

# NEWSLETTER

SOCIETY FOR THE SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF MORMON LIFE

Volume 3, Number 2

June, 1981

## RECENT MEETINGS OF INTEREST

### Pacific Sociological Association

This organization had its annual Spring meetings this year in Portland, Oregon, late last March. Included on the program was a paper by Moshe and Harriett Hartman, of Utah State University, on the sex-role attitudes of Mormons and non-Mormons, based on a sample of college students. One interesting finding of this study was that the greater satisfaction of Mormon women with traditional sex roles was related to their perception that domestic roles were given much more prestige in the Mormon culture than elsewhere. Another paper scheduled for presentation on a Mormon topic had to be cancelled. Several papers on the sociology of religion more generally were also presented in two different panels. Among the more interesting work reported was that done by a team of graduate students led by Professor Rodney Stark, of the University of Washington, on a kind of reciprocal relationship in the distributions of church-going and cult-going memberships, and the geographical variations in those distributions.

### SSSML

Our own SSSML met in this semi-annual Spring meeting with the PSA. The turnout was unfortunately small, but we were rewarded by a very interesting program: Irene Hewette came as a representative of the evaluation research office of the LDS Church Correlation Department and gave us a very succinct and enlightening presentation about the work of that office. We learned how and when it came to be organized, for what purposes, and under whose supervision. Then we were given a brief rundown on the major research projects current and contemplated, including those on conversion, inactivity, and LDS women. It was obvious from the presentation that this enterprise is an unusually professional and sophisticated example of so-called "in-house" research. Members of our society have already been called on in a number of cases as consultants to some of the projects underway in this office, and there seem to be many possibilities in the future for mutually beneficial and interesting professional relationships with SSSML members. After Irene's presentation at our meeting, most of us enjoyed a dinner together at the Benson Hotel's elegant dining room.

### Western Social Science Association

This organization had its annual meeting in San Diego late in April this year. Wilford Smith chaired a panel on the sociology of Mormonism, which was attended by about a dozen people--not as large a turnout as in previous years. Three papers were presented {see previous issue of this Newsletter}, followed by a discussion and critique from Phil Kunz of BYU. Two of the papers demonstrated how content-analysis of church publications {e.g., general conference reports} can be used to trace trends and changes in the style and emphasis of certain movements within the church. The third paper was more of a conceptual critique of the traditional LDS concept of women's roles. We hope to insure that next year's meeting of the WSSA will also have a panel on Mormon topics. Feel free to offer any ideas or initiatives in this direction.

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Three organizations of interest to sociologists will be meeting more or less simultaneously, as usual, at their annual conventions in late August of this year. Toronto, Ontario, will be the site for the Society for the Study of Social Problems {SSSP}, August 21-24; the Association for the Sociology of Religion {ASR}, August 21-24; and the "parent" organization, the American Sociological Association {ASA}, August 24-28. A number of other affiliated organizations for rural sociologists, social psychologists, and others will also be meeting in Toronto around this time. Our own organization, SSSML, will hold its OFFICIAL ANNUAL MEETING on Sunday, August 23rd, from 3 - 5 p.m., in the Park Plaza Hotel (French Room), Toronto, along with the SSSP, which is providing our meeting facilities.

Here is a chance for you to enjoy a colorful vacation in one of the most cosmopolitan cities of the world. Transportation might not be too bad if you watch for the variety of bargain fare offers on the major airlines and get your tickets quickly before the fares go up to summer rates. {For example, if you can get yourself up to Calgary, you can now get roundtrip tickets between Calgary and Toronto on Air Canada for less than-\$300.00. For slightly more, United Airlines will take you to Toronto from several western U.S. cities.} Some real bargains in room rates have also been worked out by some at the posh Park Plaza Hotel, with the SSSP, for as little as \$65.00 per couple {in Canadian dollars, which cost only \$.85 in U.S. dollars:}. There is no room tax in Toronto, and no extra charge at this hotel for children under 14 years old who are staying with their parents. The Park Plaza is just four subway stops from the Sheraton Centre Hotel in Toronto, where the ASA will be meeting at about the same time, but the ASA's hotel {as always} is a lot more expensive.

If you want a big break in price, though, there are two other options afforded by the proximity of some major educational institutions to our hotel: some of the residence halls on the campus of the University of Toronto have been reserved for the SSSP and for members of organizations {like ours} meeting with the SSSP. About a 10-minute walk from the convention hotel {Park Plaza}, these air-conditioned rooms can be reserved for only \$16.50 {single} and \$22.00 {double}, Canadian dollars. Bed linens and towels are supplied, but these rooms share bathroom facilities with other rooms on the same floor. They are also sex-segregated accommodations. Even closer to the Park Plaza Hotel is the campus of St. Michael's College, where most of the meetings and accommodations will be found for the ASR. Rooms can be reserved here in quaint and charming resident halls for \$16.00 {single} or \$26.00 {double}, Canadian dollars. {This translates to \$14.50 and \$23.00, respectively, in U.S. dollars.} The rooms at St. Michael's will be avail-able only for the nights of August 21, 22, and 23. Time is of the essence in making your plans. These room accommodations are going to be gone fast. If you want more information on how to make your reservations, write immediately to Armand L. Mauss, Department of Sociology, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164.

That's all about how you can attend these meetings. Now let's tell you why you should attend. First of all, the ASR {Association for the Sociology of Religion} will be having a session devoted entirely to the sociology of Mormonism. Chaired by Jon P. Alston, of Texas A&M University, it will feature the following papers: "Well-Being and Happiness in Mormon Families: A Multivariate Analysis" {James Duke and Barry Johnson, BYU}; "Mormonism's 'Back-to-the-Land' Movement and Its Agrarian Values" {Donald Dyal, Texas A&M}; and "Mormons for ERA: Analysis of an Internal Social Movement" TO. Kendall White, Washington & Lee University}. Discussant will be Armand L. Mauss, Washington State University. This session will be held at Brennan Hall, St. Michael's College, Toronto,

from 10:15 a.m. until noon on Saturday, August 22, 1981.

Then our own organization, SSSML, will meet in the Park Plaza Hotel from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, August 23rd. After a brief business meeting {our 'annual meeting'}, we will assume an "author meets critics" format. The author will be Klaus J. Hansen, of nearby Queen's University in Ontario, who has just published a great new social history of Mormonism's more recent "assimilationist" years: *Mormonism and the American Experience* {University of Chicago Press, 1981}. A critique of this book will be offered by Rodney Stark, University of Washington, followed by Klaus Hansen's response, and some discussion by all of us. This ought to be a great intellectual experience!

So, y'all come! Stay at any of the above hotels or dorms that appeal to you, and join us for some great times. Future meetings of our organization after Toronto will be in the Spring of 1982 with the PSA again {in San Diego }, and August of 1982 with ASA, ASR, and SSSP again, this time in San Francisco. Suggestions for formats and contents of these 1982 meetings will be greatly appreciated.

## OLD BUSINESS

1. Not hearing of any objections to the proposed editorial change in the constitutional terminology referring to our officers, we have made the change. Our officers are now called, respectively, President, Vice-President {and President-Elect}, Secretary-Treasurer, and Council Members {two}.

2. In accordance with Article IV, Section 6, of our Constitution, the Council {made up of the five leaders listed above} has replaced Wilford Smith with James T. Duke {BYU} as our Vice-President and President-Elect. We congratulate Wilford and wish him well in his new assignment as Mission President for the LDS Church in Fiji. He promises to reaffiliate with us the minute he gets back:

3. In case you've forgotten, the Officers and Council of the SSSML until August, 1982, are now as follows:

President: Armand L. Mauss, Washington State University Vice-President {and President-Elect}:  
James T. Duke, BYU Secretary-Treasurer: Julie C. Wolfe, University of Utah Council Members: Marie Cornwall, University of Minnesota  
James T. Richardson, University of Nevada, Reno

Jim Richardson is on sabbatical in Holland until the end of summer, and Marie Cornwall will be working for the LDS Correlation Department again, July through December, 1981, in Salt Lake City.

## NEW BUSINESS

1. The future of our organization depends a lot on you, the membership. So far just a few of us have carried the organization to the point where it is at least providing some interesting programs and opportunities for scholars of things Mormon to meet. We would like to propose even more in the way of "grapevine activity": serving as a kind of "brokerage" organization to help people contact other people who have related scholarly interests. {See bottom of page 3 of the previous Newsletter.} However, almost no one took us up on our call in the last Newsletter, where we solicited brief blurbs

on the scholarly interests and activities that you have. If you'll let us know what these are, we will tell everyone else. Be sure to let us know, too, whenever you publish an article that might be of interest to the membership of SSSML.

2. Still another offer we are making at this time: Do you have a research idea or even a research discovery that you could capsulize for us in about 500 words? Let's call it a 'mini-article.' If you have anything like that which you would like to share with the membership, send it to Armand Mauss {500-word limit}, and it will be published in the next issue of the Newsletter. Equally appropriate would be an abstract {limit 200-words} of an article that you are publishing elsewhere or reading at a conference. From these humble beginnings, if our membership grows a bit more, we may be able to start our own journal, as the Mormon History Association has done. Theirs has come out only annually since it started 6 or 7 years ago, but it is always a fine collection of articles.

3. All such activities, however, cost money, as does even this Newsletter, and we are a bit concerned about the tardiness with which our dues have been coming in. They are only two dollars a year, and almost all of the dues for 1981 are still outstanding {i.e., few have paid for 1981\*}. In a number of other cases, people have not even paid for 1980. We are attaching hereto a current membership roster for your information. If you have any asterisks after your name, then our records show that you owe us some dues {\* for 1981 only, \*\* for 1980 and 1981}. Please fork over, so that we can keep these Newsletters coming out.

4. Also attached hereto are {1} a sheet soliciting news items and other information about you or your work {we're giving you another chance\*, and {2} some extra membership applications for you to use in soliciting new memberships in SSSML among your friends. Of course, our members do not have to be Mormons but only be interested in things Mormon from a sociological or anthropological or even psychological point of view. Please make good use of both of these other attachments and mail them back to us.

#### HOPE TO SEE Y'ALL IN TORONTO!

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#### 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 {\$2.00}

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 : A. L. Maws, President, SSSML, c/o Washington State University Pullman VA\_ QQIAh

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: A. L. Mauss, President, SSSML, c/o Dept. of Sociology, Washington State University, Pullman, WA. 99161

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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 : A. L. Mauss, President, SSSML, c/o Dept, of Sociology, Washington State University, Pullman, WA. 99164