

DIALOGUE



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DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT

is an independent quarterly established to express Mormon culture and to examine the relevance of religion to secular life. It is edited by Latter-day Saints who wish to bring their faith into dialogue with the larger stream of Christian thought and with human experience as a whole and to foster artistic and scholarly achievement based on their cultural heritage. The journal encourages a variety of viewpoints; although every effort is made to ensure accurate scholarship and responsible judgment, the views expressed are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily those of the Mormon Church or of the editors.

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LETTERS

A Kinder Word for Bureaucracy

While I have, for many years, considered the Church Building Division and its predecessor, the Building Committee, among the Church's less inspired parts, I must take issue with Dennis Lythgoe's (Winter 1982 issue) misstated claim that Max Weber saw bureaucratization of society pejoratively.

Weber defined bureaucracy in a rather neutral way as having the following elements: (1) division of labor in the organization, (2) a pyramidal authority structure, (3) position and role of individual members based on technical competence and normative values, (4) separation of ownership of the company from the worker, and (5) written rules governing operations. The emotion-laden definition Lythgoe presents ("excessive multiplication of bureaus," "complex procedures impede effective action," and "fixed routine without exercising intelligent judgement") were never part of Weber's definition, though they characterize the popular interpretation today. Weber viewed the bureaucratic pattern of impersonal appointment to office based on technical competence as an improvement over the earlier appointment by hereditary right or purchase of office.

Of course, bureaucracies have their problems, and better structures might be possible. For example, bureaucratic appointments sometimes fail to assure technical competence, either because selectivity goes awry or favoritism associated with friendship of family relations, which bureaucracy is supposed to override, still wins out. A more serious weakness is that the rationalism and impersonal aspects are so strong that unusual circumstances have dif-

ficulty receiving adequate attention, and people's emotions don't receive the attention they prefer.

These are the problems Lythgoe seems to have experienced.

Yes, there is a need for more attention to special environmental conditions and the affective aspects of the human condition in the way the Church Building Division operates. There is also great advantage in having a professional and knowledgeable staff to protect local bishops and congregations from costly mistakes.

M. P. Marchant
Provo, Utah

Disappearing Showers

Lythgoe (Winter 1982) can set aside his fear that the Church has begun discriminating against women by not providing showers for them. Our third phase has just been completed, and *neither* shower room is to be found. Lythgoe's experience in probing into the reason ("the Brethren prefer it that way") makes me wonder — is this entirely a cost-cutting measure, or is it partly for the sake of modesty, in line with the emphasis on the "one thing leads to another" idea?

Richard Pearson Smith
Westfield, N.J.

Impressed by LDS Women

A wife of one of my colleagues who is a rather orthodox Jewish young woman of thirty-five years of age and very intelligent has been reading *DIALOGUE*. She is pro-

foundly impressed with the articles by the women writers and eager to meet them. She is positive in her position that the intelligent LDS women will work out the best relationships to the current issues confronting American women today. She wishes to attend the next MHA meetings, and she probably will.

Garth N. Jones
Anchorage, Alaska

No Reconciliation

Steven H. Heath's article (Autumn 1982) "The Reconciliation of Faith and Science — Henry Eyring's Achievement" is, I submit, a false premise. Eyring's views on organic evolution are in contravention to the revealed word of God (scriptures.) Eyring, admittedly a brilliant chemist and scientist, achieved no such reconciliation in his lifetime. He kept his knowledge of the revealed truths of religion and his organic evolutionary views in separate compartments to "avoid resolving the obvious conflicts which would otherwise arise" as McConkie has stated.

First, let me make it crystal clear that what I have said and will say about Dr. Eyring has absolutely nothing to do with his character, which has been unimpeachable, as far as I know.

Those who side with Eyring's evolutionary views (and they are legion in the Church), give priority to human reasoning over revelation. The so-called scientific teachings concerning the age of the earth and the origin of man are in direct conflict with the simple and plain words of the Lord that have come through the scriptures. Actually, the spectacle of any Mormon scientist (Talmage, Widtsoe, Stokes, James, Jensen, etc.) adding God to the Lyell-Darwin mechanism as a prime mover is an anomaly — an utter impossibility. Lyell, Darwin, Spencer, Huxley would, of course, have none of it.

An organic evolution advocate worth his salt does not accept the biblical ac-

counts of the Fall, Adam and Eve, the Atonement, and the need of a Savior. The Bible is a complete myth to him and is so expressed by its foremost advocates. As Julian Huxley stated in 1859: "Darwin removed the whole idea of God as the creator of organisms from the sphere of rational discussion. Darwin pointed out that no supernatural designer was needed; since natural selection could account for any form of life there was no room for a supernatural agency in its evolution."

The whole program of organic evolution (natural selection, uniformitarianism, survival of the fittest) has come under serious question in recent years at the top level of investigative organic evolution, contrary to Dr. Eyring's views, absolutely leaves no room for Christ and the scriptures. You can accept one view or the other, but not both.

Professor Heath did a real service in his article by printing various letters of President Joseph Fielding Smith and Dr. Eyring. It affords the opportunity for the reader to make a choice between organic evolution and the gospel as expressed in their divergent views. The following statement from President Smith's *Man, His Origin and Destiny* is devastating to organic evolution:

We do have in the Church many members who do not have an abiding testimony, and are disturbed by philosophical theories in the Universities. Many of the theories are proclaimed with such positive finality that those weak in the faith are inclined to accept the deductions of these teachers, and think that the revelations must be wrong. We cannot accept the hypothesis of the scientific world which is in direct conflict with the Gospel. You cannot be a true member of the Church and reject Jesus Christ. You cannot be a faithful member and reject the scriptures (Standard Works) for those are the standards of our faith. If you accept them you cannot accept organic evolution, for they are diametrically opposed.

It is most interesting to note that President McKay selected President Smith as a

counselor in the First Presidency after his book was written; and, more important, the Lord chose him as his prophet after the book was written. The fact should give the organic evolutionists in the Church some serious moments of troublesome inquiry and contemplation—but probably won't!

The greater tragedy is not that the western world has bought the Lyell-Darwin explanation of earth history, but that most of the world has bought the Lyell-Darwin rejection of God. Therein lies the danger!

Julian R. Durham
Ogden, Utah

South Pacific Answer to Bureaucracy

Having been a ward clerk, executive secretary, son of a bishop, and government bureaucrat, I had a particular interest in the articles on Church administration in the Winter 1982 issue. Dennis Lythgoe's experiences in chapel building were especially familiar to me having peripherally participated in constructing or remodeling three ward buildings.

His account brought to mind an occurrence while I was a missionary in the South Pacific in the 1960s. The mission auditors discovered fifty dollars in the books of one of the districts with no indication which branch or account it belonged to. The mission presidency decided to have a contest among the branches of the district and award the money to the branch which did the most to improve and beautify its meetinghouse and grounds. A tiny branch won the competition and the fifty dollars was duly awarded. Imagine our surprise when, on our next visit to the branch a few weeks later, we discovered a brand new branch chapel! With fifty dollars the members had razed the thatched hut where they had previously met and replaced it with a frame building with a metal roof and crushed coral floor. They also had enough money left over for paint. So much for bureaucracy.

David M. Thomas
Chandler, Arizona

Cooling Fan

An avid DIALOGUE fan from the first issue, I found my enthusiasm cooling after a decade, as it seemed that DIALOGUE began to concentrate on scholarly rather than philosophical insights into the profound human problems within the Latter-day Saint community.

I was irked by the rambling, lengthy perusal of the Negro-priesthood problem which never really came to grips with the Prophet Joseph's revelations on the subject (twenty-year old compilation available on request). The poor perception of the Mormon missionary activity in east Germany under President Alfred C. Rees in pre-war Nazi Germany was annoying. (I was there.) The superficial story of Apostle John Taylor whose actions were, I feel, largely responsible for my grandfather's death, should or could have been expanded from the personal narrative to a far-reaching investigation of the ramification of such actions (and teachings) by Church authorities. ("Thou knowst not what argument thy life to thy neighbor's creed hath lent.")

I am distressed by the anti-intellectualism in the Church, and believe it axiomatic that you cannot bolster truth with lies (even well-intentioned ones) or with error (especially error from deliberate ignorance).

In the Spring 1982 issue, I thoroughly enjoyed Jan Shipp's article. We LDS are fortunate in being able to share her insights. The Hutchinson categorizing of Mormon attitudes toward the Bible was interesting. I think—to put it bluntly—that Mormons are biblical ignoramuses. In consequence, they are often literary ignoramuses also, since much great literature cannot be fully appreciated without knowledge of the Bible. They are also linguistic ignoramuses, and have no idea of the problems and pitfalls inherent in any translation, no matter how good the translator, and they definitely cannot comprehend the compounding of difficulty engendered by Jesus speaking

Aramaic, which the apostles (and others) rendered into Greek, which was translated into the seventeenth-century English, and is now being perceived in the twentieth-century English of the nonlinguistic Church authority. The Prophet Joseph Smith sensed the need to savor the scriptures in the original tongue when he established the classes in Hebrew in Kirtland in 1835.

Let's keep a good dialogue going, for a one-way flow of ideas results in intellectual disaster for all concerned.

Lew W. Wallace
San Gabriel, California

The Place of DIALOGUE

The message and mission of DIALOGUE is different from the message of *Ensign* and other periodicals. Each has its purpose and place. Church members who wish to have a broad background of information should read both.

Murray C. Harper
Lewiston, Idaho

Dialogue a Strength

Thank you, editors, for a stimulating, marvelous publication. Contrary to many DIALOGUE-doubters, some of whom admittedly have never read the journal, DIALOGUE has strengthened my Mormonism.

Ingrid Rees
Omaha, Nebraska

No Comment from President McKay

As I reviewed with interest Steven Heath's article on the evolution issue (Autumn 1982), I recalled a personal experience with Joseph Fielding Smith when he was president of the Quorum of the Twelve.

During the summer of 1961, I spent a week in the Church's Salt Lake City Missionary Home before a mission to West Germany. President Joseph Fielding Smith

customarily spoke to the missionaries once during that week of intensive missionary preparation.

President Smith had been a theological hero of mine so I was delighted that he would address our group. After giving his talk, he extended an open invitation to visit him in his office should we have any further doctrinal questions.

With the questioning mind of a nineteen-year-old and eager to meet President Smith personally, I made an appointment to talk to him about the position on evolution reflected in his book, *Man, His Origin and Destiny*. Having recently completed two years at BYU including a geology class, I was interested in knowing the Church's "official" position on the possibility of a God-directed evolutionary process. After all, I was being sent out as a missionary to represent the Church.

I explained to President Smith that our geology professor had given us a photocopy of a letter to a Mormon scientist in Salt Lake City signed by David O. McKay, then president of the Church, dated 15 February 1957 and explaining that on the subject of organic evolution the Church had officially taken no position. *Man, His Origin and Destiny* was not published by the Church and was not approved by the Church but contained expressions of the author's views for which he alone was responsible.

I was inquiring whether the antievolution teachings in President Smith's book were "official" doctrine that we as missionaries should represent or was the issue still open as President David O. McKay's letter would indicate? In other words, was it his opinion or Church doctrine?

I mentioned to President Smith that many of the Mormon scientists felt that significant evidence supporting some kind of evolutionary process could not be overlooked and that a divinely directed evolutionary process (at least in part) should not be eliminated as a possibility until more was revealed from the Church's First Presidency as well as more discovered from scientific findings.

He became a little irritated with my insistence about the Church's official position and asserted that he found the theory of organic evolution generally inconsistent with gospel doctrine. Then I asked directly, "If evolution is indeed contrary to the gospel and official doctrine, why don't you talk to President McKay about it?" His response was most interesting: "President McKay won't talk with me about it."

Robert F. Bohn
Danville, California

Nibley Defended

In his review (Winter 1982) of Dr. Hugh Nibley's *Abraham in Egypt*, Eric Jay Olson makes several general statements, but the only (ergo probably the worst and greatest) specific error he can find in the whole book is that on page 5 the name *Joseph* appears where *Jacob* should. This slip is an easy one to make, like saying *Elijah* for *Elisha* or vice versa. It is a small and inconsequential error, no matter how loudly Olson proclaims it is an

enormous and tremendous one that invalidates the whole book. Since perhaps he could find no others, I offer him two: *Ikhanton* for *Ikhnaton* (p. 113) and *statutes* for *statues* (p. 67). Like Joseph-for-Jacob, these are obvious typos. I could not find any substantial or important errors, any more than Brother Olson who perhaps should win an award for making the biggest mountain out of the smallest molehill.

Benjamin Urrutia
Salt Lake City, Utah

CORRECTION

In David John Buerger's article, "The Fulness of the Priesthood': The Second Anointing in Latter-day Saint Theology and Practice" (Spring 1983), p. 35, n. 88, a copy of excerpts from the First Presidency Letters is in Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, rather than the Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, as cited.

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Ten Years in Camelot: A Personal Memoir

Davis Bitton

BETWEEN 1972 AND 1982 I was part of the team of historians located in the Church Office Building under the direction of Leonard J. Arrington. It was a golden decade — a brief period of excitement and optimism — that someone has likened to Camelot. But it came to an end. This is not an attempt to write the complete history of those ten years, with their achievements and frustrations. To tell anything like the whole story would require a book. Others participating in the same activities — and certainly those looking on from the outside — would see them somewhat differently or at least would emphasize different things. I confidently predict that one or two dozen different oral or written versions of these events will make the rounds during the next few years. What I offer here is modest, partial, and tentative.

In 1972, at a time when reorganization was taking place in other Church departments as well, the old Church Historian's Office was reorganized as the Historical Department of the Church with Alvin R. Dyer as its managing director. There were to be three subdivisions: Library, Archives, and Historian's Division. Later a Curator's Division, or Arts and Sites, was added. Named to head the Historian's Division and given the title of Church Historian was Leonard J. Arrington. It was the first time a professional historian, a real historian, was named to this position, for the so-called Church Historian had traditionally been one of the apostles and functioned as an administrator.

What was behind this decision? Apparently it was part of a recognition in many of the Church departments that experts should take over specialized functions, leaving the General Authorities free to exercise their role as spiritual leaders and as traveling ambassadors rather than being bogged down in departmental responsibilities. One can guess, too, that at least some previous

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Church Historians recognized that they simply did not have the training or the credentials to be historians. They had administered as well as they could, given the many demands on their time, but here was an opportunity for a recognized historian to show what could be done.

Leonard Arrington brought to the assignment impressive qualifications. A professor of economics at Utah State University, Leonard had done a dissertation in economic history at the University of North Carolina, later published as *Great Basin Kingdom*. He had been by far the most productive scholar working the fields of Mormon history. He had good connections in the academic community and among historians in such associations as the Agricultural History Society and the Western History Association. He was well known to virtually every scholar or student of Mormon history and had been in the small group that had formed the Mormon History Association back in 1966. He was active in the Church and a former member in a Logan stake presidency. If the Church wanted a historian who could command respect, Leonard was clearly the man.

What was in the minds of those who selected Leonard? The commission was to carry out a program of research and writing on Latter-day Saint history. A first kind of writing project would be scholarly books and articles designed for historical journals, papers for presentation at meetings of professional associations, and monographs that would be so well-researched and authoritative that they would provide the scholarly basis for other scholarly and popular works. Second, part of the division's assignment was to communicate information about Church history to a broad audience, especially through such magazines as the *New Era* and the *Ensign*. There were some hopes in the specific mandate to write scholarly history that a little judicious pump-priming would yield positive long-range results — respect for the Church, its history, and leaders who were willing to support thorough scholarship.

Even before 1972 there had been hints of a thaw. Scholars had been granted access to materials for a variety of historical projects. In 1967 Leonard Arrington's contract with Knopf for a one-volume history had led him to make such a request, which had been granted. S. Lyman Tyler, of the University of Utah, had also been a door-opener in arranging to get a letter of clearance from President N. Eldon Tanner for about a dozen scholars engaged in similar projects during the 1960s. I was one of those fortunate enough to receive such a letter — now no longer operative but glued in my scrapbook as proof of an attitude that once prevailed. Elder Howard W. Hunter, Church Historian for a brief period after Joseph Fielding Smith became president of the Church, had been warm and communicative, even inviting a group of us historians in for rap sessions. The Church and its historians seemed to be getting along well; certainly the historians saw themselves as loyal members while at the same time thinking, and being led to believe, that they had much to contribute.

I have often heard it said that Leonard Arrington "opened up the archives." It is not that simple, as he would be the first to admit. The horror stories about the old days when Alvin Smith and Will Lund reluctantly opened

the gates of access, screened notes, and on occasion helped a generation or two of scholars are true enough in general, as many of us can testify; but the situation had never been without glimmers of hope. Even before the 1972 appointment, new procedures and a relaxing of the old rules were being worked out. The “professionalization” of the archives, including systematic accessioning, cataloging of the material, the preparation of registers, and clearly stated rules about use, had begun when Joseph Fielding Smith was still Church Historian. Leonard, a convenient symbol to many people, certainly approved of these changes, for they made it possible for us to say, in answer to recurrent questions, “The Church Archives is a professionally run institution. Its rules of access are not arbitrary.” We were proud to be associated with such a place. But the process was larger than one man.

Newly called as Church Historian in early 1972, Leonard had the right to appoint his own assistants and to have a small staff. I remember the excitement with which I received the information, and the grateful wonderment at his choosing me for one of the two Assistant Church Historians. (It was agreed that instead of a single person holding that title, Jim Allen and I would be Assistant Church Historians of equal title, each retaining our positions at our respective universities, he at Brigham Young University, I at the University of Utah.) Leonard has said that he saw us both as loyal, hard working, and supportive. He also saw a certain complementarity in our temperaments and institutional ties. Within weeks, others — secretaries, research assistants, and other historians — were added to the new Historian’s Division.

Elder Alvin R. Dyer was our managing director and our champion. A skilled businessman and management consultant, Elder Dyer took it as his role to “put wheels” under the new division — set up the procedures and guidelines that would enable us to function. Approving wholeheartedly as the various proposals were presented was the First Presidency. I remember attending a ward party just at the time my own appointment was being announced. President Harold B. Lee, who happened to be a member of the ward, generously made a point of coming up to me and saying, “Welcome aboard.”

My sense of privacy and aversion to postured piety are sufficient that I will not include in this account the many examples of answers to prayer. But perhaps it would be appropriate to share the tender experience, after Jim’s and my appointments had been approved, of kneeling with Leonard in a prayer of gratitude. We were historians, to be sure, but we were also committed Church members and saw the development as a wonderful opportunity to combine the two.

Since my own training was in European history, I often wondered at the chain of circumstances that brought me to serving on Leonard’s team. From the time I started dabbling in Mormon history when I was on the faculty at the University of Texas, through the experience of becoming acquainted with Leonard Arrington when he came to deliver televised lectures there, and through my participation in the organizational meeting of the Mormon History Association in San Francisco, I seemed to be moving almost irresistibly

in the direction of Mormon history. When a position at the University of Utah opened up in 1966, my family and I moved to Salt Lake City. It all seemed to converge.

The small group of historians attached to the Historian's Division gradually expanded. This was not due to any imperialist design or empire-building complex. Some of the appointments were seen as temporary; others were part-time. The division at its largest included fourteen historians and three secretaries. It was perhaps natural that much attention be given to history in 1980, the sequicentennial year. It would not have been surprising to have the division then shrink a bit by natural attrition. But what happened was not expected.

In effect the Historian's Division was a research institute. It produced scholarly work on a broad front, published work in a variety of outlets, engaged in discussion and consultation with other historians and interested Church departments like education and the magazines. Projects were not picked at random. They were cleared in meetings with Elder Joseph Anderson, the managing director after Elder Dyer's incapacitating illness and death. Projects of major importance were also cleared by the two advisors to the Historical Department of the Church from the Council of the Twelve and by the First Presidency. Individuals either volunteered or were assigned to work on given projects.

Quite early the question arose as to whether the findings and publications of the History Division should be "correlated." I am here referring to the reading committee with power to require changes in the Church's printed materials or withhold approval to publish. It is frequently regarded as a board of censorship but, to put the best light on it, is a means by which the Church assures that materials for the various classes and programs do not duplicate or contradict, that they are accurate, and that they are doctrinally sound. The research and publication program of the History Division was not part of any system of classes, it was not presuming to make statements about the current doctrinal positions, and with respect to historical accuracy it seemed unlikely that untrained committee members would be in a position to second-guess those who had done the research. So as a reasonable procedure it was agreed by the General Authorities in charge that the "reading committee" of the Historical Department would be Leonard Arrington, Davis Bitton, and James Allen. I think it worked out rather well. Some of the specific matters in our publications that later turned out to be irritants did not do so because of historical or doctrinal inaccuracy.

The overwhelming majority of our findings posed no problem to faith. Of course we early discovered, if we had not already known, that our ancestors were human; but within that framework there was ample evidence of faith and devotion. One of my projects, begun prior to my appointment, was *Guide to Mormon Diaries and Autobiographies*. With the help of Gordon Irving and others I continued to devote time to it almost every week. This was the real stuff of history, the nitty-gritty, showing people without pretense. The sterling qualities, the willingness to sacrifice for a cause greater than their own immedi-

ate interest, the conviction that the restoration was what it claimed to be, are inescapable in hundreds of these personal accounts. Other historians of the division had similar reactions. Their research, to judge from their comments, deepened and strengthened rather than weakened their devotion to the Church.

Of course what constitutes a problem depends entirely on the person. On one occasion Leonard and I were advised to leave a chapter on polygamy out of our book. We listened to such reactions, tried to be sensitive to different audiences, and made the best judgment we could. Polygamy is a large and important part of our history. Questions continue to be raised about it. Thinking that we could render service by producing a concise, low-key treatment of the subject, we proposed such a work to our superiors. They declined. Whether because of general press reaction or because of the presence of Fundamentalists still clinging to the practice, polygamy is such a sensitive subject that some General Authorities preferred to avoid mentioning it at all. Church magazines were not supposed to mention the practice. Books produced by Deseret Book studiously avoided it. It seemed like something of a modest breakthrough when my article on "Great-Grandfather's Family" was published by the *Ensign*; for the whole point of this article was to acknowledge that our ancestors had family problems as do we, and one of these, for them, was polygamy. We were not advocating its present practice, needless to say, but to acknowledge that it existed in the past and that sometimes it had been reasonably successful and other times a failure seemed consistent with the historical evidence.

The euphoria of being part of something like the Historical Division in 1972 is hard to convey. It seemed like a heaven-sent opportunity. Our leaders were behind us, liked us, encouraged us. We had available one of the great collections of primary source material in the world. There was much that needed to be done. In meetings between Leonard, Jim, and me, and in larger meetings with the whole staff, we discussed needed projects and thought in terms of priorities. Those that seemed strongest were carried by Leonard to meetings of the heads of the different divisions of the Historical Department and on up the ladder. Generally speaking, the responses were favorable and encouraging. There were fruitful meetings with *Ensign* editors Jay Todd and Lavina Fielding Anderson, who were anxious to carry good historical articles and sought our advice in mapping out possible topics.

At the very beginning, when our staff was still small, I made the suggestion that we should do something with oral history — the technique of tape-recording interviews with people who were involved in matters of historical importance. We persuaded Gary Shumway, a Church member and history professor at California State University (Fullerton) with oral-history experience, to spend some time with us in the summer and get our program launched. Thanks to his careful training and high standards, an oral history program was begun. Many of us participated in it by conducting interviews. One of the choice experiences of my life was nine sessions of interviewing T. Edgar Lyon, beloved Institute of Religion teacher and a historian himself. Bill Hartley was placed in charge of this program at first. Later it was placed under the direc-

tion of Gordon Irving, who continues to direct it. A generous donation from the descendants of James H. Moyle helped pay for processing and other expenses. With many hundreds of interviews now completed, including many by Charles Ursenbach in Canada and other volunteers, the James Moyle Oral History Program can stand comparison with the best in the country.

Another area that quickly became one of our acknowledged provinces was women's history. We employed Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, who had just been awarded a Ph.D. by the University of Utah, and one of the assignments she undertook was a life of Eliza R. Snow. Leonard had already shown himself open to recognizing the important role of our pioneer women which, taken together with the increasing prominence of women's studies and women's issues generally, made it natural to encourage work along this line by Maureen and others. Eventually Jill Mulvay Derr and Carol Cornwall Madsen joined the staff and made their own contributions. Other researchers on fellowships and volunteers added their bit. It is an understatement to say that the past ten years have raised our consciousness of the role of women in Mormon history.

In two respects the History Division was a refreshing change from the academic environment. For one thing, the emphasis on research and publication was much more intense. Although universities expect such work to go on, it is usually recognized that teaching and administration are equally important. At the Historical Department, research was the name of the game. Projects were underway, many of them moving ahead simultaneously. As we got together formally and informally, progress reports were given. Not a year passed without many articles (and occasionally books) being published. The other difference I noticed between the History Division and the university settings I am most familiar with was the conviviality, the congeniality, and the collegiality. While not totally lacking in academia, they are often almost indiscernible. Good cheer, encouragement, interest, pride in the accomplishments of any individual in the group were strong features of the History Division. It was a heady atmosphere.

When one remembers that all of this was assumed to be not only professionally meritorious but also a fulfillment of a commission from the Church, based on the idea that the time had come to write the history of the Church in a professionally competent manner, it is perhaps understandable that we often had the strong feeling that God was in his heaven and all was right with the world.

A project that had been suggested in meetings with Elder Howard Hunter even before 1972 was a sesquicentennial history of the Church. Not since B. H. Roberts had published his *Comprehensive History* in 1930 had there been a multi-volume, in-depth survey. His history, however excellent, had been superseded in many respects, and he had had very little to say about the events of the twentieth century. Given the opening up of new primary sources and the contributions of a new generation of historians after World War II, the time seemed ripe for a new monument to Mormon history. Proposals were made, approved, and, after many discussions, sixteen authors selected to pro-

duce as many volumes. It was never assumed that they would all appear in the year 1980, but some, perhaps two or three, were to be ready by that year, the others following at a pace of two or three a year until the entire set was complete. This project had the full backing of the First Presidency. At a kick-off dinner sponsored by Deseret Book, the authors gathered with their wives, enjoyed a delicious repast, and listened to a positive address by Elder Thomas Monson. One statement from his talk might have been considered an omen. "Measure twice and cut once," he cautioned. But there seemed every reason to believe that a superior history, one that could stand comparison with any other, was about to appear and remain standard for many years to come.

In our very early meetings we recognized a need for something to replace Joseph Fielding Smith's *Essentials in Church History*, whose inadequacies were apparent to the serious student. We decided that two separate one-volume treatments of our history were needed, one for members, the other for nonmembers. Certain phrases and ways of expression we have in the Church would make it very difficult for a single book to serve both purposes. After a period of musical chairs in which different individuals were proposed as authors, it was decided that the volume for Church readers would be produced by Jim Allen and Glen Leonard. The other work, intended primarily for nonmembers, would be written by Leonard Arrington and me.

The Story of the Latter-day Saints, Jim's and Glen's volume, appeared in 1976. It is a marvelous book. Well organized, thoroughly researched, full of little known facts, always concerned with putting the events in an intelligible context, it can be read with profit by anyone. As was appropriate for its intended purpose, it is permeated with an underlying faith in the restored gospel, although, of course, the authors constantly remembered that they were writing history, not delivering a sermon. A superb bibliography in the back of the book enables interested readers to seek additional information on all topics treated in the book. Although scholarship continues to accumulate additional titles each year, I still recommend this book as the place to start. The authors received countless letters, including some from students in places like Ricks College and Brigham Young University. Not written as a textbook, *Story* was nevertheless serving a useful purpose in many Church history classes.

The other book, entitled *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints*, was published by Alfred A. Knopf in New York in 1979. Leonard and I were happily surprised at the favorable reception and the almost unanimously favorable reviews. It sold in bookstores across the country. The History Book Club offered it to its members and sold several hundred copies. One month over six hundred public libraries bought copies. The respected firm of Allen and Unwin brought out an edition in England. Finally, it was published in a Vintage paperback edition. It is our hope that in universities and among general readers, *The Mormon Experience* will be recognized as authoritative for several years. We have reason to think that it has done much good, winning friends for the Church, respect for our LDS history, and even some conversions. The whole experience was a "high." I hope that through it all I

retained some vestige of humility, a saving sense of humor, and an awareness that in the course of human events all things are temporary.

I am not mentioning all the titles of books and articles we produced. Suffice it to say that we all rejoiced in achieving the purpose for which we had been appointed. The evidence was there as title after title appeared. As Ronald Esplin has put it, we know how hard we worked, we know our prayerful intent, and in good conscience can say that we were not unprofitable servants.

In addition to publications and the delivering of papers at conventions of professional associations, many of us gave talks in sacrament meetings, at fire-sides, and to study groups, service clubs and literary societies. We did not see this as a burden but an opportunity, though it did take time and effort. Leonard was called upon most frequently, but the rest of us also spoke several times a year. The slant would vary with the audience, of course, but a persistent message seems to have come across that our Mormon history was something rich and inspiring, that it deserved the attention of competent historians, and that those historians who had studied it in greatest depth were still people of faith and commitment. We thought we were doing something good.

I have been discussing various aspects of our activities from 1972 on. Much of what I have said continued to be true right down to 1982: the publication program, the sense of achievement, the collegiality, the giving of speeches. But there is a downside to this story, what I might refer to as the "decline" of the History Division. The remainder of this essay will mention some aspects of that gloomy episode.

In turning over in my mind the series of experiences that led to the demise of the History Division, I discover that I am still too close to them, too emotionally involved, to be regarded as anything but an *ex parte* witness. Some experiences I choose not to detail. Recognizing my own lack of objectivity, I will offer just a few observations.

From the beginning, we detected some negative rumblings. A Church Office Building bureaucrat who regarded himself as an expert on the law of consecration and stewardship showed up in my office one day and asked for some information about the precise number of temples that were supposed to be located in the City of Zion. I am sure that my comments, to the effect that any statements by Joseph Smith along those lines were probably tentative, did not sit well. We were puzzled and dismayed when an outspoken General Authority criticized us for including the entire text of a Brigham Young letter alluding to a Word of Wisdom problem. However, we were neither disappointed nor disheartened. Were they not simply the inevitable pricks and stings that come when you do anything of interest or importance?

One member of the Historical Department, a librarian, regularly went through anything we published, underlined passages he considered inappropriate, and sent these annotated copies to his personal contacts among the General Authorities. We were certainly aware of this and simply hoped that small minds would be so recognized by those in positions of responsibility. We had our own channels of clearance and communication and never regarded our-

selves as immune from criticism. But the behind-the-scenes, over-the-back-fence rumor-mongering was insidious.

Some self-appointed critics were simply manifesting a generalized prejudice against academics. It is not hard to understand that employees who had come up the ladder at a time when training was not a prerequisite would feel threatened by university hot-shots with their Ph.D. degrees and their claims to know how things should be done. Maybe we brought some of it on ourselves, although I think we were not guilty of looking down on those who were faithful workers in their different roles.

It is my guess that some of our detractors had the mental picture of us as a conspiratorial, anti-Church cabal that sat around trying to figure out ways to cause trouble, to embarrass the Church, to undermine and destroy. I can state categorically that such a picture was a nightmare reflecting fears and suspicion but did not bear any resemblance to the facts.

It did not help that the decade of our existence was a time when Jerald and Sandra Tanner were publishing a variety of works with the specific purpose of refuting or embarrassing the Church. Those ex-Mormons had begun their publishing activity before the Historian's Division was ever created, and they would continue it long after. But the two activities were going on simultaneously. Some of the documents they published left the archives in unethical ways. We were not responsible for that. We did not sympathize with the Tanners. But in a very vague and general way one can imagine how "the troubles of our Church history" could be seen in terms of both fronts. I was dismayed when an honor's thesis produced by a University of Utah student lumped the work of the historians of the History Division (for which he showed little appreciation) together with the publications of the Tanners. For him, it was all "the New Mormon History." Guilt by association is a devastating thing, as we discovered.

There were other straws in the wind. With the publication of *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, the generally favorable reception was tempered by criticism. When Elder Ezra Taft Benson addressed a meeting of institute teachers, he mentioned three deficiencies in that work without mentioning it by name. He did not like the use of *primitivist* to describe the widespread nineteenth-century attempt to get back to the original apostolic church. With respect to the coming forth of the Word of Wisdom, he did not like mentioning the context of temperance activity and health practices of the 1830s, although the authors of *Story* made it clear that God was still behind the eighty-ninth section. And the word *communitarian* to describe practices and institutions such as the United Order was frowned upon; too close to "communism," one imagines. These criticisms, however oblique in not mentioning the title of the book, were far more formidable than anything earlier. They came from a highly placed apostle and were delivered to educators of the Church.

To understand why we did not throw in the towel immediately it must be remembered that scarcely a day passed without positive, favorable reaction. People throughout the Church enjoyed what we were doing, found it interest-

ing, and were encouraged with the model we provided of high-quality research and continued loyalty. Responses came by letter, by telephone, and in personal conversation from ordinary members, bishops and stake presidents, various employees within the Church Office Building, more than a few people high in the ranks of the auxiliaries, and even some General Authorities. I have no desire to compromise anyone by waving lists of endorsers, but perhaps it can be understood that even in the face of some criticism we could continue to think that basically we were on the right track and were fulfilling the mission to which we had been called.

On one occasion the question of publishing articles in *DIALOGUE* came up. An issue had appeared in which the History Division had been represented by three or four names, probably one or two articles and one or two book reviews. It might have been concluded that *DIALOGUE* was out of bounds, but the result of the discussion was acceptance of an informal guideline: no single issue would contain more than one (perhaps two) pieces by History Division people. That seemed fairly reasonable. The same applied to *Sunstone*.

One of my personal disappointments was the lack of mutual respect and a willingness to discuss. Never were our critics willing to sit down and talk over matters with us. If we were inaccurate, we could be so informed. If a book had errors, they could be corrected in future revised editions. If we were violating the procedures set up by Elder Dyer back in 1972 and approved by the First Presidency, we could be told about it. But such conferences did not occur. I may be pardoned a personal suspicion that critics, especially those who have not put in the same hours of back-breaking research in the archives, are afraid to discuss such matters across the table with historians who have done their homework. But civilized standards would presumably find room for some such discussion if differences of opinion arose.

I can state objectively that the decision was made to scuttle the sixteen-volume history (actually allowing it to find its own outlets over a period of years), to sharply circumscribe the projects that were approved, to reject any suggestions, however meritorious, for worthy long-range projects, to allow the division to shrink by attrition, and finally to reassign the remaining historians to a new entity, the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute of Church History, which would be affiliated with Brigham Young University. The adoption of the new institute title took place in 1980. The move to the BYU campus started then and was finally completed in the summer of 1982. I had retained my University of Utah professorship throughout and in August of 1982 resumed it as my exclusive professional appointment.

Leonard J. Arrington was called as Church Historian in 1972. He was sustained at general conference that year and for the next couple of years. In 1975 he was named "Director" of the History Division but was not released as Church Historian. He carefully avoided using the Church Historian designation himself but did not correct the many people who still used that as his title. Finally, in 1982, he received a letter honorably releasing him. That same year

Elder G. Homer Durham, who had been managing director of the Historical Department of the Church since 1977, was named Church Historian.

If you visit the East Wing of the Church Office Building you will find in the hallway a gallery of portraits. These are the Church Historians, from Oliver Cowdery to G. Homer Durham. But where is Leonard Arrington? Nowhere to be seen. The official explanation is that to be a Church Historian one has to be a General Authority. A brief period of our history, awkwardly embarrassing to someone, is thus erased. Orwell's *Truthspeak* did not have to wait for 1984.

But there are some things that cannot be erased. The record of research and publication of a little band of historians during just a few short years is there for all who are interested to see. It is a simple fact that the most important contributions to our Mormon history were either produced by or encouraged by the Historian's Division. For the foreseeable future other writers will have to use these works as their point of departure; they cannot claim to have prepared themselves for their own contribution without paying attention to them.

The historians continue to live on, doing history, some of them affiliated with the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute. Even though not located as conveniently to the archives and even though teaching responsibilities will now inhibit their production, they will continue to be publishing scholars. Others have scattered elsewhere and will likely produce some books and articles of importance. A new generation of energetic young researchers is already appearing on the scene. I think I am right in saying that they see themselves as continuing the tradition of honest scholarship associated with the Arrington years.

The Mormon History Association continues to prosper as a center and encourager of work in our history. An independent group, it brings together professional historians and buffs, LDS, RLDS, and nonmembers, the devoted and the doubting, bishops and apostates. Each year its convention seems more impressive than the last. Leonard, Jim, Dean Jessee, and I, all of whom have served as its president, can feel encouraged that an organization continues to promote the kind of forthright, confident research we have been identified with.

In the spring of 1982 announcement was made of the formation of the Leonard J. Arrington Foundation for Mormon Studies. With contributions from generous donors who wish to show their support of honest but loyal scholarly activity, this independent foundation can assist in the publication of primary sources and scholarly works that would not find outlets in the usual channels.

But it is especially in hearts and minds that the ten golden years will continue to live on. I will be eternally grateful for an opportunity that comes to few people. The close friendships and camaraderie remain. The countless expressions of good will and enthusiastic support will not be forgotten. When we find ourselves on the other side of the veil, however much condemnation I may

fully deserve for other parts of my life, I do not fear facing President Harold B. Lee and saying, "It was not an easy assignment, for there was no way of pleasing everybody. But we worked hard. We did our best. Thank you for your confidence."

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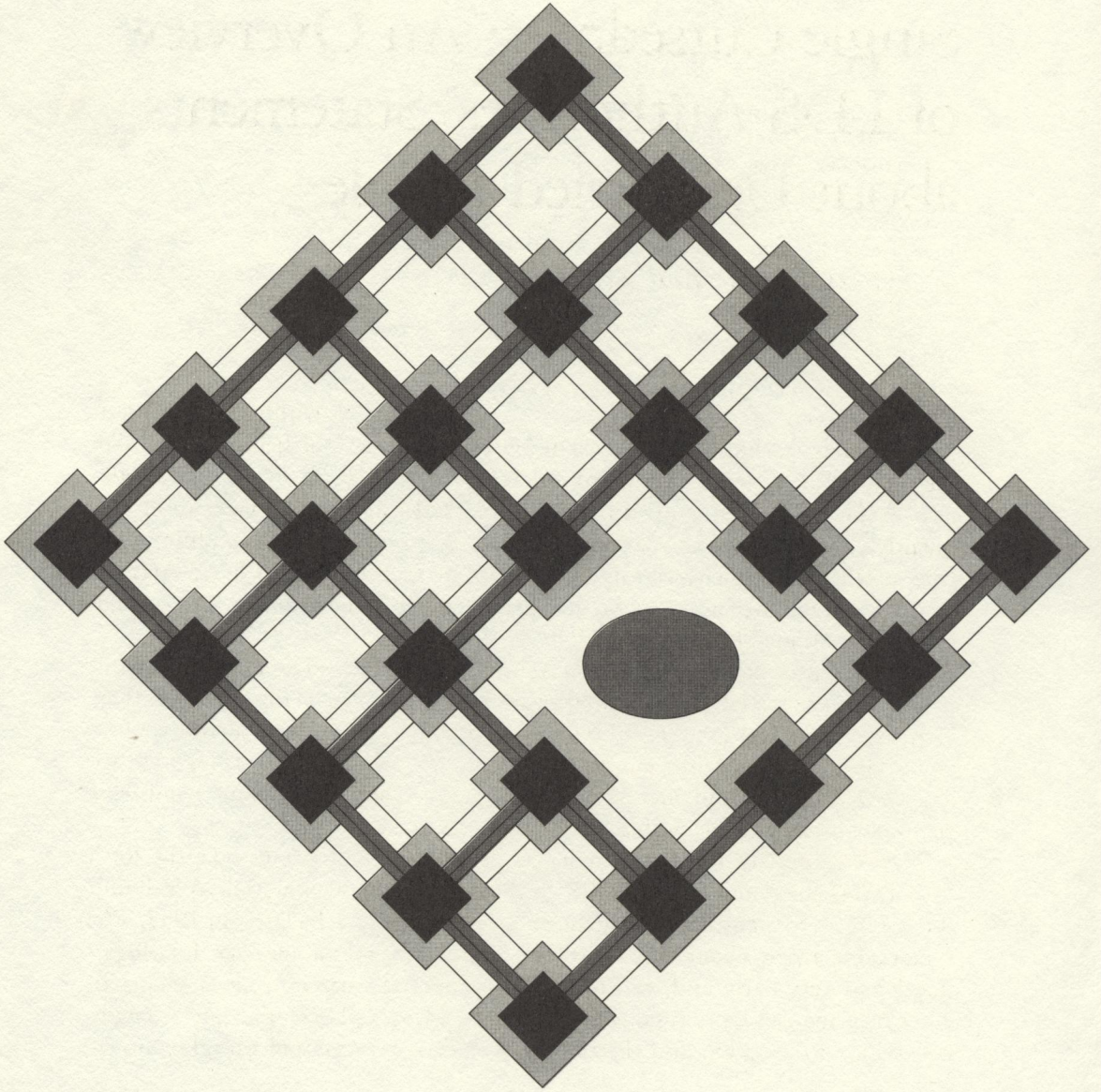
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Single Cursedness: An Overview of LDS Authorities' Statements about Unmarried People

Marybeth Raynes and Erin Parsons

BEING MARRIED IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT IDEAS within Mormon culture, emphasized almost to the exclusion of other states of being. Much like the moon that is visible only when reflecting the sun's light, mention of singleness occurs most frequently in articles and talks about marriage, most frequently coupled with exhortations to marry. Not only does this condition hold true in official statements but it also seems to be fact in personal lives. According to one single woman, "To be determined not to be determined by marriage is to be determined by marriage."¹

Our research focused only on never-married people. The numerous statements about divorced and widowed persons merit additional discussion on their own. We found no mention of separated, deserted, or prisoner-of-war spouses or out-of-wedlock parents. So, though we do not mention these categories, we are aware of them and suspect they experience many of the same conditions as never-married people within the Church.

Overall, statements about singleness in official LDS settings take the form of both blessings and cursing with little nonjudgmental material. We found the earliest statement about singleness recorded in 1831, the latest in 1982. The remarkable thing about this time-span is that the major message for singles developed very early and, except for an occasional variation, never changed. That message can be summarized briefly: (1) God's plan is marriage. Singleness violates that plan, and therefore has at least overtones of unrighteousness

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¹ Diane Higginson, "Single Voices," *DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT* 6 (Summer 1971): 79.

or abnormality. (2) If you marry outside the temple or outside the Church, unhappiness will follow.

These views began in 1831 when a revelation to Lemam Copley, a former celibate Shaker and missionary to the same, announced that “whoso forbiddeth to marry is not ordained of God, for marriage is ordained of God and man.” (D&C 49:15). After 1850 when polygamy was openly espoused, Apostle Orson Hyde warned reluctant bachelors that “better men would step forward to do the job” if they did not marry and he also denounced Paul’s statement as “false doctrine”: “It is better to remain unmarried even as I.”²

Even after the cessation of plural marriage, the pressure on man was not relaxed. In 1914, Feramorz Y. Fox, president of LDS College, urged: “While counseling the women against marrying outside of the Church, we must use every means to overcome the tendency among Mormon men to delay marriage.”³ In 1924, Apostle George F. Richards was “appalled” to learn that 27,104 members of the Church over twenty-one were single the previous year. “Why,” he demanded, “when we believe in marriage? Forbidding to marry is the doctrine of devils.”⁴

Even though singleness is equally “wrong” for men and women, there were clear gender differences in the attitude of authoritative statements: Women were gentle victims of man’s selfishness. Thus, unmarried men needed to “repent” of singleness as they would any other sin, and the chief means of persuasion was threats. From the speeches, four reasons emerge for men’s refusal to marry:

1. It is their nature to avoid marriage. Brigham Young believed that “not one man in a 1000 would have wife or children except for religious reasons.”⁵ In years as widely separated as 1874, 1958, and 1981, a “growing indifference” to marriage throughout the nation is cited as a reason why increasingly large numbers of Mormon men choose not to marry.⁶

2. Single men are less righteous. Those who do not choose a wife are “unwilling to accept God’s commands, don’t “understand” gospel principles, and are “not living their religion.”⁷

² Orson Hyde, 6 Oct. 1854, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 2:84.

³ Feramorz Y. Fox, “Comments on June Editorial,” *Young Woman’s Journal* 15 (Sept. 1914): 559.

⁴ George F. Richards, Conference Reports, 4 April 1924, pp. 30–31.

⁵ Brigham Young, 9 Aug. 1868, *Journal of Discourses*, 2:90.

⁶ “Better One than Two,” *Juvenile Instructor* 9 (July 1874): 163; ElRay L. Christianesen, “Whom and Where Will You Marry?” *Relief Society Magazine* 45 (Oct. 1958): 644–48; Jan Thompson, “Prepare for Life, Not Just Marriage” (interview with Susan Memmot), *Church News*, 18 July 1981, p. 7.

⁷ Samuel W. Richards, “The Duty of Marriage,” *The Contributor* 13 (1892): 92; Hyrum M. Smith, *Conference Reports*, 4 April 1913, p. 115; Oscar W. McConkie, *She Shall Be Called Woman* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1979), p. 112; “An Everlasting Covenant,” (Lesson Department), *Young Woman’s Journal* 33 (Feb. 1922): 116.

3. As a result, single men are worldly and materialistic, “too niggardly to support a wife” because “a wife in this day is too expensive an article to keep.” It is “unfortunate when comfort, social position, desire to travel or professional or political ambitions stand in the way of rearing a family.”⁸

4. Single men are defective or disabled in some way. Perhaps out of false charity, most of the speculation about continuing singleness fell in this category. In chronological order, men are purported to suffer from: disability (1892), inability to support a wife (1913), incompetence (1974), “lacking in guts . . . [or] suffering a chemical imbalance” (1979), inadequate to meet the demands of personal involvement (1981), and “battered and scarred” (1981).⁹ A bishop in a singles ward explained this last statement:

Life is a test. Some who are especially battered and scarred inside have not been asked to face the Celestial challenge of marriage. It is enough for them to simply make it through, pointing to two ward members—a nymphomaniac and a homosexual—who fought their battles daily. Perhaps winning the *not* doing battle is just as important as winning the doing something battle. Those who may be mentally or severely physically handicapped are not compelled to marry during earth life.¹⁰

Only one article reflected single men’s perspective on singlehood and many of those interviewed mentioned their sensitivity to the labeling they felt occurred from other members of the Church: These labels included homosexuality, too “picky,” “immaturity,” “lack of self-knowledge, and “lack of interpersonal skills.”¹¹ None of the sources searched revealed any positive reasons or acceptable reasons why men do not marry.

The reasons why women do not marry are less stringently negative but still less than positive.

1. Men may not be available due to war, disability, or disinterest.¹²

2. Career or education decisions may preclude marriage. This reason is not, however, considered acceptable. Remarked Helen Rowland in the 1917 *Relief Society Magazine*,

Don’t accept substitutes: don’t accept a career instead of marrying the right man. Art is thrilling but you can’t run your fingers through its hair. A career is absorbing, but

⁸ Hyde, *Journal of Discourses*, 2:84–85; Blanche Beechwood [Emmeline B. Wells], *Woman’s Exponent*, July 1876; “Marriage as a Religious and Moral Obligation” (Social Service Lesson), *Relief Society Magazine* 10 (May 1923): 155–58.

⁹ Richards, “The Duty of Marriage,” p. 90; Hyrum M. Smith, *Conference Reports*, pp. 114–15; Paul E. Dahl, “Some Factors Which Differ Between Married and Never Married L.D.S. Males and Females Who Attended 1969 Summer School at Brigham Young University in Relationship to Their Families of Orientation,” Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1971, p. 29; McConkie, *Woman*, p. 109; Thompson, “Prepare for Life,” p. 7; Kay Senzee, “Single Survival,” *Exponent II* 8 (Winter 1981): 11.

¹⁰ Senzee, “Single Survival,” p. 11.

¹¹ Lavina Fielding Anderson and Jeffrey O. Johnson, “Endangered Species: Single Men in the Church,” *Sunstone* 2 (Summer 1977): 4–5.

¹² Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 12:262; Henry Bowman, “Are Girls Become Pursuers?” *Improvement Era* 48 (July 1945): 7; Richards, “The Duty of Marriage,” p. 90.

you can't tie pink ribbons in the curls of your brain children. Work is beautiful and ennobling, but it never calls you sweetly foolish names, takes you out to dinner, admires your latest hat, or tells you how different you are from all the other women. In short, the most radical, self-ordained bachelor girl will admit that she is making no great human sacrifice when she wants to give up her freedom, her wild ways, and dances, in order to make herself worthy of a pure, sweet man.¹³

3. The woman may be undesirable marriage material. No Church discussions of singleness stated personal undesirability as a reason directly, but the implication is there. For example, when women are exhorted to stay sweet, well-groomed, skilled at homemaking, and of service to mankind to be "more ready" when marriage comes along,¹⁴ the implication is that one may be undesirable or unmarriageable without these qualities.

4. Other reasons include the fear that men cannot support them,¹⁵ while some women may be responsible for dependent members of their immediate families or be repelled by sex. These last two reasons are mentioned once only in *Alone but Not Lonely*, a 1973 book, by a Mormon who was not a General Authority. The author, Wayne J. Anderson, also provided the sole positive reasons for women remaining unmarried: wider career opportunity and greater service to all of mankind.¹⁶

Although these reasons lack the directly threatening tone common when addressing single men, they still assign blame in a quiet way. Staying "sweet" and being careful about too much career involvement are enjoinders to wait in an appropriate way to be available for marriage, with the implication that it will result. No advice was ever given on direct steps single women might take to get married.

Another frequent theme of official statements — again a form of negative persuasion — is warnings about the unhappy fate of the unmarried. First, a single child is a reproach to his/her parents who "will receive condemnation on their heads if their children do not learn the correct . . . principle of eternal marriage."¹⁷ Unmarried women are warned that they will be forced to work in the field or in the mines, and are left, in Brigham Young's phrase, as "female outcasts and marriageable outlaws."¹⁸ Without marriage women are "unprotected," and, in 1892 Samuel W. Richard, president of the European Mission, asserted, "by men remaining single, women are denied their right to marry — no wonder they are demanding the franchise so that they may protect their rights themselves."¹⁹

¹³ Helen Rowland, "Making a Husband out of a Man," *Relief Society Magazine* 4 (Nov. 1917): 612.

¹⁴ McConkie, *Woman*, p. 108.

¹⁵ Hyrum M. Smith, *Conference Reports*, p. 15.

¹⁶ Wayne J. Anderson, *Alone but Not Lonely* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973), p. 54.

¹⁷ Christiansen, "Whom and Where," p. 646.

¹⁸ Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 12:262.

¹⁹ Richards, "The Duty of Marriage," pp. 91–93.

The most important costs, however, are personal and spiritual. Single men “will not have a principality in the hereafter” and will have to face the Lord empty-handed when he asks “Where is your wife?”²⁰ Their presumed choice not to marry is “frustrating their own eternal progress,” a theme President Spencer W. Kimball spoke to at least twice in the middle 1970s. Quoting George Gilder’s not always reliable research, he warned that single men live shorter lives, have poorer health, are emotionally less stable, and get fewer important posts.²¹ Additionally, single people suffer openly admitted discrimination within the Church because they are often “viewed by other Church members as a failure or as incompetent” or as second-class citizens.²² Seventy ElRay L. Christiansen predicted disappointment, regret, and remorse if people remain single.²³

Furthermore, singleness also causes negative consequences for society. Orson Hyde warned that “men will gratify worldly desire out of wedlock, thereby increasing babies out of wedlock as well as prostitution.” Consequently, God will send pestilence to lay waste to the cities and to “visit the guilty sensualist with dreadful punishment.”²⁴ Later authorities maintained that the “bulwark” of society will be weakened because “all sorts of social problems are caused by singlehood, crime, immorality, divorce and poverty.”²⁵

As these examples show, the difference in attitude between single men and single women is striking. General Authorities, all of whom are male, consistently perceive the single man as selfish, sinful, and possibly suffering from chemical imbalance. A man who stubbornly retains bachelorhood is not worthy of his priesthood. In 1974, President Harold B. Lee sternly admonished: “All women have a desire for companionship. They want to be wives and mothers, and when men refuse the responsibility of marriage, for no good reason, they [the women] are unable to consummate marriage. Brethren, we are not doing our duty as holders of the priesthood when we go beyond the marriageable age and withhold ourselves from an honorable marriage to these lovely women.”²⁶

²⁰ Spencer W. Kimball, “Marriage,” *Ensign* 6 (Feb. 1976): 4.

²¹ Spencer W. Kimball as quoted in Gerry Avant, “Marriage Ordained of God” (report of speech), *Church News*, 4 Jan. 1975, p. 4.

²² McConkie, *Woman*, p. 108; Bruce L. Campbell and Eugene E. Campbell, “The Mormon Family,” in *Ethnic Families in America: Patterns and Variations*, eds. Charles H. Mindel and Robert W. Habenstein (New York: Elsevier North-Holland, Inc., 1977), p. 385; Ida Smith, “The Psychological Needs of Mormon Women,” *Sunstone* 6 (March/April 1981): 62.

²³ Christiansen, “Whom and Where,” p. 648. Others acknowledge that deprivation, social pressure, exclusion, and discouragement also afflict the single. See McConkie, *Woman*, p. 109; Orson Scott Card, “What They’re Doing in Rochester, Orlando, Tempe . . . : A Report on Successful Programs for Single Adults,” *Ensign* 8 (Feb. 1978): 10; Gerry Avant, “Single Adults: Activity in Ward Is Key to Success,” *Church News*, 18 July 1981, p. 7.

²⁴ Hyde, *Journal of Discourses*, p. 84.

²⁵ Richards, “The Duty of Marriage,” p. 92; David O. McKay, *Conference Reports*, 1953, p. 17.

²⁶ Harold B. Lee, “Understanding Who We Are Brings Self-Respect,” October conference address 1973, *Ensign* 4 (Jan. 1974): 100.

This consistently negative labeling presumably creates a negative social environment for single men. The unanimity of negative tone is surprising. We found no positive statements about unmarried men, regardless of circumstance. As we might expect, at least one single male reported never having received any positive encouragement or understanding from Church sources about his single state.²⁷

In contrast, worthy single women are consoled that, should they not be chosen for the "most choice career," they will yet receive all the blessings of matrimony in the hereafter.²⁸ Meanwhile, they should devote themselves to service and spiritual growth.

How do single people view their own experience? Women have spoken most openly. In 1839 Elizabeth Haven, wrote to a friend: "Tell them [other women friends] not to be in a hurry about getting married, for I am not."²⁹ She married the next year. Later, Susa Young, a daughter of Brigham Young and divorced from Alma Dunford, her first husband, wrote to her mother, "Sometimes they tell me I must be saved by some good man. If that's all, I could be sealed to some one who has proved his integrity and has passed away. . . . I have no desire to be any man's wife. And doubt whether I ever shall."³⁰ She later married Jacob Gates and editorialized in the *Young Women's Journal* that a girl "really looks forward to marriage as the one desirable thing in her life."³¹ Whether this statement was autobiographical or only exhortatory we have no way of knowing.

Perhaps mirroring the social changes that have made singleness much more prevalent, personal writings of Latter-day Saints in the last decade sound less defensive. The "single condition is not a trial or affliction, rather an opportunity for growth," says Carol Clark, a single Relief Society General Board member.³² "Don't judge yourself, find satisfaction in present joys and prepare for life, not just marriage," said another. A third asserted, "There is not just *one* acceptable life pattern for every woman in the Church, i.e. 'all Mormon women are . . .', 'all single people feel . . .', 'all mothers will . . .', etc."³⁴

²⁷ Donald L. Wight, interviewed by authors Feb. 1982, Salt Lake City, notes in possession of Marybeth Raynes.

²⁸ Neal A. Maxwell, "The Women of God," April 1978 conference address, *Ensign* 9 (May 1978): 11. Such assertions may emerge from a stereotyped view that women are "naturally" spiritual, kind, sweet, and nurturing while men are "naturally" rebellious and disobedient. Hence, they must bridle their urges and fight their basic natures to achieve spirituality.

²⁹ Elizabeth Haven Barlow to Elizabeth Howe Bullard, 24 Feb. 1839, in Kenneth W. Godfrey, Audrey M. Godfrey, and Jill Mulvay Derr, *Women's Voices: An Untold Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982), p. 115.

³⁰ Susa Young Dunford [Gates] to Lucy Bigelow Young in *ibid.*, pp. 331, 334.

³¹ Susa Young Gates, "Editor's Notes," *Young Woman's Journal* 8 (Jan. 1897): 183.

³² Carol Clark, *A Singular Life: Perspectives for the Single Woman* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974), p. 3.

³³ Thompson, "Prepare for Life," p. 7.

³⁴ Ida Smith, "Psychological Needs," p. 2.

At least one person lamented, "I am perfectly content to remain single right now, but my bishop . . . has only one word for me: marriage. No one in my ward can believe that someone 'so far over the marrying age' . . . can be satisfied with a career."³⁵ The tension implied between personal acceptance and negative pressures identifies yet another source of negative feelings. Diane Higginson, writing in *DIALOGUE* in 1971, identified the situation as "being in the right Church but in the wrong pew . . . neither a priesthood bearer nor a child bearer."³⁶ Other women specified some of their feelings. Feeling "branded with a scarlet 'S,'" depressed, impatient, feeling failure, lonely, discouraged, out of place, even though objectively things might be going well, unlovable with unattainable dreams, invisible and unrecognized by the Church, and waiting.³⁷ They also mention feeling a double bind about marriage and education/career. If single women "don't get educated or adopt a career they will have to settle for a less stimulating, rewarding existence if they never marry; if they do get a rewarding career, they intimidate the men they might want to marry." Succinctly put, one woman entering graduate school was told, "You'll be sorry if you go to law school; no self-respecting missionary will ever marry you."³⁸ The dilemma is genuine: either course of action could be the "wrong decision" that might bring on a permanent single status for which one is fully responsible.³⁹

Older single women mention their pain when "quips like 'I guess he died in the war in heaven' and 'someday my prince will come — in the millennium' are no longer laughable."⁴⁰ One single woman confessed to new attitudes about men: "My right man has changed a lot since high school, and the range is narrowing: not just because the number of available men is decreasing . . . but because I find *myself* gradually becoming less flexible. I am no longer willing to date, but I find an increasing longing to have the experiences be meaningful. I also find myself struggling to be patient; patient with the 'relationship process' which takes time to enact."⁴¹

Unfortunately, single men have been largely silent, and no similar body of personal writings documents their feelings. From the informal survey in the only article on the topic, single men seem to feel chastised, lonely, labelled, left out, and often sexually frustrated. Additionally, they feel pressure from everywhere: parents, friends, bishops, and single women. One branch president

³⁵ Clark, *Singular Life*, p. 2.

³⁶ Higginson, "Single Voices," p. 79.

³⁷ Maryruth Bracy, "Single Voices," *DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT* 6 (Autumn–Winter 1971): 78; Anonymous, *ibid.*, p. 77; Beth Vaughn, "Sisters Speak: The Single Woman in the Church," *Exponent II* 6 (Dec. 1975): 16; Thompson, "Prepare for Life," p. 7; Senzee, "Single Survival," p. 6; Louise Durham, "Profiles: Research Director Speaks Out," *Exponent II* 6 (Autumn–Winter 1971): 12.

³⁸ Janeen Jacobs Aggen, "Does a J.D. Rule Out a Mrs.?" *Exponent II* 7 (Fall 1980): 4.

³⁹ Bracy, "Single Voices," p. 78.

⁴⁰ Clark, *Singular Life*, p. 3.

⁴¹ Bracy, "Single Voices," p. 78.

expressed sympathy for a single counselor “literally backed against the wall after a fireside by five or six women — with no defense except a cookie and a glass of punch.” In addition to labels like immature, immoral, selfish, and unrighteous, they are not seen as worthy of Church callings that other men of commensurate age and activity are filling.⁴²

The Church, lagging ten years behind society, discovered single people as a group in the 1970s and implemented singles wards and Young Special Interest programs. It recognized the different types of singleness (never-married, divorced, and widowed), dispensed alternative advice for singles: good grooming, reading a lot, performing compassionate service and entertaining the neighborhood children.⁴³ This program brought relief and relative enthusiasm from many singles within the Church and seems to be partially successful in meeting some needs. Others point out that the labelling and stereotyping continues. “All that single saints have in common is that they’re single,” complains one.⁴⁴ Another “pointed out the irony of participating in a program ‘whose very existence advertises that you’re failing. The only qualification you have to have to belong is being single. The only thing you have to do to get out is to get married.’”⁴⁵

In an interview we conducted, one single man denied the “selfish single” label. Instead, he said, he and other men felt as trapped in their circumstances as women. No one seems available to point out patterns, give encouragement, or suggest positive changes that could lead to marriage.⁴⁶

The Church’s efforts to solve singleness may have also created additional problems because its message is almost exclusively negative and because it contains a surprising number of double messages. The process of communication, we feel, has an impact as significant as the content of the message. That process is primarily characterized by its negative tone. Whether the content is gentle or harsh, overt or covert, the attitude of the speaker nearly always communicates that there is something very wrong about being single. Two social scientists, William D. Payne and Merlin B. Brinkerhoff, pointed out in an insightful 1978 essay in *DIALOGUE* that labels create very powerful social expectations. Thus:

It is difficult for a negatively labelled Church member to maintain a picture of himself inconsistent with the way in which others in the Church view him. Negative social labels, with their accompanying expectations, may lead someone to self-deprecating deviant behavior. The unconventional behavior confirms and reinforces the negative label. Within the Church, the role of the label, and its accompanying expectations in making the behavior come true is seldom considered.⁴⁷

⁴² Anderson and Johnson, “Endangered Species,” pp. 2–3.

⁴³ Anne Osborn, “The Ecstasy of the Agony: How to Be Single and Sane at the Same Time,” *Ensign* 7 (March 1977): 48.

⁴⁴ Card, “What They’re Doing,” p. 7.

⁴⁵ Anderson and Johnson, “Endangered Species,” p. 4.

⁴⁶ Wright, interview.

⁴⁷ William D. Payne and Merlin B. Brinkerhoff, “Negative Social Labelling: Some Consequences and Implications,” *DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT* 11 (1978): 44.

In addition, they note that “the possessor of a single stigmatizing characteristic is often seen as possessing several other discrediting characteristics which some member relates to the original label.” The consequences of teaching Latter-day Saints that singleness is a “bad” state to be in undoubtedly has consequences for marriage, childraising, and larger issues of identity that deserve fuller exploration.

The double messages which coexist in talks, lessons, and general attitudes are:

1. Don’t marry too young. Take your time. *But* don’t marry too late or you will miss out. The “proper age” for marriage is definitely post-mission for men but otherwise remains undefined, although it is obviously a narrow slot. The most recent example of a new attempt to define this optimum age is seen in a 1982 statement telling mission presidents not to offer advice about how soon missionaries should marry after their return home, which reverses decades of advice to marry within six months of returning home or be “a failure as a missionary.”⁴⁸

2. You cannot reach exaltation on your own for you must be married, *but* your eternal exaltation is completely your own responsibility.

3. If you lead a good life even though not married you will reap all the blessings in the eternities, *but* those who are not married will be ministering angels, and remain “separately and singly, without exaltation . . . to all eternity.” (D&C 132:16–17). There are doctrinal provisions for those not married in this life to be married in the millennium;⁴⁹ however, not all Church members may understand that doctrine and those who do may not be particularly comforted.

4. If you live the commandments while still single, you will be rewarded by marriage; *but* those who don’t marry are less righteous.⁵⁰

5. Single women should develop their talents through career and service, *but* they should be prepared at any minute to marry and confine their efforts to family and Church.

We also see a double message in the difference between the content and the form of the message: we care about you and you are important in the Lord’s church, *but* we do not know how to talk positively to you or really recognize your existence in a positive way.

It is encouraging, however, to note that over half our sources about singleness have been printed since 1970, presumably because singleness has become more socially acceptable and because single people themselves have begun to make a place for themselves. Oscar McConkie, a former mission president, acknowledges that the single Mormon deserves a life as full and satisfying as a

⁴⁸ Lee, “Understanding Who We Are,” p. 120.

⁴⁹ Brigham Young, 9 Aug. 1868, *Journal of Discourses*, 12:262.

⁵⁰ Christiansen, “Whom and Where,” p. 646; Joseph Fielding Smith, “Marriage in Eternity,” *Improvement Era* 60 (Oct. 1957): 702; Campbell and Campbell, “Mormon Family,” p. 385.

married person, even though there seems to be a tacit implication that “fulfillment” is really a substitute for marriage.⁵¹

Furthermore, research about Church members is increasing. Statistics make people visible. When Church authorities become aware that a substantial minority — some guesses say 30 percent — of the adults in the Church are single, it is easier for them to address problems and programs. The recent emphasis in Church talks and manuals about the importance of self-esteem and the ability to love has also somewhat mitigated the negative pressure on singles. Eleanor Knowles, a single editor at the *Ensign*, observed in 1971: “From childhood women have been told that a woman’s fulfillment comes with marriage and a family. Lessons at Church are often prefaced with ‘when you marry.’ Few persons warn that you may not marry, and therefore preparation for a full life must be made, regardless if it is within or without marriage.”⁵² “You’re making a great contribution and the promises will be fulfilled in the eternities,”⁵³ President Kimball assured single *Ensign* readers in 1976. He also urged, “We should place emphasis on the person rather than the status. We should all be part of the mainstream . . . part of a big family in the Church. Part of the problem of the singles is that we are playing limits instead of realizing the limits of potential.”⁵⁴ And speaking about the Special Interest program to Church members in general, Elder James E. Faust, now an apostle, said: “What is proposed is a way to reach the singles and have each feel that someone cares and that each has a place in the Lord’s Church. Too often we are insensitive to the feelings of the singles.”⁵⁵

In addition to shedding a more positive light on being single, a practical focus for solving issues is urged. In the *Guidelines for Single Adults* issued to regional, stake and ward levels in 1980, policies and procedures are written in a positive, informative style. Unmarried persons are urged to participate in singles programs. Singles miniconferences and conferences have occasionally been reported in the *Ensign*. One single attendee at a conference commented on the pleasure of “learning you’re not alone. You can call on a fellow member of S.I. and get help. Someone who has been through your problem and survived shows you can too.”⁵⁶ Counseling for all singles to discover “hangups” has also been recommended in printing as an acceptable course of action, though not by a General Authority.⁵⁷ Service and spiritual growth are also

⁵¹ McConkie, *Woman*, p. 113.

⁵² Eleanor Knowles, “A Look at the Single Person,” *Ensign* 1 (Aug. 1971): 40.

⁵³ Kimball, “Marriage,” p. 4.

⁵⁴ Avant, “Single Adults,” p. 4.

⁵⁵ James E. Faust, “Reaching the One,” April 1973 conference address *Ensign* 3 (July 1973): 87.

⁵⁶ Card, “What They’re Doing,” p. 7.

⁵⁷ Knowles, “A Look at the Single Person,” p. 40. Since we cannot recall similar recommendations for married people who are not suffering from obvious difficulties, this statement may reflect the assumption that singleness in and of itself constitutes a personality defect or problem.

recommended.⁵⁸ In short, if you “feel deprived by being single, expand your sphere of usefulness.”⁵⁹

This broader vision of the last decade is still double vision, however. Although some General Authorities speak of singleness with sympathy and insight, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy reportedly said, during a singles conference at BYU in 1982 that a single person is not a whole person, and being single — particularly divorced singleness — was described as being unacceptable to the Lord in general conference.⁶⁰ The continuing themes have not been basically changed, but are simply supplemented with new positive statements backed up by programs tailored for single people.

⁵⁸ Osborn, “Ecstasy of the Agony,” p. 49.

⁵⁹ McConkie, *Woman*, p. 113.

⁶⁰ *Church News*, 2 April 1982, p. 6.

Embroideries

Joyce Ellen Davis

In this small room
the bishop sits like God
Himself
broad farmer face upon
a red neck shining out of his
collar like Moses' face
at Sinai
red ears burning
like the bush

he asks
in his farmer's voice
if I am pure
a princess in Zion

Oh how the fires of Sinai
consume the world's unblemished
lambs firstlings
without spot or broken
bone
My illuminated blemishes are
new embroideries
evident as Hawthorne's Prynne's
a hyaline film emerging
on my breast

another room
another ceiling shadowed curtains open
your eyes your hands in the hard dark
your mouth breathing on mine
Andy Williams crooning *moon river*
from a portable radio
your eyes your hands your mouth
wherever you're going
the voice sings
wherever you're going
wherever where ever

I burn under the bishop's
farmer eyes
with prised fires fierce
as Sinai's.

JOYCE ELLEN DAVIS, a graduate in theater arts from the University of Utah, won the Utah Arts Council's first publication grant with her novel Chrysalis. Married and the mother of five sons, she confesses to "a passion for books, Bach, nachos, and Marvin (not necessarily in that order)."

On the Edge: Mormonism's Single Men

Jeffery Ogden Johnson

THE DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS contains extremely specific instructions concerning marriage for men:

In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;
And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];
And if he does not, he cannot obtain it. (D&C 133:1-3)

When Joseph Smith gave these instructions 16 May 1843 to the Saints in Ramus, Illinois, a forty-four-year-old bachelor was a member of his household in Nauvoo. John M. Bernhisel of Pennsylvania had graduated from the medical department of the University of Pennsylvania before he joined the Church in the early part of 1842. He received his endowments from Joseph Smith in late 1843 and boarded with the Smiths until after Joseph's death. It wasn't until 1846 at the age of forty-seven that he married, being sealed to four women on January 20 in the Nauvoo Temple. In February he was sealed to three more women, including Melissa Lott, a former wife of Joseph Smith. In December 1846 John Milton Bernhisel II, his first child, was born to Julia Ann Haight.¹ During the Utah period, Bernhisel developed an essentially monogamist relationship with another wife, Elizabeth Barker by whom he had nine children (1849-71) while several wives including Melissa Lott, left him in Utah and married other men. A son David Martin Bernhisel called him "naturally shy and retiring, never obtrusive, but silent and shrinking from public notice. He was a confirmed bachelor, in which condition he would probably have remained, but for the teachings of Joseph Smith, who strenuously urged him to obey the law, which he did."² Both Joseph Smith's trust

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¹ Family group sheet of John Milton Bernhisel and Julia Ann Haight, Genealogical Society Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

² David M. Bernhisel, "Dr. John Milton Bernhisel," *The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 3 (Oct. 1912): 174.

and his strenuous urgings can be seen as setting a tone for the relationship of single men with the Church. This paper will look at that relationship, as well as the place single men occupied in their broader community, and the social-emotional support systems they developed.

It is interesting that the social reality for single men was in decided contrast to the consistently negative rhetoric about them. A conspicuous example is that of a conference sermon by Orson Hyde in 1854, chastizing unmarried men: "If you do not step forward and marry, and try to carry on the great work of Jehovah, it will be left for a better man to do than you." Behind him, a "voice in the stand" interrupted: "There is but one old bachelor in the Territory, and he has gone to the States."

Hyde continued: "O! I beg your pardon; President Young says he does not know of but one old bachelor in all the Territory of Utah, and he has gone to the States; therefore I have nothing more to say on this particular point."³ He did, however, continue by denouncing bachelors, presumably non-Mormons, who gratify their "fleshy desires" but will not support their offspring honorably.⁴

It is interesting that Brigham Young's was the "voice in the stand" since the 1850 census lists thirty-six-year-old Samuel Greenleaf Ladd, a bachelor, as a member of his household.⁵ Ladd received his endowments on 15 December 1851⁶ and worked for Brigham Young for several years. He had joined the Church in New York in 1843 and emigrated to Utah via California with the *Brooklyn* company, arriving in Utah in August 1847.⁷ In early Utah when the Aaronic Priesthood quorums were composed of adult men, Ladd, an elder, served as first counselor in the deacon's quorum of the Salt Lake Stake (October 1862–April 1865). In October Conference 1865 he was sustained as president of the priests' quorum and so served until he was called to settle Arizona in 1873.⁸ Interestingly, as president of the priests' quorum he presided over all the priests in the Salt Lake Valley, adult men called to "visit the house of each member, and exhort them to pray vocally, and in secret and attend to all family duties" (D&C 20:47).

After a first trip to the Mormon colonies in Arizona in 1873, Ladd settled there permanently in 1876. The only trained surveyor in the settlement, he laid out the town plats and then surveyed the irrigation canals. When he died in St. Joseph, still unmarried in 1893, he was honored as the area's oldest citi-

³ *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool, England: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1855–86), 2:84.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ United States, Department of the Interior, Bureau of the Census, 1850 Census, Utah, Salt Lake County, p. 49.

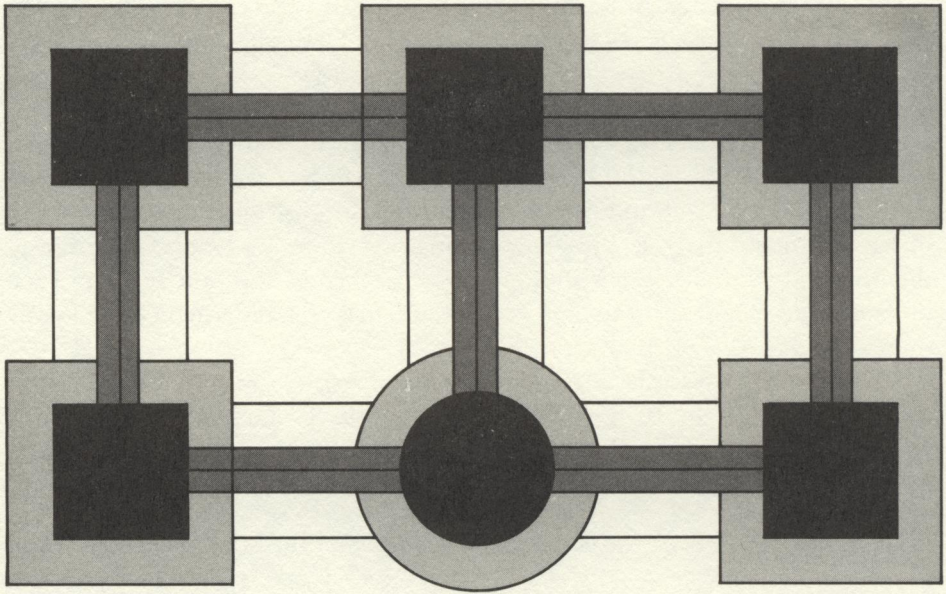
⁶ "Samuel Greenleaf Ladd," Temple Index Bureau, Genealogical Society.

⁷ John Bushman, "Death of Major Ladd," *Deseret News*, 20 May 1893, p. 5.

⁸ Sustaining of officers in general conference, *Deseret News* from Oct. 1862–April 1873.

zen. His estate was willed to the Snowflake Stake Academy; his house and city lot went to the city.⁹

Twenty-year-old George John Taylor, oldest child of Apostle John Taylor, was probably at the meeting where Elder Hyde railed against bachelors, but he died sixty years later, still unmarried. His record of Church activity is exemplary, beginning with his baptism by Joseph Smith at age eight in Nauvoo. Young George became de facto head of the house as his father's church duties kept him away from the family for long periods of time. When the family arrived in Salt Lake Valley, thirteen-year-old George immediately began snaking logs out of the canyons to build the family home. He also got out the logs used to build the first bridge over the Jordan River. These activities developed into a family lumber business. He served two missions, one in New England and another in England. He helped his father edit his New York City newspaper, *The Mormon*, served as business manager for his father's large family, taught grammar and geography at the University of Deseret, was a member of the editorial staff of the *Deseret News*, served on the Salt Lake City Council, as chief clerk of the Utah Legislature, as county coroner for many years, and as editor and publisher of *Keep-A-Pitchinin*, one of the West's first illustrated journals and humor periodicals. In 1873 he was called to the high council of



⁹ See Charles S. Peterson, *Take Up Your Mission: Colonizing Along the Little Colorado River, 1870–1900* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1973); and George S. Tanner and J. Morris Richards, *Colonization in the Little Colorado: The Joseph City Region* (Flagstaff, Ariz.: Northland Press, c1977).

Salt Lake Stake where he served until the stake was divided in 1900. His lumbering, mercantile, and later mining activities made him one of the leading businessmen in Utah.¹⁰ In his old age, he was honored and respected by each member of his father's "large Patriarchal family of which he was the eldest member."¹¹ He had supervised the education, both spiritual and economic, for many members of the family and obviously had a central place in his family and community.

Another single man who would also make a significant impact on Mormon society, arrived on 1 October 1861. He was John Rockey Park, a native of Tiffin, Ohio, who had been educated at the Heidelberg College at Tiffin and Ohio Wesleyan University and had graduated from the medical department of the University of the City of New York. He planned to go to California but investigated Mormonism that winter in Utah, joined the Church, and began teaching school. Later he left Utah for a few months to teach school in Oregon but returned in the spring of 1864 to receive his endowments on June 18. He taught school until the spring of 1869, when the Board of Regents at the University of Deseret asked him to become its president. For twenty-three years his energies were focused on developing the university; and some idea of his central role can be guessed from the fact that, when Brigham Young advised him to study Europe's educational systems, the university closed until he came back. In 1892 he retired from the university but in 1896 was elected the first State Superintendent of Public Instruction. He had already been working with schools all over the territory and this job gave him the power to improve teaching on all levels. He continued in this position until his death in 1900.¹²

Apostle Orson F. Whitney conceded that Park was not "a religious man" but praised him for his morality as "an educator, a creator and a developer of latent powers."¹³ His role as father of education in Utah was extremely challenging and delicate. Joseph L. Rawlins, former professor at the university explains: "On the one side it was charged that it was a school of infidelity and operating against the interests of the dominant church, and, on the other side, among non-Mormons, that it was a strictly Mormon institution. So when the Territorial Legislature occasionally made an appropriation for the University the Governor would veto it, and all sides seemed bent on its destruction."¹⁴

¹⁰ "George John Taylor is Called by Death," *Deseret Evening News*, 15 Dec. 1914, p. 7; Ronald W. Walker, "The *Keep-A-Pitchin* or the Mormon Pioneer Was Human," *BYU Studies* 14 (Spring 1974): 331-44; and the George J. Taylor papers, Historical Department Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah; hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives.

¹¹ Nellie T. Taylor, "John Taylor, His Ancestors and Descendants," *Utah Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 21 (Oct. 1930): 159.

¹² See Levi Edgar Young, *Dr. John Rocky [sic] Park* (Salt Lake City: privately published, 1919); and Ralph V. Chamberlin, ed., *Memories of John Rockey Park* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Alumni Association, 1949).

¹³ Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons Co., 1892-1904), 2:332.

¹⁴ Chamberlin, *Memories*, p. 48.

Park successfully walked this narrow line between church and state. By the end of his term as president, the University of Utah had developed into a fully functioning university and the new campus on the foothills above Salt Lake City was taking shape. He also left a society deeply committed to education.

Whitney's allusions to Park's singleness are gracefully phrased:

It was said of the great Washington that nature gave him no children in order that he might be the Father of his Country. As truly might it be said of Dr. Park, that he had neither wife nor child, in order, it would seem, that he might devote himself the more fully, and with all the zeal of a Catholic priest laboring in the interests of Mother Church, to the cause of education in Utah. He was married to that cause. Education was his wife, and his children were the University of Utah and the public school system of the present time.¹⁵

This same idea — that a single man was too busy or too committed to a project to marry — occurred not infrequently in eulogies at the funerals of single men, but it hardly applies to Dr. Park. He created an artificial family for himself by becoming the foster father for seven children, and with the mother of two of these children, his housekeeper, had a closeknit family. He did not, however, ever marry this woman. One of the sons, David R. Allen, became a professor at the University and his foster daughter Rosa Zender was married to another professor, William G. Roylance. After David Allen married, he and his wife lived with Dr. Park in his large home and later the Roylances joined them. All the children seemed to have been close to their foster father.

Park also married, even though he was a bachelor. Returning from his study tour of Europe in 1872, he met a young girl, Annie Armitage, a convert enroute to Salt Lake City. After her arrival, she lived with Daniel H. Wells, of the First Presidency, but soon became very ill. Park succumbed to pressure to marry her for eternity and the deathbed sealing was performed by President Wells on 5 December 1872. She recovered, but Park was adamant: the sealing was for eternity only — not for mortality. He obtained a divorce from Brigham Young on 13 March 1873. This marriage became an issue when his will was probated at his death, even though in the meantime, she had married William Hilton and had several children.¹⁶

In 1885, Park hired a single man to be in charge of the University's vocal music instruction. Even Stephens was an energetic young Welshman whose family had joined the Church and emigrated to Utah in 1866 when he was twelve years old. Except for fording the Green and Platte Rivers, he remembers, "I had the privilege of walking all the way," and recalls the journey as "such an experience of pleasure to me, that I found it difficult to sympathize with the pioneers who thought it a hardship. I find my mind wandering off now, and I can see myself . . . the first day I started across the rolling country.

¹⁵ Whitney, *History of Utah*, p. 331.

¹⁶ Chamberlin, *Memories*, p. 127; and *Journal History*, 16 May 1901, pp. 3–6, LDS Church Archives.

I was too elated to walk, so I would run ahead and then would stop and wait for the crowd." He quips, "Of course I was a very young man. I was going across that thousand miles and as I was going to have a walk between two and three hundred Danish girls, I ought to have been content and happy."¹⁷

Stephens spent his boyhood in Willard, Utah, herding sheep, building stone houses and working on the railroad, but his real work was music and he developed into one of Mormonism's most important musicians. With only ten months of study in Boston, he trained thousands of voices and wrote hundreds of songs, including many of the hymns in the present hymnbook. He organized the Stephen Opera Company and brought grand opera to the West. In October 1890, the Church leaders asked him to become the director of the Tabernacle Choir. Six months later he had increased the size to 300 voices and the interior of the Tabernacle was remodeled to accommodate it. He took the choir to the World's Fair in 1893 and won second prize, giving concerts in Denver, Kansas City, Saint Louis, and Omaha en route. He wrote the Hosanna Anthem for the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple and directed the special choir in the sixteen sessions of the dedication. When he retired in 1916, he had been director for twenty-six years.¹⁸ When five to six hundred singers assembled at his home for his farewell, he thanked the choir "for this opportunity to have a family reunion, for the choir, he said, had been a family to him, as he had none of his own."¹⁹

Zina Young Card, a daughter of Brigham Young, wrote a tribute that is better as an expression of affection than as poetry. It expresses rather awkwardly some feelings about Even Stephens' singleness:

For in the hearts of Zion's children found
A wondrous love for thee. And he will hear
Their prayers. No children call thee sire,
Yet art thou father to the glow and fire
Of noble aspiration that in them will live for aye
And thy inspired songs, and name shall never die.²⁰

Most single men, however, did not occupy the socially prominent places of John R. Park and Even Stephens. Few, for example, have heard of Axel Einerson, elected president of the United Order in Axtell, Utah, on 15 March 1876. He was a bachelor and one of the largest landholders in southern Sanpete County. Because of his management, the United Order Salt Company was very successful. Under his direction, it held a monthly fast meeting and also took over the ecclesiastical duties of the settlement. After the Order was dissolved he stayed on to build a rock store and run the community blacksmith shop. His sister, Helena Einerson Madsen, president of the Gunnison Relief

¹⁷ "The Great Musician," *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 20 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1958-77), 10:85.

¹⁸ Andrew Jenson, "Even Stephens," *Biographical Encyclopedia*, 1:740-46.

¹⁹ "Passing Events," *Improvement Era* 19 (Oct. 1916): 1123.

²⁰ Zina Young Card, "Even Stephens," *Young Women's Journal* 6 (June 1895): 432.

Society, persuaded him to donate \$363 to assist the Relief Society in promoting home industry.²¹

Another almost forgotten single man is Henri Edouard Desaulles, a furniture maker from Kingston, Piute County, Utah. He was a Swiss convert to the Church and had come to Utah with his mother and niece. Well-educated, he wrote English better than he spoke it, had a large library for pioneer Utah, and subscribed to newspapers from New York City and Boston as well as French language papers published in the United States. Isolated and intensely lonely, he recorded despondently in his diary, "I guess Hell itself would not be worse than my past life."²² His mother had died and his widowed niece and her family, his only relatives in the Church, lived in northern Utah. He was also a little deaf. His diary records the social problems of a single man in unusual detail, but we may assume that other single men might have similar frustrations, chief among them his loneliness. One diary entry uses the word *alone* nine times in a single sentence.²³ It was hard for him to participate in community activities because he felt unwanted. For example, he cleaned the schoolhouse for the Twenty-fourth of July program and then did not attend because he felt no one wanted him there. The United Order in which he was a member did not credit his work at the same rate for married men which made him feel unvalued. He also had to hire women to wash his clothes and bake his bread because the time such needed housekeeping took (he was a successful breadmaker) kept him from his work.

Even in his highly introspective diary, there are clues that he was not totally excluded from his community. In fact his shyness may have caused more of a problem than exclusionary ward members. Desaulles's bishop called him to be the elders quorum clerk and he faithfully went to quorum meeting even when no one else attended. He spoke in sacrament meeting and sometimes bore his testimony at fast meeting. Later the bishop called him to be an acting priest, visiting ward members with his companion. The bishop sometimes visited him and encouraged him in his work. People regularly borrowed books or brought him a pie. Obviously, he had a place in the community even though he lacked friends and companionship.

He met some of these needs when he was able to afford a cow. He gave her a name and, with obvious affection, named each calf that came along. He also lost himself in his books — Milton, the Bible, Gibbon's *Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and other popular books of time.

He felt responsible for his niece; and when her husband died, he wrote President John Taylor asking if he should leave the United Order to help her.²⁴ He corresponded regularly with her and her children and sent her money when

²¹ *Memory Book to Commemorate Gunnison Valley's Centennial, 1859–1959* [n.p.; n.d.], pp. 72 and 74.

²² Henri Edouard Desaulles, *Diary*, 1 January 1888, LDS Church Archives.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ H. Edouard Desaulles to John Taylor, 28 Nov. 1880, John Taylor papers, LDS Church Archives.

he could. One entry in his diary reads, "I had letters from . . . my niece Adele but they are very short letters & don't tell me much. I wish I was better off so I could send Adele something, but I could not this year. If we were nearer I could help her a good deal more. I think next winter [I will move to Ogden] the Lord permitting unless I get myself a wife in the mean time."²⁵ This last statement is interesting: he was fifty-six years old but still did not accept his single state.

Desaules' diary also contains several passages, rare for the nineteenth century, that may acknowledge sexual tensions. One reads:

I feel a little alone & lonesome to day I cleaned the school house preparatory to the people having a dance here to night. They all went to Antimony today to picnic the fourth [July 1885] at Mr Winters. I would have liked to have gone but I had to clean the room out wich took me till past noon today after wich I went & took a bath in the river, wich comforted my poor old body somewhat I am now trying to overcome a weakness inherent to me since childhood I have tried over and over again to overcome it. I have never been able to be fifteen days without sucomeing to it. I had prayed to the Lord in my early days in the woods of Saint Blaize [?] in my old county to have pity on me and overcome in me this terrible weakness. I was not in the Church then. Yet I prayed to the God of Abraham the God of Isaac & the God of Jacob to have pity on me and help me over come, but through all these years & it is thirty seven years since I am still very weak, helpless, all alone, & seemingly without a single friend in the whole world who seems to care about me. If that is my destiny all right. I will not give up trying to break [it] up as long as I can command the will to do it. I feel very miserable at times, but still try to grin & bear it, I must help myself & then perhaps the God of Heavens will have pity on me and help me overcome evil so I may be more usefull in the ways of the Gospel, instead of being useless as I have been until now.²⁶

This passage may be describing the so-called "solitary vice" held abhorrent in Victorian culture and still, like all nonmarital forms of sexual expression, forbidden by the Church. If so, it is obvious that Desaules was suffering from emotional isolation and low self-esteem as much as — or possibly more than — from sexual frustration.

Desaules had no opportunity to express sexual feelings. He records in his diary, "I joked with the girls again. Ellen Mar McCullough kissed me [once], but would not let me kiss her again."²⁷

Desaules's feelings of isolation from the community were not unique to him. Another single man, John Powell, an English coalminer, joined the Church and came to America at the age of forty-three in 1893. He got a job in Rock Springs, Wyoming, but had a crippling accident that was almost fatal. Determined to receive his endowments as soon as he was

. . . feeling strong enough for the journey, I applied to the Bishop for a recommend to the Logan Temple. As soon as possible I made the trip and put up at the Logan House kept by a Mr. Blanchard.

²⁵ Desaules, *Diary*, February 1889, pp. 112–13.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 4 July 1885, p. 61.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, July 1885, p. 64.

After a week's recuperation I went to the Temple. There I was informed that being a single man I could not have my Endowments. "You must bring your wife with you," they instructed me. I failed to see it that way. Sensing my obstinacy, the President came and confirmed what had already been told me. I reminded him of the costs of my journey, and "here's my recommend endorsed by the Stake Presidency, and I'm going to remain here until I receive my endowments — unless you throw me out," I added. I cannot soon forget the deep red that mantled the President's cheeks as in a vehement tone of voice he said: "Brother, you shall have your Endowments, for you are worthy," and then reminded me of the responsibility I was taking upon myself. It was suggested that I discard my walking cane while I was going through the House.²⁸

The feeling that somehow there was something wrong with single men is also expressed in the autobiography of David Evans Coleman of Thatcher, Arizona. He here expresses his perception of the community towards his singleness: "Here is a young man of thirty odd years in our community, has ability, takes an interest in social, spiritual and civic affairs. He will neither marry nor go on a mission. A man of that age, unmarried, is not an asset to any community. He is a social liability."²⁹

With much reluctance and under great pressure from local Church leaders Coleman did go on a mission and later, at the age of thirty-nine, married a woman of nineteen. It would be interesting to have more details about the remainder of his life.

It is frustrating to lack the demographic data that might let us project how typical such cases were. But these rather negative examples are a minority of the single men I was able to find in my far-from-random searches. Most of the single men I heard about were, in contrast to Coleman, considered assets within the circle of those who knew them no matter what the official position may have been.

Such a case is Andrew A. Kerr, like John Park a schoolteacher. He grew up in Ogden and went on a mission, and taught school until he could go to Harvard to get his master's and doctor's degrees. He returned to Utah to head the Anthropology Department at the University of Utah. He conducted the archaeological fieldwork for the university and was in charge of its natural history collections.³⁰ Barnard DeVoto pays him a glowing compliment that manages to insult almost everyone else on the faculty: "Dr. Kerr is a trained anthropologist and he stands out like a sequoia amidst sage brush — a scholar alone in a mob of Mormon bishops, tank town annotators and hicks."³¹

Singleness was not even an absolute bar to such church positions as bishoprics and stake presidencies despite scriptural injunctions that bishops be married. In 1904 when the wards in Salt Lake City were organized into four

²⁸ John Powell, "A Summary of the Religious Side of My Life," p. 16, LDS Church Archives.

²⁹ David Evans Coleman, *Autobiography*, p. 3, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.

³⁰ See the Andrew A. Kerr collection, LDS Church Archives.

³¹ Bernard De Voto, "Utah," *The American Mercury* 7 (March 1926) : 322.

stakes, a thirty-four-year-old bachelor, Nephi L. Morris, was named president of the northwest stake which retained the name of the Salt Lake Stake and was assigned ten wards. He had served on a mission in Great Britain from 1892 to 1895; after he returned, he was called by Wilford Woodruff to serve on the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association general board. His father, Elias Morris, died after serving as bishop of the Fifteenth Ward many years, and Nephi was made second counselor in the new bishopric in 1898 from which he was called to head the Salt Lake Stake. He served as a bachelor president for three years, until 1907 when he married Harriet Hooper Young, a granddaughter of Brigham Young.³²

As recently as 1937, Apostle Charles Callis ordained and set apart a single man, John William Pulley, to be bishop of the American Fork Four Ward.³³ Oral tradition has it that Elder Callis told Bishop Pully to get married within a year and sixteen months later he married Anna Vee Davis.³⁴ The Capitol Hill Ward in Salt Lake City had a single bishop, Herman J. Hogensen, from 1965 to 1969, and on 12 December 1982, William Clayton Kimball, a never-married university professor, became bishop of University First Ward in the Boston Massachusetts Stake.³⁵

The relationship of never-married men to the Church was an important question to this study and it was rather unexpected to discover that some single men were given important duties in the kingdom, both spiritual and temporal. Others felt socially and doctrinally estranged from the Church and either became inactive or remained marginally involved. Apostle E. T. Benson's son Walter, born in 1867, was never baptized and never participated in Church activities even though he lived in predominantly Mormon Cache Valley.³⁶ Stanley Snow Ivins, son of Apostle Anthony W. Ivins, served a mission for the Church in 1914 but became increasingly disaffected in his later life.³⁷ The same pattern appears with historian Dale Morgan, who died in 1971. He came from a strong Mormon background but did not maintain active affiliation as an adult.³⁸ Evidently one's relationship with the Church was highly personal; some felt close and others did not. No doubt the pattern of cause and effect was self-sustaining to a great extent. Those who were important to their community's social and economic life obviously received emotional and material rewards that increased their involvement. Others, feeling alienated and un-

³² Andrew Jenson, "Nephi Lowell Morris," *Biographical Encyclopedia*, 1:639-40.

³³ American Fork Fourth Ward, manuscript history, 1936, LDS Church Archives.

³⁴ Family group sheet of John William Pulley and Anna Vee Davis, Genealogical Society.

³⁵ Capitol Hill Ward, Manuscript History 1965-69, LDS Church Archives; [William Clayton] Tony Kimball, "Priesthood Without Family," *Exponent II* 9 (Spring 1983): 15.

³⁶ Donald Benson Alder and Elsie L. Alder, *The Benson Family* (Salt Lake City: The Ezra T. Benson Genealogical Society, Inc., 1979), p. 315-16.

³⁷ See the Stanley Snow Ivins collection, Utah State Historical Society.

³⁸ See Utah State Historical Society, *Register of the Dale Lowell Morgan Collection* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1979); and Everett L. Cooley, "A Dedication to the Memory of Dale L. Morgan," *Arizona and the West* 19 (Summer 1977): 103-6.

appreciated, withdrew even farther and had little or no effect on the people around them.

These variations also showed up in the support systems single men developed. Here chronology seems to have been a factor. Early single men like George Taylor had strong family ties and clearly defined roles with their siblings and their siblings' children. John Park created an artificial family which acted as a support system. However, the second generation of Mormonism's single men seem to have found comparable support among colleagues. Both Even Stephens and Andrew Kerr shared interests with other men in their same profession as well as with family members. Colleagues provided vacation companions and funeral speakers. Since there were few women colleagues, this was a strongly man's world.

Furthermore, since it also seems to have been a married world, I found no indication of a single men's network. Even Stephens wrote a hymn to John Park, but it was done for the dedication of the Park Memorial Building,³⁹ and was similar to many hymns written for many similar occasions.

What we do not know about most of these men is how they viewed their singleness. Were they apologetic? defiant? oblivious? They do not say, but it would require unusual ego strength for them not to accept some of the negativism of their society, a negativism that saw their achievements as largely compensatory. For example, when Hollywood actor Moroni Olson was buried in his home state of Utah, President David O. McKay said of him: "Although he never married and reared a family, I want to think of him as a person who so loved his profession that he gave his all to it and this is the reason he never married. Moroni was a man of great ideals, both spiritual and moral, and was a great contribution to Hollywood, the stage and screen. I only regret that he did not marry and have someone to bear his name now that he has passed into eternal life."⁴⁰

It is often true that the names of single men are forgotten since they do not have descendants to honor their contributions and ritualize their history. Many of them lived on the fringe of Mormon society. Yet whether as fully contributing members like Even Stephens or as lonely outcasts like Henri Desaulles, they are part of our broader community. In that sense, we are their spiritual descendants, and the reconstruction of their fragmented histories is a worthy activity for Mormon historians.

³⁹ "Memorial Ode," *Improvement Era* 22 (June 1919): 716–19.

⁴⁰ "Rites in Ogden Eulogize Utah Actor," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 Nov. 1954, p. 10C.

Ministering Angels: Single Women in Mormon Society

Lavina Fielding Anderson

SINGLE WOMEN IN MORMON SOCIETY have not fared very differently than those in society at large. When they have been objects of pity in Cincinnati, they have also been objects of pity in Cedar City. When they have been glamorous and “liberated” career women in New York, they have also been, on a somewhat smaller scale, glamorous and liberated career women in Salt Lake City. As the Raynes-Parsons essay indicates, their theological and cultural position in the Church has changed very little between two centuries. What has changed has been the larger economic opportunities that have made singleness a less terrifying option than marriage at any price.

I would like to discuss the social experience of historical Latter-day Saint single women in the context of five questions: (1) Does she have an acceptable reason for being single? (2) Can she provide for her own economic security? (3) What place does she occupy in her family of origin? (4) Can she contribute to her community in a way that she will be rewarded for? (5) What was the emotional life of a single woman in past generations?

The answer to the first question, her reasons for remaining single, is difficult to ferret out, for the automatic presumption is that a woman was never single by choice. Instead she was a victim — primarily the victim of man’s selfishness, occasionally of her own “ugliness,” or of her lack of sufficient social standing to win a “self-respecting” man for a husband (girls who had “lost their virtue” were presumed to be in this category), or of some other defect such as feeble-mindedness, although that was not an absolutely insuperable bar to marriage either. The notion that a woman might choose to remain single when she had the option of marrying is not one that was seriously discussed in the nineteenth century. It was theologically dangerous, socially irresponsible, and usually economically impossible.

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However, the reality is that single women did exist; and Mormonism's distinctive system of plural marriage offered the option of being married in letter but single in fact. It is not completely farfetched to think of Eliza R. Snow, with her two husbands, as being a single woman. The cases of Rhoda Richards and Vienna Jacques are even more instructive. Both were sealed to Joseph Smith during his lifetime, but there is no evidence that either considered herself a connubial wife. On the contrary, Rhoda, the sister of Willard, Phineas, and Levi Richards, explained in a brief autobiographical sketch: "In my young days I buried my first and only love, and true to that affiance, I have passed companionless through life; but am sure of having my proper place and standing in the resurrection, having been sealed to the prophet Joseph . . . by his own request." Her editor, Tullidge, comments admiringly, "A very beautiful incident is this . . . memory of her early love, for whose sake she kept sacred her maiden life."¹ Since she was ninety-three at the time she dictated this reminiscence, one might conclude that she considered herself in no haste to join either her dead lover or the man she had been sealed to for eternity.

Vienna Jacques, a native of Massachusetts, came to Kirtland in 1833 at the age of forty-five where a revelation received by Joseph Smith that same year directed her to consecrate her property — about \$1400 — to the Church. She had never married and it is not clear how she acquired so substantial a sum except "by patient toil and strict economy." Joseph Smith in September of that same year wrote to her, telling her that "I have often felt a whispering . . . thou shouldst remember her in all thy prayers and also by letter." The Doctrine and Covenants instructed her to go to Missouri to "receive an inheritance from the hand of the bishop; that she may settle down in peace." She was married to Joseph in about 1843 or 1844 when she was in her middle fifties according to an affidavit drawn up for her signature but remaining unsigned in the Smith Affidavit Book. She drove her own team across the plains and died at the age of ninety-six in Salt Lake City's Twelfth Ward.²

Bernice Grant Casper relates a modern parallel. Her aunt, Lola Smith of Centerville, was engaged to marry Vernon Cecil Layton in 1920. Both were called on missions at the same time but their wedding plans were far advanced — the basement of the home they planned to move into after their wedding was dug — and she decided to stay and work. He went to the California mission and developed a kidney infection. When it became apparent that his condition was terminal, she went to his bedside, and in response to his pleadings during one of his lucid periods, promised to be sealed to him. He died on 12 February 1921 between that promise and her next visit. Two weeks later, on 23 February, she was sealed to him with her father standing as his

¹ Edward W. Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (New York: Tullidge & Crandall, 1877), p. 422.

² *Ibid.*, p. 441; Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet*, 2nd ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), p. 336; Daniel W. Bachman, "A Study of the Mormon Practice of Plural Marriage before the Death of Joseph Smith" (Master's thesis, Purdue University, 1975), pp. 112, 335; Dean Jessee, "A Priceless Treasure," *Church News*, 2 Aug. 1980.

proxy. She was a few months short of her twenty-fifth birthday. She kept her cedar chest with cut embroidery and crocheted work intact until she died almost sixty years later.

She continued to live in the family home after her brothers and sisters married. Her father died within a year and she lived with her mother for some years. She was very popular, had friends, dated, traveled, sang with a professional group from Centerville, served three times as president of the YWMIA, entertained often and well, and died at the age of eighty-three of a gall bladder attack which she disregarded while she attended a party. Her niece remembers her as “smiling all the time, so clean it hurt with a lovely personality, tasteful and elegant in her clothes, small, and exquisitely refined.” Bernice also remembers meeting her aunt in the company of attentive males but her assumption — that her aunt was at least once engaged — differs from the memory of other members of the family. Lola always wore her engagement ring, kept in touch with her fiance’s family, and unflinchingly went to his grave in Kaysville on Decoration Day. Bernice also remembers that she seldom spoke of her dead fiance but conveyed the idea that she “cherished the thought that she would be with him” and only occasionally “became a little wistful. She said once,” her niece recalls, “‘If only I could have just held a baby, my own baby, in my arms.’”

The family was proud of her, and the nieces growing up saw her as glamorous, romantic, and beautiful. They also acquired some reservations about her anomalous marriage. “How could you tell a dying man no?” Bernice queries. “And only two weeks after his death she would have been grieving and mourning his loss. Was that a time for a decision?”³

Whatever position these women may occupy in the next life, however, they were, for all practical purposes, single in this life, making the same kinds of decisions as other single women. After about 1880, the pool of single women seems to have increased simultaneously with gradual elimination of polygamy and the expansion of economic opportunities, apparently the overwhelmingly determining factor in the quality of their lives.

Lola Smith was an executive secretary to two state superintendents of school.

Ida Mabel Wilcox set up a portrait photography studio on Salt Lake’s Main Street in 1918 when she was twenty-two and remained in business until her death in 1947.⁴

Two sisters, both of whom served on the first general board of the YWMIA, began gainful careers early. Agnes Campbell became a clerk at ZCMI and Joan, the eldest daughter, began working with her father in the Church Historian’s office in her early teens. Her father died when she was sixteen and she continued that profession until she was twenty-six, then became a cashier at ZCMI. While she was still young, she was made engrossing clerk

³ Conversation with Bernice Grant Casper, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2 April 1982.

⁴ “Salt Lake Photographer Succumbs at 53,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, 13 Dec. 1947, p. 25.

in the Territorial legislature and was, while holding that position, nominated as a notary public, "the first woman in the Territory to be so honored." The governor regretfully had to refuse to confirm the appointment because she was underage. The two sisters built a "modest, pretty home" on Capitol Hill where they settled with their mother. After about twelve years at ZCMI, Agnes began working fulltime for the YWMIA, first as assistant secretary to the board, then as business manager for the *Young Woman's Journal*.⁵

Margaret Ann Freece, the daughter of "a financially impoverished polygamy family," died a "wealthy woman" in Salina. She became a licensed physician in 1897. Her father had been excommunicated several years before her birth and she does not seem to have been a practicing Mormon but contributed to her community in an enviable number of ways including serving on the school board for nine years, providing scholarships for graduating seniors, and founding a progressive club to promote conservation, cultural, and other civic projects. Locally, she had the reputation of preferring to "boil a rock to get the grease out of it rather than buy a soup bone," but her thriftiness seems to have been coupled with genuine competence. She was involved financially in the coal mining industry, was a director of a bank, an officer and the largest stockholder in a grain and milling company, and was one of the early directors of the first bank of Salina. She married at age fifty-four a man who died two years later.⁶

Dr. Freece is, however, the only woman I have come across in this study who was actually wealthy. Far and away the greatest number of single women who were self-sustaining were schoolteachers. For example, of sixty-five single women called to the General Board of the YWMIA between 1948 and 1972 twenty-eight were teachers. Twenty were secretaries.⁷ My mother-in-law, Ruby Johnson Anderson, commented forcefully about two of her teachers: "Ruth Rees and Otilie Finster made it possible for me to earn my living all my life with what they taught me in their classes and I can't say the same thing about any other classes that I took." Ruth Rees was the home economics teacher and Otilie Finster was the typing teacher. Both were single, and both taught at South High from 1932 until at least the early 1940s. Ruth wrote and sold a cookbook and, with her roommate, another single or possibly widowed woman, designed a dual-occupancy home that contained an "ideal kitchen." She also caused a sensation by "dropping dead of a heart attack in her classroom one

⁵ Susa Young Gates, *History of the Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from November 1869 to June 1910* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News, 1911), pp. 196–97.

⁶ Vicky Burgess-Olson, "Margaret Ann Freece," *Sister Saints*, ed. Vicky Burgess-Olson (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1978), pp. 402–11.

⁷ Occupational information was not available for all of the single women. YWMIA Scrapbook, 1848–1961; Historical Department Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah; hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives; and interview with Helen D. Lingwall, former YWMIA secretary, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2 April 1982.

day,”⁸ sparing herself the problem of a lingering, lonely death that other single women had to face or make arrangements to avoid.

Teaching school had, of course, been an acceptable occupation for women ever since the development of graded schools in the 1820s; they had become widely accepted by the 1870s. These small classrooms of age-grouped pupils demanded more teachers, and women, who had been thought incapable of handling the discipline problems of the one-room school and advanced age groups, were seen as appropriate for the younger classes, especially since they would accept salaries one-third or one-half those of men. “By 1860 women teachers outnumbered men in some states, and . . . by 1900 over seventy percent of teachers were women. By 1925, the rate had climbed to 83 percent.”⁹ Thus, no woman could be accused of doing something unwomanly by becoming a teacher and many women with access to education did so. Certainly many of Utah’s best-known Mormon single women were teachers: Alice Louise Reynolds of BYU, Ida and Mary Cook who pioneered the graded school system in Utah, and Maud May Babcock who introduced and popularized physical culture, as it was known then.

Women who did not have independent means or some kind of trade, however, were sometimes in desperate straits. Virginia Blair, born in 1890, worked at a variety of jobs including baby-sitting, freelance writing, and selling greeting cards. She never had much financial independence and was forced to live with her unmarried brother Millington — an arrangement uncongenial to both of them — until World War II enabled her to find employment in an aircraft plant in Burbank, California. After the war, however, she again became economically dependent. Her financial dependence was not just inconvenient and humiliating: she actually went without food and medical attention because of her poverty. And she certainly had strong feelings about her dependence. She and her mother both lived with Millington for a time and she frequently complains that he delighted in coming home, disrupting their quiet enjoyment of a radio program, and leaving the kitchen a mess. She calls their relationship, “Hell on earth.”¹⁰

Another single woman, Eunice Harris, was in nearly the same situation. Born in 1890, she and her mother both became dependent on her brother Clint in Lehi and, in 1930 when Eunice was visiting in Monroe, she received a remarkably candid letter from her mother asking when she was planning to return. “I know things are not as pleasant here as they might be, if it was my house hold it would be different in many ways, it is not so agreeable for me either. I have to watch myself all the time ore I would be in trouble, as Clint

⁸ Conversation with Ruby Johnson Anderson of Pasadena, California, in Salt Lake City, Utah, 5 April 1982.

⁹ Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Random House/Vintage Books, 1962), pp. 316–17.

¹⁰ See Register and Papers of Virginia Blair, Philip Blair Family Collection, Marriott Library Special Collections, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

feels that he is under no obligations to keep me & I guess he is right. Many times I would have gone on the spur of the moment had I had a place to go, but as I am dependant on him I have to take whatever comes & make the best of it, & you will have to do the same thing.”¹¹

Flora Belnap’s fragmentary reminiscence about the winter of 1948–49 when she would have been in her mid-sixties, records a bitter complaint that despite terrible cold, six-foot drifts, and the necessity of thawing out her pipes “several times a day,” . . . not once did Olive [her sister] call over the telephone to find if I were even alive.” Two years later, another sister invited her to spend Thanksgiving with her family. Flora refused and “really prayed someone else would invite me” and, on Thanksgiving morning, a friend did.¹² Thus, many single women seem to have been marginal members of their families of origin.

However, many of these fragmentary households no doubt lived together in peace and harmony. Stephen Webb Alley, whose brother, interestingly enough, never married, fathered three daughters and two sons. Kate, a teacher, and Ellen, whose occupation is not known, never married; and the third daughter, Edna, was over fifty when she married. Kate and Ellen seem to have lived in their family house on Eighth East throughout their lives, and, for Kate at least, with a schoolteacher’s income, it must have been by choice.

Those without families present seem to have been in an even more marginal situation. When Jane Beeching died in 1926 at the age of seventy-one, the only survivor was a sister in England. Jane had joined the Church in England and befriended the missionaries there “for many years” before emigrating in 1901 at the age of forty-six. She was known for temple work and her activity in her Relief Society, according to her obituary. One wonders, however, about her Relief Society involvement since she moved three times — to hotels and boarding houses — in the seven months covered by one little diary that survives.¹³

It is not clear how she lived. When she bought a hairbrush and lost it in the same day, she notes it in her diary, possibly because of the annoyance although possibly also because of the expense. She records receiving “a Cheque from England” and a bishop’s giving her two months’ rent. Eunice Harris also moved frequently from hotel to rooming house when she was in Salt Lake and not living with her brother in Lehi. Flora was well enough off to afford a modest house of her own in Salt Lake City after she moved from Ogden.

These three women, Flora, Eunice, and Jane, also represent a little-recognized class of Mormon single women, now occupied most often by widows — the full-time genealogist and temple worker. The greater availability — and indeed necessity — of education has meant that the so-called “old maid” or “spinster aunt” has been replaced by the “career woman” even

¹¹ Winka Larson Harris to Eunice Harris, 29 July 1930, LDS Church Archives.

¹² Flora Belnap, “Autobiographical Sketch,” LDS Church Archives.

¹³ Jane Beeching, *Diary, 1915–1917*, LDS Church Archives; Obituary, *Deseret News*, 1 Sept. 1926, 2 Sept. 1926.

if the career has been more accepted than chosen and is more endured than embraced. Being actively involved in genealogy and temple work, however, was a conspicuous signal to the community at large that the single woman in question had a firm connection to the spiritual and social life of the Church, that she had important work to do for which she could justly expect recognition, and that people could understand what she did. It is perhaps ironic that none of them, with their commitment to genealogy, seem to have gotten along well with their siblings or left adequate personal histories despite their interest in researching their ancestors. Jane may have kept a diary consistently but only one volume survives. Flora made several attempts to write a personal history but they are unfinished. Eunice would be only a name on her father's family group sheet if a suitcase full of genealogical papers, half-done beadwork, vials of pills, and some pictures of her and her sister's family in El Paso were not shoved into a storage room in the old seminary building on Third West in Provo after her death in 1960.¹⁴

Although a case could be made that such women occupied a backwater in the mainstream of Mormon group life, still they were accepted and "respectable," although we should note this interesting sequence of entries from Jane Beeching's diary:

"We went to the Temple about [Sister Teney Wilson's] records and Bro Simmon Insulted me.

"Waited in vain to get into Temple. Great Crowd of Marriages.

"Went to Temple. Locked Out.

"Went to Temple & did Sealings. Emma Lucy Gates married."¹⁵

It is also interesting that the quickest place to find single women in a preliminary search was on the Church's general boards, and the same could not be said of single men. Florence Smith Jacobsen, president of the YWMIA from 1961 to 1972 explained that single women were actually viewed as desirable *because* of their lack of family involvement. After she had initially set up her board, her advisors told her that they "would prefer that we did not present the names of women with young children — meaning children under the age of twelve; but that if we did, they could not go on any overnight trips. That's why we drew heavily on older women and single women." Since the policy was not retroactive, board members who were still adding to their families, were not released; and, when it became apparent that "they managed overnight assignments just beautifully," the policy was relaxed on occasion, in practice. Since her own three children had grown up thawing out prefrozen casseroles and recognizing Mutual night by the tuna-fish-gravy suppers, Florence was not inclined to be sympathetic with the policy in the first place: "Because of the way the policy came about, I suspect that some incident had occurred and that there had been a typical overreaction to it: because one child drowns you fill in the swimming pool."

¹⁴ Conversation with Donald Barney of Provo, Utah, 22 April 1982.

¹⁵ Jane Beeching, Diary, 21 Jan. 1916, 7 June 1916, 29 June 1916, 30 June 1916.

Florence adds, "Another reason we picked single women was because they were so well qualified. They were professional women. We needed women who could meet the public, stand up in front of an audience and project, and who could understand the program and the directions we gave them. Those single women or our board had made a mark on their own and were women of accomplishment before they were ever called."¹⁶

Out of the 116 women called to the General Board during her term of office, 38 percent were single women. Her immediate predecessor, Bertha S. Reeder, called a board of seventy-seven, of which thirty-eight — or fifty percent were single. This is in addition to eight women who were either widowed or married and childless.

There may be an unconscious echo in this percentage. In 1891 when Elmina S. Taylor, first general YWMIA president, established "aids" (the first members of the General Board) she did it because the labor of traveling to stake conferences was overburdening her. Of the first four women she called, two, Agnes Campbell and Sarah Eddington, were single.

Obviously, being single did not cut women off from the administrative life of the Church as represented by the women's auxiliaries. Occasional references to stake and ward YWMIA presidents as "Miss" indicate that it was no bar to local service either, and Flora Belnap records being totally overcome by "fear & humility" at being called to be first a counselor in a stake Primary presidency and then the president when all of the other officers were "old enough to be my mother."¹⁷

It is rather more difficult, however, to sort out the emotional life of these women who saw their friends and sisters marrying and having children, indisputably the grand mission of a Mormon woman's life. Did they have feelings of sexual frustration as normal urges and affections were denied an outlet? Did they feel a social stigma attached to their singleness? As menopause announced the irrevocable denial of maternity, did it simply confirm a fact that they had already come to terms with years before or did it confront them with a postponed crisis to work through? And without the built-in support system of a husband, children, and grandchildren — especially for those women whose relationships with their siblings was problematic — where did they go for emotional sustenance?

Needless to say, I have found no open discussion of these matters in any of the documents that I have examined. The reticence on sexual matters that governed previous generations would strongly discourage such disclosures. It may, in many cases, have even prevented the recognition of such feelings and these women might feel justly affronted at the charge that they were sexually repressed. Bernice's Aunt Lola could openly express a longing to hold her own baby in her arms where she would have been severely censured had she said openly that she wished to hold a man of her own in her arms. It is, therefore,

¹⁶ Conversation with Florence Smith Jacobsen, Salt Lake City, Utah, 22 Jan. 1982.

¹⁷ Autobiographical Sketch in Fourth Ward Amusement Company Account Book, p. 121, Church Archives.

in the expressions regarding maternity that we can look for such hidden feelings although we have no way of knowing if the woman speaking actually expressed her own feelings or repeated a conventional platitude.

For instance, we find unmarried members of the General Board addressing conferences or other Board members on the “necessity of getting the young mothers to come out to the meetings” as a way of curtailing “the spread of immorality” and also lecturing on why temple marriages are more beneficial than others. Sarah Eddington, deputy county recorder for forty-eight years who, interestingly, had a sister who also never married, asserts the reason to be: “Joseph Smith says that when a seal is put upon the father and mother it secures their posterity so that they cannot be lost, but will be saved by virtue of the covenant of their father and mother. How dare we think of bequeathing to our children less than we have received? Brigham Young said any young man who understood what he was doing would travel from here to England and any young girl would die unmarried rather than be united in the wrong way.”¹⁸ Not only were single women in authoritative positions extended the right to speak authoritatively about marriage and child-rearing — matters on which they had no personal experience — but single women could be seen as noble martyrs, preferring virgin death to an “incorrect” marriage. Elsie Talmage Brandley, a married YWMIA board member recalls her own emotional response to a short story about a woman who refused to marry outside the temple. She “wept bitterly when a heroine vowed, ‘I’ll be an old maid for the Gospel’s sake’ and promised, ‘I know how you feel, Phyllis. I’ll be an old maid for the Gospel’s sake, too.’”¹⁹

Even though reticence about sexual matters may have disguised sexual feelings to some extent, it is probably not realistic to argue that single women then experienced no tensions between biological urgings and social restraints. It is undeniable, however, that those social restraints were powerful and punishing in their censure. On 21 May 1887, the *Deseret News* contains a brief notice of a trial for adultery of a married man and an unmarried woman, both of whom had been excommunicated “some time ago.” The unidentified newspaper reporter freely remarks that testimony “showed the conduct of the defendant and Miss Winegar to have been of the most disgusting character.”²⁰ The same edition of the paper also reports the funeral of Louie Wells Cannon, whose story is surely one of the most sorrowful tragedies of nineteenth-century Mormon life. She had died of long-drawn out and agonizing complications in giving birth to the stillborn son of John Q. Cannon, the husband of her sister Annie, no doubt becoming a graphic example of the consequences of unchastity. John was the son of George Q. Cannon, then first counselor in the First Presidency, and Louie was the daughter of Emmeline B. Wells, future general president of the Relief Society, and of Daniel H. Wells, second coun-

¹⁸ Sarah Eddington, *Young Women’s Journal*, 5 (May 1895): 395; 6 (Dec. 1894): 386.

¹⁹ Elsie Talmage Brandley, *Young Woman’s Journal*, 40 (Oct. 1929): 685.

²⁰ *Deseret News*, 21 May 1887, p. 5.

selor in the First Presidency. John Q., age twenty-nine, was second counselor in the presiding bishopric. Louie, age twenty-four, was on the YWMIA General Board. He confessed his fault first to his brother on 4 September 1886. In a dramatic sequence, he appeared in stake conference the following afternoon with his uncle, Angus M. Cannon, the stake president. They interrupted the man who was speaking, John Q., in tears and agony, confessed his fault and "laid down his priesthood," and his uncle put the motion of excommunication to the congregation, who also "in tears" voted unanimously to cut him off from the Church. Annie divorced John four days later and he married Louie the day after that. John was arrested and charged with polygamy within a month, a procedure that mocked the family's grief but probably also provided an opportunity for the Mormon community to rally to the couple under what seems to have been gratuitous persecution since family members were required to provide proof of immorality rather than polygamy. Ironically, there seems to have been reason why they should not have been married instead of having an affair since this was well before the 1890 Manifesto. A year after Louie's death, on 6 May 1888, John was rebaptized, and a week later he and Annie were remarried, first in the endowment house by Annie and Louie's father and then by a justice of the peace. Annie stood proxy as Louie was sealed to John.²¹ John and Annie later added eight children to the three they already had.

After such painful realities of adultery, it is somewhat alarming to find Kate Thomas, a later member of the YWMIA General Board, penning a memorial poem to the recently dead Osborne Widtsoe in the persona of his wife, Rose Harmer Widtsoe:

Only one more gone with the constant going
Some may think idly since 'tis not their woe, . . .
Not for me! God of love, I want my lover!
Ever and evermore I want my lover!"²²

Furthermore, the poems addressed to women and the numerous "love poems" in which she assumes a male persona has led one historian to conclude that "her writing is full of unrequited love for men, and later, an almost sensual passion for women."²³

Kate was born in Salt Lake in 1871 and, a writer and dramatist from childhood, wrote prolifically for the *Young Woman's Journal* starting about the turn of the century when she would have been in her early thirties. Editor

²¹ *Deseret News*, 6 Sept. 1886, p. 2, 16 May 1887, p. 5, 21 May 1887, pp. 3, 5; *Journal History*, 7 Oct. 1886, pp. 2–3; 9 Oct. 1886, p. 3; 11 Dec. 1886, pp. 2–4, LDS Church Archives; Abraham H. Cannon Diary, 4 Sept. 1886, 5 Sept. 1886, 6 May 1888, 13 May 1888; microfilm of holograph, LDS Church Archives; original at Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Emmeline B. Wells Diary, 1 Jan. 1887, 16 May 1887, Harold B. Lee Library.

²² "The Wife Speaks," *Young Woman's Journal*, 31 (May 1920): 243.

²³ Sterne McMullen, Register of the Kate Thomas Collection, Utah State Historical Society, n.p.

Ann M. Cannon reports that “more than once she wrote an article overnight to fill a particular need,”²⁴ and in her fiction she seems to have actually preferred using a male point of view. It is thus somewhat disorienting for a reader to begin a story clearly bylined “Kate Thomas” and which explains in the first paragraph, “I was madly in love with my big-bodied English chum, Ashford,” to realize a paragraph later that “I” is a boy named Tom.²⁵ Although her preference for the male persona may speak sinister volumes about the self-perceived limitations of women in an earlier generation, it is an exceedingly common convention and does not speak sinister volumes about her sexual orientation. It is thus difficult to agree with that historian’s conclusion. Kate Thomas’s prose and poetry would repay study as a compendium of romantic conventions (what, for instance, do you do with speech in a Church magazine by the heroine: “Oh, if there were a man strong enough to win you whether you would or not! To storm you and take you! I despise a man that cannot make a woman love him!”²⁶), but her unpublished poetry may reveal more about her internal state. There are indeed poems expressing love and friendship to women, love-longing to men, and the imagined agonies of a mother whose child has died. The emotion is certainly intense but at least some of the subjects cannot have been autobiographical, thus enjoining caution in so interpreting other poems that might be autobiographical. It should also be noted that she was hardly unique: Sarah Russell, a general board member writing under the penname of “Hope,” contributed dozens of similar poems to the *Journal’s* pages between 1880 and 1910 and Virginia Blair confided many productions of the same genre to her diary a generation later.

One poem, however, apparently written between 1897 and 1902 when Kate would have been in her late twenties or early thirties tempts such a reading:

I dreamed you loved me — that you kissed my mouth
 With that rare look of splendor in your eyes,
 Then hand in hand we faced the purple west
 That held less glory than our hearts enclosed.

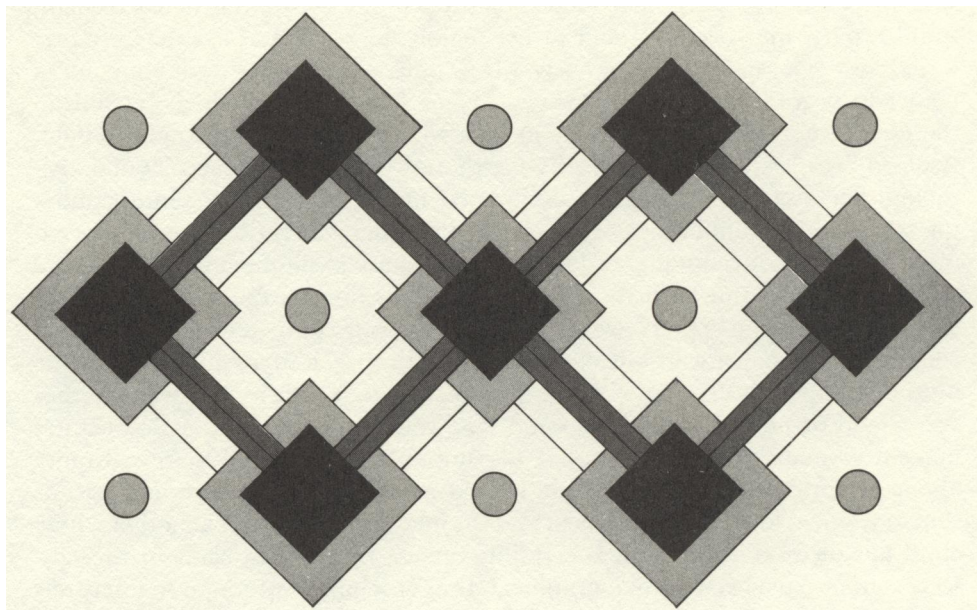
Her lover, clearly male and not female in this poem, tells her that “our sun shall have no setting. Thou and I/ Shall be together through eternity” as gods. Exquisite music and clear voices sing:

Blessed are they that find their heavenborn mate.
 These twain were great and are great and shall be
 When earth is earth no more. They must be great
 Who live to God.

²⁴ *Young Woman’s Journal* 40 (Oct. 1929): 681.

²⁵ “A Romance of Bedruthen Steps,” *Young Woman’s Journal* 27 (July 1916): 471.

²⁶ “The Reconciliation of Dick and Dorothy,” *Young Woman’s Journal* 14 (Dec. 1903): 548–53.



She wakens from the dream and laments:

O Love! The paths we tread may never meet.
 We may not learn that we are heaven-joined.
 It may be but the phantom of a brain
 Grown sick with longing for the ne'er-to-be
 But all my soul ascends in gratitude
 That I may claim the memory of a dream.²⁷

A Freudian could no doubt explain this poem satisfactorily by murmuring about repression, fantasies, and sublimation. I think it may be more realistic to see the poem as hybrid — perhaps based on an erotic dream or even an actual kiss but swiftly translated into the acceptable Latter-day Saint convention of eternal marriage continuing beyond the grave — or even perhaps starting there.

It is also important, I feel, to acknowledge the reality that a woman's friendships in preceding generations may have been much richer and more satisfying than some of those established in our mobile and sex-centered society. Although some scholars have attempted to see evidence of sexual liaisons in such longterm and intense friendships — and probably with cause in some cases — I found no evidence of such relationships in any of the Mormon single women I studied. Certainly their Mormon culture would have censured and punished homosexual unions as surely and swiftly as it censured and punished extralegal heterosexual relationships.

²⁷ "Untitled Poem" in Record Book of Manuscript Poems, Kate Thomas Papers, Utah Historical Society.

A final question remains to be asked in any analysis of the emotional life of single Mormon women. Since the assumption was that no Mormon woman would remain single by choice, is there any evidence that some did? And to what extent did society's view of single women color their views of themselves?

Again, direct evidence does not exist. However, it is interesting that single women then as now were assumed to be drawn to children to fulfill their "instinctive" mothering needs, a view which found a contemporary echo as recently as the 1981 women's fireside when Shirley W. Thomas, first counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency, talked about "mothering roles" in a context of single women and urged all women, regardless of marital status, to "learn to use the principles that relate to motherhood."²⁸ Thus Ann M. Cannon of the general board receives this somewhat left-handed compliment: "Travel, literary work and a successful public life (she was a county deputy recorder) have not weaned Sister Cannon from simple home pleasures. She showers her love on children, particularly on the dear little ones who live in the home with her" — presumably her younger brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews.²⁹

In 1931, May Anderson, the never-married second general president of the Primary, received a letter from Fred W. Schwendiman of the *Deseret News* thanking her for her "extraordinary kindness." Obviously seeking to pay her an ultimate compliment, he continued, "Such faith and confidence as you have shown is usually only found in the heart of a mother towards her son and I want to tell you that next to my two wonderful mothers and my dear wife and companion, you have won a place in my heart never to be changed."³⁰ Twelve years later, Lowell Bennion, then of the University of Utah Institute, wrote her a similar graceful compliment: "I recalled all the people I knew who had 'multiplied and replenished the earth' with little regard . . . to life's purposes and . . . then I thought of you and the intelligent loving devotion you had given to the creative life of the souls of other people's children." He calls it a "genuinely divine role."³¹

With the possible exception of this last quotation, it is possible to see these quotations as compensatory and consoling, "making up" for an irretrievable loss. Few would argue that the experiences of marriage and motherhood are not inherently valuable and such is not the intention of this paper. The difficulty lies in the conclusion that a woman lacking such experiences is a lessened and lesser person.

Stena Scorup, an educator in Salina, Utah, who also became its mayor, seems to have accepted such an evaluation of herself even though her experiences contradicted it. She called herself "a homely, humble school teacher" but obviously enjoyed the banquets, dances, toasts, and speeches — in other

²⁸ Shirley W. Thomas, "An Opportunity for Continual Learning," *Ensign* 12 (Nov. 1982): 102.

²⁹ *Young Woman's Journal*, 16 (June 1905): 264.

³⁰ Fred W. Schwendiman to May Anderson, 9 Jan. 1931, LDS Church Archives.

³¹ Lowell Bennion to May Anderson, 12 May 1943, LDS Church Archives.

words, receiving attention from men. She devoted herself to providing high-quality education to her students and anxious care to her numerous nieces and nephews, but also enjoyed her mission and travel that took her away from such responsibilities. And she seems never to have resolved the tension between Mormon doctrine on the importance of marriage and her own personal state. In a personal sketch written in the third person, she laments that she “is doomed to continue a servant to others through eternity” but “thinks it won’t matter much anyway.” Her biographer, Vicky Burgess-Olsen, points out the ambiguity in this phrasing: does *it* refer “to her life? to eternity? to being doomed?” In another place, Stena said, “I am the one member of our family who will never go to heaven” because of her singleness. At the close of her life, she advised her “nieces and nephews and . . . all the previous and younger generation . . . : Do not follow my example. Get married and make a home of your very own and have as many children as you can educate as they should be. Do not get so lost in your profession and work or allow home responsibilities however urgent and necessary, deprive you of having a family and making a real home of your own for them.”³²

It is difficult to tell if any of the single women we have examined in this paper deliberately chose singleness. On at least one level, Stena certainly did, but it was not a level she could acknowledge openly and perhaps could not even admit existed. The powerful conventions that “consoled” single women for their singleness and permitted them entry to Mormon society also required that they be ultimately defined by what they lacked, not by what they possessed or what they could do. There is no question that conformity to this convention — universal as nearly as I can determine — rewarding them with a recognized and valid place. But one wonders about the cost in self-imposed limitations, in self-evaluations that always had to qualify achievement with the reminder, “But I’m not married,” and by a loss of talent and energy to a society that defined in negatives rather than positives.

³² Burgess-Olsen, “Stena Scorup,” in *Sister Saints*, pp. 297–99.

Man and Motherhood

Susan B. Taber

LATTER-DAY SAINT WOMEN are not lacking counsel on their proper roles which are, of course, found exclusively within the Church and family. Such writings, appropriately authored by men, carefully detail how women are uniquely suited for and divinely called to the roles of wife and mother. Indeed they promise that a righteous woman will be totally fulfilled within these designated spheres where in some manner, she even shares, partakes of, or otherwise participates in the priesthood.

Despite the scrupulous scholarship that has gone into these writings, however, a quintessential issue has unaccountably been overlooked. Women and the priesthood, though a topic deserving of the attention it has received, has regrettably distracted our attention from a much weightier matter, man and motherhood. This oversight has unfortunately perpetuated some very mistaken ideas about the correct roles for both men and women in Mormon families, established beyond any reasonable doubt in scripture. Our lack of understanding is serious and could, I believe, even subvert us in our quest for salvation.

The purpose of this paper is to shed light on the appropriate role of man with respect to motherhood,¹ focusing on man's proper sphere within the family and the role to which that sphere most naturally directs him. As a woman, I am, of course, well qualified to expound on this subject, even without the supporting scriptural references, recent scientific evidence, and carefully validated study of my own which follow.

A first step in understanding man's role must obviously include an examination of how God describes himself. It is interesting that none of the experts on

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¹ Since all faithful women are promised the blessings of motherhood and are educated for it in Relief Society, we can assume that motherhood is an eternal attribute of all righteous women.

woman and the priesthood have expounded upon scriptures in which God refers to himself in language which can only be classified as motherly: "But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." (Isa. 49: 14–15) Since this particular passage was included in 1 Nephi 21:14–16, it comes to us with doubled emphasis, as does the following which is recorded three times in scripture:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and yet would not

(Matt. 23:37; Luke 13:34; 3 Ne. 10:4–6).

For those masculinists² who might insist that the Lord is speaking merely metaphorically, we might refer to parallel scriptures in the Doctrine and Covenants in which the Lord also promises to gather his people as a hen gathers her chickens (10:65; 29:2; 43:24).

The Lord has described an important attribute of godhead by defining his love for us as that of a mother for her nursing child. Certainly this is an attribute to which all men should aspire. And yet God has at this time seen fit to deny fathers the experience of nursing with its attendant feelings of love. Does it not, therefore, seem incumbent upon a man who aspires to godhood through the priesthood to seize every opportunity to develop powerful bonds with infants and children, in emulation of his very Creator and Exemplar?

Current writings would have us believe otherwise. BYU professor Rodney Turner maintains that women are to serve as both "mother and father" to young children³ and quotes J. Reuben Clark, Jr., in support of that contention.

Now, brethren, at best we are somewhat clumsy at leading and directing our children. We are away from home, of necessity a great part of the time, our thoughts are along other lines, we have to battle for our existence, for the livelihood of our families. Those of us who hold Church positions are absent in the evenings, in addition to the days that we spend getting our livelihood. I repeat, we are a little bit clumsy. And so to the sisters of the Church, the mothers of the Church, they whom the Lord has designed and planned should be the immediate instrumentality of perpetuating the race and of bringing spirits to this earth, providing bodies for them, to them we must primarily look for the rearing of our children.⁴

It is only when children reach a "proper age" that, according to Turner, they are to be handed over to the father for education and guidance "pertaining to the world beyond the hearth."⁵

² In other words, a male chauvinist. A distinction is drawn between masculinist and patriarch. Rather than use *patriarch* for both meanings, in this paper patriarch refers to the functions and duties of a righteous, nonoppressing father.

³ Rodney Turner, *Woman and the Priesthood* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972), p. 297.

⁴ Conference Report, 6 Oct. 1951, p. 58, as cited in *ibid.*, p. 296.

⁵ Turner, *ibid.*, p. 297.

Current research indicates that a man who is “clumsy” with his young children, and who leaves their care and education to their mother will find neither his children nor himself ready for heartfelt communication when they reach the age of sixteen or twelve or even eight. Instead, the years during which a deep love could have developed will be lost. Will not a closely related loss be the qualities essential to effective exercise of the priesthood also have been lost? “The rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and . . . the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness. . . . No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by longsuffering, by gentleness, and by love unfeigned; By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy and without guile.” (D&C 121:37–42).

The attributes of constant love and compassion which Isaiah and Christ compared to maternity are so essential to the nature of God that, in his wisdom, he has provided compensatory experiences for those, *i.e.*, men, who cannot be natural mothers. Through the discipline of fatherhood and priesthood, such traits may gradually be developed. It may seem unfair to masculinists that motherhood power comes so much more easily to women than to men. It is unnecessary here to catalogue the sacrifices and sufferings which bring women to this pinnacle;⁶ however, we may safely assert that the pedestal of perfection is part of the territory of motherhood.⁷

As J. Reuben Clark remarked, “Motherhood is near to divinity. It is the highest, holiest service to be assumed by *mankind*.”⁸ Since, however, it is all too easy for men to evade the difficulties and responsibilities which endow women with motherhood, it is imperative that they must overcome their “clumsiness” with children and take advantage of every opportunity to nurture the children whom women have brought into the world. Fortunately for men, society now approves of men’s attempts to parent.⁹ Even so worldly a magazine as *Newsweek* has noted that men are capable of nurturing their children.

In one series of studies, for example, Harvard psychologist Milton Kotelchuck showed that infant emotional needs can be satisfied equally well by either parent; when upset, the babies he studied turned for comfort to whichever parent most often tended them. “Both parents seem to care equally and seem equally adept at reading clues about the baby’s needs,” says University of Texas psychologist Douglas Sawin. “Indeed,” adds

⁶ Anyone who has lived with a pregnant woman is well aware of this.

⁷ See, for example, remarks of L. Tom Perry at the dedication of the Nauvoo Monument as reported in “Nauvoo Monument to Women,” *Ensign* 8 (Sept. 1978): 73: “Today we cry, we plead, we earnestly petition you to remain on your pedestals in a place of striking, singular beauty, in a revered light. Continue to maintain the priorities the Lord has established for you.”

⁸ Conference Report, 3 Oct. 1942, pp. 12–13, as cited in Turner, *Women and the Priesthood*, p. 299; italics added.

⁹ Such books as Fitzhugh Dodson’s *How to Parent* and *How to Father* are salient examples.

psychologist Ross Parke, who has observed the behavior of mothers, fathers, and babies over the last ten years, "we find that the similarities much outweigh the differences."¹⁰

In the words of pediatrician Lee Salk, we find scientific confirmation of what the Lord revealed through Joseph Smith 140 years ago. "Men have always had a need to be tender and to nurture," he says. "Now society is allowing it to emerge."¹¹

When scientists confirmed the value of the Word of Wisdom, Mormons were delighted and advertised their own foresightedness.¹² We seem to have not yet discovered the public relations value of promoting the parallels between the current findings of pediatrics and psychology and Doctrine and Covenants 121.

Perhaps we have been distracted by the roles to which Mormon men feel they have been assigned which prohibit their spending quantity time nurturing their young children. In Mormon society, God is understood to have made the first role assignments to Adam and Eve:

Unto the woman God said, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." And unto Adam he said, . . . "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. . . . In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Gen. 3:16-17).

This passage is generally interpreted by Mormons to mean that the wife stays home with the children while the husband not only earns the family livelihood but also does the most important church work. The husband is also seen as handling the finances and making major family decisions, with perhaps the counsel of his wife, if he desires it.¹³ Upon reflection, however, it becomes obvious that this definition of the commandment results in outright disobedience to the original commandment.

In order to discover the level of conformity to the divine injunction to sweat, we conducted the following survey on 25 May 1982. A sample of LDS homes was surveyed according to rigorous scientific methods of telephone interviewing. The sample was drawn at random from the membership of a 600-member ward in the Southeastern U.S. The ward encompasses one-half of a metropolitan area of 500,000 and includes urban, suburban, and rural populations. The sample was narrowed to only couples married in the temple, who were parents and who hold church callings. The rationale was that these couples could be presumed to have had the most complete instruction regarding this particular commandment. Each adult who answered the telephone was asked:

¹⁰ Lynn Langway with Lisa Whitman, Marsha Zabarsky, and John Carey, "A New Kind of Life with Father," *Newsweek*, 30 Nov. 1981, pp. 93-94.

¹¹ *Ibid.*; see D&C 121:37-42.

¹² For example, *Reader's Digest* advertisements and *Church News* editorials.

¹³ Turner, *Woman and the Priesthood*, p. 23, "The very attributes which characterize a woman of high spiritual endowment suggest that, for now, her essential milieu is the home rather than the world at large." See pp. 23-30 for a more complete discussion of this viewpoint. See also Ezra Taft Benson, "The Honored Place of Woman," *Ensign* 11 (Nov. 81): 104-7.

1. What are you doing right now? Is your work area air-conditioned? 2. What is your spouse doing at this time? Is he/she in an air-conditioned room? The results are summarized in Table 1.

In summary, 84.62 percent of the men were away from home earning the family living, but were definitely not sweating, facially or otherwise. Of the 15.38 percent men who were sweating, half were at home, and half were away from home. 84.62 percent of the women were at home with their children (mean, 4.77 per woman; median, 5) and were definitely in a state of sweat. (The temperature was 92°F with 88 percent humidity). Perhaps, in deference to the sensibilities of the Bible belt, we ought to refer to this as perspiration or a glow, but let us be honest and call sweat sweat. Ironically enough, the only men who were obeying the divine commandment to sweat were the 15.38 percent whose wives, in contradiction to the expected custom, were away from home working. Surely it is time to free women from their sweat-producing (by definition, unfeminine) labors and let them work at occupations which are unsweaty. Accountants, chemists, doctors, businessmen, even lawyers or salesmen rarely work up the healthy glow which a woman can achieve in getting

TABLE 1

<i>Husband Occupation</i>	<i>A.C.?</i>	<i>Wife Occupation</i>	<i>A.C.?</i>	<i>No. of Children</i>
1. Banker/CPA working at desk	yes	Stripping wax from kitchen floor	no	3
2. College professor giving final exam	yes	Cleaning garage	no	5
3. Statistician working at desk	yes	Painting bedroom	no	5
4. Architect redesigning office building	yes	Washing windows	outside?	3
5. Sales representative out to lunch	yes	Cutting grass	outside?	6
6. Truck driver en route to New Orleans	yes	Washing walls	yes	4
7. Engineer designing telephone circuits	yes	Dragging 2-year-old and 4-year-old up hill	no	6
8. Hospital food director planning menus	yes	Hauling rock to put around vegetable garden	no	4
9. Truck salesman writing bids	yes	Canning	what's the point?	5
10. Doctor seeing patients	yes	Tilling garden	no	7
11. Laminator cutting wood in garage	in the garage?	Hospital administrator working at desk	yes	2
12. Machinist grinding tools	yes	Scrubbing down shower with Clorox	why?	8
13. Landscaper/gardener mowing grass	no	Mortician planning funeral	yes	4

four children washed, dressed, strapped into car seats, and transported to story hour at the library. Let us inspire men to come home from the offices, factories, and schools where they are evading the divine commandment to sweat. With women sweating at home and men coolly removed from home, we have created a marital environment exactly the opposite of the one assigned to Adam and Eve. No wonder there is so much strain as men try to be patriarchs in their families and women try not to usurp patriarchal responsibilities.¹⁴

The spiritual dangers of our present condition descend far deeper than the determination of who writes the checks or which spouse earns the family income. Let us examine some of the twentieth-century ills which could be corrected by a simple change of roles. Let us suppose that women, except for a six-week to three-month maternity leave,¹⁵ work away from home at occupations appropriate to their skills and men stay at home caring for the cracked grouting, leaky faucets, and leaf-filled gutters in addition to the hard physical labor usually known as housework.

First of all, let us consider the problem of patriarchal authority. The ideal, of course, is that the children learn to relate to deity as they relate to their earthly fathers. When the father is absent for ten or twelve of the child's waking hours, it is difficult indeed for the mother to reserve all decisions and discipline for the father's hour (if that) with the children. In fact, women have been admonished not to threaten children with "wait until your father gets home," but to teach and correct immediately. How can a child identify father with patriarchal authority when it is mother who generally administers the family? If fathers were sweating at home, they could administer justice and mercy as appropriate and as needed. Had Alma been at home more with Corianton, perhaps Corianton would have understood the plan of salvation more fully and would not have fallen into such grievous sins. (See Alma 39-42).

Once freed from the enslavement of outside careers, fathers could attend parent-teacher conferences, consult with pediatricians and dentists, and make the decisions which are their prerogative as heads of families. In too many families, the father tells the mother, if he remembers, "do as you think best," before she spends the day conferring with principals, doctors, etc. Then he complains that she did not consult him before she hired a tutor or made an appointment with a specialist. Such abdications of patriarchal responsibility would end if the fathers attended the consultations.

Now that "modern inventions have allowed for the semi-automation of the home,"¹⁶ the father at home could devote to his sons the hours they require if they are to develop into patriarchal men. He could teach them to swim and to play basketball and baseball, thus retrieving this important part of their training from the often unworthy hands of non-LDS coaches. Think how the ranks

¹⁴ Hence, the need for such books as Helen Andelin's *Fascinating Womanhood*.

¹⁵ Few, indeed, are the housewives who are given a six-week respite from housework or church duties after childbirth.

¹⁶ Turner, *Woman and the Priesthood*, p. 300.

of Eagle Scouts would swell — all because of fathers being at home to keep their sons hard at work on their merit badges. Men would also have time to manage the finances, pay the bills, and make the family purchases. Then they would truly preside over the family. We would have no more emasculated men who have lost their manhood because their wives shop, pay bills, balance the checkbook, and supervise the children's homework.

Many leaders and members of the church have decried the practice of birth control.¹⁷ Man's return to the home would remove the temptation to practice artificial birth control. For example, when a young man returns from his missionary service, he is usually twenty-one years old and has three or more years of education to complete before he will be ready to support a family. On the other hand, his female contemporaries are within a year of graduation from college. Many couples are tempted to postpone having children until the husband is prepared to support them. If they do have children immediately, many problems erupt in the family as the parents attempt to support themselves, finish school, and care for the children. If the wife continues to work, the children are often left at babysitters; if she doesn't, the husband's financial and time burdens are extremely heavy.

Man's return to the home would sweep away many of these problems. While the young man serves his mission, the young woman could finish her education. By the time an elder had been home from his mission for six months to a year, the young women of his age would have graduated from college. If a couple married at the age of twenty-two, both could continue their educations or the wife could work. When children entered the family, the young man could leave his studies for a while (or permanently) to care for the children. After all, the role of domestic engineering and parenting requires all of the education that a man can acquire and is worthy of his full attention. He could satisfy any creative or intellectual urges within his home and his church responsibilities. Think of the benefits a man with architectural training could give to his family. He could, when not busy with child-care, design a home for his family and supervise its construction, thus saving thousands of dollars. A man with scientific training could help to shape his children's minds. The family kitchen could become a true laboratory of life, as he taught his children not merely to cook and wash dishes, but helped them discover the laws of chemistry and the wonders of biology.

Some couples justify their use of artificial birth-control in the name of family spacing. However, with fathers at home, the problem of birth control would truly "solve itself."¹⁸ If a man had the opportunity of providing the daily care and education of a one-year-old and a two-year-old, he would be aware of the appropriate time to add another child to the family. Not only that, but he could sublimate his masculine sexuality in the realm of service

¹⁷ Turner, for example, devotes forty-seven pages of his book (195–242) to a discussion of pronouncements against the use of birth control.

¹⁸ "Birth control, under God's law, is a problem that solves itself," Orson F. Whitney, *Relief Society Magazine* 3: 367, July 1916, as cited in *ibid.*, p. 218.

and tender care of his children. Thus, the burdens of bearing and caring for children would be more equally shared by both partners in the marriage, and family spacing would be natural rather than artificial.

It is obvious that women's physical capacities are much better suited to the kinds of jobs which many men have abdicated their responsibilities in order to hold. It is a false view of society which views being a doctor, lawyer, psychologist, social worker, or accountant as being of more worth than a domestic engineer. I tremble, to suggest it, but perhaps the Soviet Union is right about one thing. In the USSR medicine is not a high-status occupation, since most of the doctors are women. Can we allow the communists to be nearer the truth than we? No career can compensate for a man's failure to sweat at home.

We should also consider the proposed arrangement from the spiritual, and not merely practical or temporal advantages, though they are so overwhelming as to be almost sufficient.

An influx of women, with their high spiritual endowments into the world would indeed be the salvation of the modern world. Since woman's nature is the repository of tenderness, compassion, sacrifice, and devotion,¹⁹ surely as women took a greater role in the working world, it would begin to shape itself to the more refined natures of its new mistresses.

It is a generally held opinion that a mission prepares a man for his spiritual life. He learns to serve others, to love them, to practice kindness, persuasion, gentleness, and meekness, and to set and achieve goals. He also learns to seek spiritual knowledge and the influence of the Holy Ghost daily. What better preparation can there be for fatherhood? Why should these months of spiritual preparation be squandered in an office or laboratory? Let men stay at home where they are needed to instruct the next generation of priesthood holders.

The missionary efforts of the Church would become even more powerful. As fathers interact daily with others at grocery stores, playgrounds, and schools, the opportunities to share the gospel with potential patriarchs would proliferate. The all-too-frequent dilemma of the interested wife with an uninterested husband would vanish if men were contacted first by other family men.

The beneficial possibilities of keeping this commandment are truly mind-expanding and soul-enhancing. Let us consider just a few more of the salutary effects on Church and family if we could cast off the traditions of men and keep this commandment. First of all, the Young Men's organization would take its rightful place as the best organization in the church. Men would have plenty of time to devote to their callings, and would, we are sure, magnify them since they would no longer be distracted by the so-called demands of their careers. We might even extend the influence of men down into the Primary, even perhaps to the nursery, where the direct influence of the priesthood is scarcely discernible. How can boys learn to exercise the priesthood when their only instructors in Primary are women? It is imperative that young boys be

¹⁹ Turner, *Woman and the Priesthood*, pp. 23, 29. Also, "More than male gallantry lies behind the belief that, in this fallen state, women as a group are more refined and spiritually inclined than men," p. 17.

influenced by men right from their earliest years in the church. Freed from the bondage of wage earning, men would fulfill their priesthood duties, whether on the high council, as bishops, or as home teachers, during the week so that they would not have to neglect their wives and families on evenings and weekends.

Not only would there be fewer rebellious “bishop’s sons,” because of father’s increased presence, but much of the work now accomplished by auxiliaries such as the Relief Society, Young Women, and Primary would be done by the priesthood. This is the only way we will ever achieve the level of priesthood organization and effectiveness which will allow the auxiliaries to assume their appropriate position.²⁰

Surely, the emancipation of women has been reserved for these last days. Now that women are finally capable of earning a livelihood, men can become what they were created to be — sweating patriarchs. How long are we going to kick against the pricks, bind ourselves to apostate custom and false macho pride, and relegate women to the sweating labors of the home? Let us bring the fathers home to earn their bread (in other words, contribute to the family) by the sweat of their brows and to gain, by their experiences, the attributes of motherhood which are so necessary to the powers of the priesthood.

²⁰ “We expect to see the day, if we live long enough (and if some of us do not live long enough to see it, there are others who will), when every council of the Priesthood in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will understand its duty, will assume its own responsibility, will magnify its calling, and fill its place according to the intelligence and ability possessed by it. When that day shall come, there will not be so much necessity for work that is now being done by the auxiliary organizations, because it will be done by the regular quorums of the Priesthood” (Joseph F. Smith, *Conference Report*, April 1906, p. 3).

Selling the Chevrolet: A Moral Exercise

Clifton H. Jolley

THIS IS THE SADDEST STORY I have ever told. Not because The Chevrolet is gone, but because it probably is not.

This much is known. During the Christmas season of 1973, Gene and Charlotte England traveled to Salt Lake City from Northfield, Minnesota. They made the trip in The Chevrolet — a brown stationwagon of uncertain origin.

The Chevrolet did not manage the trip very well. Little wonder, since Gene is known for keeping his automobiles well past their prime and for his hellbent-for-naugahyde driving style.

But this was no normal automobile. In “Blessing the Chevrolet,” an essay that appeared in the Autumn 1974 issue of *DIALOGUE*, Gene explained how on several occasions of mechanical emergency he had administered to this car, and how the car subsequently had been healed. There may be those who will question the orthodoxy of blessing an automobile; but if you allow the practice, it is difficult to imagine an automobile more in need of blessing than one driven any distance by Gene England.

As for apologizing for the practice, the pioneers blessed their oxen, which most religionists find more defensible than blessing tin lizzies, but only because modern religionists have no experience with oxen. I recently delivered a yoke of Red Durham oxen from New Hampshire to Pioneer Trail State Park in Salt Lake City. How such a fate should befall a twentieth-century writer with no agrarian pretensions is another story; but it left me prepared to bear witness that it is not possible for *anything* to be less deserving of blessing than oxen. Not even Chevrolets.

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According to “Blessing the Chevrolet,” as the Englands crossed South Dakota on a Saturday afternoon, a long ways from Salt Lake City (as South Dakota is from anywhere), the car began to suffer. And once again, Gene healed it.

That much is known.

What I tell you now has not been known publicly. I have treasured it in my heart, waiting for an occasion to finish the story begun a decade ago.

During the winter of 1978, Gene and Charlotte were preparing to travel east from Provo, Utah, where Gene was now teaching. Were I to think a bit about it, I might remember where they were off to. But maybe not. All memories of that trip and the events surrounding it have been overwhelmed by what for me has become the paramount event of 1978.

Gene arrived at our house late that evening. We also were living in Provo, in Indian Hills, just a block from Bert Wilson, who had grown up with Gene in Downey, Idaho. Bert frequently would walk past our house, stop, and we’d talk. Talk about the mountains, and the sun off them in the evenings, and about Bert’s pickup which had been destroyed moving salvaged bricks from a demolition site in Orem. Gene had been building his home north of BYU’s Marriott Center parking lot — a new home built to look like an old one. Complete with a tower study behind a walnut tree, some of whose roots were severed when the foundation was poured. Hopeless case. But Gene blessed the walnut, too. We all waited for the tree to die. Everyone but Gene, who hauled bricks to build his tower behind it and watched it blossom that spring. It is the largest, healthiest tree on the block.

“You know, he destroyed my pickup,” Bert would tell me as the sun blanched the scrub oak on the mountains behind our homes.

“It wasn’t much of a pickup to begin with, Bert.”

“What are you talking about? It was a great old pickup until it broke its back hauling twenty ton of brick out of Orem.”

Bert may have been right. But he needn’t have worried. What Gene breaks, he fixes. Wonderfully. But Bert moved to Logan before there was time for a proper healing. And Bert never mentioned the demise of his pickup with rancor. It was a sacrifice. The sort of sacrifice friends make for one another. Especially Gene’s friends.

Gene came over late that evening. We had just built a fire, and the light of it glistened on Gene’s teeth as he walked into the living room. (I don’t remember that detail, but I am certain it is accurate; Gene always smiles when he is about to propose something absurd.)

“We’re leaving tomorrow. How’d you like to sell our car while we’re gone?”

I had been lucky in selling an old car of ours the week before; a station-wagon I had advertised for weeks, finally selling it well below low book, and

happy to have it gone. Gene evidently deduced from that happy accident that I was good at selling used cars. Maybe even enjoyed it.

"I don't know, Gene. I'd hate to screw it up some way, take less for it than you wanted, or something."

"Don't worry about it. Anything you get will be fine," he said, putting his arm around my shoulder and leading me outside.

Parked in my driveway was the old stationwagon I'd seen parked for months in front of Gene's house. I had thought it was a junker, a derelict that would have to be hauled away. But there it was, derelictly in my driveway — mismatched tires, no hubcaps, shredded upholstery, and paint oxidized to an opaque gray that made description of its color a guess.

"How much do you want?"

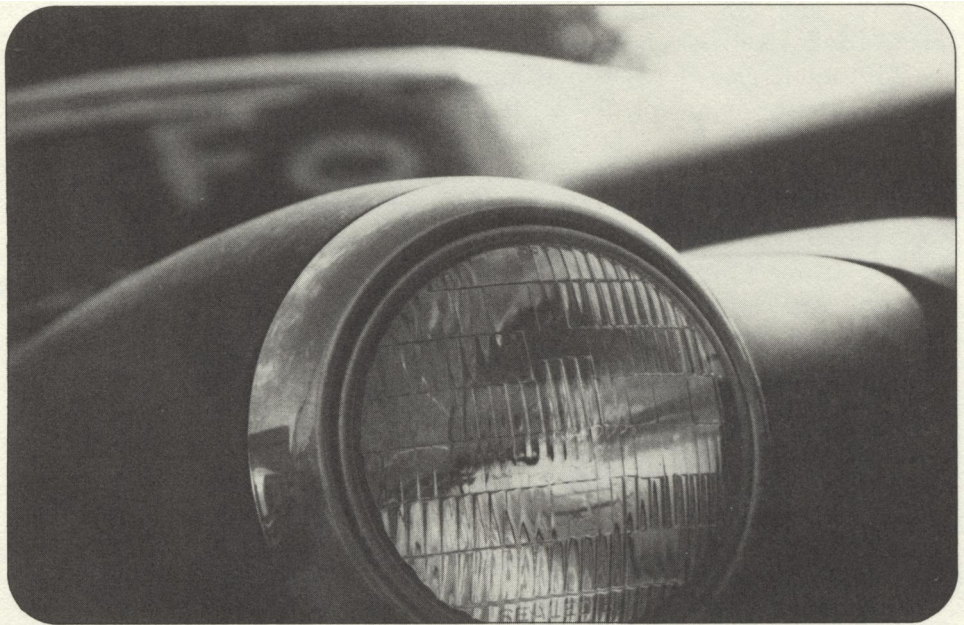
"I was thinking \$500."

"Five hundred dollars! Gene, this is very much a car you would pay someone to haul away and not tell you what they did with it. When people talk about 'scrap metal,' this is what they're talking about. You should have used this to haul the bricks in."

Again he put his arm around my shoulder. "Clifton," he said, his voice slightly sententious and low, "this isn't just another car. This is . . . *The Chevrolet.*"

I suspect there are words to describe my feelings at that moment. But "awe" is inadequate. And "reverence" doesn't work for a car with no hubcaps. When I was in Rome a number of years ago, I visited a reliquary wherein was enshrined a strap of leather from Peter's sandals. It looked old enough to be, and for just a moment I thought, "What if it is . . . ?"

That's how I felt about The Chevrolet.



Not because I had always believed. When I had first read Gene's essay about blessing the car, I had said to my wife, Marcia, "Too bad it wasn't a Buick; would have given him an alliterative title." And for days after, I felt the cynic's need to wisecrack about "Gene England's program of metaphysical automotive maintenance — change the oil every 2,000 miles; get a lube each 4,000; and bless as needed." Nevertheless, for a family home evening just before leaving on a trip to California, I read the essay to my children. They liked it. More — they believed it.

We always pray before leaving on a trip. We prayed before leaving for California. But not enough a prayer to keep the car from having trouble late at night between Mesquite and Las Vegas, in that long, dark stretch of desert that worries adults. And terrifies children.

My six-year-old son Calvin sat in the front seat between Marcia and me as the car began to sputter going up one of the desert hills. Beginning as something of a gurgle, the missing quickly developed into a lurching indecision. I had no idea what the trouble might be. But as Marcia and I quickly discussed the alternatives if the car should break down, I felt Calvin's hand on my thigh.

"Are we gonna be okay?" he asked.

"Sure," I said, trying to concentrate on the rhythm of the engine.

"But what happens if it stops?"

"Everything's fine."

"But it's dark. I can't see any lights out there. What if it stops?"

Calvin was afraid. And as his fear distracted me from the car, I also looked into the night. He was right. It was *really* dark out there. And no cars coming. I had no idea what we would do if the car broke down.

"Daddy. You remember that story you read us, about the man who prayed for his car? Remember that?"

I remembered.

"Maybe we should say a prayer."

I wasn't going to pray! I'd had too much fun over Gene's essay. I might break down and be devoured by the dark monsters that live in the desert between Mesquite and Las Vegas, but I would not be a hypocrite. I would not bless the Ford!

"Daddy's driving and can't close his eyes, so maybe you'd better pray."

And he did. I remember Calvin's prayer, exactly. "Heavenly Father, please bless the car so it won't break down and get us stuck in the dark."

As he prayed, the car staggered up a long incline, between frequent cut-aways of the hill. The engine seemed to be missing more than running. Missing to the very moment of Calvin's ". . . in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen."

It did not miss after that. It ran smoothly to California. It ran smoothly till the day I sold it, a week before Gene approached me about The Chevrolet.

"You're selling The Chevrolet?"

"Yes. For \$500. See you when we get back." And he was gone, like one of the Three Nephites, leaving me The Chevrolet. To sell.

I parked it on the street. Put a sign in the window. "\$500 or best offer." Any offer. However unique its history, however often blessed its past, however much I had come to believe in the blessing of oxen and children and automobiles, this was a car that had seen better days, a long time ago.

I knew what was going to happen. The car wouldn't sell, at any price. Gene would get back from his trip and say something like, "You're doing a good job, Clifton. You just go ahead and keep doing what you're doing." The car would stay in front of my house until it collapsed into its own rust.

I was very discouraged. But it was The Chevrolet. And Gene was Gene. What was there for me to do?

I needed to do very little.

Three days after Gene left, I was again sitting in front of the fire, working on an essay about the sacrifices friendship can demand. About bricks and pickups; about stationwagons whose blessings are used up.

I had just gotten up to stoke the fire when I heard the crash. Not quite a crash. More a crunch. Not enough of a noise to go see about.

In a moment, there was a knock at my door. "I'm really sorry," the frightened young man apologized, "but I ran into your car. The stationwagon. I just didn't see it. Seemed to come out of nowhere."

I put my arm around his shoulder, as I imagined Gene might do. "Don't worry, son. Believe me when I tell you this isn't your fault. It's the car. Selling itself. Nothing you could have done about it."

The boy pulled away from me, uncertain whether he might not be in more trouble than he had imagined.

We called his father to find out his insurance company, and the next day I drove the further-mangled Chevrolet down for an appraisal. The settlement came to \$332. A little less than \$200 short. But I wasn't worried. No faith is stronger than the faith of the faithless converted.

Two days later a seminary teacher offered me \$200 for The Chevrolet. "For parts," he said.

I didn't tell him about the car's history. You can never be certain about the religion of a seminary teacher, and I didn't want to screw up the deal The Chevrolet had arranged. I took the \$200 and watched The Chevrolet move off down the street.

However remarkable its past, I was glad to have it gone. Not because I hadn't grown fond of the car or because I had the least suspicion of its being a Mormon monkey's paw, but because I would have the money for Gene.

When I gave it to him, he smiled, not the least amazed. Nor was I.

A few months later, I saw the seminary teacher to whom I had sold the car. He was driving along Main in downtown Provo.

He was driving The Chevrolet.

He was smiling.

A Personal Odyssey: My Encounter with Mormon History

By Lawrence Foster

FOR NEARLY A DECADE, the greater part of my waking hours has been spent in the study of Mormon history. In writing a dissertation at the University of Chicago and then a book dealing in part with the origin of Mormon polygamy, I worked intensively in archives from coast to coast. My goal was the clearly impossible one of reading everything of importance in print by or about the Latter-day Saints prior to 1860. From one perspective such actions were nothing out of the ordinary. Many Mormon scholars have shown even greater dedication in attempting to reconstruct the roots of their faith. Yet my case is different. I am not a Mormon. Many Mormon friends have been puzzled that anyone could have devoted so many years to studying the Latter-day Saints without becoming one. Conversely, non-Mormons have repeatedly asked me, only half-jokingly, how anyone could have studied Mormon history so thoroughly without becoming anti-Mormon.

This essay attempts to articulate what attracted me to the study of Mormon history and why my studies have led me to become neither Mormon nor anti-Mormon.¹ My simultaneous attraction to Mormonism and my distance from it are the product of a carefully formulated approach to the study of religion. By making a full and candid statement of my motives, insofar as I am aware of them, I hope that it may be possible to suggest not only something significant about the Mormon past, but also what Mormonism and Mormon history may yet become. I further hope to raise issues and suggest an approach that may be fruitfully applied to the study of any religious movement.

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¹ Portions of this essay first appeared in slightly different form in Lawrence Foster, "New Perspectives on the Mormon Past: Reflections of a Non-Mormon Historian," *Sunstone* 7 (January–February 1982): 41–45, and are used here by permission.

My unorthodox approach to Mormon history is the product of an equally unorthodox but committed religious background which has significantly shaped all aspects of my scholarship. As a child, I lived in the Philippines. My father was the first nonproselytizing Methodist missionary in that country. Instead of “saving souls” (or more precisely, trying to convert Roman Catholics to Methodism), he did essentially pre-Peace Corps, pre-Green Revolution work. This included agricultural extension activity in outlying *barrios* and teaching vocational agriculture in high school and sociology in a local college. Living conditions in the rural *barrio* where we lived for two years were primitive by American standards. We initially had neither running water nor reliable electricity, for example. Not only were my parents Americans struggling to understand a strange culture while rearing two young children, but much of their work was with Philippine Methodists, many of whom held conservative views which my parents did not share but with which they did not feel free to differ publicly.

More significant than my cross-cultural exposure in the Philippines was the influence of my mother, who had a profound impact on my religious attitudes and development. Her experiences growing up for the first sixteen years of her life as the daughter of Methodist educational missionaries in Korea highlight the classic tension underlying the missionary enterprise. Her mother, a warm but imposing dowager who went to Korea as a single Presbyterian missionary, was a missionary fundamentalist whose chief goal was saving souls. In later years when she would come to visit, we were strictly instructed never to discuss religion with her. Her religious views were so inflexible and literalistic that any attempt to raise or respond to religious issues could only provoke fruitless tensions.

At the opposite pole was my grandfather, a reflective and thoughtful man who taught history in Korea for nearly forty years. He was a missionary intellectual, a person whose deepest concern is to understand and appreciate a different culture. Mother vividly remembers that during their vacation trips to the lovely Diamond Mountains in what is now North Korea, the family would stay in Buddhist guest houses and Grandfather would have long serious discussions with the monks. He was visibly impressed by their spirituality and sought to comprehend their faith purely for its own sake, not for any ulterior motives.

These polarities in my mother’s background were a source of great anguish to her, anguish which she transmitted to me. Eventually, after great personal struggle she worked her way to a position closer to Grandfather’s Christian humanitarianism. Yet the tension remains. For instance, Mother will state unequivocally that the institutional church is wholly expendable if that be necessary to realize God’s deeper goals on earth. On the other hand, my parents tithed their income, a practice rare for Methodists. I received both a thorough grounding in Mother’s literary and religious approach to the Bible and full biblical refutations for the arguments of fundamentalist Christianity. As a teenager, I participated regularly in church services, choir, and youth

groups, yet my propensity for raising uncomfortable questions continually embroiled me in controversy. For example, I was such a disruptive influence for my conservative eighth-grade teacher that by mutual agreement I opted out of the class and spent my time in the church library reading *The Interpreter's Bible* on the Book of Job.

From my experiences growing up in another culture and associating with parents who had a strong but unorthodox religious commitment, I reached two unshakable conclusions. The first was that religion can and often does play a powerful role in human life. Whether for good or ill, religion is a force which cannot be ignored. Some scholars might casually dismiss the influence of religion, but I had felt its power and been shaken by it. I became fascinated, as was William James, by the religion that exists not as a dull habit but as an acute fever — religion that is alive. I read widely in my own and in other religious traditions and meditational writings. During and after college, I developed a hobby of visiting a variety of religious and cult groups, ranging from Guru Maharaji, the Hari Krishnas, and the Moonies to Billy Graham and revivalistic faith healers. My goal was to understand the varied ways in which religion, which had been such an important force in my life, had also influenced the lives of other men and women.

A second conclusion which gradually developed out of my interest in the varieties of religious experience was that no religion has a monopoly on absolute truth. Through personal experience and wide reading, I came to know many wonderful men and women whose beliefs were widely at variance with my own. I could have become cynical at such divergences or have adopted an exclusivist viewpoint as the best way to shore up my faith. Instead I concluded that all religions — even the best — are but partial perspectives on a higher truth that is ultimately beyond full human comprehension or institutional realization. We are all like blind men, each convinced that he knows what the elephant really is, yet each perceiving its awesome immensity only in part. It became increasingly clear to me that no specific beliefs and practices are necessarily important in themselves; what really matters is the meaning that they hold for the worshipper. Surely this awesome and wondrous universe could be approached from many different perspectives, any one of which might serve as a vehicle for richer insight and deeper understanding.

This realization did not cause me to give up my faith, but led me instead to want to explore it more deeply. Even if there were many possible approaches to truth, I, like other individuals, had grown up within a particular tradition for which I had a special emotional affinity. Though I might intellectually reject a literalistic interpretation of the Christmas story, for example, I would always feel deeply the joy of the Christmas spirit, with its message that God can work through even the most lowly and unpromising circumstances. Why should I try to convert to another faith if, as I came to believe, the deepest spiritual values could also be found in my own? And conversely, why should I try to convert others to my faith if those deeper spiritual values could also be found in their faiths? I increasingly felt my deepest affinity not with lukewarm or

naive believers in my own tradition but with those people of whatever faith who seemed to have an appreciation of deeper spiritual values — what I came to see as true religious consciousness. From these perceptions developed my distinctive sense of mission. My goal was not so much to convert across faith lines but to encourage others to appreciate and better understand the universal values within their own heritage — to become *better* Methodists, Catholics, Jews, Buddhists, Mormons, or whatever.

When I first stumbled into Mormon history in the late 1960s, I was only dimly aware of Mormonism or how I would eventually study the movement. Like many other non-Mormons, I started with little more than a few basic stereotypes about the Latter-day Saints and a willingness to learn the extent of my ignorance. My impressions then were threefold: Mormonism was an “authoritarian” religion; its members had once practiced polygamy; and the religion discriminated against blacks. In late 1969 I toyed briefly with the idea of writing my history B.A. thesis at Antioch College on the origin of Mormon polygamy. Ironically, it was Fawn Brodie’s *No Man Knows My History* that discouraged me from pursuing the topic then. While the dust jacket of her book touted it as the “definitive” biography of Joseph Smith, a close reading of the first few pages convinced me that Brodie felt Smith was incomprehensible. Putting two and two together, I concluded that if the definitive biography of Joseph Smith said he was incomprehensible, there was little chance that a beginner like myself could unravel anything as complex as Smith’s motives or the origin of polygamy in the six months then available. I would have to gain a broader perspective first.

My real concern, in any case, was not Mormonism per se but whether the turbulence and experimentation of the late 1960s might have any parallels with the pre-Civil War period. As an undergraduate at Antioch, an experimental liberal arts college in Ohio which combined alternating quarters of on-campus study with off-campus work, I was exposed to the peak of the late 1960s social protest and counter-cultural movements. Many people seemed to be at loose ends, searching for a sense of community but often not finding it. In an effort to come to grips with this disruption, I wrote an undergraduate thesis comparing and contrasting the marriage and family ideas of two other antebellum restorationist movements — the Shakers, who set up celibate communities, and the Oneida Perfectionists, who established a form of group marriage. I concluded that although both groups had rejected the nuclear family and monogamous marriage, their rejection was based on a concern for enlarging the “family” to include the whole group, linked together in tighter bonds of unity.

Until 1971 my curiosity about Mormonism was temporarily in abeyance. Then, at a conference in Chicago, a paper on Mormon family ideals was presented by Mel Hammarberg, a non-Mormon scholar. He stressed that polygamy had been viewed as a means of enlarging family and kinship connections. During the question period, I pointed out that the Shakers and Oneida Perfectionists had also sought to enlarge the nuclear family. Why, I asked, were so

many people at the same time and place concerned with enlarging the family? He said he didn't know. I decided to find out. My dissertation at the University of Chicago eventually became a comparative analysis of the marriage and family restructuring of these three groups, as seen in their social and intellectual context. To that end, in 1973 I spent six months researching and writing a fifty-page seminar paper for Martin Marty which attempted to develop a new and more convincing analysis of the origin of Mormon polygamy.

The work was an eye opener. I had previously viewed the Mormons as hardworking, cleancut, loyal, thrifty, brave, clean, reverent — and utterly boring. No group ever talked more about free will (“free agency” in Mormon parlance), while seeming to exercise free will less in important matters. I had always remembered one vivid cartoon. It showed a large, overbearing woman talking with her neighbor while her small, shy husband dutifully sat on the couch, his hands meekly folded. The woman was saying: “Hubert has a will of iron; he just seldom gets a chance to use it.” This for me was the epitome of Mormonism.

Popular Mormon writings had merely reinforced the unbelievable stereotype. Mormons throughout history, if one believed the accounts, had always been paragons of virtue, totally dedicated to the faith. They had never had any doubts or problems except how they could better spread the “gospel” among non-Mormons, who, for wholly inexplicable reasons, were adamantly opposed to accepting the “truth.” Even without actual knowledge of events, I realized that this official, Pollyannaish version couldn't possibly be the full story. Surely there must have been more to Mormon history than the naive accounts indicated, especially considering the remarkable success of Mormonism.

Fortunately, my 1973 work with primary Mormon records and with what has sometimes been called “the new Mormon history” helped me to overcome these stereotypes. For the first time I began to gain a real appreciation of the Mormon past and what Mormonism might become. When I started my research on the origin of Mormon polygamy, I fortuitously decided to read systematically through the back issues of *DIALOGUE* to try to gain an understanding of the historical and religious concerns of Mormonism. The result was a minor revelation. Latter-day Saints were not a bunch of goody-goody zombies but were real people who were struggling with many of the same questions that, in a different religious tradition, had also baffled and challenged me. Perhaps by studying the Mormons I could gain insight, not only into their past but into mine as well.

Several months after completing the paper on polygamy, I had the good fortune of attending the first meeting of the John Whitmer Historical Association, the RLDS historical group, in Nauvoo, Illinois. There I also met Latter-day Saint historians from the newly professionalized LDS Church Historical Department and gave them a copy of my paper for their criticism. To my delight, they said that it rang true to them. I was encouraged to come to Salt Lake City the following summer to research my hypotheses in the Church Archives. The four months I spent there in the summer of 1974 were one of

the most exciting and rewarding periods of my life. I had feared that it would be impossible to gain access to the Church Archives. Instead, all relevant materials were made available to me and many individuals shared their ideas and helped in any way they could. I made many dear and lasting friends that summer, Mormon and non-Mormon alike.

That Salt Lake City research provided the core of what eventually became my dissertation and then my book, *Religion and Sexuality*, published in 1981 by Oxford University Press. In the book, I sought to combine both the analytical perspectives of an outsider and the sensitive appreciation of an insider. My goal was to place the origin of Mormon polygamy into a comparative perspective with other social and intellectual experiments of the antebellum years, particularly the Shakers and Oneida Perfectionists. I tried to explain not only *what* these groups did, but *why*, and how successful they were in terms of their own objectives. By seeking sympathetically yet critically to understand these extraordinary experiments in religious and social revitalization, I was attempting to come to terms with a broader set of questions that affect all men and women during times of crisis and transition.

I am encouraged that to date high praise for the study has come from LDS, non-Mormon, RLDS, and anti-Mormon scholars alike, all of whom apparently feel that the book supports their own point of view. This was precisely the reaction I had hoped to get. My goal was to reconstruct, as nearly as possible, what actually happened and then to present that evidence in such a way that individuals from widely divergent and seemingly incompatible backgrounds would find the presentation believable and be able to experience again the full range of reactions that occurred when the original phenomena took place. Beyond that, my deeper objective was to show even the most rampant skeptic how and why religion (in this case, Mormonism) could and did play an important role in human history.

Over the past decade, I have formulated a unified approach toward the major issues of early Mormonism, including the First Vision, the origin of the Book of Mormon, and the Latter-day Saint concept of true religious authority. My perspective corresponds neither to that of most Mormons nor of most anti-Mormons. Setting out my full approach toward these complex issues would be impossible here. Instead, I shall deal briefly with one topic which constitutes the crux of my personal difference with conventional Mormonism — the Latter-day Saint concept of true religious authority.

Let me preface this discussion by raising the question of the propriety of dealing historically with the Mormon religious experience at all. One of the fears voiced most frequently by Mormon conservatives is that serious historical writings may “secularize” Mormonism. This view is a red herring, in my opinion. For believing Mormons to write either an exclusively “religious” or an exclusively “secular” version of their history is to make a false dichotomy since Mormonism, more than most contemporary religions, has refused to accept a religious-secular dichotomy at all. Mormon theology unequivocally

states that the spiritual dimension is comprised of a form of matter. Thus, presumably, it must also be subject to some form of natural law, even if we do not yet understand it. Joseph Smith asserted: "All spirit is matter, but is more fine or pure, and can only be discerned by purer eyes." He also said "that spirit is a substance; that it is material, but that it is more pure, elastic and refined matter than the body; that it existed before the body, can exist in the body, and will exist separate from the body when the body will be mouldering in the dust."²

Growing out of this assertion is the Mormon belief that when properly sealed under Church authority, earthly relationships will literally continue and develop further in the afterlife and for all eternity. Death is viewed only as a transition to a higher realm of reality which still involves a type of physical order, even though we normally cannot comprehend that order because of our earthly limitations. (The analogy presented in Edwin Abbott's *Flatland* may be useful here.) Because this life and the afterlife are believed to be indissolubly linked, it follows that all religious and secular activities on earth should be inseparable. The extraordinary Mormon effort to establish their Zion in the American West during the nineteenth century reflected this drive to integrate all reality into a unitary whole. In short, Mormonism is at the same time the most overtly materialistic of the major offshoots of the Judeo-Christian tradition and the most emphatically committed to the reality of the spiritual world. In what is only a seeming paradox, Mormons might be said to believe in a form of "spiritual materialism."

This explicitly materialistic orientation has some important logical consequences for Mormons as they study their own history. While naive Saints will undoubtedly continue to attribute every past event to divine fiat, just as young children believe literally in Santa Claus, more mature Saints also have the important option of investigating even the seemingly miraculous and inexplicable elements of their history to try to understand their naturalistic dynamics, insofar as that is possible. Such investigation need not reduce the sense of awe, mystery, and power in Mormonism. To use a related analogy, is it really more religiously inspiring to believe that storks bring babies or to try to understand a deeper level the extraordinary richness of the emotional and physical elements that contribute to the birth of new life? Anyone who has read widely among the great writers in the natural sciences such as Loren Eiseley and Carl Sagan is surely aware that deeper understanding heightens rather than reduces our sensitivity to the ultimate wonder that is life. Similarly, human history, when understood in its full richness, is an ever-unfolding miracle. Knowledge, not ignorance, is ultimately more effective in promoting a rich and vital faith. In this spirit, I, though a non-Mormon, am attempting in what follows not to engage in destructive criticism of the Mormon faith, but rather to help that faith see itself more clearly and move toward the development of its full potential as a world religion.

² Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: Period I*, ed. Brigham H. Roberts, 6 vols., 2nd ed, rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1948), 5: 393, 4: 575. Punctuation has been modified for clarity.

To begin to express my reservations about the Mormon concept of true religious authority, let me briefly sketch the approach toward authority used by the group with which I now feel most spiritually akin — the Religious Society of Friends, better-known as Quakers. Although neither I nor my parents are formally affiliated with the Quakers, our attraction to the group and what it stands for is long and deep. By discussing some of the key features of the Quaker approach toward authority and then comparing that approach with the one used by Mormons, I hope to highlight distinctive elements in both groups. All too often, Latter-day Saints assume that no other religious group could possibly be as attractive to its followers as theirs is to them. One of the few ways to begin to overcome such insularity is to provide concrete evidence of attractive alternative cases. The Quakers are an ideal group to make this point, since they are so small and do not actively proselytize today. They thus pose no direct institutional challenge to the Latter-day Saints, and hopefully they may be looked at more objectively than could potential competitors. At the same time, the Quakers also raise important issues for Mormons. I have found in the Quaker community and approach many positive elements that I also see in the Latter-day Saint movement, yet without the curious limitation in religious exploration that increasingly appears to be present in conventional Mormonism today. My hope is that the following reflections may prove useful to Latter-day Saints as they seek to understand and come to terms with distinctive aspects of their own faith as well.

Who are the Quakers and what is their approach to religious authority? Known today by many people as little more than the image on the Quaker Oats box, the Quakers historically were the most radical of the Protestant offshoots of the English Civil War period of the mid-1600s which have survived to the present. Going even further than the warring Anglicans and Puritans in breaking with the beliefs and practices of Roman Catholicism, the Quakers adopted the position that the ultimate source of true religious authority was what they variously referred to as the Inner Light, the Christ Spirit, or the Spirit of Truth within each human being. Unlike the Puritans, who saw human nature as basically evil, the Quakers were convinced that human nature, at its core, was basically good. Sensitivity to the inner light which could be found in all human beings was the only ultimate basis and justification for religious and moral authority.

Two controversial conclusions followed from this Quaker belief in the inner light as the ultimate basis for all truth. The first was that no external religious authorities, ceremonies, or forms had any ultimate validity in themselves; the inner spirit was what really mattered. Quakers thus did away with even baptism and the Lord's Supper as formal ceremonies. They eliminated any paid ministry, believing in the literal priesthood of all believers. Singing in church and formal sermons were also eliminated. In their place was substituted the silent meeting, a form of group meditation and worship. Believers would sit together in silent openness to the leadings of the Lord. When an individual felt an inspiration from God or a deep insight, he or she would break the si-

lence to share it with the group. Always acting as a check on individual idiosyncrasy was the combined striving of the group for a true consensus with each other and with the Lord on all major issues.

A second result of the Quaker stress on the inner light as the basis for all truth was their social radicalism. Quakers refused to accept arbitrary social distinctions between people. Because all individuals were viewed as possessing a spark of the Divine, Quakers insisted on treating all individuals equally and using the same forms of address for all human beings, even the king. Seeing the spirit of God even in their enemies, they opposed all war and violence, preferring if necessary to suffer imprisonment or even death rather than harm others. They dressed simply and without ostentation in a highly class-conscious age. Believing that one should tell the truth at all times, they refused to swear oaths to tell the truth only at specific times. And they infuriated their patriarchal contemporaries by giving equality to women within their organization. Women, like men, could speak in meeting, take leadership roles, and even go on missionary trips to spread the Quaker message. Intrepid Quaker women travelled to America to convert the Indians, to Rome to convert the Pope, and to Turkey to convert the Sultan.

The result of such radically unorthodox beliefs and practices was predictable — bitter persecution. During the worst period in England, thousands of Quakers were imprisoned under the foulest imaginable conditions and hundreds died following brutal treatment that even the twentieth century has hardly surpassed. Eventually, under the leadership of William Penn, a refuge was established in Pennsylvania. There the Quakers, unlike many earlier religious refugees to the New World, secured religious freedom not only for themselves but also for others whose views differed from their own. Pennsylvania became a rich, cosmopolitan center of diverse religious and ethnic groups — an inspiration for the eventual American commitment to genuine religious freedom and pluralism.

The Quakers have remained a relatively small group since colonial times, largely because of their unwillingness to compromise their basic principles in search of members. There are only some 30,000 Friends of the silent meeting variety in the United States today, and fewer than 200,000 Quakers of any persuasion throughout the world. Yet the Quakers have always been influential far beyond their numbers. Vividly remembering the persecution and injustices they suffered, Quakers have repeatedly stood as champions of social justice, prison reform, women's rights, the fight against hunger and poverty, and the search for world peace. I have experienced in the Society of Friends a rare combination of deep spiritual commitment with burning concern for social justice which appears less common in larger religious organizations. I do not doubt that this spirit, which I believe to be closely akin to that which underlay the early Christian movement, may be found in other groups as well; I only observe that in my experience this spirit has been expressed most clearly by the Society of Friends.

Latter-day Saints will note striking similarities and even more striking differences between Quakers and Mormons. Like Mormons, Quakers believe in and have suffered because of their belief in continuing revelation. Yet whereas Joseph Smith displayed this belief in literal form by dictating the Book of Mormon, issuing revelations in a "Thus saith the Lord" style, and claiming to be God's special prophet, Quakers have adopted a more inward, personal stance toward inspiration, free either from the need for external physical proofs of faith or any hierarchical mediation by external authority. George Fox, the chief founder of Quakerism, declared that he had experienced by direct revelation from God truths which he subsequently also discovered in scripture. Quakers, both then and now, have professed similar experiences and openings toward new light. Checks are provided on permissible inspiration not by a single official spokesman believed to have authority from God to speak as sole prophet, seer, and revelator, but through the mediation of the entire meeting acting as a gathered body.

Both Quakerism and Mormonism are alike in being lay organizations with no paid clergy or professional theological caste. Quakers go further than Mormons, however, in practicing the priesthood of all believers, since women are received in all respects as equal to men before the Lord. Also similar yet different is the way consensus is achieved. In Mormonism, as I understand it, when major decisions are declared by the hierarchy, Mormons acting as a body may in a conference affirm or "sustain" a consensus, unanimously supporting a policy even though, as individuals, they may not fully agree with it. Rather than accepting such a consensus imposed from above, Quakers seek within the meeting to develop a consensus representing all participating members. In theory, so long as even a single individual is conscientiously unable to take a stand, the group as a whole must seek to modify its position sufficiently that a new position closer to the truth can be freely and openly accepted by all. This is more demanding than simply accepting an edict from above, but in the long run I feel that it leads to a deeper and more internalized commitment.

Many other similarities and differences might be noted between the Quaker and Mormon approaches, but let me turn now to the difficulties that I have with the Mormon claim to hold sole possession of true religious authority. In my opinion, Joseph Smith was going in the right direction, but didn't go far enough. He could clearly see the inadequacies of the religious systems of his day, but he failed to understand that those inadequacies are inherent in any human attempt to explain ultimate reality. As a result, Joseph Smith made the mistake of trying to set up a new religious system which would be free of all the flaws of the old imperfect systems. In my opinion, he inevitably failed, for no earthly institution or set of beliefs, even the best, can adequately represent the full wonder and complexity of life. If you doubt this, try to explain what the color red really is to a man blind from birth. To some degree, all humans are inherently blind. We are inevitably forced to try to describe the greater in terms of lesser categories which cannot fully comprehend reality.

Following the death of Joseph Smith, as so frequently happens after the loss of a movement's founder, Mormonism gradually moved away from its prophet's powerful, albeit incomplete, vision. Brigham Young and other leaders, though deeply and sincerely committed to Joseph and to their understanding of what he had taught, simplified the message so that more immature Saints could grasp it. This process has gone even further during the decades since World War II, as the Church has attracted an incredible number of new converts. Many of them have little appreciation for Mormonism's historic distinctiveness, but are simply looking for authoritative answers to questions which, by their very nature, have no authoritative answers. The message has been watered down until for many it is like eating a poor pabulum — a pabulum characterized by the belief that simply by following Church leadership unquestioningly one will have achieved true faith. At times Mormonism appears to be a public relations shell without substance. Like the biblical Pharisees whom Jesus so sharply criticized, Mormons increasingly define themselves in terms of external behavior — not smoking, not drinking, and paying tithing — rather than seeking to understand the inner spirit which alone gives such actions meaning.

Perhaps the ultimate irony is that Joseph Smith, who introduced the temple ceremonies so important to Mormonism, would today be unable to participate in those ceremonies himself because of his own behavior. For Smith was no teetotaler; on numerous occasions throughout his life, he drank beer and wine. Indeed, he once planned to set up a bar in his Mansion House in Nauvoo. Only Emma's indignant refusal to countenance the action forced him to back down.³ Yet today, how many Saints are piously judgmental of anyone who deviates even an iota from official Church policy. So often Mormons do all the right things for all the wrong reasons. They strain out gnats and swallow camels.

Today I see in Mormonism a growing fear, a loss of true confidence in the Mormon message, and an unwillingness or inability to accept the richness and complexity of the Latter-day Saint faith. Many Mormons, even at the highest levels of the Church, have recently begun to argue that there is simply "no middle ground" — one is either 100 percent Mormon or 100 percent anti-Mormon. While such statements are palpably and demonstrably false, they are nevertheless dangerous, especially for naive Saints who lack deeper spiritual experience. It may be true, as the saying goes, that "there are no atheists in foxholes," but I would ask: Who would choose to *live* in a foxhole all his life? What kind of life would that be? Commitment and challenge are vital to any faith, but let us not carry commitment to such pathological extremes that we retreat permanently into foxholes and accuse anyone who doesn't share our curious preference of being an enemy. Such an approach makes not only for bad religion, but for bad history as well.

³ The bar episode of September 1843 is described in Joseph Smith III's memoirs, and is conveniently summarized in Robert Bruce Flanders' *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), p. 246.

There is much more than I could write on this topic, but let me close with two final examples. The first is an outrageous parable from the colorful investigative journalist of the early twentieth century, Lincoln Steffens. The second, in my opinion, is the most moving statement Joseph Smith ever made and possibly one of the most moving statements made by any religious leader.

Lincoln Steffens told his good friend Ray Stannard Baker the following imaginary story:

“Satan and I,” said Steffens, ‘were walking down Fifth Avenue [in New York] together when we saw a man stop suddenly and pick a piece of Truth out of the air — right out of the air — a piece of Living Truth.’

“Did you see that?” I asked Satan.

“Yes,” said Satan.

“Doesn’t it worry you? Don’t you know that it is enough to destroy you?”

“Yes, but I am not worried, I’ll tell you why. It is a beautiful living thing now, but the man will first name it, then he will organize it, and by that time it will be dead. If he would let it live, and live it, it would destroy me. I’m not worried.”⁴

Joseph Smith picked a piece of Truth out of the sky, a piece of Living Truth. It was powerful, immensely powerful. Sometimes even he couldn’t understand what he had in his hand. It was fearful even to him. His followers wanted Truth simplified. Some of them eventually helped kill him because they couldn’t comprehend his Truth — and because some of his very human weaknesses got in the way of his prophetic role. In a sermon several months before his death, Joseph expressed profound frustration at his inability to be understood, to get his deepest message across to even his closest followers. He declared, in words containing the utmost pathos: “You never knew my heart; no man knows my history; I cannot tell it. I shall never undertake it; if I had not experienced what I have I should not have known it myself.”⁵

The Truth that Joseph Smith saw is still powerful, though largely hidden even from faithful Latter-day Saints. Historians, at their best, have the opportunity of trying to recapture that Truth, at least in part. Such historical writing, far from threatening true religious understanding, provides one of the very few ways that it may, to a degree, be achieved. Good history and good religion go together, in Mormonism as in all faiths. Crushed and crushed again, Truth will rise ever with renewed strength and power. This, at least, is my faith.

⁴ Ray Stannard Baker, *American Chronicle: The Autobiography of Ray Stannard Baker* [David Grayson] (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1945), p. 222.

⁵ *The Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star* 5 (November 1844): 93.



The Snowdrift, the Swan

Helen Walker Jones

IN THOSE IDAHO SUMMERS, Maggie drove a tractor and sat on her hands in the movies, hiding her callouses from the fresh-faced college boys she dated. She worried about her peeling nose and ate nothing but tuna fish, in emulation of the ancient Twiggy poster on her wall. After graduation, she taught in a one-room school, despairing of ever being thin or beautiful.

When she met Nick on a ski lift in the Tetons, he was just home from Vietnam, his army brushcut glaring in that era of long-haired hippies. Fair, blue-eyed, and tall, he was totally her opposite in appearance. Her thick black hair hung to her waist, coarse as a horse's tail. And she still ate a lot of fish because, as her mother always said, at five-foot two every pound shows.

Nick began squiring her to outdoor rock concerts, the thick smell and smoke of marijuana wafting over them as though the lid had been removed

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from a steaming cauldron. Nick would lie on the hillside, smothering fistfuls of clover against her nose, tickling her with the stems, murmuring about his summer in Scotland as a bartender, the frenzy of law school, his endless months in a barracks reading military-legal documents.

Maggie loved to hear him talk. She would lie back against the deep reeds or bristling weeds of whatever farmer's field it was, waiting for the band to arrive, smelling the pot, the musky perfume, the incense. Nick's voice reminded her of a disc jockey's — resonant, clipped, worldly-wise. She kept waiting for him to announce a contest: FOLKS, WIN BY BEING THE SIXTH CALLER ON OUR REQUEST LINE.

She critiqued the girls around her, their lavishly thick hair frizzed and kinked, legs bare, shoulders exposed. They drank beer or wine and never worried about their figures, forsook makeup and bras, relishing their firm, dewy youth. At twenty-four, Maggie felt like an old woman, furrowed by time, slowly starving herself toward hollow cheeks.

She was amazed when Nick proposed marriage, as though all those intense months of weeping and aching had been an ordinary, casual experience. Somehow, she couldn't believe he loved her, too. When they married that summer, her mother breathed a sigh of relief at having one less old maid in the family but fretted about what people would think of a civil wedding. "Well, at least he was born a Mormon," her mother said. "He might come around some day."

They began marriage with the usual expectations: a home, children, endless passion. Maggie pictured herself pureeing baby food, rocking through wintry nights with her breast bared to a suckling child, making quilts in Relief Society. Instead, she spent ten childless years waving to nieces and nephews over a chasm of white carpet unmarred by teething biscuits, sticky fingers, or wet diapers.

Nick's law partners regarded them as a modern, childless-by-choice couple who relished their freedom to travel and entertain. They weekendend in Jackson or Aspen and threw lavish dinner parties at a moment's notice. Maggie knew a marvelous caterer whose phone was unlisted — her mother.

Maggie basked in the social life but harbored the feeling that an upright Idaho Mormon girl could not be complete without children. Finally, shortly before her tenth wedding anniversary, she visited yet another fertility specialist who examined her, then tilted back in his chair, sucking on a pencil, his stethoscope dangling beneath his armpit like a wayward tadpole. "Mrs. Slattery," he said softly, "a fear of childbirth can sometimes prevent pregnancy. I suggest you loosen up a little and keep trying. I know you've been told this before but get rid of those hangups. Your husband checks out, so it must be your problem, and there's no physical reason you can't conceive."

He was the fourth specialist they had consulted. Maggie thanked him politely and walked to the parking lot, where she wept with her head on the steering wheel of her sports car.

That evening she spent two hours getting ready to attend a reception for Warren Burger, who turned out to be friendly and congenial. Maggie asked

about his children and grandchildren, wondering if he noticed the swollen bags under her eyes. She had rubbed ice cubes on them all afternoon.

On the way home, in the car, Nick loosened his tie knot and pulled her close to him. "I think every lawyer in the state was there," he said.

"And I was an Oscar-worthy actress," Maggie said, snuggling under his arm at a stop light. "My pearly teeth and wintergreen breath awed the legal eagles, who hovered around me and discussed the fine points of *Brown vs. the Board of Education*."

Nick laughed. "Don't tell me. A quote from the society page, right? You're not tired of this wild social life, are you?"

"We're not quite the Duke and Duchess of Windsor yet. Although, come to think of it, they never had children either."

Nick looked at her sideways then glanced back at the road. "Forget that doctor." He stubbed his cigarette in the ashtray. "You know what somebody said about you tonight? That you looked like a cross between Ava Gardner and Vivien Leigh."

"Ah, that must have been because I fluttered my eyelashes while they discussed Giotto or Mendelssohn and tried not to cough when they blew smoke in my face."

"I'll bet no one there dreamed you still think of yourself as an overweight tractor driver." Nick laughed again and squeezed her shoulder. "Hey," he said, "I saw Mr. Burger helping you on with your coat. Do I have grounds for jealousy?"

"Maybe a little. Or maybe he just likes fox fur."

Nick pulled into the driveway and turned the key, flipped it out of the ignition and into his pocket. "My dear, you conducted yourself admirably," he said in a British accent. "Especially after your harrowing experience at the doctor's office." He kissed her cheek.

"It's just skillful acting," she said. "When I keep my mouth shut, they think I'm smart. But really, my mind is mildewed like a month-old banana."

"Go put on your nightgown, Chiquita. I'll be up in a minute."

The Wall Street Journal lay open on their bed. Undressing, Maggie remembered filling in once for Nick's secretary. He had sent her to the news stand for a *Journal* and when she returned with a *Ladies' Home Journal* everyone had laughed hysterically. For weeks afterward, Nick's partners asked her for the latest Dow Jones recipes.

Old banana brain, she thought. I'm okay if I keep my mouth shut and my mind open. Loosen up and keep trying, Mrs. Slattery. There's no physical reason you can't conceive.

When Nick came upstairs, she was in bed. He threw back the satin comforter, dropped his shoes beside hers, then switched off the lamp.

"Undressing in the dark to spare my innocent eyes?" she asked.

He climbed in, pulling the blanket up to his chin and shivering. When he reached over and clicked off her side of the electric blanket, she said, "Step one — foreplay."

“Do you have to be funny all the time?” he said quietly, lying back on his pillow.

“I thought you liked it.”

“When it’s appropriate I do.”

“Sorry,” she said. “Did you pull the drapes? Mrs. Leroy might have her telescope trained on our window again.”

“They’re closed.”

Maggie turned toward him, flattening his hair against her forehead. His breath was warm and she pictured him at the reception, eating an olive from a toothpick.

“I want you to quote to me,” she said.

He punched his pillow, then began in a deep, mocking voice, “Your hair is black as ebony; your eyes, the hue of raw honey.” Spoofing the Song of Solomon was his best-loved ritual. They had begun it years ago, waiting endless hours for the concerts to start.

“You forgot my favorite part,” she said.

“Your lips are a scarlet ribbon dripping with wine?”

“No, the snow and the swan.”

“Aha, that’s not even biblical. It’s from a Scottish song, I think. ‘Your brow is like the snowdrift, your throat is like the swan.’” He rolled his “r’s” and Maggie pictured him wearing an outrageous orange kilt, standing behind a bar, mixing drinks.

“I’d put my arm around you,” Nick said, “but Warren Burger might be jealous.”

“Well,” she said, “if you can have Raquel, I can flirt with Warren.” Before they were married, Nick had a poster of Welch taped to his bedroom wall, an index card with the words “These are the times that try men’s souls” stapled across her bare midriff.

“I don’t know what Warren sees in you,” Nick said. “You’re developing dark circles under your eyes.”

“I know. You’ll have to change your quotation: ‘Your eyes are purple rings, creased with crows’ feet.’”

He laughed and hugged her. “Maggie, Maggie, I love you even if you’re crazy.”

“And I love you,” she said, “even though you wear cowboy boots to court.”

After Nick began snoring, she lay awake thinking of Sally Kellso, her college roommate — a frail, undeveloped redhead. Maggie dreamed about Sally often. Sally had had a habit of staring at Maggie, admiring everything she did. “You’re so gorgeous,” she would say, watching Maggie roll her hair onto juice cans. “You could have any guy in the world.”

Sally undressed in the closet and took sponge baths to avoid the community shower in P.E. class. She washed her underwear in the bathtub so no one would catch a glimpse of it in the laundry room.

Sally was a shy, harmless girl, but the dreams Maggie had about her were nightmares. One night during her sophomore year, Maggie had returned from badminton class to find Sally sprawled on the bed in her shortie nightgown, pale and shivering, her legs mottled with blue veins. As Maggie stood there with her mouth open, Sally miscarried, drenching the bed with blood. The clotted mass lay in a heap on the gray bedspread. Maggie picked it up in a towel with both hands, closing her eyes to keep from fainting, and hurled it into the toilet. Then she watched it swirl around as she flushed it away. A fetus. A few months more and it would have been a fully developed baby.

Afterward, Sally was completely hysterical, screaming for her lost baby, holding her hands over her mouth so she wouldn't divulge the name of the father, who was married. She spent the next year in a mental hospital.

Now, each time Maggie dreamed of Sally Kellso, she woke up sweating, walked to the window and touched the curtains to see if they were the scratchy green dorm curtains or her sheer floor-length drapes. Then she would lie in bed, pressing her hands into the mattress to keep from rubbing them, feeling through the towel the slimy dark mass that reminded her of blueberry jam.

The day after Warren Burger's reception, Nick called Maggie from the office. "There's a meeting at the bank tonight," he yawned. "An embezzlement problem, it looks like. They want counsel present. So I'll grab a sandwich at the drug store."

"Okay," she said. "I guess I'll go buy myself a steak."

She was standing at the meat counter when a man in greasy khakis asked her how to cook barbecued ribs. "I'm not much of a cook," she said. "Sorry."

"Me neither. Why don't we eat out?"

"Huh?"

"I'm asking you to dinner," he said, grinning. He was almost as blond as Nick, with immaculate white teeth.

"I'm married." She flashed her diamond.

"What does that mean these days?" He was wearing a blue baseball cap. Maggie pushed her cart away and he reached out to touch her shoulder. "Hope I didn't offend you," he said. "I get a little rowdy sometimes."

She moved quickly past the pot roasts.

"You probably think I'm too old," he followed her, "but I'm just a spring chicken." He held up a three-pound fryer and laughed.

Maggie wheeled her cart to the check-out counter. A redheaded model winked from the cover of a magazine, her breasts exposed from a gaping blouse. Maggie looked at the model's carefully disheveled hair and wondered what Sally Kellso was doing these days.

"You know," the man said, nodding at the magazine, "you could make a lot of money as a model. That gal hasn't got a thing on you, honey."

"She hasn't got a thing on, period," Maggie said and he guffawed.

She was closing the trunk of her car when he reappeared, shouting, "Give me your phone number."

“You’re nuts,” she yelled, slamming the door.

“My name’s Ron,” he called across the parking lot, jumping into a black pickup truck. He followed her, but she lost him at a yellow light and sighed with relief.

At home, she put her groceries away, wrapped herself in a blanket and sat under the maple tree in the front yard, reading a trashy novel and watching Madeline Leroy’s little boy ride his tricycle.

She heard the engine and glanced up from her book to see the C.B. aerial on the black pickup wobbling madly as Ron pulled up in front of the house. She shook her head and set the book in her lap. “Hi there,” Ron said. He had changed into ironed levis worn white at the knees. “I went home and showered. I thought you were kind of put off by my work clothes. Yes,” he raised a hand to stop her question, “I saw where you turned off after that light.”

Maggie stared at the Big Wonderful Wyoming mud flaps on his truck. “Go away,” she said.

“I’ve been afraid you’d say that,” he put a hand on her knee. She moved her knee away. “But if you change your mind, honey, here’s my card. And don’t let anybody tell you you’re not the foxiest chick I ever picked up at the meat counter.”

She watched him drive off, talking into the C.B. microphone. Probably zeroing in on some lady truck driver, telling her she was a foxy chick, asking her how to barbecue spare ribs.

Madeline Leroy was standing on the sidewalk not ten yards from Maggie’s chair, her hands clasped behind her back. Her little boy was sitting on his tricycle with his legs dangling over the handlebars, bent at the knees, leisurely swinging the front wheel from side to side.

“Get those legs down or no treat,” Madeline said, pushing a lock of gray hair from her temple. She had become pregnant with this last child at age forty-five, never suspecting until her sixth month that she was pregnant. “I just figured it was menopause,” she had explained to Maggie. “But no such luck.”

After the little boy dropped his feet to the cement, his mother said, “Open your mouth and close your eyes and I’ll give you something to make you wise.” He stretched his chin toward the sky and opened his mouth so wide Maggie wondered if it would crack at the corners. Then Madeline dropped two jelly beans down his throat like a mother bird feeding worms to her baby.

Maggie folded her blanket, dragged the lawn chair onto the porch and went inside, sprawling on the white brocade couch, wondering how long it would take Madeline to alert the whole neighborhood that Maggie had entertained a handsome stranger on her front lawn.

She wondered if Nick was thinking of her, or about the embezzlement case, or his pretty secretary who undoubtedly knew all about the *Wall Street Journal* and was incredibly fertile besides.

That night, when Nick climbed into bed beside her, Maggie said, "Don't do your Song of Solomon stuff tonight. I'm not up for it." She stared at the shadows on the ceiling.

"You don't want me to quote at all? he asked.

"No."

"Then how can I say you're beautiful?"

"Never mind," she said.

"You're the most beautiful woman ever to throw hay bales."

Maggie shook her hair back and smoothed the cool satin of her nightgown. She thought of hot, sweaty afternoons on her dad's farm, her arms tanned deep brown, her hair tangled and filthy. "Sometimes it took an hour to get the dirt out of my eyes after I got off the tractor," she said. "And when I took a bath, the tub was literally black afterward."

"I'll bet every boy in town loved you."

"I was a fat, calloused farmhand. Not exactly the type boys dream about."

"I don't believe it."

She leaned on one elbow and looked at Nick's profile in the moonlight. "It's getting darker in here," she said. "You can quote to me now, if you want."

He began talking in his disc jockey's voice, mocking her, and she thought of her rough hands in those Idaho summers, before she discovered fabulous thick moisturizers and silky rich lotions.

After the hysteria, Sally Kellso had lain on her bed for hours, pale, anemic, twitching from cold and shock. Maggie had wrapped her in blankets and hugged the girl desperately against her chest, trying to ease her own warmth into Sally's quivering body, to revive her somehow, to make things old again, as they had been when Sally was someone to ridicule for her shyness and excessive modesty.

Maggie lay listening to her husband in their wide bed, remembering porch-lights and trembling hands, her first kiss. She pictured Sally's married boyfriend (his face a blur) pressing his lips to Sally's, huddling against her in a dark corner, whispering reckless lies. The clotted fetus seemed to be swirling in her head again, Sally's legs pale against the bloody gray bedspread.

Maggie imagined herself and Nick in thirty years: a perversely chic old couple like the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, growing old together, childless, wealthy, pathetically romantic.

She pulled the electric blanket up beneath her chin and threw one arm over Nick's chest, burrowing up against him, wondering if Sally Kellso had ever given birth again.

Contraceptive Use among Mormons, 1965-75

Tim B. Heaton

Sandra Calkins

THROUGH THE MID-1960s the Utah birth rate has paralleled that of the nation as a whole. Since 1965, however, the Utah birth rate has risen, diverging sharply from the U.S. rate which has generally stabilized. The U.S. rate was probably affected by the use of new, more effective contraceptives (such as birth control pills and IUDs). The rising Utah birth rate, on the other hand, may be a reaction to the anticontraceptive statements published during the mid-1960s by leaders of the LDS Church. (See First Presidency statement of 14 April 1969 and *Church News* editorials during the late 1960s and early '70s.) If Church members whole-heartedly accepted these statements, one would expect to see a decline in the use of birth control among Mormons during the early seventies.

To examine patterns of contraceptive use, we extracted all data for women who classified themselves as Mormon in the 1965, 1970, and 1975 National Fertility Studies. Unfortunately, reliable data since that time are unavailable. The National Fertility Study was discontinued in 1975 and replaced by the National Survey of Family Growth. But in that study the Church of Christ, The Church of Jesus Christ, and The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints responses have also been categorized as Mormon. To reduce any confounding influence of marital status or race, data for those women whose first marriage was not still intact and nonwhites were excluded. The sample sizes are very small (ranging from 70 to 117). Furthermore, studies of contraceptive use and fertility which contain a reliable sample of Mormons,

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and which permit comparisons over time, are nonexistent. Thus, the observations cannot be regarded as conclusive.

The percentages in Table 1 do not support the hypothesis that the Utah fertility rate is a consequence of a particular Mormon theology opposed to birth control. In 1965 and 1970, the percentage of Mormon couples who had ever used birth control was comparable to that of white married Protestant couples and ten percent higher than that of Catholics. By 1975, 96 percent of the Mormons had at some time used contraceptives — a slight increase over time. Thus, the high usage of birth control among Mormons suggests that their high fertility is the result of some factor other than acceptance of an anticontraceptives ideology.

Table 2 shows the patterns and timing of the use of birth control methods among Mormons in this sample. We have ranked birth control methods according to their effectiveness and modernity with 1 being the most effective and modern and 3 being the least. Those reporting no use are ranked as 4. Each case was categorized by the one most effective method used by the respondent in the specified interval. Between marriage and the birth of the first child (the first interval), half of the women did not use any method of birth control. For the period between the first and second child (the second interval), both an overall shift toward more effective methods and a 20 to 30 point decrease in the percentage of respondents in category 4 are evident. Yet another shift toward more effective methods is evident, over time, among those who have ever used birth control. (See the third column of the table.) The difference between first-interval and second-interval contraceptive use is increased use of condoms, diaphragms, and foam. The difference over time, for those respondents who have ever used birth control methods, is increased use of the pill, IUDs, or sterilization. Considering that some of these respondents had few

TABLE 1
PERCENT OF PROTESTANTS, CATHOLICS, AND MORMONS
WHO HAVE EVER USED BIRTH CONTROL
(white married couples)

	YEAR		
	1965	1970	1975
Protestants†	87%	88%	—‡
(n)	(2666)	(3708)	
Catholics†	77%	81%	—‡
(n)	(1090)	(1225)	
Mormons	87%	90%	96%
(n)	(70)	(117)	(71)

† Source: Charles F. Westoff and Larry Bumpass, "The Revolution in Birth Control Practices of U.S. Roman Catholics," *Science* 179: 41-44. (Table 5)

‡ Comparable Protestant and Catholic 1975 National Fertility Study data are not yet published.

TABLE 2
 CONTRACEPTIVE USE AMONG MORMONS DURING THE
 FIRST AND SECOND BIRTH INTERVALS,
 AND THOSE WHO HAVE EVER USED BIRTH CONTROL

	<i>First Interval</i>	<i>Second Interval</i>	<i>Ever Used</i>
1965			
1. Pill, IUD, Sterilization	3%	8%	34%
2. Condom, Diaphragm, Foam	36%	51%	46%
3. Rhythm, Abstinence	10%	14%	7%
4. None	51%	28%	13%
(n)	(70)	(65)	(70)
1970			
1. Pill, IUD, Sterilization	24%	25%	64%
2. Condom, Diaphragm, Foam	18%	38%	21%
3. Rhythm, Abstinence	6%	9%	5%
4. None	52%	28%	10%
(n)	(117)	(97)	(117)
1975			
1. Pill, IUD, Sterilization	23%	23%	66%
2. Condom, Diaphragm, Foam	24%	45%	20%
3. Rhythm, Abstinence	4%	13%	10%
4. None	49%	19%	4%
(n)	(71)	(64)	(71)

or no children at the time of the survey, the percentage of those who never used birth control is very low.

The major change across time is a shift toward the use of more effective and modern methods of birth control. Especially between 1965 and 1970 is this evident. Among those who ever used contraceptives, there is a 30 point increase in the use of the pill, IUD, and sterilization from 1965 to 1970. Similar increases were also apparent in the data for both the first- and second-interval percentages. Patterns of use changed little from 1970 to 1975. It thus appears that Mormons, like other groups, accepted advances in birth-control technology during the latter part of the 1960s.

Bush concludes that high Mormon fertility rates are more a consequence of the value Mormonism places on children than of polemics against birth control. He goes on to note that for many Mormons "the greatest personal impact of the Church stand on birth control has been the emotional discomfort caused by the strained rationalizations used to reconcile personal practices with their view of the Church position."¹ There is qualified support for this position.

¹ Lester E. Bush, "Birth Control Among the Mormons: Introduction to an Insistent Question," *DIALOGUE* 10 (Autumn 1976): 12-44.

Mormons appear as likely as other religious groups to practice some form of birth control and are willing to try the most modern, effective methods. Yet they continue to have substantially larger families than the national norm because they adopt contraceptive use relatively late.

For some families, delaying birth control until after the arrival of the first or second child is undoubtedly consistent with a desire to begin a family soon after marriage. In other cases, however, failure to practice birth control during the first and/or second birth intervals may be based on a belief that to do so would be contrary to Church teachings. Perhaps only when these individuals are faced with the reality of caring for children do they reconsider the acceptability of birth control. In these cases, an anticontraceptives theology may result in shorter birth intervals and subsequent higher fertility than would occur in the absence of the theology. Whatever the rationale, there is no evidence in these data that the use of birth control methods by Mormons has decreased since 1965.

A Survey of Current Literature

Stephen W. Stathis

AS MORMONISM EMBARKED UPON THE 1980s, it appeared, at least outwardly, that the Church might be well advised to prepare for a new era of journalistic sensationalism and criticism. To combat this anticipated struggle, a "Public Communications Advisory Council" composed of twenty-five prominent media representatives and business leaders was formally organized early in 1982 under the direction of Gordon B. Hinckley of the Church's First Presidency.

The council is charged with correcting false or inaccurate information about the Church, determining what aspects of the institution or doctrines the Public Communications Department should stress to the public, and providing new ideas on how its messages might best be communicated.¹ Thus far, the council seems to have performed its work well. The accompanying compilation of recent periodical and popular literature about Mormons and Mormonism should cause little concern to the Church hierarchy.

While there are among these works a few disconcerting voices, they are for the most part neither controversial, or startling. That singular distinction is reserved for the week-long series of articles published by the *Denver Post* in late November 1982.²

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Mormon History Association Awards

Larry C. Porter, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, MHA

1966

BOOK AWARD: Robert Bruce Flanders, *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965).

BOOK AWARD: James L. Haseltine, *100 Years of Utah Painting* (Salt Lake City: Salt Lake Art Center, 1965).

ARTICLE AWARD: D. W. Meinig, "The Mormon Culture Region: Strategies and Patterns in the Geography of the American West, 1847–1964," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 55 (June 1965): 191–220.

1967: No awards

1968

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SPECIAL CITATION: To Earl E. Olson, Assistant Church Historian, in recognition of his meritorious contributions to the study of Mormon history.

1969

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SPECIAL CITATIONS: To the editors of *DIALOGUE* and *BYU Studies* for stimulating research and publication.

1970

BOOK AWARD: Richard Howard, *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development* (Independence, Mo.: Herald House, 1969).

ARTICLE AWARD: Richard L. Anderson for several articles in the *Improvement Era*, *BYU Studies*, and *The Instructor*.

WORST BOOK: Stanley P. Hirshon, *Lion of the Lord* (New York: Knopf, 1969).

1971

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ARTICLE AWARD: Dean C. Jessee, "The Writing of Joseph Smith's History," *BYU Studies* 11 (Summer 1971): 439-72.

1972

SPECIAL CITATION: To John James, Jr., librarian at the Utah State Historical Society, in recognition of meritorious service to the cause of scholarship in Mormon and Utah history.

1973

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1974

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SPECIAL CITATIONS: To Bill Russell, editor of *Courage*, Andrew Karl Larson, for long time service and for his book *Erastus Snow*; and to Alma Blair, for contributions to Mormon history and for the innovative use of films in its teaching.

1975

BEST BOOK AWARD: Dean C. Jessee, ed. *Letters of Brigham Young to His Sons* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, in collaboration with the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1974).

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BEST ARTICLE BY A JUNIOR AUTHOR: Gordon Irving, "The Law of Adoption: One Phase of the Development of the Mormon Concept of Salvation, 1830-1900," *BYU Studies* 14 (Spring 1974): 291-314.

SPECIAL CITATIONS: To Kenneth W. Godfrey, for inspiring teaching of Mormon history, for continued activity in research and publication, and for conscientious effective service as secretary-treasurer of the Association; to Kenneth E. Stobaugh, for interest in the preservation of historical sites, for generous assistance at the time of the Association's Nauvoo meeting, and for broad-minded friendliness to people of all faiths; to Ralph Tate, Jr., for donating time and expertise to the preparation of legal papers which obtained for the Mormon History Association a nonprofit corporate status; to T. Edgar Lyon, for inspiring teaching of Mormon history, for continued activity in research and publication, and for conscientious efforts to maintain integrity and historical accuracy in the projects of Nauvoo Restorations, Inc.; and to George S. Tanner, for exemplifying the serious contributions an amateur historian can make to the collecting of source materials and the writing of local and family history.

1976

BEST BOOK AWARDS: Dallin H. Oaks and Marvin S. Hill, *Carthage Conspiracy: The Trial of the Accused Assassins of Joseph Smith* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975); and Gene A. Sessions, ed., *Mormon Democrat: The Religious and Political Memoirs of James Henry Moyle* (Salt Lake City: The James Moyle Genealogical and Historical Association, 1975).

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1977

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SPECIAL CITATIONS: To Robert L. Flanders for pathbreaking scholarship dealing with the history of Nauvoo, for continued interest in promoting responsible scholarship in Mormon history, for active leadership in the Mormon History Association from its inception, and for broad-gauged ecumenism; to the editor and authors of *Mormon Sisters* for making a signal contribution in the neglected area of Mormon women's studies; for exemplifying what interested, dedicated women can accomplish on their own; for initiative in pushing their project to completion, publishing it, and distributing it to an appreciative audience; to the First Presidency of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for their generosity and cooperation in allowing sessions of the twelfth annual meeting of the MHA to be held in the Kirtland Temple; to Duane Bunnell for extraordinary service in making travel arrangements which made possible the holding of the twelfth annual meeting of the MHA in Kirtland, Ohio.

1978

BEST ARTICLE BY A SENIOR AUTHOR: Marvin S. Hill, C. Keith Rooker, and Larry T. Wimmer, "The Kirtland Economy Revisited: A Market Critique of Sectarian Economics," *BYU Studies* 17 (Summer 1977): entire issue; and Paul M. Edwards, "The Secular Smiths," *Journal of Mormon History* (1977): 3-18.

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OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENT: David J. Whittaker, Brigham Young University.

1979

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OUTSTANDING BIBLIOGRAPHY AWARD: Chad J. Flake, *Mormon Bibliography, 1830-1930* (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1978).

OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENT: Steven L. Olsen, candidate for Ph.D. at the University of Chicago.

SPECIAL CITATIONS: To the late Gustive O. Larson for his service to the cause of Mormon history, his scholarly publications in that field, and for his years of service as a teacher and a friend to students; to the late Dr. T. Edgar Lyon for his service to the Mormon History Association, for his scholarly contributions to the field of Mormon history, and for his years of service as a teacher and friend to students; to the late Dr. David E. Miller for his service to the Mormon History Association, for his scholarly contributions to the field of Mormon history, and for his years of service as a teacher and a friend to students; to Brigham Young University Press for its encouragement of the art of history through publishing four fine works of Mormon history during 1978 — *Utah's History*, *The Mormon Role in the Settlement of the West*, *Anti-Mormonism in Idaho, 1872-1892*, and *Sister Saints* — as well as for its continuing involvement in the publication of *BYU Studies*; to Graceland College and its administration and staff for their generous and gracious offer to host the fourteenth annual Mormon Association meeting and for their outstanding attention to our needs and comfort.

1980

BEST BOOK AWARD: Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Knopf, 1979).

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1981

BEST BOOK (documentary classification): Andrew Karl Larson and Katharine Miles Larson, eds., *Diary of Charles Lowell Walker*, 2 vols. (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1980).

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OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENT: Michael Guy Bishop, Southern Illinois University.

SPECIAL CITATIONS: To Glen M. Leonard in recognition of his conscientious production and expert work as associate editor of the first seven volumes of the *Journal of Mormon History*; and to Maurice L. Draper and Clare D.

Vlahos and twenty contributors who produced an impressive collection of essays, many on Mormon history, in *Restoration Studies I, Sesquicentennial Edition* (Independence, Mo.: Herald House, 1981).

1982

BEST BOOK AWARD: Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality: Three American Communal Experiments of the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1981) and Stanley B. Kimball, *Heber C. Kimball: Mormon Patriarch and Pioneer* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1981).

THE T. EDGAR LYON AWARD FOR BEST ARTICLE: Linda King Newell, "A Gift Given, A Gift Taken: Washing, Anointing, and Blessing the Sick among Mormon Women," *Sunstone* 6 (Sept.-Oct. 1981): 16-25.

DISTINCTION IN EDITING MORMON DOCUMENTS: Andrew Ehat and Lyndon Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1981).

SPECIAL CITATION: To those responsible for the preservation and restoration of the Logan Tabernacle.

1983

BEST BOOK AWARD: Juanita Brooks, *Quicksand and Cactus* (Salt Lake City: Howe Brothers, 1982).

THE T. EDGAR LYON AWARD FOR BEST ARTICLE: Dean Jessee, "Return to Carthage: Writing the History of Joseph Smith's Martyrdom," *Journal of Mormon History* 8 (1981): 3-19.

THE GRACE ARRINGTON AWARD FOR HISTORICAL EXCELLENCE: Ronald Walker for superlative qualities of eight articles published in 1982.

THE WILLIAM GROVES AND WINIFRED FOSTER REESE HISTORY AWARD: Edward Leo Lyman for his dissertation, "The Mormon Quest for Utah Statehood," University of California, Riverside.

SPECIAL CITATIONS: To the Chesterfield Foundation for the high quality of its productions, specifically its collection of essays and photo essays, Lavina Fielding Anderson, ed., *Chesterfield: Mormon Outpost in Idaho* (Bancroft, Idaho: The Chesterfield Foundation, 1982); and to Larry Porter for eight years of selfless service to the Mormon History Association while serving as its Secretary-Treasurer.

The Ezra Booth Letters

Dennis Rowley

BOTH EZRA BOOTH, a Methodist cleric from Mantua, Ohio, and the Booth letters are familiar to students of early Mormon history. Booth was the first apostate to write publicly against the new Church, and most standard histories include an account of his conversion and almost immediate apostacy.¹ He joined the Church in June 1831 after seeing Joseph Smith miraculously heal the paralyzed arm of his neighbor, Mrs. John Johnson. He left on a mission to Missouri with Joseph Smith and twenty-six others later that summer. Apparently, he expected to convert many people and perform miracles similar to Joseph's through the power of the priesthood to which he had been newly ordained. When neither converts nor miracles were readily forthcoming and when he began to see frailties in Joseph Smith and other Church leaders (including seeming inconsistencies in some of the Prophet's teachings), he became disaffected from the Church.

On 6 September 1831, shortly after Booth returned to Ohio from his Missouri mission, a Church conference barred him from preaching as an elder.² Shortly thereafter, he shared some of his negative feelings in a letter to the Reverend Ira Eddy, a presiding elder in the Methodist Circuit of Portage County, Ohio, and sent a second letter to Edward Partridge, attempting to dissuade him from further affiliation with the Mormons. During the months of October, November, and December 1831, Booth's initial letter to Eddy, his letter to Partridge, and an additional eight letters to Eddy, were published in a weekly newspaper, the *Ohio Star*, of Ravenna.

DENNIS ROWLEY is curator of archives and manuscripts in the Harold B. Lee Library.

¹ The most detailed analysis of Booth and his letters is in Max Parkin, "The Nature and Cause of Internal and External Conflict of the Mormons in Ohio Between 1830 and 1838," (M.A. Thesis, BYU, 1966), pp. 101–120. See also Donna Hill, *Joseph Smith: The First Mormon* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977), pp. 143–46.

² Hill, *Joseph Smith*, p. 143.

In the 20 October 1831, issue of the *Ohio Star*, in which Booth's second letter appeared, the editor stated that Booth had written him a note giving his reasons for writing the letters. They were as follows: "1st. To discharge a duty which I owe to God and the public. 2d. To rescue, if possible, the honest and conscientious who are involved in it. 3d. To prevent others from falling into it. 4th. To comply with the request of a number who have solicited an exposure of Mormonism."³ Booth's "exposure," if it can be called such, consisted of little more than a recounting of some of the apparent supernatural events occurring within the Mormon Church in the months since his conversion. His objections and criticisms fell into three broad categories: the inconsistencies he saw in the revelations of Joseph Smith, what he called the "despotic" tendencies of the Church, and the "manifest weakness" in the personality of Joseph Smith and other leaders.⁴

The letters seem to have had considerable local impact. One week before the ninth letter was published 8 December, Joseph Smith received a revelation calling him and Sidney Rigdon to interrupt their labors on a new translation of the Bible, leave Hiram, Ohio (thirty miles southeast of Kirtland), and travel through northeast Ohio preaching against the letters.⁵ During December and January, with the assistance of several others, they "did much towards allaying the excited feelings which were growing out of the scandalous letters then being published."⁶ These letters, furthermore, would consistently be used as a source for anti-Mormon writers. They were reprinted in E. D. Howe's *Mormonism Unveiled* . . . and in at least one anti-Mormon tract in 1901. Howe was heavily used by nineteenth- and early twentieth-century writers and by Fawn Brodie in 1945.⁷

Beyond this, however, we know little. Although most historians would doubtless agree with the assessment that "these nine letters had extensive circulation and imposing effect upon the public mind for a time,"⁸ little or no evidence helps us understand the extent of their circulation and the nature of their "imposing effect."

Recently, a single letter has come to light which adds to our understanding of the impact of the Booth letters and the public view of Mormonism and religion in northeast Ohio.⁹ Written early in 1832 by Wesley Perkins¹⁰ of Lorain

³ *Ohio Star*, 20 Oct. 1831, p. 3.

⁴ Parkin, "Internal and External Conflict," p. 105.

⁵ Now Doctrine and Covenants 71.

⁶ B. H. Roberts, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2nd ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1951), 1:241.

⁷ Parkin, pp. 120–28; R. B. Neal, "Smithianity; or Mormonism Refuted by Mormons." *Anti-Mormon Tracts*, No. 6 (Cincinnati, Ohio: Christian Leader Print, 1901); and Thomas G. Alexander, "The Place of Joseph Smith in the Development of American Religion: A Historiographical Inquiry," *Journal of Mormon History* 5 (1978): 3–17.

⁸ Parkin, "Internal and External Conflict," p. 104.

⁹ This letter was acquired by the Brigham Young University Library in 1975 from Jenkins Book Company of Austin, Texas. Jenkins had obtained it from the Eberstadt Sale.

¹⁰ Wesley Perkins was born in Orwell in 1805. Sometime in his early adulthood, he established a leather manufacturing company in nearby Pawlet, Vermont. From Benson,

County, Ohio, the letter is addressed to his brother, Jacob, of Orwell, Vermont. It is written in ink, three pages long, and describes social and economic conditions in Lorain County. Periods have been added at the ends of sentences and new sentences have been started with capital letters where necessary.

Amherst¹¹ Feb. 11 1832

Respected Brother & Sister I Sit down this evening to address a few lines to you to inform of my wellfare which is verry good at present although I have been quite out of health. the Summer past I was taken Sick the Seventeenth of August with the intermitting feaver which lasted four Weeks & then the fever & ague Set in & give me a thorough Shaking for Eight Weeks & then left me in rather a poor State of health So that I hav not been able to do but little work as yet, the rest of my family has enjoyed good health Since I wrote to you last, you must excuse me for not writing to you before. I have thought of writing a number of times to let you know whare I was & what I was about, I [am] most likely like other men trying to get a living and to raise the wind¹² if possible, but it gose rather hard with me at present being Sick & not able to pay for my land down. But as long as I can get enough to eat drink & ware & that to as good as my neighbors I dont mean to complain, but that wont always answer the contract.¹³ I must look out for the ups & downs in this Country, I have located my Self in the Town of Amherst Lorane County. I have Bought 72 1/2 acres of land in the Centre of the Township. It lies on the Rodde leading from Cleveland to Detroit Eight miles from the mouth of Black River where Stembotes and Schooners land Pasiongers & only the wharf at the mouth of this River cost about twenty thousand Dollars. This River is about as large as Poultney River¹⁴ and is verry Raped in high water. The water has don considerable damage on this River this winter. Yester day the large Grist Mill in Elyria the County Town¹⁵ was carrid of down the Falls with \$3000 Bushels of wheat & Several others very much Damaged one turned bottom Side up, there is in this Town six Sawmills & one grist mill two stores & a number of mechanics of all kinds. Thare will be a Steem grist mill and a Saw mill [and a] cardin machine¹⁶ built in this Town Next Summer one mile from my hous which will be of grate utility to this place all so two or three furnises within Eight miles of this place. I like this place fare better than I did in Windham.¹⁷ Windham lies 40 miles from the lake so that we have grater privileges than those that live so far from the lake, for thare is no other market so near as the Lake market. I should like to have you visit this Country & See for your Self & I am sure you would be pleased with the Country & with the situation of it. As to the Land it Rates first. 2nd the Soil it is

the town he mentions in his letter, Orwell, now in Addison County, was about ten miles due north and Pawlett was about thirty miles southeast. In 1830, Perkins moved to Amherst, Ohio, where he opened a shop "in which for many years he pursued his trade of wagon making." He also spent "much time nursing the sick." See *History of Lorain County, Ohio* (Philadelphia: Williams Bros., 1879), p. 330.

¹¹ A conference of the Church was held in Amherst, Ohio, 25 January 1832.

¹² "Raise the wind" probably meant to make progress, as in sailing.

¹³ Either a reference to payment due on his land or to a crop he had committed himself to harvest and deliver.

¹⁴ A river in Rutland County, Vermont.

¹⁵ Elyria was the county seat of Lorain County.

¹⁶ A "cardin[g] machine" was used to prepare wool and other fibers for spinning.

¹⁷ Probably Windham, Ohio, which was approximately forty miles south of Lake Erie in Portage County.

principle Black Sand & what you would call muck. it Brings Greate corn not so good for wheet as Clay land. The timber on the Ridges is principally Chesnut White wood. The flat land is mixer of almost all kinds, no Pine in this Country, Priess Current for produce is as followes Wheet from 75 to \$1.00 (Per) bushel Rye \$0.50 Corn 37¢ Per bushel. Porke from ten to twelve dollars a Barrel other things in propotion, it has been verry Sickly in this parte of the Country the Summer past. al though But very few deaths hear only three in this Town, As it Respects Religion in this Town thare is Considerable Stir at Present. The Mormon Religion (is the) excites the greatest couriosity at Present. Joseph Smith & Sidney Rigden is the head men in this business. There god is the Devil. None but the Simple will embrace there Doctrin. if you Could tend one of there meetings & see the young girles have visions (it would) it would put you in mind of the [Doggy Story?]¹⁸ I herd you tell, it is paid no attention to only By those that are possessed of weak minds. I understood that Jared Carter¹⁹ was in Benson²⁰ & had Baptised A number and would Starte for the Promust land in the Spring. it is nothing mor than I Should expet of the Carters & some oths in that part of Town of Benson. Whoever joins them will become A Prest or prophet or prophethes. I would Send you A paper that Contains A letter written by the Rev. E. Boothe.²¹ I will Send you the letters & you may survie them and Satisfy your Silf. Mr. Booth went to the Promust land, Jacob I heard from Wildham last week all our friends ware well at present. I have not herd from Vermont in 18 months I wisht you would write to me as soon as you Recd these few imperfect lines without Delay. Pleas to write all the news The deaths, tc. tell Sister Harret I want to now how to get along with all her Children. I have not herd nothing from her Since Cousin Roswell Bottom wrote to [Therman?]. Give my love to all friends & Relation. Jacob if you take A news Paper Please to Send it to me after you have Don with it & I will send you one from this Country I remain your Brother

Wesley Perkins

P.S. please to direct your letters and paper to Plato Post office Lorane County Ohio

In addition to providing a useful description of conditions in Lorain County in 1832 and an interesting commentary on the spirit of the westward movement in American history, the letter's chief value lies in Perkins's reaction to Mormonism and to the Booth letters. It is a solid piece of evidence of the extent of the circulation of those letters even though Perkins fails either to specify the form of the letters in his possession or to indicate how he obtained them. While Perkins's letter does not show whether he had anti-Mormon feelings before reading the Booth letters, it does indicate that he also knew of

¹⁸ Apparently a private joke.

¹⁹ His comments about ne'er-do-wells such as the Carters from "that part" of the town of Benson reveal a bias about the structure of society which he had carried with him to Amherst, also the home of Jared Carter beginning in 1831, the same year he became a Mormon. Carter served two short-term missions to the east while he resided in Amherst, one from 22 September 1831 to 29 February 1832, and a second from 25 April 1832 to 19 October 1832. During Jared Carter's Church career until his death in Illinois in 1850, he was dis-fellowshipped once and tried before a Church court once. But his overall record, including four short-term missions, was one of loyal service. See Lyndon W. Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Provo, Utah: Seventy's Mission Bookstore, 1981), pp. 73-74.

²⁰ A town in western Vermont (Rutland County) about four miles east of the southern part of Lake Champlain.

²¹ Ezra Booth.

local Mormon events—the Amherst Conference of the Church, held on 25 January 1832, a scant two weeks before he wrote his letter, for example. Perhaps it was the conference which prompted his comment about Mormon girls having visions. He may have attended out of curiosity despite the poor state of his health. Also, he would have known about local missionary work and the Mormons' move into the area, especially if converts in either category were former friends or neighbors from Vermont. All this was part of what he termed a “considerable stir” about religion and was undoubtedly a familiar topic of conversation.

The historical value of the Perkins letter would increase if we had a better idea of how typical his reactions to the Booth letters were and his degree of neutrality prior to reading the letters. It would take many similar letters and more related information to suggest an answer to such a question, but this letter encourages those inclined to pursue the matter.

The letter also provides interesting evidence for transitions between one geographic area and another. That Mormons would be a topic of conversation for a westering Vermonter in Ohio in 1832 and the folks back home suggests that we have not given enough consideration to the impact of Mormonism on non-Mormon society in those instances when the entire body of the Church moved from one locality to another.

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Among the manuscripts recently acquired by the Marriott Library are:

RICHARD F. BECK PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

Eighty-one significant photographs of placer mining and mining areas in southern Utah have been donated by Mr. Beck. The pre-1900 photographs were taken just before the turn of the century by Charles Goodman, a photographer from Bluff, Utah.

FAWN M. BRODIE PAPERS

Fawn M. Brodie died 10 January 1982 shortly after completing work on her book *Richard Nixon: The Child and the Man*. Since that time the University of Utah has received her manuscript and research files as a gift from her children.

Materials received this year were added to the existing collection which consisted mainly of correspondence, book reviews, and articles regarding her controversial work of 1945, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet*, along with other materials on early Mormonism and a typed manuscript of *Thaddeus Stevens, Scourge of the South*.

The new items received include drafts and manuscripts of her Nixon and Thomas Jefferson biographies. The vast amount of notes, newspaper clippings, reviews, and articles which comprised the research material necessary for com-

pletion of her biographies of Nixon, Jefferson, and Sir Richard Burton were also given to the library. The research material for her biography of Nixon is supplemented by numerous taped interviews which were also donated with the collection. Along with the manuscript material were approximately four hundred books, many with Brodie's marginal notes, supplementing her other research material on Nixon, Jefferson, and Burton. Also included in the collection are research notes on other subjects, speeches, articles, lectures, and correspondence.

GEORGE T. BROOKS PAPERS

This collection, donated by Mr. Brooks, includes fourteen issues dated between 1881 and 1883 of the handwritten monthly newspaper, "The Home Writer," representing the Young Men's and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association of Manti, Utah. There are also written accounts and memoranda from 1878 about the building of the Saint George LDS Temple by Edward L. Parry, chief mason for the project, including the time book for the quarry. Also included with the collection is a manuscript hymn book copied by John Johnson Davies in 1897.

LUCY MAY VAN COTT PAPERS

Lucy May Van Cott was dean of women at the University of Utah from 1908 until her retirement in 1931. These materials, donated by a niece, Helen Hinckley Jones, include notes, correspondence, articles, and biographical notes and sketches. 1917-1955, ¼ lin. ft.

HAROLD DALGLIESH COLLECTION

This collection, donated by Mrs. Harold Dalgliesh, includes a number of valuable books, and twenty photographs of Salt Lake City, Utah. The photographs date from 1894 to 1896 with one from 1914.

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF UTAH PAPERS

The papers from the Episcopal Diocese of Utah came to the University through the efforts of Dr. Harold Dalgliesh, archivist for the diocese. The collection covers 1866 to 1980. A great deal of the material is associated with ten individual bishops, including letterpress books from Bishop Leonard (1888-1903), journals written by Bishop Spalding (1905, 1910), and record books of work performed by Bishop Henrique (1907-1944). Also included is a great deal of correspondence; church registers; parochial, parish and bishop's reports; and parish publications and histories. Other information covers the Episcopal Church missionary program in Utah, financial records, and various materials on the churches and parishes. 13 lin. ft.

JOSEPH E. JOHNSON PAPERS

New materials have recently been added to the Johnson collection. These come from Mrs. J. H. Hutchinson who previously donated the Charles E. John-

son and Joseph E. Johnson diaries, and include newspapers edited and published by Joseph E. Johnson along the pioneer route to Utah and in Utah (1853–93) and other newspapers published in Salt Lake City. Aside from the newspapers there are record books, receipt books, copies of the *Times and Seasons* (1839, 1841, 1843), bank drafts, handbills, and certificates. Also included is a letterpress book of Charles E. Johnson's dated 1906 to 1907.

PRESTON NUTTER CORPORATION PAPERS AND HOWARD C. PRICE, JR., PAPERS

The Preston Nutter Corporation Papers and Howard C. Price, Jr., Papers involve both corporate records and personal papers of the Nutter and Price families. Preston Nutter was involved in ranching and freighting in the Utah, Colorado, and Arizona area from the 1890s until 1936. His family, including his son-in-law Howard C. Price, Jr., carried on the corporation until its sale in 1981. The collection, donated by Price, contains many records including personal diaries and daybooks; personal, legal, and business correspondence; business records such as ledgers, bills, income tax returns and bank statements; and a collection of photographs. 1880–1980, 46 lin. ft.

GAIL PLUMMER PAPERS

Gail Plummer, a University of Utah professor of speech (1941–64), was also director of Kingsbury Hall (1930–57) and the director of the University Theatre (1943–57). The collection which was given to the University by Mrs. Gail Plummer, consists of scrapbooks of newspaper clippings, programs, and publicity items organized by subject, including the summer festivals, the Salt Lake Theatre, the Utah Symphony, and Kingsbury Hall. Also included are scrapbooks about Maud May Babcock and a collection of photographs of performers. 1901–57, 13 lin. ft.

WARE AND TREGANZA ARCHITECTURAL RECORDS COLLECTION

The Ware and Treganza collection, a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Richard R. Clawson, consists of 539 ink-on-linen drawings from the firms of Walter E. Ware, and Ware and Treganza. The sixty projects in the collection represent Ware's practice dating from his earliest works in the 1890s through his partnership with Alberto O. Treganza, 1904 to 1922. The firm of Ware and Treganza was one of the most prolific in Salt Lake City. Some of the more well-known designs in this collection include the A. C. Ellis and Thomas Weir residences in Salt Lake City and the Jesse Knight residence in Provo.

REVIEWS

Brief Notices

Gene Sessions

ONE OF THE GREAT JOYS of writing about books in a forum such as this comes from the fan letters that inevitably follow each edition. Some time ago, for example, we awarded the Milk the Mormons Award to Richard Eyre for a couple of volumes he had cranked out on how to be a perfect hubby and papa. We subsequently heard from Brother Eyre: he responded to news of the coveted honor in glowing terms, stopping just short of suggesting that we do not know who our fathers were. Now we notice another of his masterpieces. With his companion Linda, Rick has produced the ultimate guide for *Teaching Children Responsibility* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1982, viii+241 pp., illus. \$7.95). Linda, of course, is one of the most important wives in America. Among their splendid qualifications to engage in counseling Mormon parents are Linda's titles of Utah Mother of the Year (1981) and Outstanding Woman (NCW, 1982), and Rick's authorship of thirteen other books, his status as former mission president, degrees in something or other (family life? child psychology?) and a whole bunch of sweet kids. In addition to all that, Rick is an advisor to Ronald Reagan on child and family issues, although it is hard to tell whether that position is a result of genuine qualification or is supposed to be a qualification itself. In any case, the book amounts to an excellent rehash of old family home evening manuals and promises to sell very well, mostly to mothers-in-law. Most importantly, the Eyres' book reminds us of a pervasive truism in the current Mormon book market — all an LDS author needs to be an expert in any field are brass, a typewriter, and a few connections. We now have every-

thing from ex-English instructors writing history to seminary teachers doing archaeology. But as Jimmy Carter once said (and epitomized so well), "Why not the best?"

In case Mormon parents fail to receive all of Eyre's books as gifts and, worse still, fail to read them, they will likely be forced to buy Douglas H. and Donlu D. Thayer's *Greg & Kellie* (Salt Lake City: RIC Publishing, 1982, 75 pp., n.p.), a dual novella about two Provo kids who end up pregnant, or at least one of them does. First, we meet Greg, a typical priest whose parents have failed to listen to the Eyres, as he makes plans to tell his folks and the bishop about his fall from grace. It is just wonderful how everyone in the story understands Greg, from his friends to Kellie's parents. They make everything so easy under the circumstances. His half of the story ends with a warm feeling in his stomach and tears in his eyes as he tells Kellie he loves her and that everything will be all right. Kellie's half is just as maudlin. She is everyone's cheerleader/beauty queen with long hair, panty hose, and Herbal Essence shampoo. But she, too, finds only understanding and kind assistance from everyone who comes to know of her predicament. Her story also ends with a warm feeling in her stomach and tears in her eyes as Greg tells her he loves her and that everything will be all right. The purpose of this book is obviously to help kids in a similar fix; but if youngsters who are not there yet read it instead, they might decide to take the plunge just to get all that love and understanding.

BYU Family Studies Professor Brenton G. Yorgason wrote about purer teenage relationships some five years ago in *From First*

Date to Chosen Mate (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1977, ix+137 pp. \$5.95). This perennial gift for the Mormon kid on his/her pubescent birthday has become an enduring best-seller that has now inspired two sequels full of similar pablum. Yorgason, now teamed with colleague Terry R. Baker and sociologist Wesley R. Burr, continues to advise Mormon couples with another of his monotonous "from" books. This edition's Milk the Mormons Award, therefore, goes jointly to *From Two to One* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1981, 141 pp. \$6.95), a thoroughly boring set of homilies about pursuing an equally boring courtship, and *From This Day Forth: The Joy of Marriage* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982, 280 pp., index, \$8.50), a wedding-present type book full of surefire ways to turn into Richard and Linda Eyre. While we cannot complain about these authors' qualifications to write on their subject, such volumes must certainly embarrass them among colleagues outside Mormondom.

Three other currently hot Mormon books follow the same formula Yorgason and his cohorts have employed to win their coveted Elsie. As a matter of fact, one of these almost inspired the creation of a new award for Mormon books, perhaps a Pull the Latter-day Leg Award. Essentially copying the counsel contained in *From Two to One*, a collection of essays entitled *Between Ring and Temple: A Handbook for Engaged L.D.S. Couples (and others who need a review)* (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1981, 171 pp., bibliography, \$7.95) contains perhaps the funniest passage in a supposedly serious book in all of modern literature. In the midst of an essay about what to expect from sex, we read:

One partner, at that moment of tender sharing, may nibble excitedly at the ear lobe of the other. The thoughts of the "nibbler" may run something like this. "How silly and distracting and even painful is this nibbling at my ear lobe." From the "nibbler" another thought pattern. "Why isn't my partner experiencing even greater excitement. My room-

mate told me there was nothing more sexually exciting than ear lobe nibbling." (p. 90)

All potential nibbles (hopefully unrelated to Hugh) will anxiously devour the rest of this book looking for equally delightful tidbits of advice to help their coming marriages wax strong.

Unfortunately, the other two books of similar genre are funny only in their silliness and insipidity. Clark Swain, *Enriching Your Marriage: A Tune-Up for Partners in Love* (Bountiful: Horizon Publishers, 1982, 188 pp., biblio. \$7.95), brings all of his skill as a marriage counselor and family life professor at Boise State to waste as he tries to satisfy the Mormon book market's apparently insatiable appetite for perpetual rehash. From front to back, Swain's book contains not one original nor really meaningful bit of insight into the salvation of the troubled American marriage. Reading his book is analogous to taking sugar pills for an imagined ailment. If your marriage is actually healthy, it may feel better for your having read Swain's book, but if it is really in any sort of trouble, go see Swain in person and forget his book. To illustrate the point, save two dollars and buy instead *Man and Woman, Joy in Oneness* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1982, 50 pp., index, \$5.95) by a California housewife named Ester Rasband and get basically the same stuff minus the pretention.

A happy sequel (for a change) in the Mormon publishing game is Mina S. Coletti and Roberta Kling Giese, *Family Idea Book 2* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1982, vii+266 pp., index, \$5.95), a follow-up volume to their highly successful handbook for family harmony and good times. Colletti and Giese once again display a genius for coming up with ideas to make modern family life not only less stressful but also a great deal of fun. They make no pseudo-serious claims for family panaceas, although following their suggestions ought nevertheless to guarantee that things will get a lot better even in the shakiest of families.

If all else fails in the modern family adventure, Mormon parents can encourage the kids to follow the example of one of the celebrities in William T. Black's second book on *Mormon Athletes* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1982, xviii+279 pp., index, illus. \$7.95). Here we get short bios of a few dozen LDS jocks of both genders (although Tina Gunn is about the only female of any real note included). Danny White, Dick Motta, Merlin Olsen, Don Fullmer, and Doug Padilla are representative of the athletes Black surveys. The only problem with this sort of stuff comes from these demigods' humanity. What happens to the Mormon kid who has decided to worship good old Father Murphy and then discovers that big Merlin lost his devotion to Mormonism somewhere between Logan and Hollywood? Hero worship remains an important and perhaps salutary part of American life, but when heroes must fit religious prescriptions, a certain amount of danger ensues for the worshipper.

Even the scholarly world suffers from incurable hero worship. Witness Pulitzer Prize winner Merlo J. Pusey who after several years of research produced *Builders of the Kingdom: George A. Smith, John Henry Smith, George Albert Smith* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1981, xiv+378 pp., index, illus. \$10.95). One of the self-proclaimed toughest reviewers on the scene (myself) got all the way through the book before discovering that even Pusey-class writers fall victim to the enticements available in doing family history. (*Utah Historical Quarterly*, Fall 1982, pp. 385-87). Perhaps a family-authorized biography provides a fiscal salvation that society would not or could not give its scholars. Perhaps Eyre, Yorgason and Swain deserve more credit than we gave them. Perhaps the rest of us, who snootily seek meaning and substance in Mormon literature, are the real fools, inasmuch as we earn little for our labors. But it is comforting to believe that . . . we have sufficient for our needs.

Not Without Pain

From Housewife to Heretic: One Woman's Struggle for Equal Rights and Her Excommunication from the Mormon Church, by Sonia Johnson (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1981), 406 pp. \$14.95.

Reviewed by Irene M. Bates, mother education teacher in the Pacific Palisades Relief Society, Social Services coordinator in Santa Monica Stake, and currently researching a book on patriarchs to the Church.

SONIA JOHNSON's highly literate account of her journey *From Housewife to Heretic* is so involving the book is hard to put down, and for this reader at least left a heartache that lingered long after finishing her story. More than a record of the author's activities and conflicts in the campaign for

women's rights as a member of the Mormon Church, this is an inside view of one woman's loss of innocence. Sonia Johnson is far from unique in facing that experience, often the price of maturity, but few of us could trace it with her skill and passion or with the kind of clarity afforded by her new and "purer" cause. It is compelling drama with touches of wry humor and an abundance of absorbing detail which enriches and validates the author's observations. But this is Sonia Johnson's story, and she forces her readers to remember that in her uncompromising judgments.

The real strength of the book lies in the quality and vividness of expression which allow the reader access to the author's deepest feelings and insights. At times the book is emotionally devastating. Its flaws

are those which are inherent in almost all crusades: the sometimes biting assumptions of ulterior motives, the neglect beyond fleeting mention of any opposing, less than sinister, concerns, and the magnification of past incidents through the changed focus of today's lens. One might wish for some moderation, for some exceptions or concessions, but her extreme positions are the marks of a single-minded revolutionary. They measure her hurt and disillusionment, but they also reveal the dedication and strength of a "now nothing to lose" zealot.

It may well be true that her present singleness of purpose has brought freedom from the kind of painful conflict so often encountered in an institutional setting, that "to meet your foe out openly on the battlefield is an exhilarating and freeing experience" (p. 200), and that waking to days "rich in purpose" has brought a sense of renewal, too. But the book still encourages some doubt about the ringing affirmation contained within the first three sentences of her story — "I realize that I never have been happier." Not only does her often bitter tone belie the quality of that happiness, there is also the poignant recognition of a void in her life:

I miss teaching Relief Society because I miss my Mormon sisters . . . I miss most playing the organ . . . I miss them [the hymns] but in a way that hearing them cannot relieve. I shall never hear them again as I did for more than forty years, with the feeling of community warm and deep in my bones. (p. 100)

Sonia Johnson is unable to jettison the whole rich fabric of past associations, but with her new awareness there can be no turning back.

With a recognition of Sonia Johnson's sacrifice for her cause comes a sense of the Church's loss, too. Her kind of courage, keenness of mind, and spiritual hunger are precious assets in any community; and although those attributes are still evident throughout her book, they tend to be distorted by her present anger. That anger has been visible on television and apparent

in other media accounts. It has alienated potential readers among those who, while not in full agreement with her, did sympathize with her in the beginning. Yet the anger is not without cause, and the book uncovers some of its sources.

Sonia Johnson's subconscious file of "what it means to be female in a male world" exploded and ricocheted off the walls of her Mormon world during a meeting conducted by her stake president. She explains, "We had come hungering and thirsting for help, for a reason to believe that the leaders of our church were inspired, for a reason not to have to become renegades. We had come asking for thoughtful answers . . . And he had given us a stone" (p. 104). *Pageant* was the magazine offered as the source of the speaker's scant information about the Equal Rights Amendment! After reading the simple text she knew, she says, what the women's movement was all about and it was "the largest lump of pain I had ever been handed at one time" (p. 108). For Sonia Johnson that moment was the "painful, beautiful birth" of a human being. She could no longer repress her new perception that women had been oppressed for centuries. A brick wall of official indifference denied the possibility of resolving her sense of outrage. So Sonia Johnson simply put her considerable anger to work — *against* the institutional patriarchy of her church and *for* the clearer goals of the women's movement.

As we are led through the stages of her growing fury, we wonder if the seemingly inevitable chain of events was inevitable. What if, at the outset, she had been afforded some intelligent dialogue with church leaders beyond the local level? But such requests were denied, a humiliating part of her church's betrayal.

There is a private betrayal, too, the "near mortal wound" of her husband's untimely desertion to another woman. It was Sonia's bruising dissection of this personal crisis that brought me some discomfort as well as pain. Privileged information about

character traits, accessible only in a close relationship, is bared, an exposure which hurt more than any spotlighting of perceived flaws in her church. She makes cruel thrusts such as, "Your mama never rocked you when you were a baby, you say And all the rest of us can never make it up to you" (p. 25). Such lashing out is understandable against the callousness she suffered. But when she uses her personal tragedy as further evidence that "patriarchy is a sham," the disclosures savor of revenge and exploitation. Ironically, they tend to diminish rather than strengthen her argument.

But there is tenderness, too, in the early days with her husband, when she talks of the loyalty of her children and stalwart friends, and even when she refers to those members of her ward who turned against her: "I remember and miss them all." I was grateful for this softness and thankful, also, for evidence of unconditional love in our midst in the shape of the Kris Barretts, the David Homers, and the Louise Wynns and others, who may not have agreed with Sonia completely but who cared deeply about her.

The saddest element in the whole pic-

ture is the failure of so many to see the pain behind the fury. Perhaps this blindness illuminates the personal threat Sonia Johnson represented and still represents. She asks us to confront the tensions and contradictions that she chose to face but which many of us prefer to avoid.

Sonia Johnson's story highlights the costs of poor communication (to which she contributed at times) and of inexcusable ignorance fostered by blind conformity. But on a more fundamental level her book warns of the dangers of repressing one's doubts and questions in the interests of avoiding conflict. The failure to acquire some immunization by working through such concerns is to render oneself vulnerable, as was Sonia Johnson.

Discerning non-Mormons may be able to measure the author's former commitment by the force of present denunciations. Some Mormons may simply feel antagonistic to her, others will feel sad, and still others less lonely. And there will be admiration. But there is little chance that any will get through the book without pain. In the interests of greater understanding, not only of Sonia Johnson but of ourselves, the book deserves to be read.

