

NEWSLETTER

COMMITTEE ON MORMON SOCIETY AND CULTURE

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Status of CMSC and the Newsletter

In No. 1 of this year recipients were advised that future copies of the Newsletter would be sent only to those who sent in self-addressed, stamped envelopes. The result was virtual disaster. Most of those who might have sent the envelopes failed to do so. This might be interpreted as lack of interest, except that we know of individual cases where other reasons were at fault. As a result some of the current addressees, through negligence or perhaps the fault of our blunders in "managing" the Committee in the loosest possible way, have failed to receive all copies of the Newsletter. Amnesty is hereby declared! If any of you have not received all copies, please request you be furnished missing ones. This issue completes three for the third year, a total of nine issues available.

Despite your chairman's frequent resolves to chuck the whole enterprise, CMSC still seems to fill a valuable need for some recipients. I have, consequently, decided to keep going, urged particularly by the kindness of Dean Louder and Ben Bennion in providing the piece below to help enliven the Newsletter.

You will recall that nobody was asked to produce additional payment this year, because our till was sufficiently full. For 1977, however, please send \$2.00 in order to receive three issues. And for next year, no stamped envelopes!

Project Report: "Mormon Mobility in the Modern Era"

Dean Louder and Ben Bennion have furnished the following exclusive report to CMSC on the status of their project titled as above.

Final form of the project: graphically illustrated monograph

Scope and aim: Analysis of three particular aspects of recent Mormon migration within the United States and Canada; (1) the temporal and spatial variation in the major flows of Mormon migrants; (2) salient socio-demographic characteristics of the migrants; (3) the role of migration as a major component in the geographic spread of the Church.

Background: The LDS Church's recent computerization of its membership records has

rendered obsolete the standard membership form used since 1940. In the summer of 1974 we secured access to the retired white copies of these old forms after they had been filed away alphabetically upon arrival from an ever-widening circle of wards and stakes. At that time knowledgeable sources in the membership department of the Church estimated that approximately eighty-five percent (85%) of all North American membership records had been received. Our primary objective was to study Mormon mobility patterns as revealed by the changes in address recorded on the backside of records. To have pursued such a study using the new computer membership file would have been impossible since it retains only the most recent move or present location of members. As we began to compile data on migration, it became apparent that we could efficiently record other information on the membership file which would permit us to construct a rough socio-religio-demographic profile of the Church. (We kept wishing that the LDS Church would keep track of its members' education and occupations.)

Sample and data: A one percent sample (every hundredth form) was drawn. It was clear that regions outside North America were under represented, the reason being that only two countries, the United States and Canada, had sent most of their retired forms to Salt Lake City by the summer of 1974. Prior to taking the sample, each American state and county and various regions of Canada and the rest of the world were geocoded to permit rapid and precise assignment of places of birth, baptism, and residence. The following variables were then recorded: year of birth, county and state or non-U.S. region of birth, year of baptism, county and state or non-U.S. region of baptism, date and type (temple or civil) of first marriage, date and type of second marriage (if applicable), sex or priesthood held, date of most recent priesthood ordination (if applicable), place of mission served (if any), years of birth of children (up to the seventh), and, finally, year and county and state or non-U.S. region of successive migrations (up to the tenth).

Data files: All data compiled were punched on cards and then transferred to magnetic tape to create an initial data file, **MORMON**, which was used to create a second file or interaction matrix, **MORMOV**.

MORMON: This file consists of some 11,000 entries, the number of Latter-day Saints selected by sampling with their accompanying socio-religio-demographic characteristics as described above.

MORMOV: This file was designed to facilitate analysis of LDS mobility patterns and to permit analyses to be conducted at any of several scales: intra-county, inter-county, inter-state, inter-region (regions as defined by Nielson in his in-house report *Membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by Areas* prepared in 1971 for the Presiding Bishop's Office), or international. The file consists of the approximately 44,000 moves made by the 11,000 Latter-day Saints sampled. Using the well-known SPSS programme **CROSSTABS**, where horizontal entries consist of origins and vertical entries destinations and third and fourth dimensions time and socio-religio-demographic characteristics respectively, we can identify and classify primary LDS migration streams at several scales by time period.

Work completed: To date we have completed three papers based upon our summer's work at Church Office Buildings Square. The first, prepared for geographer's meetings in Milwaukee (1975) and Moscow, USSR (1976), placed our study in the historical context of the contrapuntal forces of gathering and dispersion. A second, presented at a BYU symposium in November 1975, illustrated how LDS wards have spread across the United States from Utah and how Mormons are currently (1973) distributed, both absolutely and as a percentage of the total population at the county level. (The 1973 maps required the conversion of ward and stake membership data into county units, a tedious but simple task not heretofore undertaken except for Utah and parts of Arizona and Idaho.) The third paper, prepared for the third (1976) issue of *Measuring Mormonism*, discussed some of the socio-demographic differences between CONs (converts) and BICs (members born in the church).

Parts of these three papers will be incorporated in the monograph, *Mormon Mobility in the Modern Era*, now being written.

Utah Holiday Magazine

Those not located in the Wasatch Front area may not be aware of the contents of this magazine, which often deals substantively with aspects of Mormon life in Utah. (Address: Utah Holiday Publishing Co., 246 West First South, Salt Lake City, UT 84101. \$8 for 17 issues per year.) Volume 6 is now appearing.

When the magazine began a few years back it was nothing but a "discerning guide" to the "good life," Salt Lake City version. Apparently it filled a substantial need, for it has prospered and expanded. Now it uses the tagline "Useful Fact/Provocative Opinion." In the last two years especially it has come out with many pieces of real substance about Utah life, far more than any other publication. A choice example of a presentation which no one else could or would do was in the May 24, 1976 (Vol. 5, No. 10) issue. "Probing the Power Structure," by Elaine Jarvik, "The Powers That Be," by Jarvik and George Buck, and "Political Power People," by Jarvik and R.J. Coles, combine to lay out a comprehensive, if flawed, picture of who holds and uses power in the Salt Lake area. "The Powers That Be" is a set of photos and thumbnail sketches of fifteen men whom the reporter considers to have key significance. (It may be compared usefully with an article by J.D. Williams on the power structure in SLC in the 1950's mentioned in a previous issue of this newsletter.)

Other treatments of value include: an approach to a history of TV in Salt Lake (July 7 and Sept. 8 and 29, 1975), an issue on Ogden (Mar. 3, 1975), the advertising industry in Utah (July 26, 1976), the Salt Lake City press (Dec. 5, 1974), the Utah legislature with ratings of individuals (Mar. 24, 1975), and an issue on Utah Valley (Dec. 3, 1975). Of special value is "Mormon money and how it is made," by Dave Briscoe and Bill Beecham (Mar. 22, 1976).

Association for Mormon Letters

The first symposium of this group was held October 4, 1976 at the Hotel Utah. Papers read included Bruce W. Jorgensen, "Heritage of Hostility: The Mormon Attack on Fiction in the Nineteenth Century"; and a panel on "Mormon and Poet: The Interface." Steven Sondrup (Humanities, BYU) is executive secretary of the association.

Geography of Mormon Culture Symposium

Klaus D. Gurgel communicates that he will chair a session with this title as part of the 73rd Annual Meeting of The Association of American Geographers to be held in Salt Lake City, April 25, 1977, 1:30 to 3:10 PM, at the Hotel Utah. The following papers were slated:

S. George Ellsworth. "The Expansion of Mormonism: Geographical Considerations."

Jerald R. Izatt and Dean R. Louder. "The Core-Periphery Dichotomy: Its Meaning for Mormons."

Gary Brent Peterson. "The Mormon Landscape as Home."

D. Brooks Green. "The Marriage Field of a Rural Mountain Valley in the Mormon Culture Region."

Ulrike Rehn-Schlendrich. "Modification and Secularization Tendencies in the Socio-geographical Structure of Mormonism in Modern Utah."

Miscellany

Lavina Fielding's summary of the "Expanding Church" symposium at BYU has appeared in the December issue of *The Ensign*. It considers at much greater length than our bit in a previous newsletter the substance of the conference.

In the same issue of *The Ensign* Davis Bitton's two-page discussion of recent books and articles on Mormon History contains much of value to CMSC readers.

The third issue of *Sunstone*, A Quarterly Journal of Mormon Experience, Scholarship, Issues, and Art has appeared, continuing the surprisingly high standard of the first two issues. (P.O. Box 596, Provo, UT 84601. \$11 per year, \$8 for students and retired persons.) A warm piece by James N. Kimball recalls the positive side of J. Golden Kimball often forgotten by those who laugh at or with him. Craig and Nancy Law's try at

contemporary "Mormon Documentary Photography" is anthropologically interesting. Their shot of "Wheat and Beet Days, softball game. Garland, Utah, 1974" is an instant classic. Allen D. Roberts gives us "More of Utah's Unknown Pioneer Architects: Their Lives and Works." "Past and Present: Some Thoughts on Being a Mormon Woman," by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher is thoughtful. Dennis Lancaster's "Dixie Wine" is more a condescending folklife paper than the "history" it is labelled, yet it has value. The review of E.L. Wilkinson's and Cleon Slousen's one-volume history of BYU has substance even if it might have been handled better. (I was sorry to see the authors use noms de plume.) Brigham! and Here's Brother Brigham, two totally contrasting stage productions, are reviewed by a pair who, again, hide their identities, yet their comments are valuable. And there is still more in Sunstone number 3.

The Folklore Society of Utah meeting held Sept. 25, 1976, included papers by Kathy Ensign. "Courtship and dating customs among Mormons," Richard C. Poulsen, "Folklore of the Icelandic settlement in Spanish Fork," and Austin E. Fife, "Western motifs in cemeteries of the intermountain region."

Joseph Romney (History, Cal. Poly., San Luis Obispo, CA) has commented on the piece in Newsletter 2, 1976, on Mormon personality. Amidst general resonance with the characterization, he suggests that on a number of points a tension or synthesis prevails. For example, the emphasis upon individual freedom simultaneously with obedience is synthesized as verbal agreement with each ideal, surrounded by a high degree of stress as the situation is dealt with repeatedly without (perhaps) a discernible general rule governing the outcome.

Glenn Vernon's Measuring Mormonism, Vol. 3, has appeared. Whereas it began with student papers, by this issue it contains all solid, professional reports of much value.

The Journal of Mormon History, Vol. 3, is out. The nearly one hundred pages contain such pieces as: Chas. Peterson's provocative "A Mormon village: one man's west"; William Mulder, "Mormon angles of historical vision: some maverick reflections"; "Edward Tullidge: historian of the Mormon commonwealth," by Ronald W. Walker; and "Sources of Marriner S. Eccles's economic thought, by Dean L. May.