

SSSML Newsletter

SOCIETY FOR THE SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF MORMON LIFE

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Attached to this newsletter are two forms: Annual Dues Statement and News Sheet; and Election Ballot for SSSML Officers. Please fill out and return both forms ASAP. Also consider the possibility of recruiting a colleague or student for membership into SSSML. Simply photocopy the Annual Dues Statement and News Sheet for the potential recruit and have him/her fill it out.
2. Darwin Thomas and Robert Wilcox were invited to write a column for this issue of the SSSML newsletter. Their column dealing with the use of the book, Doc: The Rape of the Town of Lovell, in a social psychology graduate seminar should be of interest to most SSSML readers. More importantly, the article illustrates the kind of contribution that SSSML members can and should make to the SSSML newsletter. Please consider submitting short articles or news items for

future issues. All materials can be sent to Larry Young, Department of Sociology, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602.

ANNUAL SSSML LECTURE

The Annual SSSML Lecture was held October 25, 1989 at Brigham Young University. The lecture consisted of two speakers and two respondents who dealt with the topic, "Mormonism as a Case Study: The Growth of New Religious Movements." The two speakers included Rodney Stark, Professor of Sociology, University of Washington who spoke on "Modernization and Mormon Growth: The Secularization Theories Revisited," and Jan Shipps, Professor of Religious Studies and History, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis who spoke on "Making Saints: In the Early Days and in the Latter Days." Eileen Barker, Professor of Sociology, London School of Economics, and Darwin L. Thomas, Professor of Sociology, Brigham Young University responded to Professors Stark and Shipps.

The speakers and respondents repeated the panel discussion on October 27, 1989 as the first evening plenary session at the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion meetings in Salt Lake City.

RECENT CONFERENCES

The majority of active SSSML members participated in the 1989 annual meetings of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion which were held in Salt Lake City, Utah last October. Dozens of conference papers, representing a broad spectrum of disciplinary approaches, focused on Mormon life. Marie Cornwall, Tim Heaton and Larry Young plan on editing a book which will include several of the papers presented at the SSSR meetings. In addition, other papers are likely to appear in journals and other edited books. While space limitations do not allow for a full description of all Mormon related conference papers, the following article, reprinted with permission from the December, 1989 issue of Sunstone, gives a good summary of the meetings:

Mormon Sociologists Hold Landmark Meeting

For some time LDS sociologists have been regular participants at Mormon scholarly gatherings such as the Mormon History Association's annual meetings and Sunstone symposiums. Because of their specialized analytical skills and perspectives they have been seen by many as important contributors to the discussion of Mormonism. However, this fall for the first time ever nearly all sociologists who study Mormons were gathered in one place to share their research with other sociologists and, turning the tables, Mormon scholars from other disciplines were minority contributors.

This October 27—29 [1989] the joint meetings of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR) and the Religious Research Association (RRA), held in the Salt Lake Marriott Hotel, legitimized Mormon studies for North American sociologists of religion and also bonded Mormon sociologists.

Fearing low conference turnout, SSSR/RRA rarely meets west of the Mississippi. But due to the lobbying of RRA board member Stan Weed, a researcher in the Church's research and evaluation division, the organizations agreed to come to Utah and this year's conference attendance broke

the record high by one person.

Although the conference had sessions on many religions, Mormonism was prominently featured. At the Thursday opening session Ray Briscoe, with LDS Research and Evaluation, humorously introduced conference goers to Utah and Mormons using demographic data and Calvin Grondahl cartoons. Friday night the Church hosted a generous open house/buffet dinner on the panoramic 26th floor of the Church Office Building for all conference attendees.

Later, the Friday evening plenary session featured Mormonism as a case study in the growth of new religious movements. University of Washington sociologist Rodney Stark presented his research on the growth of the LDS Church. He said the Mormon phenomena challenges the widely-accepted sociological assumptions that secularism and modernity will eventually replace religion. Stark concluded that, based on his growth studies, Mormonism will become a new world religion.

Indiana University-Purdue University historian Jan Shipps, author of *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religions Tradition*, shared research from her forthcoming book on Mormonism in the twentieth century. She discussed the evolving methods Mormons developed to create a Mormon ethnic identity and questioned whether those methods could survive the challenges of the growing international church. She believes Mormonism will evolve from an ethnic religious group to a world religion.

Stark's and Shipps' presentations were discussed by BYU sociologist Darwin Thomas and Eileen Barker of the London School of Economics.

Many attendees felt that this serious discussion of Mormonism by respected non-LDS scholars made Mormon sociology a respectable field of study in the eyes of many in attendance. During the following days, for the first time in the organizations' history the Mormon sessions were attended by numerous scholars not in Mormon

studies.

In addition to the impact on non-Mormon sociologists, the conference brought together a significant number of scholars interested in Mormon sociology, many had never met each other before, including Shipp and Stark.

CONFERENCES IN THE NEAR FUTURE

1. The Mormon History Association will hold its annual meetings at the BYU-Hawaii campus on June 10-17, 1990. For further information contact Martha Sonntag Bradley, Program Chair, 4611 Belmour Way, SLC, UT 84117.
2. The Canadian Mormon Studies Association will hold a conference on "Mormons in Canada, Local and Comparative Perspectives." The Conference will be held June 20—24, 1990 at the University of Lethbridge. For further information contact Keith Perry, Program Organizer, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Lethbridge.
3. Upcoming Sunstone symposiums include:
 - "Plotting Zion," a symposium on communal societies, will be jointly sponsored by the Sunstone Foundation and the Pacific Coast Chapter of the National Communal Historic Societies Association. The conference will be held May 3—5, 1990 at the Excelsior Hotel in Provo, Utah. For registration information or to receive a copy of the advance program contact Sunstone in SLC.
 - Sunstone Symposium XII will be held on 22—25 August 1990 at the University Park Hotel in Salt Lake City. Proposals for papers and panels are now being accepted at the Sunstone office.
4. The 1990 Annual Meetings of the Association for the Sociology of Religion will be held August 9-11, 1990 in

Washington D.C. The conference theme will focus on "Religion, Tradition and Innovation."

5. The 1990 Annual Meetings of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion/Religious Research Association will be held November 9—11, 1990 in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

MINUTES FROM THE 1989 SSSML BUSINESS MEETING

(Recorded by Kristen Goodman, Secretary-Treasurer)

Meeting held 28 October 1989 at the Marriott Hotel in Salt Lake City, Utah from 11:30 am to 12:45 pm. The meeting was held in conjunction with the annual meetings of the SSSR and RRA.

Attending: Don Lindsey (President), Tim Heaton (President-Elect), Kristen Goodman (Secretary-Treasurer), Larry Young (Newsletter Editor), Armand Mauss, Max Stanton, Harold Christensen, Merlin Brinkerhoff, and Gerald Stott.

Don Lindsey brought the meeting to order and led discussions about elections, structure, functions, membership growth and publication of research.

Elections and SSSML Structure

Don read the by-laws to help us determine the election process we should follow. Armand remembered that we nominate people in the Fall at a business meeting, then open nominations to the general membership through the newsletter, and have elections in the Spring. We need to elect a president, vice-president/president-elect, secretary/treasurer, and three council members.

Tim Heaton nominated Merlin Brinkerhoff for president and Kris Goodman as secretary/treasurer. Kris accepted and Merlin agreed to think about it. Tim will be the president for the next two years. We aren't sure who the current members are, but

we should find out and get their input. We may want to reconsider the need for council members.

Kris will send Don a list of members and their dues status. Don will send copies of the by-laws to those present at the business meeting so we can suggest any changes.

SSSML Functions

Merlin asked about the office of president, and the functions of SSSML.

1. We sponsor a newsletter; Larry Young is currently the content editor and David Buerger is the format editor and publisher. The newsletter provides information about work being done in the various areas and on various topics.
2. We try to sponsor sessions at professional meetings. SSSR meetings offer a good fit with our interests. Sunstone meetings are usually in Salt Lake City so they are convenient, and papers don't need to have much analysis. We have sponsored sessions at PSA in the past, with "fair to middlin" success. ASR meetings seem to come at a bad time, and there isn't a lot of interest there.
We may be able to sponsor only one session a year, but we shouldn't lose too much by trying to sponsor a SSSR/RRA session, and sponsor or co-sponsor a session a PSA. Our size limits our functions right now. We aren't strong enough to sponsor our own meetings yet. With limited travel and professional development budgets, many researchers choose to attend meetings within their own discipline. This depletes the pool for giving papers at any specific meetings.
3. We also co-sponsor an annual lecture. We get help from the Redd Center and others at BYU. However, the lecture doesn't have to be given at BYU.

SSSML Growth

Harold Christensen raised a question about why an organization like the Mormon History Association has flourished, and SSSML hasn't. Several reasons were suggested:

1. MHA appears to be more inward-looking. SSSML has broader interests, but most sociologists can't make a living at Mormon studies.
2. The Church used to support historians and they spawned a lot of students. Historical studies don't seem to pose the same threat to testimony as studies of current Mormons and Mormonism.
3. Another problem is that Church employees doing sociological studies can't share much of their research, so may feel awkward in an organization where professional sharing is expected.
4. The Church will probably never have a "Church Sociologist" (like a Church Historian) because he/she would have to be true to the discipline and couldn't promote only the positive aspects of the Church.

We discussed the possibility of opening membership to more than sociologists. The purpose statement in the by-laws certainly seems broad enough to include other social and behavioral scientists. We want to keep diversity in the organization, so that we include more than the "Mormon ghetto" or "culture core" along the Wasatch Front. We could try for potential members in the Seminary and Institute system, and at Ricks. Many potential members don't even know about the society.

We need to get some kind of campaign to increase our membership so we have a larger and more stable core of members. People suggested writing letters to colleagues inviting them to join, and putting information in newsletters from BYU departments such as the Anthropology Department Newsletter.

Publication of Research Volume

Don raised the question again of publishing a volume similar to the old "Measuring Mormonism." He checked with his college, but funding was not available. Many of the papers given at the current SSSML/RRA Meetings will go to a major publisher, but we may want to try to publish some of the others. We think we could do it relatively inexpensively. Don offered to take charge, but asked for help. Gerald Stott offered his assistance and Armand Mauss offered to update his 1984 bibliography for the first volume. Don will ask others to help referee papers. We still need to think of a new name for the volume.

Action Items

1. Don send copies of the by-laws to business meeting participants to review and suggest changes.
2. Kris send Don a membership list and dues status.
3. Everyone think of a name for our proposed publication.
4. Larry include a note about the business meeting, nominations, and request for dues in the newsletter.
5. Think about people to recruit for membership.
6. Someone contact the BYU Anthropology Department to get a notice in their newsletter about SSSML.

GUEST COLUMN

[Editor's Note: Darwin Thomas and Robert Wilcox were invited to reflect on the use of the book, *Doc: The Rape of the Town of Lovell*, as a textbook in a Brigham Young University social psychology graduate seminar.]

The Religion and Family Tapestry In Our Social

Fabric: "Doc's" Designs

Each year as we prepare the outline for a graduate social psychology seminar we wonder about how to best help the students see how religion and family combine with other social institutions to create the social fabric. Once created, the social fabric, with its unique community design, warms and protects some attitudes and behaviors while it simultaneously smothers and kills others. This past semester we used "Doc": *The Rape of the Town of Lovell* (Jack Olsen, 1989, Macmillan) to illustrate the interplay between location in the social structure and attitude/behavior patterns.

It is very difficult to create a classroom experience with sufficient impact to carry the students beyond the required readings into a personal review of their own attitudes and behaviors. But, "Doc" provided just such a rare opportunity and the long discussions before and after class attest to the relevancy of these self reflective experiences.

Community memberships provide many roles varying greatly in power, authority, and responsibility for our own and others' behavior. Some carry protective immunity from investigation and accountability to remarkable degrees. For twenty-five years, responsible residents of Lovell, Wyoming refused to believe that "Doc" was systematically raping his patients. Even after trials, convictions, books, and Oprah Winfrey talk shows, some still refuse to believe.

To accuse a medical doctor of patient rape while under the pretense of a pelvic examination is a serious and disturbing thing for anyone, let alone a teenage Mormon girl in for her first "exam," a first-generation American farmer's wife of German descent, or an Hispanic welfare mother with minimal education. Who would believe them? In a small town of 2,200 people, for a woman to accuse a man of rape who is revered and respected for numerous deeds of superior medical achievement, a founder and chief supporter of a church and school, and a tireless worker and contributor to worthwhile community projects, is to invite an

avalanche of public outcry blaming the victims. Arden McArthur, mother of two raped teenage daughters, did just that and caused innumerable problems for herself, her family, and the family's local business.

The litany of skeptical people representing all levels of the social order illustrates the plight of the low-power person seeking a protective response from the social fabric while at the same time pointing to serious flaws in it. Unbelieving husbands and fathers, Mormon and Baptist church officials, police chiefs and county attorneys, hospital administrators and state medical examining boards, made us appreciate the formidable structural barriers confronting a mother and two daughters. Through dogged and determined effort, with more than 50 victims, Arden was able to get the minimum number of nine women willing to testify as suggested by the prosecuting attorney. Even at that point the prosecuting attorney was not optimistic of a conviction until he decided to have neither Arden nor her daughters testify at the trial. His strategy was to make sure that the victims were not all Mormon women, but included other Protestants and Catholic denominations. This diffused the Mormon conspiracy defense that the conservative Baptist's lawyer was constructing.

Somewhat ironically, Arden, in her discussions with our class, indicated that during those long dark years it was her religious convictions that sustained her, led her to women willing to testify, and gave her the faith to continue, all the while knowing that the overlay of religious attitudes and behaviors in Lovell made her work all the more difficult. What would the designs of the social fabric look like from social science perspectives if they included the possibility of divine intervention in the lives of people? The social tapestry within which "Doc" wove his designs raised many fundamental questions. The book by a man who was asked by "Doc's" supporters to write the "real" story of John Story, along with video tapes of Larry King, Oprah Winfrey, Inside Edition, and 60 Minutes provided

powerful case study material for better understanding the role of religion and family in community affairs.

Darwin Thomas, Professor of Sociology, BYU, husband of Beverly Morrison, from Lovell, Wyoming.

Robert Wilcock, Ph.D. candidate, Family Studies, BYU, from Lovell, Wyoming.

RECENT SOCIAL SCIENCE PUBLICATIONS ON MORMONS

[Ed., Compiled by Armand Mauss]

Books:

There are some new books in history, biography, and theology, but I would not consider any of them social science, even by a fairly expansive definition of that term.

Articles:

From the *Social Forces* 68:572—92 (Dec., 1989):

- Marie Cornwall, "The Determinants of Religious Behavior: A Theoretical Model and Empirical Test."

From the *Review of Religious Research* 31:2 (Dec., 1989):

- Marie Cornwall and Perry H. Cunningham, "Surveying Latter-day Saints: A Review of Methodological Issues."

From *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 22:4 (Winter, 1989):

- Editors, "Coming to Terms with Mormon History: An Interview with Leonard Arrington."
- Stanford Cazier, "Honoring Leonard Arrington."
- Max Nolan, "Materialism and the Mormon Faith."
- Carol Edison, "Mormon Gravestones: A Fold Expression of Identity and Belief."
- William A. Wilson, "The Study of Mormon

- Folklore: An Uncertain Mirror for Truth."
 - Stephen Epperson, "Jews in the Columns of Joseph's Times and Seasons."

From *Sunstone*:

13:4 (August, 1989):

- David Knowlton, "Missionaries and Terror: The Assassination of Two Elders in Bolivia."
- J. Frederic Voros, "Do You Still Believe in Magic? Why the Sixties Generation is Losing Faith."
- George P. Lee, "The Lee Letters" (complete texts of the two letters given by Lee to the General Authorities).

13:5 (October, 1989):

- David H. Bailey, "Mediocrity, Materialism, and Mormonism."
- Frank Whaling, "The Intertwining of the World's Religions" (an interview).
- Marshall Hamilton: "Thomas Sharp's Turning Point: Birth of an Anti-Mormon."
- Kate L. Kirkham, "Can Whites 'Do' Integration?"
- Jessie Embry, "An Unfruitful History" (review of 1988 Bookcraft history of the Relief Society, 1974-1984, written by Barbara B. Smith).
- Newell Bringhurst, "A Practical Man of Action" (review of 1988 University of Illinois Press biography of Joseph Smith III, written by Roger D. Launius).

13:6 (December, 1989):

- Paul James Toscano, "Priesthood Concepts in the Book of Mormon: Unique Perspectives on Church Leadership and Organization."
- Marie Cornwall, "The Gender Question."

PLUS . . . a very nice, long, newsy article about the October, 1989, conference of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and the Religious

Research Association, with special attention to its Mormon content.

From *BYU Studies*: 29:3 (Summer, 1989):

- A Lester Allen, "Science and Theology: A Search for the Uncommon Denominator."
- "Mormon Bibliography, 1988" (see excerpts below)

29:4 (Fall, 1989):

- Peter Crawley, "The Constitution of the State of Deseret."
- Ronald W. Walker, "Toward a Reconstruction of Mormon and Indian Relations, 1847-1877."
- Edward Leo Lyman, "The Rise and Decline of Mormon San Bernardino."
- Richard D. Poll, "The Move South" (during the Utah War).
- David J. Whittaker, "Almanacs in the New England Heritage of Mormonism."

PLUS . . . a series of book reviews on the new biography by Levi Peterson, Juanita Brooks: *Mormon Woman Historian* (University of Utah Press, 1988).

FINALLY ...

From the "Mormon Bibliography, 1988" section of *BYU Studies* 29:3, I caught the following items not already mentioned in my SSSML "Recent Publications" section:

- John D'Emilio, "Mormon Polygamy," in *Intimate Matters*, edited by John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, New York: Harper & Row, 1988 (pp. 112-20, 138).
- Douglas A. Hooper and J. Lynn Elgnad, "Single Females in Rural Energy-Impacted Counties: The Effects of Rapid Growth and a Male Marriage-Market Squeeze." *Rural Sociology* 53 (Spring, 1988): 87-95.
- Richard J. Jensen, "Freedom of Expression: The Mormons for ERA." *Free Speech*

- Yearbook (1988): 1-13.
- Daniel K. Judd, Ronald D. Bingham, and Richard N. Williams, "Agentive Theory as Therapy: An Outcome Study." AMCAP Journal 14 (1988): 37-54.
 - Joe F. Pittman and Sally A. Lloyd, "Quality of Family Life, Social Support, and Stress." Journal of Marriage and the Family 50 (Feb., 1988): 53-67.

ANNUAL DUES STATEMENT AND NEWS SHEET

[See attached page.]

ELECTION BALLOT

[See attached page.]