

## NEWSLETTER

### COMMITTEE ON MORMON SOCIETY AND CULTURE

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

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#### Mormon Dietary Habits Studied

The Fall 1976 issue of *The Professional Nutritionist* contains an article by D.P. Rose, "Diet, Nutrition, and Cancer," which features substantial data on the incidence of cancers among Mormons in comparison with the U.S.

#### Perception of the Mormons

A UPI dispatch from Salt Lake City, printed in the Jan. 20, 1977, *Provo Daily Herald* reported on the first word non-Utahns think of when they hear the name "Utah." A survey done by the Utah Travel Council says the first word is "desert," followed in frequency by "Mormon." "Asked to expand on 'Mormon,' the survey showed that persons most often thought 'unfriendly' was the appropriate word.

#### Polygamy Study

CMSC member Russell Judkins (Anthropology, SUNY, Geneseo, NY) worked last summer in the beginning of a long-range project of interest. He has under-taken the social anthropological analysis of Mormon polygyny in the 1847-1890 period. Focus of attention will be on the structural orientation of the individual wife as head, or co-head, of a functional domestic unit, which might operate either in close cooperation with or semi-independently from other like units -- which taken together, and viewed in terms of male role perspective, are called a polygynous family. This is especially important because these de facto basic units of polygynous societies are potentially matrifocal and matriarchal in their potential for female-centeredness, yet, apparently paradoxically, they occur in a strongly male-dominated, patrilineal society (at least allegedly). He further notes that the orientation in nearly all writing on this unique and surprisingly enduring American experiment in familial structure and interpersonal dynamics has been superficial, sensationalist, and basically oriented (even if only antagonistically) to the structural perspective of the male. This dominance of male-perspective in writing on Mormon polygyny is linked with an uncritical acceptance of Western notions of romantic love and sex-roles. The detailed outcome aims to be an analytical reconstruction of interaction patterns, decision-making, authority and resource allocation and interpersonal relations in individual domestic units of polygynous families. He notes, moreover, that Mormon polygynous marriage and family is the only example we know of in the 19th and 20th century among Euro-American societies, so it should provide a unique perspective and example. His work began with documentary investigations in SLC.

### Class/Research on Jewish and LDS Families

The BYU student newspaper reported a class would be offered during Winter Semester in the Honors Program labelled "Jewish and Mormon Family, Differences and Similarities." The class was to be taught by "Steve Newman, a Jewish graduate student from Kansas State University" and "Larry Brady, a colleague of Newman's in the College of Family Living graduate program." Newman is said to be a former rabbinical student at Hebrew Union College --Jewish Institute of Religion.

### BYU Studies

Volume 16, Number 4, contains selected centennial year lectures thought by the editor to be worth preserving. CMSC people might find considerable value in Pres. Spencer W. Kimball's "Second Century Address," and perhaps in "A BYU for Zion," by Chauncey C. Riddle, but the influential talk by Elder Boyd K. Packer, "The Arts and the Spirit of the Lord," which caused a minor furor in some quarters in Provo, Elder Neal A. Maxwell's "Some thoughts on the gospel and the behavioral sciences," and Spencer J. Palmer's "Mormon views of religious resemblances" all deserve some attention. A notable perspective, mentioned in a previous newsletter, is now published here in Prof. Ernst Benz' "Mormonism and the secularization of religions in the modern world." His is one of those rare papers in which the non-Mormon author both has something insightful to say and also says it in highly knowledgeable language about the Mormons. He sees the Latter-day Saints as secularized to a degree and in a manner both desirable and necessary in the modern world, but lacking most of the harmful effects of the usual secularization. His analysis of how this could come about is provocative.

Wilson's "The Paradox of Mormon Folklore," given as a lecture in the Redd Center series at BYU, is published in the Autumn 1976 issue. It provides one of the more carefully phrased statements of the social, cultural and psychological significance of folklore in Mormon studies. It is followed by "Hagoth and the Polynesian Tradition," by Jerry K. Loveland (BYU-Hawaii) which is a cut above the usual treatments but really says little about Mormons and their life or about Polynesia. A. Glen Humpherys, "Missionaries to the Saints," presents a historical sketch of "home missionaries" and related callings mainly in the 19th century but extending in part up into the earlier decades of the 20th. Among the book reviews, Marvin S. Hill's vigorous treatment of Wilkinson and Skousen's one-volume history of BYU proves to be one of the more successful reviews ever in BYU Studies, both substantively and stylistically.

### Utah Historical Quarterly Folklore Issue

The Fall 1976 issue (Vol. 44, No. 4) is devoted to Mormon folklore studies, under editorship of William A. Wilson, whose "The Study of Mormon Folklore" begins the issue with a historical and conceptual overview of the subfield. Wilson also contributes a definitive bibliography as the final item. The real highlight is Clifton H. Jolley's "The Martyrdom of Joseph Smith: An Archetypal Study," pages 329-50. He discusses this historical event in terms of Jungian archetypes as used by Campbell and Rosenberg in studies on The Hero. Of the fifteen elements expectable in martyred-hero narratives, ten clearly apply to the Joseph story, in some cases contrary to objective historical facts.

Jolley's piece is destined to be one of the classics of Mormon folklore studies. Other articles, including "The Legend of Jessie Evans Smith," "The Great and Dreadful Day: Mormon Folklore of the Apocalypse," and "Some Botanical Cures in Mormon Folk Medicine," are of some interest but not significant.

Dialogue, Autumn 1976

In case some CMSC readers have not yet seen this issue, they should note the significance of its subject: "Sexuality and Mormon Culture." The lead article by Lester E. Bush, Jr., is a classic to match his earlier piece on the history of Mormon views on the Negro. The argumentation is careful and the documentation (in historical form) of immense value. Probably the piece stands out because previous studies of Mormon sexual behavior and attitudes have been so partial or slanted as to offer only minor help in understanding this complex phenomenon. Klaus Hansen's "Mormon sexuality and American culture" is quite impressionistic, valuable for a few suggestions but easy to argue with. Wilford Smith's replicated survey materials on LDS youth's sexual behavior and views (from 1950, 1961 and 1972) is methodologically careful, something that cannot be said about a good deal of sociological study of Mormons. Armand Mauss has a piece in the issue comparing California and Salt Lake City people on sex-related matters. The short transcript of a discussion among three of the sociologists is mainly redundant with the articles. Harold Christensen reprises once more his comparative studies on sex in Utah, Indiana and Denmark. The treatment here is troubled by methodological oversimplification. (For example, his "intermountain" sample, while not well described, seems to involve many BYU students, so the geographical designation may not be apt; besides no controls for social class were apparently used in the "cultural" comparisons.) A final piece consists of an anonymous short sexual memoir of an LDS homosexual which poignantly reveals many of the hidden tensions about sexuality among LDS people.

On the whole the issue serves a very useful purpose for the student of Mormon society and culture by displaying some of the dimensions of a subject, which has hardly even been discussed publically heretofore. It is very likely that a great deal of informal and some formal condemnation of this Dialogue issue and its participants will be heard, which could say more about the society than about the participants.

Consecration and Stewardship Study

Gordon E. Wagner, an economics professor at Wells College, Aurora, NY, has completed his dissertation at Cornell entitled "Consecration and Steward-ship: A Socially Efficient System of Justice" (Jan. 1977). It spells out in unprecedented detail how a plausible institutional C & S structure could work while staying within the revelations on the subject. Since it constitutes the most ambitious and sophisticated study of this topic to date, it deserves close attention by those studying Mormons, either historically or in functional terms. (Contact Wagner direct. John Sorenson also has a copy, and it will soon be available at the BYU library.)

The scope can be seen from the table of contents:

## Chap. II. Origin and Character of Mormon Socioeconomic Doctrine

### Origins

Doctrinal foundations

## Chap. III. Mormon Communitarian Experiments Jackson County, 1831-1833 Kirtland, Ohio

Far West, Missouri, 1837-1839 Nauvoo, Illinois, 1839-1846 The westward movement

The Utah period

The early Utah period The cooperative movement United Order of Enoch

Zion's Central Board of Trade

The modern welfare program

## Chap. IV. C & S as a Social Contract: Theological Foundations

The theological foundations of C & S Mankind in their premortal spirit state

The alternatives on earth

Social contract (cf. J. Rawls' Theory of Justice)

Institutional and operational criteria of justice under C & S

## Chap. V. C & S as an Institutional System Consumer equality

Equality as producer

Social property

The right to a stewardship

The right to management

Equality as a citizen

## Chap. VI. Planning Structures: Enforcement, Economic Calculation and Adjustment

The structure and content of planning

The scope and content of the plan

Levels and form of planning

Enforcement of the plan: achieving behavioral consistency with the plan

The audit system

Leadership system

The court system

The character of incentives

Ritual of recontracting and social pressure

Economic calculation and adjustments: achieving economic consistency with the plan

## Chap. VII. Conclusions

Appendix I. Revelations to the Prophet Joseph Smith Appendix II. The Views of Brigham Young

## Miscellaneous Writings

Richard H. Jackson and R.L. Layton, "Mormon village: analysis of a settlement type," appears in *Professional Geographer*, Vol. 28 (May 1976): 136-41.

D. Michael Quinn's important dissertation is now available: *The Mormon hierarchy, 1832-1932: an American elite*. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1976 (Yale). Order No. 76-30, 277.

Luel "J" Perrett, *A comparative study of instructional techniques developed by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in their seminary program for grades 9-12*. Ann Arbor: Univ. Micro. Inter., 1976 (U. of Montana). Order No. 77-723.

James V. D'Arc, "Saints on celluloid: the making of the movie Brigham Young," *Sunstone*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Fall 1976): 11-29, has some value about media attitudes.

Robert Kane, Wayne Spencer, and Barry Rigby, "Family planning attitudes and practices in a Mormon community," also in *Sunstone*, pp. 78-85, offers valuable survey data but is disappointing in its incompleteness and lack of analysis. In the same issue the inimitable "F. Bliss and P.Q. Gump" (Orson Scott Card) reviews "Huebener," one of the significant theatrical events at BYU in recent years. This play, by Thomas Rogers, tells of an anti-Nazi Mormon in Hitler's Germany and his subsequent execution -- after excommunication under a Nazi branch president. It caused intense discussion and excitement in Provo and Salt Lake circles during its short run.

A listing in *Mormon Americana* which some might have missed: Kephart, William M. *Extraordinary groups; the sociology of unconventional life-styles*. St. Martin's: 01 vol, 1976, pp. 194-240.

Those who have recently read the official history of BYU regarding the Ricks College incident may not be aware of an interesting, obscure source with a wholly different viewpoint: *Dr. Wilkinson's Role in the Proposal To Move Ricks College*, 64 pp., 1959, Committee of One Thousand: Rexburg, Idaho. The CMSC chairman has a personal copy to share by xerox.

Eugene E. Campbell and Bruce L. Campbell, "The Mormon Family," chapter 16 in *Ethic Families in America*, Mindel and Habenstein, eds. New York: Elsevier, 1976, p. 379-412.