

NEWSLETTER

COMMITTEE ON MORMON SOCIETY AND CULTURE

No. 1, 1976

P.O. Box 7258, Univ. Sta.
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Membership and Newsletter Status

Last issue of the Newsletter asked those wishing to continue to receive it to return stamped envelopes in lieu of a subscription payment for 1976. So far about a dozen persons have returned. Nevertheless, the remaining issues will be sent out to those, despite the evident lack of interest in the large. The April 30 publication deadline for this issue was purposely put back a month to allow more response, to little avail.

New BYU Theses and Dissertations

Works completed during the last year and listed 'in the 1976 commencement program include:

Kwapinski, Sasha William. "A case study of the campaign of Karl N. Snow, Jr. for election to the Utah State Senate, from the sixteenth state senatorial district in 1972." M.A. Political Science.

Anderson, Ted Stephen. "The Southern States Mission and the administration of Ben E. Rich, 1898-1908, including a statistical study of church growth in the southeastern U.S. during the 20th century." M.A. Church History and Doctrine (1975).

Harward, Conrad Afton. "History of the growth and development of the Primary Association of the LDS Church from 1878 to 1928." M.A. Church History and Doctrine (1975).

Jensen, W. Craig. "A description of the perceived purpose and effectiveness of the ward or branch fireside among selected Latter-day Saint students and their leaders." M.A. Communications (1975).

Smith, Dennis H. "Formal reporting systems of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1975." M.A. Church History and Doctrine (1975).

Williams, John Kent. "A history of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association 1939 to 1974." M.A. Church History and Doctrine (1975).

Singh, Devendra. "Fluoridation attitudes in Utah." M.A. Sociology.

Soper, Edward Lewis. "Socioeconomic and Medicare status differences between elderly Church service and LDS private pay hospital patients." M.S. Health Sciences.

Heaton, Tim B. "Socioeconomic impact of changes in the employment base for rural counties in the mountain west." M.S. Sociology.

Mayne, Janice Dean. "The American Fork irrigation system: problems and perceptions in a distribution network." M.S. Geography (1975).

Murdock, Jon Larry. "The image of Provo, Utah, as seen through the perceptions of its residents." M.S. Geography (1975).

Hedquist, Steven Allan. "The teacher training program administered by the Sunday School of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." M. Rel. Educ. Church History and Doctrine (1975).

Heinz, Lyle S. "Origin and development of the San Juan Mission in south-eastern Utah in its work with Indian people (principally since 1940)." M. Rel. Educ. Church History and Doctrine (1975).

Paxton, Dan Richards. "An evaluation of presidential leadership in the colleges and universities of Utah." Ed.D. Community College Education.

Johnson, Melvin Kay. "A study of the social, educational, and occupational concerns of 419 LDS high school seniors in the greater Los Angeles area. Ed.D. Community College Administration (1975).

Christiansen, James W. "An historical study of the institutionalization of power in a small community." Ph.D. Sociology.

BYU Centennial Symposium: The Expanding Church

This last in the series sponsored by the College of Social Sciences was chaired by F. LaMond Tullis. Large crowds -attended many of the sessions.

Prof. Ernst Wilhelm Benz, Church History, University of Marburg (Germany) began the symposium with a Forum address in which, with great insight and depth, he placed Mormonism in a world perspective of change. He considers it exemplary in its ability to secularize religion to the degree necessary to allow its vigorous existence in the modern world, while simultaneously serving as a channel for spiritual expression. Contrary to the anticipations of some at the Y, Benz' presentations demonstrated full control of historical and theological information about the Latter-day Saints; he spoke at some moments in brilliantly informed terms on matters perhaps none of his audience had yet conceived. All CMSC Newsletter readers will want to study Benz' talk with care when it is published

along with the other symposium papers. Incidentally Prof. Benz spent over a week in Utah, including attendance at LOS Conference, turning down urgent entreaties to speak at other universities in order to have this experience. Unfortunately the Professor discovered upon returning to his home in Marburg that in his absence leftist militants had broken into his house and vandalized it, destroying his research files, art collection, etc.

Noel B. Reynolds, Philosophy, BYU, gave a keynote address, "Cultural diversity in the universal church," at the opening session on April 7, to which Hugh Nibley and John Sorenson responded. Asian stake and mission leaders discussed some of their problems that afternoon, and in the evening Latin American Church issues were discussed. Cultural discontinuities were vividly illustrated in these presentations, but overall one saw remarkable evidence that the problems were relatively less important than the accommodations already reached. Certainly the high quality of leadership exemplified in the participants was eye-opening to North Americans. It is clear that many if not most of the problems attendant on the expansion of the Church are being coped with in ad hoc fashion at the local level without intellectuals or central Church leadership intervening with much effect. In both Asia and Latin America the startling growth in numbers was emphasized. For example there are already 1000 LDS institute students in the Mexico City area where not many years ago there was difficulty finding enough to form one class. The LDS school system in Mexico is having major impact on the Church as it deals with some thousands of converts per month. The Asian leaders were excited at what they heard about the Mexican experience, yet it was made clear that the Church lacks the financial resources to duplicate its Mexican school system elsewhere.

An April 8 session featured Church leaders from France, Germany and Sweden. The tone here was still optimistic, but not at the level of the day before. Social, political and ideological challenges to individual Church members, especially youth, were emphasized. Again these leaders showed respect-inspiring ability, but the challenge they meet is not that of new numbers. They did show the mutual concern and the "europeanness" which one would expect of moderns on that continent, and apparently more of Church membership there today are distinctly modern and European rather than oriented to the USA and US missionaries as in earlier times.

A session on the Church in "the secularized world" featuring professors Robert S. Jordan (Political Science, SUNY Binghamton), Merlin Myers (Anthropology, BYU), and Douglas Tobler (History, BYU) broke little or no new ground. Tobler emphasized neo-Marxism as the most vigorous challenger to Mormonism in the philosophical lists, particularly in Europe, although this is less a direct confrontation than a general phenomenon of competition.

A Devotional address by Elder Gordon B. Hinckley made the point that the Church has already met many if not all the types of problems of internationalization. This has been done miraculously, he stated, not with self-conscious planning of "how" to do it. He felt that the apparent problems still facing us need not be the subject of worry or ark-steadying by anyone in the Church, although he was sympathetic with the idea of discussing the

problems for enlightenment.

A final session of papers addressed "cultural resemblances," examining the notion that somehow Mormons need to consider more thoughtfully why it is that among different peoples are found elements which Mormons consider part of the gospel. Little unity was displayed in these papers and discussants' remarks although individually a number of stimulating ideas were presented.

News of and Comments from CMSC People

Jack Brotherson (493 WIDB, BYU) conducted a field tour for his environmental biology class March 27 which viewed "spots where some of our early pioneers and other travellers through the state in the 1850's observed the then existent vegetation and country-side." Contrasts were to be drawn with present conditions. His notice was out of phase with this Newsletter, yet those with such interests might still wish to communicate with Professor Brotherson.

Charles Ainsworth (Sociology/Anthropology, University of Montevallo, Montevallo, Alabama 35115) has a draft of a study on southern Mormon attitudes toward Jews and Blacks, replicating Armand L. Mauss' survey of western Mormons' attitudes toward minorities. He intends to publish the work, but those with urgent interest might wish to anticipate that appearance and correspond with Professor Ainsworth.

Howard Palmer (History, University of Calgary, Alberta) indicates he hopes to return sometime to studying attitudes toward Mormons in Canada, from the standpoint of Canadian social and intellectual history, and also to write more on Mormon political behavior in Alberta. Meanwhile he edits Canadian Ethnic Studies, a journal (which, ironically, includes Jews as a category in its bibliography but not Mormons!)

Glenn M. Vernon (Sociology, U. of Utah) reports that his course on Sociology of Mormonism has now been approved as a course under that title and will be offered regularly. He has a preliminary version of a text for the class which he hopes to publish eventually. Copies are available from him at \$7.50, his cost for duplication. The third volume of his annual, *Measuring Mormonism*, will be available early in the summer.

John Sorenson (Newsletter editor) will be teaching a class at BYU in the fall under "Sociology of Religion" which will actually treat Mormon society and culture.

Klaus Gurgel, Armand Mauss, Donald Snow, Joseph Romney, Gilbert Scharffs and Mark Leone have all urged continuation of CMSC and expressed appreciation for the Newsletter. (Leone will be at the University of Maryland (Anthropology) in the fall.)

Richard D. Poll suffered a heart attack some weeks ago but is recovering satisfactorily, at last word.

Scott Kenney, a CMSC member, is editor of *Sunstone*, A Quarterly Journal of Mormon

Experience, Scholarship, Issues and Art, the new LDS students' journal. Readers who have not seen either of the first two issues are in for a treat. For example, the article in the second issue on the vigorous state of the theater among LDS young people in the Provo and Salt Lake City areas is well-written and very informative on an aspect of Mormon culture not usually discussed in print. (P.O.Box 529, Provo, UT 84601. \$11.00)

Olympus Publishing Company Publications

Some of you are already aware of Olympus' list of publications of CMSC interest (Garth L. Mangum, an Olympus founder, is one of our CMSC number). Recently offered is *The Far Country: A Regional History of Moab and LaSal, Utah* by Faun McConkie Tanner. Also issued is *Ward B. Studt's Medicine in the Intermountain West*, on rural medicine, its history, and its future. *Polygamist's Wife*, by Melissa Merrill, has been publicized and reviewed elsewhere; it is a "told to" account of a woman's experience in polygamy in the last few decades. Then J. Kenneth Davies' (also of CMSC) book, *Deseret's Sons of Toil: A History of the Labor Movement in Utah*, may also interest Newsletter readers. (The publisher's address is 1670 East 13th South, Salt Lake City 84105).

Miscellany

John Sorenson has a paper by Max E. Stanton (Anthropology, BYU-Hawaii) on "The Polynesian Cultural Center: A multi-ethnic model of seven Pacific Island cultures," presented at the 1975 meetings of the American Anthropological Association. It interprets the effects of the center Laie, the component the center on the school, Laie, the component worker groups, and the tourists.

Richard Jackson (Geography, BYU) has a paper he read at a convention on "Perception of sacred space: typology and example." It establishes a typology of sacred space ascription and provides data on a large survey of LDS people's sense of "geopiety." Those particularly interested might request a copy of the manuscript in order to offer him suggestions, as he may publish the results. Incidentally the Salt Lake Temple received the highest mean sacredness ranking, with "future city of Zion," "Sacred Grove," and "Utah" following.

The BYU chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, national history honor society, gave a \$100 award to James V. D'Arc, a senior in history from Provo, for his study of the production and impact of the movie "Brigham Young."

Some Utah Magazines

A crop of periodicals perhaps not familiar to Newsletter readers sometimes contain information and frequently convey atmosphere about Utah, Mormon and otherwise. A brief rundown on these may suggest their value for you.

Utah Magazine is in its second year. It has some occasional scenic photography which is attractive, and very occasionally some information you might not have known is written

in the 800-1400 word articles. Quality of the writing is not very good. (65 Fayette Ave., Salt Lake City 84101. \$10.00).

Utah Holiday is also around two years of age, but it has come much farther. It seems to essay to be sort of Wasatch Front New Yorker. It's listing of dining, art showings and performance events is large, although it still gives only limited coverage to areas outside Salt Lake City. Some of its articles are trivial and others not well documented, but it does provide a glimpse of how urban Utah looks to an affluent upper middle class group who like it here. (246 West First South, Salt Lake City 84101. \$8.00).

Mountainwest is sort of Utah Valley's answer to Utah Holiday. Surprisingly it has crossed a threshold of slickness one would not have thought yet possible in the valley to the south, although it is less sophisticated than its northern rival by a good measure. One interesting feature is its regular listing of "best sellers" at local bookstores of both national and regional press books. (P.O. Box 529, Provo 84601. \$6.00)

Utah Economic and Business Review. Published by the University of Utah Bureau of Economic and Business Research and now in its 36th year, this modest monthly provides a valuable stream of data on economic, demographic and other variables unobtainable elsewhere. Although most of the interpretive articles are from a broadly economic point of view, the data remain essential. (Free, from the Bureau.)