

NEWSLETTER

SOCIETY FOR THE SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF MORMON LIFE

Volume 3, Number 1

February, 1981

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS OF INTEREST

Pacific Sociological Association

The PSA is meeting this year in Portland, Oregon, at the new riverfront Marriott Hotel, during the period March 18 through 21, 1981- It will be important to all SSSML members for at least two reasons: {1} Some interesting papers will be presented, including some on Mormon topics, and {2} SSSML will hold a special meeting at the Marriott during the PSA conference. The papers to be presented on Mormon topics are: "Sex Role Attitudes of Mormons and Non-Mormons in Utah" {by Moshe and Harriet Hartman of Utah State University} and "Piety and Political Paranoia" {by Mike Homola of Purdue University}. Both papers contain findings that are somewhat unexpected. Aside from these two papers, there are altogether three different PSA sessions this year on the sociology of religion, including one devoted to the new exchange theory project of Stark and Bainbridge. For SSSML members, in particular, we will have our own meeting at 5:30pm on Friday evening, March 20, in the Salem Room, just before supper: In addition to a little bit of society business that has to be taken up, the main feature of that special SSSML meeting will be a presentation from the LDS Correlation Department on projects underway there. It is not well known that this church department has an extensive and sophisticated research capability for conducting scientific studies and program evaluations within the church organizational setting. Come and learn the uses to which the Church is putting social science research!

Western Social Science Association

The WSSA is meeting this Spring in San Diego during April 23-25, 1981. Among the sessions offered there again this year will be a special one on Mormon topics, moderated by SSSML Vice-President Wilford Smith. This is the third year in a row that the WSSA has had a "Mormon panel." This April that panel will include the following papers: "Measuring Mormonism: A Content Analysis of Mormon General Conference Addresses" {by Gordon Shepherd, of the University of Central Arkansas, and Gary Shepherd, of Oakland University in Michigan}; "Changes in Symbolic Sociological Terms: Church, Kingdom, Home, and Family" {by Michael Palmer, University of California, Santa Barbara}; and "Mormon Patriarchy in Modern Times" {by Faye Huerta and Anthony

Stocks, Idaho State Univeristy, Pocatello}. Phillip Kunz of BYU will be the discussant.

Both the WSSA and the PSA conferences will obviously be very worthwhile for SSSML members to attend, so that we can "touch base" with colleagues having mutual interests in studying things Mormon from a social science perspective. More information on the WSSA meeting can be obtained from Wilford Smith at BYU, and on the PSA meeting from Armand Mauss at Washing-ton State University

Society for the Sociological Study of Mormon Life {SSSML} Annual Meeting

{That's us, gang!} As usual, SSSML will be meeting with the joint annual conventions of the American Sociological Association {ASA} and the Society for the Study of Social Problems {SSSP}. For this year, those meetings will take place in Toronto, Ontario, between August 21 and 28, 1981. SSSML will be meeting jointly this year with SSSP, which will entitle us to have our events listed in their printed program- The SSSP this year will be meeting in the Park Plaza Hotel, with some events also on the nearby University of Toronto campus. While Toronto is a distant trip for many of our SSSML members, the annual ASA-SSSP meeting week is the time designated for our official annual meeting, so we hope that all SSSML members will make an effort to attend these August festivities in Toronto, and to stay at the Park Plaza Hotel, which the SSSP is graciously sharing with us. The exact nature of our SSSML meeting {s} there is yet to be worked out, and more will be forthcoming in a later Newsletter. Meanwhile, suggestions for our August program will be welcomed by the SSSML President, Armand Mauss. One possibility is an "author meets critic" format, if there is a good recent book on Mormon matters by a social scientist who would be willing to come and meet with us.

Association for the Sociology of Religion {ASR}

This organization will also be meeting with the ASA and SSSP in Toronto, August 22-24. It will feature at least one session on Mormon topics, which is being organized by Jon Alston, and there is a possibility of two sessions. Why not place a paper in one of these ASR sessions and thereby request travel money from your institution?! Write or phone immediately, if you might be able to produce a paper on Mormons for this program: Professor Jon P. Alston, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Texas A & M University, College Station, TX 77843.

LAST YEAR'S ANNUAL MEETING

Our meeting last August in New York City with the ASA was a real treat! We devoted the evening to a consideration of the work of Nels Anderson, well known by Mormon buffs for his 1942 classic, *Desert Saints*, but even better known by Chicago sociology buffs for his classic 1923 work, *The Hobo*. The most inspiring and heart-warming feature of that

meeting last year was that Nels Anderson attended in person at age 90! The tragedy was that only about a dozen people attended, but they were well rewarded for doing so. Professor Ronald Miller, of Chadron State College in Nebraska, reviewed Anderson's pioneering contributions to the study of skidrows and homeless men {e.g., *The Hobo*}, and Professor Craig Infanger, of the University of Kentucky, reviewed Anderson's Mormon past and his socio-historical studies of southern Utah {*Desert Saints*}. Then Professor Anderson himself {still active on the faculty of the University of New Brunswick} spoke for a while. He had prepared a formal presentation entitled, "On My Being a Mormon," which has been published in the latest issue of *Measuring Mormonism* {write for copies to Professor Glenn M- Vernon, Department of Sociology, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112}. Then Anderson shared a number of "off the cuff" recollections with us that were just fascinating, both about the University of Chicago in the 1920's, and about southern Utah before that! You see? Our annual meetings really are worth attending!; {Incidentally, Nels Anderson will be back among us again when we meet in Toronto next August, for he is scheduled to appear there on a jointly sponsored ASA-SSSP panel on the history and future of skid row studies in sociology; so you might still get to meet him if you come to Toronto !}

OTHER NEWS

We are short some Council members these days: JIM RICHARDSON is spending this Spring in Holland on a Fulbright Fellowship, but he will return to resume his duties on the Council. A more long term problem will be created for us when WILFORD SMITH will be forced resign as our Vice-President next June in order to accept a Church call as Mission President to the Fiji Islands! In accordance with Article IV, Section 6, of our Constitution, the rest of the Council will have the responsibility for appointing a successor to fill the unexpired portion of Wilford's term. Recommendations {informal nominations} for this post will be carefully considered by the Council from the membership at large. Send them to us via Armand Mauss.

ON ANOTHER CONSTITUTIONAL MATTER

There is a small discrepancy between the terminology used for our officers in the Constitution and that used in all of our letters and publicity so far. The Constitution speaks of our Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, whereas all of our other documents {Newsletters and letterheads} have used the terms President and Vice-President {or President-Elect}. The latter terminology seems to be more conventional and appropriate for professional societies, so it is proposed that we simply adopt that terminology and change the wording in the Constitution accordingly. Since the changes would all be primarily of an editorial kind, it would not seem necessary to go through a formal amending process. IF ANYONE OBJECTS TO THIS CHANGE IN TERMINOLOGY, please notify Armand Mauss in writing by the end of March. Otherwise, the change will be made.

MEMBERSHIP, DUES, AND OTHER PROBLEMS

Our organization is barely making it numerically and financially. This state of affairs is attributable mainly to a lack of leadership by the Council, which we propose to correct immediately. The first thing we will do is dun everyone for his/her dues: ALMOST ALL MEMBERS OWE DUES FOR 1980, AS WELL AS FOR 1981. Dues are two dollars {\$2.00} annually. PLEASE SEND WHAT YOU OWE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. We need these modest dues to pay the costs of putting out these Newsletters and other mailings. We will need your dues also to help pay for the second thing on our agenda, which is a MEMBERSHIP DRIVE. You will hear more about that soon, but for now we will say only that we rely on YOU, our members, to help us recruit colleagues that you suspect may have an interest in social science research on Mormon topics, either as "producers" or as "consumers" of the same. DON'T BE BASHFUL. Distribute the enclosed membership applications to your friends. Meanwhile, please fill out your own {renewal} immediately and mail it in.

FOR THE FUTURE

We are planning to promote a lot more intensive interaction among members of our association. One way in which we can do that is to inform each other regularly of NEWS ITEMS about ourselves. DON'T BE BASHFUL: Tell us the latest interesting news about yourself, or about others, for the benefit of our membership as a whole. ANOTHER THING: We would like to promote a "scholarly grapevine" under the sponsorship of SSSML. That is, we would like to be able to keep all members informed about ongoing research projects of other members {on Mormon topics}, so that members having mutual research interests can learn about them and get into direct contact with each other. We will try to get the next Newsletter out to you before summer, and we will be collecting material for it STARTING NOW. Please return the attached sheet about yourself, filled out as much as possible, by April 1st. Include newsworthy items about yourself or others, including any ongoing research that you are doing on Mormon topics, and of course your dues. All such items should be sent to our Secretary-Treasurer, Julie Wolfe-Petrusky, at the University of Utah.

FINALLY

In case you would like to be reminded of who the officers of your organization are, we reprint the following:

President: Armand L. Mauss, Washington State University
Vice-President {and President-Elect}: Wilford E. Smith, Brigham Young University
Secretary-Treasurer: Julie C. Wolfe-Petrusky, University of Utah

Council Members: Marie Cornwall, University of Minnesota
James T. Richardson, University of Nevada-Reno

Our immediate past-president was Glenn M. Vernon, University of Utah, whose advice as "elder statesman" is still very much appreciated. All of the above are found in the sociology departments of their respective institutions.

ANNUAL DUES STATEMENT AND NEWS SHEET

All members and aspiring members of SSSML please fill out this sheet as fully as possible, enclose one or two years' dues, and then return them quickly to the Secretary-Treasurer.

NAME

ADDRESS PHONE NO.
Disciplinary Identification {Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, etc.}

Dues Enclosed: For 1980 {t2.00}
For 1981 {\$2.00}
Total Enclosed:

NEWS ITEMS

1. General research or scholarly interests in Mormon matters:
2. Research projects or studies currently underway:
3. Other items of interest about yourself {recent publications, appointments, fellowships, planned sabbaticals, special events, etc., etc.}:
4. Similar items of interest about others doing Mormon-related work:

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO JULIE C. WOLFE-PETRUSKY, SECRETARY TREASURER, SSSML, c/o Department of Sociology, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT. 84112.

ALL SSSML MEMBERS: Please cut apart the two applications below and give each to a prospective new member:

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

SOCIETY FOR THE SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF MORMON LIFE Name:

Address: Phone No.:

Areas of Interest in Mormon Studies:

Dues Enclosed: \$ {@\$2.00 per calendar year}

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN TO JULIE C. WOLFE—PETRUSKY,
SECRETARY—TREASURER, SSSML, c/o Department of Sociology, University of
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