MORMON SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

In This Issue

President's Message

Our two MSSA-sponsored sessions have been accepted for the annual 2003 SSSR meetings, October 24-26, Norfolk, Virginia. Thanks to Gary Shepherd for organizing an author-meets-critics session on Armand Mauss' new book, All Abraham's Children: Changing Mormon Conceptions of Race and Lineage. And thanks to Ryan Cragun, Susan Ellis, Shauna J. Sweet, and Ken White for volunteering four interesting and diverse papers which form our second session on contemporary issues in Mormon studies.

Following up on our business meeting discussion at the Salt Lake SSSR meetings last November, Henri Gooren and Armand Mauss have put out an invitation to join a network of scholars interested in international expressions of Mormonism. The announcement was published in the SSSR e-newsletter and had already resulted in several individuals joining the network. I have submitted it to the Anthropology and Religion section of the American Anthropological Association; if any of you know of other newsletters in which this announcement should appear in, please feel free to submit it. The announcement is published elsewhere in this newsletter. And pass the word in any other way. Henri's and Armand's efforts will help make possible sessions at future SSSR meetings on global Mormonism, an important topic that is no longer under-explored.
Daryl White

MSSA-SPONSORED SESSIONS, 2003 SSSR MEETINGS

MSSA Session: Author Meets Critics

Book: *All Abraham's Children: Changing Mormon Conceptions of Race and Lineage*, by Armand Mauss, University of Illinois Press, 2003.

Organizer/Convener: Gary Shepherd, Oakland University,
shepherd@oakland.edu

Panelists:
Phil Hammond, Emeritus, University of California--Santa Barbara,
Hammond@ucsb.edu

Massimo Introvigne, CESNUR, cesnur@tin.it

Jan Shipps, Emeritus, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis,
shipps@iupui.edu

Response by Author: Armand L. Mauss, emeritus, Washington State University, almauss@cox.net

MSSA Session: Contemporary Issues in Mormon Studies

Organizer/Convener: Daryl White, Spelman College, dwhite@spelman.edu

Papers:
Sister Missionaries: Gender in the LDS Missionfield, Shauna J. Sweet, Hamilton College, ssweet@hamilton.edu
ABSTRACT:
Despite the growing participation of young women in the mission field, the experience remains both explicitly and implicitly gendered.

This paper examines the variety of obstacles (personal, structural, etc.) that young women face as a result of their decision to serve a full-time mission. I also address how they work to meaningfully incorporate missionary service into their identity as Latter-Day Saints. The findings presented in this paper are based upon extensive interview and focus group data of current and returned missionaries, and church officials, as well as participant observation as investigator and 'honorary sister' in the New York Utica Mission.

Women in LDS Literature, Susan Ellis, Wayne State College, SuEllis1@wsc.edu
ABSTRACT:
Although women account for 54 percent of the population of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, they lag behind men in publication, and the type of publications differs between men and women. This paper compares the number of publications by men and women in LDS theological literature, focusing on the official publications of the church, and the genre of those publications.

The Origins of the Mormon Intellectual Movement, Ryan T. Cragun, University of Cincinnati, r_cragun@hotmail.com
ABSTRACT:
Using a political processes social movement model I analyze the events taking place during the late 1950s and early 1960s that led to the formation of the Mormon Intellectual Movement. These events include: challenges to the authority of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, advances made in the Civil Rights Movement, the secular and professional education of Mormon scholars outside Utah.

Implications of Becoming a "New World Religion": Redefining Mormon Identity, O. Kendall White, Jr., Washington and Lee University, WhiteK@wlu.edu
ABSTRACT:
This paper examines arguments of sociologist Rodney Stark, historian Jan Shipps, and literary critic Harold Bloom, suggesting that Mormonism is becoming a "new world religion." While Stark's demographic argument is based upon the phenomenal growth of the LDS church and Shipps' assertion of a "new religious tradition" is dependent upon a theological and experiential separation from "orthodox" Christianity, Bloom's speculations are grounded in both theological distinctiveness and demography. Following an examination of these arguments, I discuss the responses among Latter-day Saints, especially church officials, in terms of implications for an emergent LDS identity.

The Contributions of Armand Mauss to Mormon Studies

(Adapted from a panel paper presented in honor of Armand Mauss at the Annual Meetings of the SSSR/MSSA, Salt Lake City, November 2, 2002)

It's a distinct honor for me to formally recognize the scholarly contributions of Armand Mauss to religious and Mormon studies. In my estimation, Armand is the pre-eminent scholar of contemporary Mormonism, and all of us who are members of MSSA—not to mention thousands of other scholars, students, and knowledge-seeking lay-people—have been the fortunate beneficiaries of this fact. The space available here is not adequate to provide a detailed account—or even a good summary—of all Armand's contributions to sociology, the sociology of religion in general, and to Mormon studies in particular over a 35-year career. I will therefore only attempt to highlight several general categories of what I see as among his most significant contributions to Mormon studies alone.

First I want to highlight Armand's leadership role in facilitating, promoting, and stimulating the scholarly study of Mormonism. He has done this over a career of unparalleled multiple, central involvements with professional bodies of social scientists, historians, and theologians. Since the session for which this paper was prepared was sponsored by the Mormon Social Science Association as part of the annual meetings of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, let me first comment briefly on Armand's connection to these two organizations.

It is no exaggeration to say that our own little group—the MSSA—owes its 25-year survival primarily to Armand's guidance, prodding, and encouragement since its inception in 1976 (then less inclusively named the Sociological Study of Mormon Life). Armand was not only among those who joined with Glen Vernon in founding

the SSML, but subsequently he literally carried this organization on his back for many years as editor and chief contributor to the newsletter and as the de facto driving force in recruiting new members, lining up papers and speakers, and generally representing and linking us to other professional scholarly bodies with interests in Mormonism. While MSSA (so named since 1995) has remained modest in size and operation, we have counted among our ranks Mormon scholars of some mark, whose work we have encouraged, supported, critiqued, improved, and advanced. Armand's imprint is indelibly present on the greater portion of these positive accomplishments.

Much more visible and significant to social scientists of religion in general was and is, of course, Armand's prominent involvement in the SSSR, including especially his 3-year editorship of the Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion from 1989 through 1992. Armand was in a strategic position then to gain greater recognition and advancement for good Mormon studies scholarship within SSSR, which I believe he did. But more important for Mormon studies than mere positional patronage of colleagues was Armand's own merited stature among his associates as an outstanding scholar who exemplified, in his own scholarship as well as in his editorial and other official duties, high professional standards and intellectual rigor that reflected favorably upon and gained credibility for the work of other scholars of Mormonism. In short, I believe he has significantly elevated the overall stature of Mormon studies in the social sciences by both his own scholarly example and by insisting on application of the same high standards in assessing the work of other Mormon scholars.

Outside the social science arena per se, Armand's influence on the maintenance and development of Mormon studies has been even greater. Most visible among his contributions within the non-social science community of Mormonism scholars have been his long-standing connections to Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, and to the Mormon History Association. Dialogue, the first and premier interdisciplinary scholarly journal devoted exclusively to works on Mormonism, has been in existence for 36 years and is subscribed to and followed religiously by thousands of readers.

Armand has been a scholarly contributor to Dialogue for 35 of these 36 years, a member of its editorial and advisory boards for 19 years, and Chair of the Board of Directors for the past four years. This long span of continual service in key policy and editorial positions strongly suggests that Armand has exerted a significant impact on the substance and direction of critical thought within the Mormon intellectual community. He has also provided crucial behind-the-scenes leadership in keeping Dialogue afloat during recurrent periods of financial and production crisis, particularly in the last several years since assuming the office of Board Chair.

Dialogue has provided an indispensable forum for expressing Mormon culture and examining the relevance of Mormonism to "secular life . . . to the larger stream of world religious thought, and [to] human experience as a whole." Since Dialogue is an interdisciplinary journal, the proportion of social science pieces appearing in its pages has been relatively small compared to the combined proportion of historical, literary, artistic, and theological works published. Nevertheless, Armand has effectively advocated for and facilitated the appearance of good social science in Dialogue, again through the combination of his own high caliber scholarship and professional stature among his colleagues. Most notable in this regard was a special issue that Armand guest-edited in 1996 on the prospects and issues facing Mormons and Mormonism in the 21st Century that was replete with articles written by social scientists.

Armand's service as a council member of the Mormon History Association and his ascendancy as president of the association in 1997-8 are particularly significant indicators of the scope and significance of Armand's contributions to Mormon Studies. The MHA is a large organization comprised of multiple thousands of unusually committed members, many of whom appear from time to time to be somewhat dubious of the usefulness of social science research on Mormon topics. Armand has clearly done yeoman service to alter this attitude through the usual means of professional reputation and his own impeccable scholarship (that invariably demonstrates historical sensitivity and command of relevant historical sources while illuminating core

Mormon topics with sociological insight). Additional contributing factors of no small import are Armand's instincts for effective organizational leadership, his intellectual integrity, moral courage, and his personal connectedness with so many important Mormon intellectuals, Mormon scholars, and an array of Mormon scholarly enterprises.

Indeed, it is this last point that perhaps is most reflective of Armand's cumulative value to Mormon studies, namely the overlapping scope of his organizational, intellectual, and personal involvements in key positions, key relationships, and in key scholarly issues relating to the study of Mormonism. Who has cultivated a wider, more significant network of contacts with Mormon insiders and outsiders, social scientists and non-social scientists, believers and unbelievers, and in the process has stimulated and facilitated an enormously fruitful cross-fertilization of perspectives, ideas, and understanding of Mormon institutions and their dynamic interaction with the larger world, than Armand Mauss?

And who has been a more compelling advocate of the particular value of social science to an understanding of Mormonism than Armand? His monumental effort in cataloging and annotating the social science literature on Mormons—recently published in two separate volumes published by the University of Illinois Press as chapters in a unique, larger bibliographic project edited by historians James Allen, Ronald Walker, and David Whittaker—was a major contribution to a general appreciation for the scope and useful application of social science methods and insights in Mormon studies. Of course, Armand's own scholarship on Mormon topics has made significant contributions in its own right and indeed exemplifies the potential of properly conceived and executed sociological analysis to do so. It is to Armand's scholarship on Mormonism that I now briefly turn my attention.

Armand's CV reveals a lengthy and distinguished list of scholarly publications and presentations over the course of his career. Here I am only going to highlight two of his published works with a particular emphasis on the latter of these. The works are, first, The Angel and The Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation, published by the University of Illinois Press in 1994, and, second, the

forthcoming All of Abraham's Children: Changing Mormon Conceptions of Race and Lineage, also published by the University of Illinois Press. [Note: All of Abraham's Children should become publicly available by mid-March, approximately the time this issue of the MSSA Newsletter is mailed.] Both of these books represent the culmination of an early research agenda set by Armand as far back as his graduate school days at the University of California, Berkley in the mid to late 1960s. This agenda focused on seeing social change as the central issue in the sociological study of Mormonism. Subsequently, the bulk of Armand's work in Mormon studies, especially including these last two books, is fundamentally concerned with analyzing the transformation of Mormon beliefs, practices, and institutions in relation to a complex history of relationships with the external social world.

The Angel and the Beehive in some ways more broadly addresses this social change or transformation theme, subsuming for instance some of the racial and ethnic issues more specifically targeted in All of Abraham's Children. It attempts to chart and account for the curvilinear nature of Mormon accommodation to an initially hostile and increasingly secular host society. Departing from traditional sect-church models that project continual compromising of socially radical tenets and practices ultimately leading to loss of a distinctive and oppositional identity, Armand marshals a number of empirical findings to argue that contemporary Mormonism has entered into a retrenchment phase of identity protection. (Ironically, though, one of these main retrenchment trends is identified as increasing belief and policy merger with certain strands of conservative Protestantism, itself a movement towards loss of distinctive Mormon identity.)

While All of Abraham's Children is subsumable in a theoretical sense to the more general conceptual framework aimed at in The Angel and the Beehive, it is nevertheless a truly ambitious work of broad scope. As important as Angel and the Beehive is, All of Abraham's Children, in my judgment, is a more mature, coherent, and thematically consistent work. In fact, I believe it is a seminal work, Armand's true magnum opus and his single greatest legacy to

scholarship on Mormonism. To produce this book, Armand has assiduously combed through and integrated a vast literature on racial and ethnic beliefs and practices as these pertain to Mormon theology and policy and has joined this literature to his own primary research on these issues. He particularly focuses attention on those major racial-ethnic categories (in relation to white Europeans) that have been most significant in Mormon history, namely Indians of both North and South America, Polynesians, Jews, Africans, and African-Americans. He reviews the historical context in which primal Mormon assumptions about race and lineage related to these categories emerged and identifies the various strands of external influences on Mormon thinking about these topics, including the 19th Century ideologies of British Israelism and Anglo Saxon Triumphalism. He shows the manifest significance of these assumptions for Mormonism past, present, and future, and reveals the complex processes through which these assumptions have changed and are still changing as the modern Mormon Church continues its world-wide expansion through massive missionary efforts. In fact Armand convincingly argues that a substantial fraction of this growth is itself both product and producer of changes in Mormon thought on the divine meaning of lineage and ethnic-racial categories.

More specifically, All Abraham's Children expands our understanding of (1) the origins and subsequent development of key Mormon theological assumptions on the divine implications of group lineage, (2) the way these theological assumptions have over time generated substantial impact on major organizational policies and programs, particularly involving missionary efforts, (3) the dynamics involved in racial-ethnic relationships as the Mormon Church continues to expand among the non-European peoples of the world, and (4) the socio-historical events and processes which have created pressure for modifying Mormon thought and practice related to race and ethnicity. These are issues that, through Armand's masterly treatment, heuristically expand their value to a wider audience beyond specialists in Mormon studies. Scholars of American history will find much in these pages that adds to their grasp of significant social forces and movements operating in both the

19th and 20th Centuries. Social Scientists too will discover much here that illuminates such core theoretical topics as identity construction and transformation, minority versus majority relationships, ethnic and racial conflict, and the dynamics of social accommodation and change. Finally, anyone who grasps the significance of modern Mormon global expansion will achieve, through a careful reading of Armand's book, an enlarged understanding of the premises that both fuel and are confronted by this same expansion.

The last thing that I would like to highlight more explicitly about Armand's scholarly contributions to Mormon studies is his insistence on wedding sound empirical data, including the historical record, to meaningful conceptual analysis. This is a quality present in virtually all of his work but is showcased most impressively in All Abraham's Children. In his synthesis of secondary and primary source materials, Armand's analysis displays the virtues of combining both ideographic and nomothetic theoretical approaches; that is, detailed explications of particular, historically specific events are combined with overarching explanations that identify general causal patterns operating within these events. Quibbles can be made over the identification and interpretation of various historical facts in All Abraham's Children. But the overall level of analytical discourse engaged in here is of a very high order and is richly satisfying at both concrete informational and abstract theoretical levels.

There is, in fact, a strong whiff of Max Weber in the conceptual scope and analytical method employed by Armand in this work. There is also an underlying social constructionist view of human activity in the theoretical perspectives Armand applies to comprehend the interrelated Mormon patterns of theological and organizational change in relation to various encounters with non-Mormon societies. These insights are accessible to the non-sociologist as well as to the specialist. Armand's writing is remarkably free from technical, sociological jargon without impairing the conceptual import of what he is saying. Finally, but not least importantly for sound and credible scholarship on religious subjects, Armand's work is a model of objective detachment. His personal status as a Mormon never manifests itself in polemics; it is

only evident in the insider access and insights that yield greater verisimilitude to his presentation and analysis. Armand is in fact a man of religious faith. But in the realm of scholarship, he is first and foremost a faithful sociologist who has mastered his craft and has the faith to apply it to his own religious tradition in ways that yield greater appreciation for the human dimensions of that tradition.
Gary Shepherd

Gender and Religion in Comparative Perspective: In Search of a Paradigm

(Adapted from the Glenn M. Vernon Lecture presented at the Annual Meetings of the SSSR/MSSA, Salt Lake City, November 1, 2002)

Quite frankly, the scholarship on gender and religion is stuck in a rut. Despite a recent spate of articles on gender and religion we know little more than we did a quarter of a century ago when Argyle and Beit-Hallahmi first wrote about differences in the religious behavior of men and women. The problem is that we are asking the wrong questions. Feminist researchers ask why women participate in patriarchal religions and why they join churches that offer them the least equality. But women do not live in a world abounding in gender equality, and then ironically choose to participate in the one institution that treats them as second class citizens. Religion is not the only gendered institution around. Politics, science, the media, and the economic world remain decidedly male dominated and patriarchal.

Most of the available research is either sex difference research or is focused on women's experience in religion—especially women in conservative religions. We have some information about women in new religious movements. The literature on women and the ministry demonstrates that indeed liberal Protestant denominations are gendered in their own way. We simply have very little insight into the full spectrum of gender relations across denominations and religions. Moreover, we know next to nothing about the religious lives of men. In short, we really know very little about *gender* and religion. What we need is a comparative analysis of the gendering of religion that is theoretically grounded in the insights offered by gender scholars.

Most recently, Rodney Stark has offered a new explanation for the sex difference in religiosity. He argues that men are less religious than women because they are more likely to take risks. The analysis and the assumptions from which the analysis is derived are riddled with problems—the least of which is the fact that risk taking itself is defined in gendered terms. Women are risk takers too. But more often than not, the risks they take have to do with the types of men they choose to form relationships with— not the type of sports or criminal behavior they engage in.

So where do we go from here? Let's begin with a brief review of gender scholarship.

Gender scholarship
Gender scholars have developed new ways to think about gender. They recognized the limited utility of sex role and sex difference approaches to the study of gender. Less interested in debating nature vs. nurture, gender scholars began to describe gender as the exaggeration of biological difference. Social science helps to exaggerate difference. In my own research on religiosity, the effect of gender is relatively small compared to the effects of other variables in the model (e.g. denomination, martial status, religion of spouse, education, and age).

Gender scholars have begun to focus on the gendering of social institutions. The economy, the labor force, the corporate world, the family, and the state are all gendered. Obviously religion is gendered as well.

Gender as Social Institution
Some gender scholars have suggested that we conceptualize gender as a social institution. As a social institution, gender is built into the major social organizations of society (the family, the economy, politics, the labor force) and is an entity in and of itself. Drawing upon such insights and incorporating new institutionalist descriptions of institutions and how they operate, I have developed a framework for thinking about gender as an institution. Such a conceptualization forms the basis for a comparative study of gender configurations across religion.

A new institutionalist perspective emphasizes cognitive as well as normative processes. Taken-for-granted scripts, rules, and classifications constrain choice and narrow the search for solutions to everyday problems. How individuals organize information and utilize social categories is central to understanding behavior. Attribution, schemas, and scripts guide perceptions as well as interaction.

Gender is the institutionalization of perceived differences between men and women. Perceived differences are constituted via historical processes of everyday practice and the meanings attached to these practices. Perceived differences are reinforced and exaggerated by the very process of categorizing individuals as male or female and attaching meaning to that categorization. Practice and meaning co-constitute and legitimate individual identities, prescribe a division of labor and the relations of power between individuals, and dictates a division of labor and relations of power within organizations as well. Thus, the institution of gender constrains not only the ends by which behavior should be directed, but the means by which those ends are achieved. Gender constructs not only individual identities but stipulates the degree of agency individuals are afforded based on perceived differences. Gender generates value and the rules by which the value is calibrated and distributed. Gender limits rationality and individuality, offering strategic pathways and logics of appropriateness for various situations and contexts. The institutionalization of gender holds both individuals and organizations accountable. Furthermore, individuals, groups, and organizations use the gender order to their own advantage. Gender operates both cognitively (classifications and schemas, routines and scripts) and normatively (values, attitudes, norms) to reinforce and legitimate assumptions about appropriate gender arrangements. Gender is an institution in the same sense as family, democracy, capitalism, and bureaucracy. Since institutions are interdependent and contradictory, gender interacts with, is constrained by, and also constrains other institutional frameworks.

Comparative analysis
Gender as a social institution dictates gender

relations in other social institutions like religion. A comparative analysis of gender and religion using an institutional framework is useful because it helps us explore 1) the degree of variation in gender configurations, 2) the factors that produce these variations, and 3) how and why gender configurations change.

A comparative analysis of gender and religion ought to begin with an analysis of the division of labor and relations of power that are prescribed based on the categorization of bodies as male and female. For example, among Latter-day Saints, we find a unique configuration of bodies, division of labor, and relations of power based in three fundamental doctrines: 1) the body as essential to exaltation, 2) a literal resurrection, and 3) women and men have distinct responsibilities in this life and the life hereafter. Noting this configuration helps to explain why official LDS church policy retains a traditional stance on sexuality (e.g. pre- and extra- marital sex and homosexuality), but takes a more moderate stance (relative to Catholics and conservative Protestants) on issues such as birth control and abortion.

Gender logics are best explored in founding myths and their interpretation. Christian denominations share the same founding myth— the story of Adam and Eve, but offer distinctly different interpretations. In the Mormon founding myth, Eve is portrayed as highly rational. Understanding the consequences of eating the fruit of the tree of life, Eve makes a choice that is celebrated as offering Latter-day Saints the opportunity for exaltation. Eve is not a temptress who gets Adam thrown out of the Garden of Eden. This is not to say that Eve is Adam's equal partner, however.

New institutionalists remind us that *institutions endure but they may also be their own grave diggers.* The taken-for-grantedness of institutions presents participants with few, if any, alternative scripts. In fact, institutions lend so much legitimacy that they constitute moral authority, loading understandings of the world with moral and political content. Once social knowledge has become institutionalized, the knowledge exists as a fact and can be transmitted simply on that basis—it is simply the way things are done.

Most gender scholars would agree that gender is highly durable as an institution, changing only in response to severe exogenous shocks, if then. However, others have noted that gender is both made (constructed and constitutive) and in the "making". Gender is made in the passive sense of being constructed by, and subjected to, cultural and historical discourse. Making gender, in the active sense, gives attention to the actor that enacts, resists, and negotiates. Thus while gender configurations are highly durable, we might also expect to find slippages in its reproduction. Despite the appearance of order, we will find moments of disorder and even outright resistance.

Ruth Wallace's study of unordained Catholic women who serve as parish pastors demonstrates that gender orders change given certain organizational constraints. Helen Rose Ebaugh has described how women "do gender" in new immigrant congregations. Women are taking on formal roles in these congregations in the degree that 1) demand exceeds the available supply of people to fill such roles, 2) women increase their human capital and qualify to fill the roles, and 3) and insufficient numbers of men are willing to fill the roles. In Mormonism, rumors of women serving as Sunday School presidents or as Executive Secretaries pre-dated clarifications by LDS Church authorities that these were positions to be filled only by priesthood holders. More young women are now serving as missionaries, an opportunity afforded them by institutionalized rules.

Change may also occur as a result of internal contradictions. The internal contradictions in Mormonism exist in many forms: 1) Girls sing along with the boys "I hope they call me on a mission" in Primary every Sunday, 2) women as well as men are encouraged to pursue college educations, 3) the economic forces that push increasing numbers of women into employment and the fact that the Church itself is employing more women.

Finally, institutional contradictions may also arise as a result of tensions among multiple institutions. Gender, along with the family, democracy, religion, science, capitalism, and the bureaucratic state shape the choices, opportunities, identities and interests of people. The shifting gender relations in Mormonism as practiced in the United States are a response to new gender configurations arising from economic change and social movement activity. Mormon women's expectations for and demand of equal treatment at home and at Church arises from their experience in other institutions. To the extent that Mormons value both democracy and the ideals of equality embedded in it, we will continue to see tensions arise between gender logics of modern society and those that exist in the Mormon experience. We would expect that more hegemonic organizations (Catholics and Latter-day Saints) will respond to such tensions in very different ways than less hierarchical religious traditions.

Despite many challenges to the gender order, enduring change requires the diffusion and general acceptance of new rules, practices, and meanings. Diffusion of new gender practices is most likely to the extent that the pressures producing change (e.g. a changing economy) impact more or less equally across religious traditions. We would expect, for example, that the variation across religious traditions in women's labor force participation and educational attainment would have declined in the years between 1970 and 2000. On the other hand, we might expect to find that reports of pre-marital or extra-marital sex will vary across denominations. More traditional gender alignments will be maintained among conservative groups that encourage tight-knit associations and produce dense networks of co-religionists. More rapid change and greater innovation is likely among traditions that are not hierarchically structured. To the extent that their religious adherents maintain fragmented and heterogeneous networks we would expect more rapid accommodation to new gender configurations. So what can we expect in religious traditions where both liberal and conservative women negotiate a new gender order? Christel Manning's study of Catholic women documents growing polarization and fragmentation within the Catholic Church, but she also finds that diversity of background and common ground act as moderating influences. She writes "interacting with real people seems to prevent liberal and conservative women from demonizing the other side and brings both sides closer to the middle". Her findings are instructive for the Latter-day experience, and helps explain the high degree of tensions that

existed among Latter-day Saints women throughout the eighties and nineties.

Hopefully, I have demonstrated how much we can learn about gender and religion by applying a new gender paradigm. Conceptualizing gender as an institution offers insight into the future. We can expect perceived "essential" sex differences to endure in new forms as gender understandings are renegotiated. Just like other institutions—the family, democracy, the state—gender is highly durable even though the form it takes—gender processes and structures—change over time. The family, democracy, and religion have changed dramatically in the last century, yet as an institution, they continue to exist.
Marie Cornwall

Announcements

The Mormon Social Science Association announces the creation of a network of scholars interested in international and cross-cultural expressions of Mormonism. Included in such a focus would be the relationship between Mormonism and the local, political, and legal frameworks, the local cultural heritage, and local prospects for retention and growth. Various local syncretic accretions and adaptations would also be included. Comparative studies with other non-establishment religious might be useful too (e.g. JW, SDA, and Pentecostal). As soon as an enduring core of scholars and potential studies can be identified, the network can take on a more organized form and seek funding for ongoing projects. Meanwhile, a great deal of mutual sharing and "cross-fertilization" can be achieved. The network would benefit by as many bilingual and multilingual scholars as possible and non-Mormon scholars are especially welcome. Interested scholars should contact the main coordinator of the emerging network, Dr. Henri Gooren of the Netherlands, h.gooren@compaqnet.nl, or Dr. Armand L. Mauss, almauss@cox.net, who is assisting.

Newsletter Announcements
To facilitate putting copies of the MSSA Newsletter on the internet, Ryan Cragun – the current Newsletter editor – volunteered to host the organization website. The new URL is: http://mssa.genesoc.com/. The old site http://www2.gasou.edu/psychology/mssa/,

hosted by Michael Nielsen, is still up. At present the new site has duplicate information. To have something posted to the site, email Ryan at: r_cragun@hotmail.com. In perusing the site you will notice the beginning of a collection of past newsletters. The eventual goal would be to put up all of the past newsletters. If you have electronic copies of past newsletters or paper copies that could be scanned, please contact Ryan.

Also, there has been some discussion about sending the newsletter electronically (as a .pdf or word file). If you would be interested in an electronic version of the newsletter rather than a paper copy or both, please contact Ryan Cragun (r_cragun@hotmail.com).

FUTURE SSSR MEETINGS
2003: October 24-26, Norfolk, Virginia.
2004: October 22-24, Kansas City, Missouri.
2005: November 4-6, Rochester, New York
2006: October 20-22, Portland, Oregon.