

SSSML Newsletter
**SOCIETY FOR THE
SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF
MORMON LIFE**

Vol. 13, No. 4
October, 1991

Lawrence A. Young, Editor

IN THIS ISSUE:

Announcements	1
1991 SSSML Annual Meeting	1
1991 Board Meeting Minutes	3
SSSML Session at Sunstone	4
Research Notes	
Wilford E. Smith	5
Conferences in Near Future	6
In the Next Newsletter	7

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Anyone interested in presenting a paper at the 1992 Annual Meeting of the Mormon History Association should contact Tim Heaton (801-378-3280) as soon as possible. The meeting will be held May 14-17, 1992 in St. George, UT.
2. SSSML will supply you with complementary copies of the newsletter if you have colleagues who might be interested in becoming a member. Each complimentary copy will include a cover letter describing the activities of SSSML and an invitation to join the Society. Send requests for complimentary copies to:

Tim B. Heaton
Department of Sociology
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah 84602

PROGRAM FOR 1991 SSSML ANNUAL MEETING

November 8-10, 1991
Vista International Hotel
Pittsburgh, PA.

As reported in the last newsletter, SSSML has formally forged a link with the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR). SSSML will hold its annual business meeting and sponsor sessions in conjunction with SSSR meetings.

The SSSML sessions at the 1991 SSSR Annual Meetings will include the following:

1. Friday, November 8 - 9:15-10:45 a.m.

MORMON SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Convener: O. Kendall White, Jr.
Department of Sociology
Washington and Lee University
Lexington, VA 24450

"Mormonism in France: Creating Unity and Cultural Diversity"

John C. Jarvis
515 S. Aikin #AR112
Pittsburgh, PA 15232-1520

"Adult Significant Others in Religious Socialization of Latter-day Saint Youth"

Marie Cornwall
Department of Sociology
Brigham Young University
Provo, UT 84602

"Mormon/Non-Mormon Differences in Family Demographics"

Tim B. Heaton
Department of Sociology
Brigham Young University
Provo, UT 84602

"Familial and Religious Influences on Suicidal Ideations"

Zhang Jie
Department of Sociology
Brigham Young University
Provo, UT 84602

Discussant: Bonnie Mitchell
Department of Sociology
Brigham Young University
Provo, UT 84602

2. Friday, November 8--6:30-8:30 p.m.

SSSML DINNER

Many SSSML members enjoy gathering informally for dinner each year. Specific arrangements for Friday evening dinner will be announced at the SSSML-sponsored session on Friday morning (if you are unable to attend the Friday morning session, contact SSSML members at the meeting for time and location of the dinner).

3. Saturday, November 9--8:00-9:30 a.m.

SOCIETY FOR THE SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF MORMON LIFE Business Meeting

Convener: Tim B. Heaton
Department of Sociology
Brigham Young University
Provo, UT 84602

Please see the minutes from the 1991 SSSML Board Meeting and the summary of the 1991 SSSML-sponsored session at the 13th

Annual Sunstone Symposium (both contained in this newsletter) for background material and likely issues to be addressed at the business meeting.

4. Saturday, November 9--12:45-2:15 p.m.

INSTITUTIONAL STUDIES OF MORMONISM

Convener: Perry Cunningham
Research and Evaluation Division
18th Floor, LDS Church Off

Bldg. 50 East North Temple
Salt Lake City, UT 84150

"Why the LDS Church Welfare System Works"
David Bradford
LDS Church Office Building
50 East North Temple
Salt Lake City, UT 84150

"New Methods of Providing Research Information to Church Administrators"

Lynn Payne
Research Information Division
LDS Church Office Building
50 East North Temple
Salt Lake City, UT 84150

"LDS Religious and Family Influences in Adolescence as Predictors of Young Adults' Religious and Familial Attitudes and Behavior"

Darwin L. Thomas
Department of Sociology
Brigham Young University
Provo, UT 84602

Discussant: Lawrence A. Young
Department of Sociology
Brigham Young University
Provo, UT 84602

For additional information concerning the 1991 Annual Meeting of the Society for the Sociological Study of Mormon Life, see the previous issue of the SSSML newsletter (Vol. 13,

Nos. 2 and 3, April and July 1991).

MINUTES FROM 1991 SSSML BOARD MEETING

Recorded by Kristen Goodman,
Secretary/Treasurer of SSSML

The business meeting was held 8 August 1991 at the University Park Hotel in Salt Lake City, Utah in conjunction with the Sunstone Symposium.

Attending: Tim Heaton (President), Ken White (President Elect), Don Lindsey (Past President), Kristen Goodman (Secretary/Treasurer), Larry Young (Newsletter Editor), Bron Ingoldsby (Board Member), Peter Sorenson, Darryl White, Bonnie Mitchell, Tami Heaton, and Armond Mauss.

SSSML Lecture

Tim Heaton started the meeting by asking for any proposals for SSSML-sponsored lectures. He suggested that the Charles Redd Center or the Economics Department at BYU may help schedule and sponsor the March 1992 lecture. We discussed the need for early planning for a lecture in October or November 1992, in conjunction with the RRA/SSSR meetings. If we could have the lecture some place other than BYU, we may be able to draw on a wider audience than just local Mormons or those interested specifically in Mormon studies.

We have about \$400 in savings, and \$300 in checking that could help pay for a lecturer's expenses. Some members were concerned that we would use up that money very fast if we paid very much of an honorarium for the lecture. To offer less than \$500 may be insulting. Maybe we could offer \$600 and negotiate if the lecturer already has transportation or other expenses paid by a department or company. Currently airfare is running about \$400 to most conferences, and we could add \$200 for the honorarium. We may want to ask for additional donations from our membership.

Elections

Tim asked that we start thinking about new officers to take over next September or October (1992) at the annual meeting. We should give Tim our suggestions so they can finalize a slate at the November meeting (with RRA/SSSR). Larry can then publish the candidates' names in the January newsletter. We have many capable people, but still may want to recycle past presidents (Armond Mauss, Wilford Smith, Jim Duke, Marie Cornwall, Don Lindsey, etc.). Armond suggested that the president and board suggest a slate for November, then let others add names to the list.

Newsletter

Larry wants to publish another newsletter before RRA/SSSR. He asked members to give him any notes before mid-October. Armond will give him new Mormon bibliography information. Don will give him some proposed changes for the SSSML constitution (?) for members to consider. Perhaps board members (Bron Ingoldsby, Rich Crapo, Gordon Shepherd) could write a column at least once a year for the newsletter.

The association pays for printing the newsletter. BYU currently subsidizes the operation with clerical help, materials and postage.

SSSML Session at RRA/SSSR

We need a discussant for the SSSML session at RRA/SSSR. If Bonnie isn't going to be there, Armond will do it.

Action Items

1. Check the SSSML constitution to see when elections are to be held and when the new officers take over.
2. Find out where the RRA/SSSR meetings are in 1992.
3. Suggest names to put on the slate for 1992 elections.
4. Give Larry notes for the newsletter by mid-October. (Bibliography from Armond, constitution changes from Don, information from Bron?)
5. Consider 1992 SSSML lecture in conjunction with RRA/SSSR.

6. Finalize discussant for SSSML session at RRA/SSSR.

SSSML SESSION AT 1991 SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM

Reported by Tim B. Heaton,
President of SSSML

[Editor's Note: The SSSML-sponsored session at the 13th Annual Sunstone Symposium took place August 8, 1991 at the University Park Hotel in Salt Lake City.]

The SSSML-sponsored session at Sunstone was well attended this year and also received substantial media coverage. Information from the session provided the lead story on the Channel 2 news (the local NBC affiliate), several newspapers included articles about the session, and the two presenters were interviewed by a few radio stations. Subsequently, a statement was released by the leadership of the LDS Church expressing displeasure over "recent symposia". The full statement is reprinted below. My understanding, through informal channels, is that the statement is directed, in part, at the SSSML session. An anthropologist at BYU was also called in by his stake president under the direction of a general authority, because of his presentation at Sunstone.

I would like your suggestions regarding any actions you feel SSSML should take in response to the Church's statement. For example, we may wish to send a letter to the First Presidency pointing out the benefits from participation in such symposia and stressing the importance of freedom of speech in the scholarly community. Any suggestions you have would be appreciated. This issue will also be discussed at our business meeting in Pittsburgh.

First Presidency Statement

Recent symposia sponsored and attended by some members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have included some

presentations relating to the House of the Lord, the holy temples, that are offensive. We deplore the bad taste and insensitivity of these public discussions of things we hold sacred. We are especially saddened at the participation of our own members, especially those who hold Church or other positions that give them stature among Latter-day Saints and who have allowed their stature to be used to promote such presentations.

We have a different concern about some of the other topics at these symposia. Some of the presentations by persons whom we believe to be faithful members of the Church have included matters that were seized upon and publicized in such a way as to injure the Church or its members or to jeopardize the effectiveness or safety of our missionaries. We appreciate the search for knowledge and the discussion of gospel subjects. However, we believe that Latter-day Saints who are committed to the mission of their Church and the well-being of their fellow members will strive to be sensitive to those matters that are more appropriate for private conferring and correction than for public debate. Jesus taught that when a person has trespassed against us, we should "go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone," and if he will "neglect to hear" this private communication we should "tell it unto the church" (Matthew 18:15, 17). Modern revelation tells us that this last step "shall be done in a meeting, and that not before the world" (D&C 42:89). There are times when public discussion of sacred or personal matters is inappropriate.

Some of our faithful members have doubtless participated in these symposia because they were invited to state or to defend the Church's position on a particular topic. There are times when it is better to have the Church without representation than to have implications of Church participation used to promote a program that contains some (though admittedly not all) presentations that result in ridiculing sacred things or injuring The Church of Jesus Christ, detracting from its mission, or jeopardizing the well-being of its members.

RESEARCH NOTES

[Editor's Note: Tim Heaton recently invited Wilford Smith, a past president of SSSML, to reflect on his recent experience as National Chaplain of the 15,000 member Reserve Officer Association of the United States. The following article draws on some of Wilford's experiences as they relate to the issue of ecumenism. The article has been edited for space.]

Mormonism and Ecumenism

by Wilford E. Smith

In response to Tim Heaton's request, I am pleased to write my views on Mormonism and ecumenism for the SSSML Newsletter. In the sense that ecumenism means world-wide involvement, Mormonism is clearly an ecumenical church. In the sense that ecumenism means that all churches are the same and therefore work together in harmony all over the world, Mormonism is not ecumenical. Like Catholicism and some other religions, Mormonism cannot agree that all churches are the same or even equal.

Nevertheless, the eleventh Article of Mormon Faith says, "We claim the privilege of worshipping almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may." Like so many religious statements, this one cannot be accepted entirely at face value. Mormons strongly oppose any form of religious worship which involves the sacrifice of human beings, mutilation of children (with some exceptions such as circumcision), bestiality, or any other form of activity which unjustly abuses human beings. Beyond that, no issue is taken with other people's expression of their belief, and great encouragement is given to everyone to worship freely in accordance with his or her personal beliefs. That does not preclude the right of one who believes he or she is right from trying to persuade others to accept, or at least listen to, his or her views. Nor does it mean that if one thinks someone's religion is foolish he

should not say so if it can be done in a non-denunciatory manner.

Mormons have no quarrel with the basic edifying concepts of the other religions of the world, and in matters of fundamental difference such as interpretations of the nature of the Godhead or the validity and nature of priesthood authority, judgment is withheld where it would be unnecessarily offensive to anyone's personal beliefs.

Because of fundamental differences in such specific matters, Mormons cannot join other churches or change from church to church as complete ecumenism would require, but there is no reason why members of different churches can't keep their important differences and still meet and work together for the common good of mankind.

I have just served a year as National Chaplain of the 15,000 member Reserve Officer Association of the United States. had no difficulty working with Jewish, Catholic and Protestant chaplains; or, with presenting sermons to large congregations of reserve military officers of every religious persuasion.

When I received my commission as an Army chaplain during World War II, I was sent to a chaplains' basic training course which was held at Harvard University. My roommates in Perkins Hall were a Congregational minister, a Methodist minister, and a Catholic priest. The Congregational minister enjoyed argumentative discussion and often got us all going. It became clear that only the Catholic and Mormon were adamant in their belief that their churches were the only completely true churches of God, but even these two had enough sense to live and let live. We all became good friends, respecting the integrity of the others while maintaining our own beliefs.

Near Camp Ellis in Illinois, where I was sent for my first active duty assignment with my wife and two small children, I shared a home with a Methodist chaplain and his wife and son. Behind our house a Lutheran chaplain lived in a mobile home with his wife and daughter. We all became good friends and respected each other's dedication to doing good, each in his own way. In October of 1991 I am going to New Jersey to give a priesthood

blessing to the Catholic who was my commanding officer at that time and who more than once called me a fool for being a _____ Mormon. He is now sick and old, and he has called me to come and bless him. He doesn't want a Catholic priest, only his old chaplain.

On Okinawa I had a fine Augustana College graduate as my assistant. He wanted to become a minister, and we often discussed the matter openly and freely. Finally, he confided that he didn't know whether to be a Lutheran or a Presbyterian. I replied, "It won't matter much since they are both wrong." We were honest enough with each other that he took no offense. He had talked with me and heard me preach enough to know what I believed, and he knew that I had great respect for the good ministers in either of those churches could do.

On Okinawa during the war I shared a tent with a Catholic chaplain for several weeks. I found him to be a brave, self sacrificing, intelligent, and good man who had won the respect and love of his troops regardless of their church affiliation. For another period I shared a tent with a Methodist chaplain who also became my good friend. One Sunday I listened to his sermon and was impressed with what he said. "You preach Mormon doctrine," I told him after the meeting as we walked down the hill to our tent together.

"I know." He replied. "You have the true gospel. I take much of my material from the Book of Mormon."

"How do you know that our church is true?"

"I had a returned missionary for my assistant for two years, and after much discussion he persuaded me to believe your church is true."

"Well then, let's get you baptized."

"No. I can't afford to do that. If I left the Methodist Church, I would lose my ecclesiastical endorsement and become unemployed. I Am too old to start a new career. I'll stay a Methodist and continue to preach Mormon doctrine where I can do so appropriately." Not changing religions also allowed him to continue smoking his cigars.

After the war I joined the army reserves and continued to serve as the chaplain of military people with all levels of rank and diverse religious persuasions. The last seven years of my reserve service I was assigned to the US Army Chaplains Board, a research and planning arm of the Chief of Chaplain's office. My assignment was to keep the board up to date on developments pertaining to the relationship of church and state as they might impinge on the military chaplaincy. I worked with half a dozen chaplains of all faiths. They proved to be good men who wanted to do what they could to make the lot of mankind better by teaching them to incorporate faith, love, and integrity into their lives.

Yes, Mormons can work with such people. Ecumenism provides opportunity to accent the good, to emphasize points of Judeo-Christian (and Moslem, Hindu, Buddhist, etc.) agreement while recognizing and defending everyone's right to believe and to worship according to the dictates of his or her own conscience as long as such worship does not require people to do anything which would be unjustifiably offensive to others.

CONFERENCES IN THE NEAR FUTURE

- The Association for Mormon Letters will hold its annual symposium at Westminster College in Salt Lake City on January 25, 1992. Contact: Richard Cracroft, Department of English, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602.
- 1992 Sunstone Symposium West will be held on 6-7 March at Burbank Hilton. Proposals for papers and panel discussions are now being accepted. Contact: Steve Eccles, 1482 Winston Court, Upland, CA (714/982-4763).
- "The Family, Religion, and Education Interface: Assessing Adolescent/Young Adult Development." 19th Annual Conference of Center for Studies of the Family will be held March 11-12, 1992 at Brigham Young Univ. Papers which address empirical/theoretical relationships between two or more institutions and adolescent/young adult development will be

given the highest priority. By November 30, 1991, send 500 word abstract to: Darwin L. Thomas, 844 SWKT, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602. For further information, call Norene Petersen (801) 378-4452.

- 1992 Washington D.C. Sunstone Symposium will be held on April 10-11, 1992, on the American University campus. Proposals for papers and panel discussions are now being accepted. Contact: Don and Lucinda Gustavson, 413 Clearview Ave, Torrington, CT 06790 (203/496-7090).
- The Mormon History Association's 27th Annual Meeting will be held in St. George, UT, 14-17 May 1992. See Announcement section of this newsletter concerning paper proposals. Contact: Mormon History Association
PO Box 7010
University Station
Provo, UT 84602
- Sunstone Symposium MV will probably be held during the first or second week in August. Contact: Cindy Dahle, Sunstone, 331 Rio Grande Street, Suite 30, Salt Lake City, UT 84101-1136 (801/355-5926).
- The Association for the Sociology of Religion's Annual Meeting will be held August 18-20 in Pittsburgh, PA. Paper proposals are usually due by late January. Further information will be available in the next newsletter.

- The American Sociological Association's Annual Meeting will be held August 20-24, 1992 at the David L. Lawrence Convention/Exposition Center in Pittsburgh, PA. The sociology of religion sessions are being organized by James Beckford. All submissions are due by December 31, 1991. Contact: James Beckford, Department of Sociology, University of Warwick, Conventry CV4 7AL, England (Phone: 0203-523156).
- 1992 Chicago Sunstone Symposium will be held sometime in October 1992. Contact: Becky Linford, 461 Elm Court, Naperville, IL. 60540-0348 (708/778-9551).

COMING UP IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER

Among items to be included in the next newsletter are the following: Research note by Bron Ingoldsby; announcement of the 1992 Annual SSSML Lecture; coverage of the 1991 Annual Meeting of SSSML; dues notice and election ballot for new officers; and a list of recent publications that should be of interest to SSSML members. In addition, SSSML members are urged to consider submitting short articles, interesting data or news items. All material submitted by January 1, 1992 will be considered for the January Newsletter. Materials should be sent to:

Lawrence A. Young
Department of Sociology Brigham
Young University
Provo, UT 84602