

NEWSLETTER

COMMITTEE ON MORMON SOCIETY AND CULTURE

No, 1, 1974

P.O. Box 7258, Univ. Sta.
Provo, Utah 84602

The Origin of the Committee

In late 1969 John Sorenson corresponded with a dozen friends hoping to establish a viable group who would consistently communicate with each other about their expressed interest in and research on Mormon life. That abortive effort was renewed in September 1973 when he invited a set of people on the BYU campus to a discussion about forming a new group with similar objectives. In a meeting in October those assembled agreed that an effort should be made to work through an existing society rather than to try organizing something wholly new. Officers of the Mormon History Association were approached to that end, but after initial interest they decided not to expand their present focus. Sorenson then sent a new mailing in January 1974 which announced that the CMSC was in existence on an ad hoc basis. By the time of the organizing meeting in Provo on 7 March, 34 persons had sent in a membership fee and information sheet. At that meeting Sorenson was chosen Chairman and Donald Snow, Arturo DeHoyos, V. Lynn Tyler and Davis Bitton Members of the Executive Committee. Tyler was designated Secretary-Treasurer. If the growth of the organization is rapid, the committee leadership will be reorganized at the end of the summer to reflect the directions of growth.

Objectives and structure of the CMSC

The Committee was organized to encourage, facilitate, and coordinate studies of Mormon society and culture. The term Mormon society and culture means primarily the distinctive institutional forms, symbols, and behavior of the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We suppose that understanding of these matters will be increased through responsible scholarly research on them. The Committee takes no evaluative position regarding the Church or its members; it exists only to improve the scope and quality of studies on the subjects mentioned, by whomever those studies may be conducted.

The initial task is to develop a network of communication among the members about their interests in and work on Mormon society and culture. This newsletter is the first instrument produced to bring about that communication. In time a more ambitious program of publication and meetings may be undertaken.

Any interested person may become a member of CMSC upon payment of the annual fee (\$2.50 for 1974) plus furnishing an information report about his interests regarding Mormon life. The membership at this time includes professional researchers from a variety of fields, students, practitioners in Church programs, amateur buffs, and those not affiliated with the Church. All are equally welcome.

CMSC is connected with no other organization, depending for financial support entirely on the fees and contributions of its members.

Future newsletters will include, in addition to sketches of members, reports of impending and recent publications, projects underway or planned, conferences, little-known research aids and sources, queries and appeals for assistance from researchers, and bibliographies. Should members desire the newsletter could expand to include reviews and review articles.

The Membership

Information furnished by members will always be a major element of the Newsletter. Since all of us are new in the organization at this point, the major portion of this issue consists of summaries of the individual data sheets of paid members received thus far.

John C. Alleman
Supervisor, Translation and Adaptation,
L.D.S. Church Translation Services Department
50 East North Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84150

Special interests: 1) most aspects of Mormon language, both English and other than English; 2) cultural differences and similarities as they affect implementation of Church programs; 3) relation of these concerns to assignments which come to TSD for translation and/or adaptation.

Studies underway: cooperating with Language Research Center at BYU in developing an Intercultural Data Bank.

(ED. note: J.C.A. is working toward the doctorate in linguistics at Columbia University.)

Davis Bitton
Assistant Church Historian, and Professor of History, University of Utah
Church Historical Department
50 East North Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84150

Special interests: 1) Mormon ideology; 2) Mormon ritual; 3) Mormon language (assumptions); 4) communication and indoctrination channels.

Studies: 1) papers on items 1 through 3 in draft stages; 2) long-range study, on social and cultural history of the Latter-day Saints to A.D. 1900, as a volume in the sesquicentennial history now in preparation.

H. Gerald Bradford
Instructor, Philosophy, BYU (33 JSB)
Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602

Special interests: 1) Mormon ethics; 2) Mormon theology, especially the idea of finite or limited theism; 3) history of development of Mormon thought.

(Ed. note: M.G.B. did graduate work under O'Dea at UC Santa Barbara in Religious Studies.)

R. Lanier Britsch
Associate Professor, History and Asian Studies, BYU (119 FOB)

Special interests: any studies shedding light on the role and place of the Church in the lives of people living in Asia and the Pacific. Interests are primarily historical, but history is conceived broadly to encompass social, linguistic, economic and psychological dimensions as well as the more usual dimensions.

Studies: volume in the sesquicentennial history, covering Asia and the Pacific.

Jack D. Brotherson
Assistant Professor, Botany and Range Science: BYU (493 WIDB)

Special interests: 1) effects of environment on growth and development of the individual, society and culture; 2) sensitivity to the natural world and its organisms and the exhibited life-style of such Individuals.

Studies underway: 1) sensitivity to one's environment and spiritual development as seen in the writings of Mormon authors; 2) quality vs. quantity living in LDS communities, past and present.

Gary L. Bunker
Associate Professor, Psychology BYU (436 HBLL)

Special interests: 1) Mormonism and intergroup relations generally, both historical and contemporary; 2) 19th century psychology in relation to Mormonism (e.g. Mesmerism, humoral psychology, etc.)

Studies: 1) ethnicity and resistance to compensatory education: a comparison of Mormon and non-Mormon ethnic attitudes (submitted for publication); 2) phrenology among the Mormons--with Davis Bitton--submitted for publication.

Fred S. Buchanan

Assistant Professor, Cultural Foundations of Education (339 Bennion Hall)
University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112

Special interests: 1) education and the Mormons in general; 2) relations between Mormons and non-Mormons in public schools; 3) oral history of education in Utah; 4) the EskDale commune of the Order of Aaron.

Studies: 1) oral history of Utah education; 2) impact of national educational movements or fads upon Utah education; 2) the public school as an agent in the socialization of non-Mormon children in Utah.

Richard L. Bushman
Professor of History, Boston University (226 Bay State Rd., Boston, MA 02215)

Special interests: 1) family structure in 19th century Utah; 2) assimilation patterns of Mormon ethnics; 3) townscapes in Salt Lake and Utah Valleys; 4) dynamics of a Mormon ward; 5) typologies of stakes and techniques of sampling the Mormon population; 6) evolutionary patterns of stake growth; 7) Mormon methods of handling aggression.

Studies: volume in the sesquicentennial history, covering the origins of Mormonism to 1630.

Thomas S. Carlson
Chairman, Department of Public Administration
California State University, Sacramento
6000 "J" St., Sacramento. CA 95819

Special interests: 1) the nature of authority in the Church; 2) class in the Church; 3) activity vs. inactivity: a profile of personal and social differences; 4) the outcast and .the path to inactivity; 5) a trend analysis of reactivation.

Richard O. Cowan
Professor, Church History and Doctrine, BYU (138 JSB)

Special interests: 1) Chart in the twentieth century; 2) use of statistics as a tool and source for Church history study, along such dimensions as urban vs. rural, Wasatch Front vs. missions, etc. (has extensive data toward that objective).

Studies: volume in the sesquicentennial history, on the Latter-day 000 from 1930 to 1950.

J. Kenneth Davies
Professor, Economics, BYU (304 JKB)

Special interest: the Church and the labor movement.

Studies: preparing a book on “Utah, Mormons and Unions” (sample chapters: pioneer Mormon unions and guilds; secularization of Utah labor; Utah, Mormons and Joe Hill; R. G. Sleater biography; Clarence L. Palmer biography, the rise of Utah unionism; Utah’s labor leaders (biographical sketches); the extent of unionism within the Church); and eventually intends to prepare a second volume, “Mormonism and Unionism—A Philosophical Treatment.”)

Arturo DeHoyos

Associate Professor, Indian Education and Sociology, BYU (139 BRMB)

Genevieve DeHoyos

Adjunct faculty member, Sociology, BYU (143 FOB)

Special interests: 1) social integration of world Mormons; 2) dangers of pluralism in Mormon society; 3) cross cultural communication.

Studies: 1) analysis of the strain in the process of integration to Mormon culture; 2) cultural factors in translating for Spain.

Justus Ernst

Manager, Special Projects , Translation Services Department

LDS Church Office Building

Special interests: Intercultural Data Bank, in collaboration with BYU Language Research Center.

Studies: survey of Church translators and adaptors for input to Data Bank.

Edward Geary

Assistant Professor, English, BYU (A235 JKBA)

Special interests: 1) Mormon literature; 2) Mormon rhetoric; 3) certain “cultural” trends, such as persistence of the “genteel” Ideal of 19th century America among Mormons--related to mother dominance; 4) possible article on Mormon literature as a regional literature, using ideas of Irving Howe re. “nostalgic celebration of lost heroic values.”

Dee F. Green

Regional Archaeologist, U.S. Forest Service

11415 Bar Harbor NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111

Special interests: most if not all topics on Mormon culture, but special concern with development of aspects of Mormon thought and an ecological influences on the historical shaping of Mormon society.

Studies: paper on kinship and its effect on community solidarity in a small southern Utah village.

Kenneth R. Hardy
Professor, Psychology, BYU (1234-B SFLC)

Special interests: 1) social and family origins of Mormon scientists and scholars; 2) psychological studies of the same including motivational dispositions and belief systems.

Studies: 1) extensive data collected on Mormon scientists and scholars, with intent to work up some of it in the near future; 2) the LDS ward as a social unit fulfilling needs for its members.

Richard H. Jackson
Assistant Professor, Geography, BYU (167 HGB)

Special interests: 1) perceptions of environment by Mormons; 2) Mormon architectural styles; 3) irrigation and resource use by Mormons; 4) population distribution and growth rates.

Studies: 1) analysis of the Mormon village population in Mt. Pleasant and Meadow, Utah; 2) development and diffusion of irrigation; 3) Mormon architectural styles; 4) recreation of historical atlas of Utah.

Clark S. Knowlton
Director, Social Research and Development, American West Center, and Professor,
Sociology
University of Utah

Special interests: 1) Chicanos and the Church; 2) social conflict and accommodation in Utah.

Armand L. Mauss
Associate Professor, Sociology
Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99163

Special interests: 1) many aspects of Mormon thought and behavior, particularly as illuminated by a large body of survey data he has on LDS in Salt Lake City and San Francisco; data open to other investigators; 2) special emphasis on the relation of orthodoxy and various religious and secular characteristics--both behavioral and cognitive.

Studies: 1) finishing his book, "Mormons and Minorities"; 2) the assimilation process Mormons are undergoing in America and the symptoms of the disappearance of peculiarity from the peculiar people.

A. Delbert Palmer

3156 Bannock Drive, Provo, UT 84601

(Ed. note: formerly President, Chilean Mission; interested in many aspects of CMSCs concerns.)

Spencer J. Palmer

Professor, History and Religion; Chairman, Asian Studies, BYU (121 FOB)

Special interests: 1) the Church and its members in Asia; especially Korea; 2) some extended families and their histories (Arizona, Switzerland/U.S., New Zealand, etc.) as influences in and manifestations of Mormon society. (Ed. note: formerly Korean Mission President.)

Evan T. Peterson

Professor, Sociology, and Chairman, Sociology, BYU (183 FOB)

Special interests: 1) demographic studies of the Church membership; 2) aspects of social change.

Studies: 1) a study of word usage among LDS students; 2) has a great deal of information on adolescence among LDS; 3) change in hymn preference over a number of decades.

Richard D. Poll

Vice President, Western Illinois University; 9 Rye Court, Macomb, IL 61455

(Ed. note: concerned with many aspects of Mormon history; thought and society,)

Michael Raber

Graduate Student, Anthropology, Yale University, New Haven, CT 06250

Special interests: 1) Mormon social organization and kinship; 2) Mormon use of natural resources, including irrigation.

Studies: based on a trip to the area last summer, has chosen to do his dissertation on historical processes of culture/environment feedback in a portion of Sanpete County, using ethnographic, historical and ecological data, during 1974-75.

William W. Reeder

Professor, Rural Sociology, 334 Warren Hall
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14850

Special interests. 1) theory of culture and society with special reference to Mormonism as a unique culture and society; 2) Mormon colonization of the northeastern U.S. since 1940

Studies: 1) levels of participation and their consequences; 2) characteristics of inactive members; 3) relationship between education, religiosity, and participation in religious activity; 4) consistency of Mormons in relation to several referents; 5) leadership development in a Mormon community in 1954-55--book-length manuscript and five articles in ms.

Wilford E. Smith
Professor, Sociology, BYU (154 FOB)

Special interests and studies: 1) for twenty years has been gathering data on the morality of Mormon college students compared to non-Mormons; 2) the ecology of Mormon orthodoxy; 3) any observation on “the fruits of Mormonism.”

Donald R. Snow
Associate Professor, Mathematics, BYU (312 TMCB)

Special interests: many aspects of the history, culture and doctrines of the Church.
Studies: several begun using simple mathematical analyses showing inter-relationships, effects of elements of Mormon culture/society.

John L. Sorenson
Professor, Anthropology and Sociology, BYU (311 BRMB)

Special interests: 1) all aspects under the heading Mormon society and culture, with emphasis on: 2) language; 3) modernization process and its impacts; 4) internationalization of the Church; 5) history of ideas in and relating to the Church.

Studies: 1) volume in the sesquicentennial history, on social, and cultural history of the LDS in the 20th century; 2) volume of historical statistics, with Phil Kunz; 3) bibliography of Mormon social/cultural studies; 4) lexicon of Mormon language and symbols; 5) is there a Mormon personality?; 6) conflict and accommodation in Utah with emphasis on the Church and its people in relation to newcomers; 7) application of social science models to the Mormon case; 8) collecting LDS manuals for social history analysis of their contents.

George S. Tate
Graduate Student, Medieval studies, Cornell (Asst. Prof., Comparative Lit., BYU, next September); Pleasant Grove Apts. 6-C, Ithaca, NY 14850.

Special interests: 1) patristic and medieval commentaries on favorite Mormon proof-text scriptures; 2) the Church in Iceland, early mission activities and failure to get a foothold; 3) Haldor Laxness' interest in and treatment of the Mormons; 4) J. Smith's technical use and “type” and typology in the Book, of Mormon; 5) Church history in general.

Studies: 1) an article on the first two missionaries to Iceland; 2) article on Laxness' Mormon interest, including an interview with him and translations; 3) an early medieval account of Adam, Eve, Satan, tokens.

Gordon C. Thomasson
Box 94, 1871 Hanshaw Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850

Studies: 1) institutional study of Mormon rites of passage and names; 2) Mormons as an ethnic minority; 3) Mormon language,
(Ed. note: G.C.T. is in graduate study at Cornell, after work in the Religious Studies program at UC Santa Barbara.)

Jay M. Todd
Managing Editor, The Ensign magazine, LDS Church Office Building

Special interests: 1) all areas under this heading; 2) potential for articles in Ensign developing from studies by CMSC members.

F. LaMond Tullis
Associate Professor, Political Science, BYU (374 MSRB)

Special interests: 1) any and all topics relevant to history of the Mormons in Latin America.

Studies: 1) volume in the sesquicentennial history, on Latin American Church history; 2) surveying attitudes among Latin American students at BYU; 3) the Churches "medical missionary" experience in Latin America; 4) longitudinal data on Church membership in Latin America.

V. Lynn Tyler
Associate Director, Language Research Center, BYU (270 FB)

Special interests: 1) language and communication, especially intercultural; 2) Intercultural Data bank.

Studies: 1) perspectives on how Deity communicates with men, LDS in particular; 2) the basicness of Church doctrines; 3) international glossary of LDS terms; 4) training in intercultural communications for LDS.

Glenn M. Vernon
Professor, Sociology, University of Utah

Special interests; broad interest in social aspects of Mormonism.

Studies: completing "Research on Mormonism," to reprint many of the available research reports from professional journals.

John W. Welch
2222 Strebtor Rd., Durham, NC 27705

Special interests; 1) what, if anything, may be identified as the Mormon Angst; 2) the institutionalization of Mormonism by which certain ideas, interpretations and attitudes have become typically "Mormon."

(Ed. note: J.W.W. is in the law school at Duke.)

Announcements

John Sorenson and Harold Madsen have arranged another conference on Mormon language, to be held at BYU April 8. Papers include: Don L. F. Nilson,, Deseret Alphabet compared with other spelling reforms; Davis Bitton, The authoritarian imagery of H. C. Kimball; N. Hill, The changing meaning of 'gathering'; Ray L. Jones, Language of deaf Mormons (film); Ed Soper, Language/culture problems of LDS health missionaries in Latin America; Alice Pack, Readability of Church materials; Bert Wilson and John B. Harris, Mormon missionary language; G. LaDue, Patterns of personal names; Gerrit deJong, Changed terms in the Bible; John Sorenson, Word frequency Messages of the First Presidency, 19th vs. 20th century; Marvin Loflin, Context and semantic interpretation; Lynn Tyler, After the manner of their language; Robert Donigan, General Semantics and the gospel; Genevieve DeHoyos, Culture in translating for Spain; Ben Urrutia, Two terms translated to Spanish which are problems.

Richard H. Cracroft and Neal E. Lambert have edited an anthology of Mormon literature which will appear from BYU Press in September. Called, A Believing People: The Literature of the Latter-day Saints, it contains materials selected from poetry, fiction, drama, journals, histories, hymns, and speeches from the time of Joseph Smith to now.

Glen M. Vernon has prepared a duplicated Bibliography of Mormon Sociology. Most of the entries are from the periodical literature on sociology. Copies can probably still be requested from him at the Sociology Department, University of Utah.