

MORMON SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Michael E. Nielsen, Editor

IN THIS ISSUE:

President's Message	1
Nashville News	1
MSSA Conference Highlights	2
Announcements	3
Change of Grade Form	7

President's Message

I am looking forward to seeing many of you in Nashville at our annual meeting. I want to bring special attention to the Sunday morning business meeting which will be held at 7:00 a.m. While the hour is early, MSSA will provide a continental breakfast. Please plan to attend. Among agenda items will be a report on the financial state of MSSA, nominations for next year's elections, a discussion of possible speakers for the Vernon Lecture and other MSSA sessions at the 1997 meetings in San Diego, and distribution of the newly established by-laws. Please contact me (Larry Young at 801-378-2107) if you have other items for the agenda.

Nashville News

Nashville is the place, and November 8-10 are the dates, for the 1996 MSSA convention, held jointly with the SSSR and RRA. Papers on Mormon studies are featured throughout the three-day program, many with a distinctly international focus. Marcus Martins has organized a session devoted to "Denominational Cultures within International Mormonism;" Grant Underwood organized "Mormonism Among Pacific Islanders;" and Perry Cunningham has

organized "Challenges of Mormon Growth Among Latinos in North and South America." Clearly, the new direction of research among many of our group is how the church will continue its growth outside North America.

In addition to sessions focusing on LDS church growth, scholars will present papers dealing with a wide variety of LDS themes. LDS culture, behavior and attitudes are examined from academic disciplines including anthropology, family sciences, history, political science, psychology, and sociology. This convention will be quite stimulating, with nearly two dozen papers on Mormonism.

As with last year's conference, our business meeting will be held early Sunday morning and include a continental breakfast. This proved to be a pleasant way to conduct business, and even resulted in some new members coming to our group. Wake "bright and early" for an enjoyable time with your colleagues.

The complete program is sent to all members of SSSR and RRA, but Lynn Payne has several additional copies for MSSA members who are not part of the major organizations. To receive a copy of this program, contact Lynn at:

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MSSA Conference Highlights

Here is a list of papers that are part of MSSA-related sessions at this year's meeting.

Mormonism Among Pacific Islanders: A Case Study in the Interplay Between Denominational Culture and Indigenous Cultures

- Jackson, "The Presence of Denominational 'Icons' in Latter-day Saint Homes in Selected Pacific Basin and Asian Rim Cultures"
- Stanton, "Samoan Saints: Standing Between Two Worlds"
- Underwood & Wineera, "Mormonism and 'Maoritanga': Religion and Cultural Negotiation in New Zealand"
- Sprickard, Convener & Discussant

Challenges of Mormon Growth Among Latinos in North and South America: A New Latino Majority within the LDS Church

- Embry, "Serving Spanish-speaking Mormons in North America: Challenges and Successes"
- Knowlton, "Mormon Lay Leaders and Socio-Economic Status in Latin America"
- Marins, "A Profile of the LDS Church in Brazil"
- Fortuny Lloret de Mola, "Mormonism in the Context of Protestant Growth in Yucatan, Mexico"
- Cunningham, Convener & Discussant

Denominational Cultures within International Mormonism

- Duke, "Cultural and Structural Factors in the Growth of the LDS Church"
- Martins, paper to be titled
- Harding, paper to be titled
- Milien, "A Study of Haitian Mormon Converts Dwelling in New York City: A Cross-Cultural Perspective in Understanding, Interpreting, and Experiencing the Mormon Subculture"

Many additional papers are likely to be of interest to MSSA members. They include:

- White & White, "Mormon Cultural contradictions: An Example of Marriage

and Race"

- Jensen, Jackson & Underwood, "Gender Roles and Caring in the LDS Culture"
- Daynes & Tatalovich, "Reconceptualizing Church-State Separation in an Era of Politicized Religion"
- Doxey, "Religion and Childhood Sexual Abuse"
- Clark, "The Impact of Family and Adolescent Religious Experience on Religious Socialization"
- Litchfield, Thomas, and Dao Li, "Adolescent Religiosity as Mediator of the Relationship between Parenting and Adolescent Deviant Behavior"
- Cox, "The Impact of Doctrinal Belief on Political World Views: The Case of Mormonism"
- Homer, "Violence in Nineteenth Century New Religion -- The Mormon Case"
- Jensen, "The Influence of the Church in the Lives of Catholics, Protestants, and Mormons"
- Religion as Opiate: Is Denomination Related to Fatalism and Perceived Justice?"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Third Eye: The Canadian Journal of Mormon Studies

A new journal of interest is The Third Eye: The Canadian Journal of Mormon Studies. This exciting development in Mormon Studies was announced in the following press release:

"A uniquely Canadian publishing venture [was] launched simultaneously at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, and in College Value Mall at Oliver's Book Store, Lethbridge, June 4, 1996. The Third Eye.' The Canadian Journal of Mormon Studies [was] displayed and released at [both] locations.

"In Lethbridge, Dr. Brigham Y. Card, a Director of the Canadian Mormon Studies Association and author of several works and papers dealing with Canada's Mormons [was] available to show and discuss the new Journal. He has a paper on the origins of the CMSA and a book review in the Journal. Former Lethbridgian, Professor Robert

McCue, historian, University of Victoria, deals with episodes of C.T. Marsden's life, a southern Albertan called in middle age to a mission in Eastern USA. Other contributors include scholars known in Lethbridge circles.

"At Kingston, the two editors, Dr. Gordon D. Pollock and Dr. Clyde Forsberg, each Ph.D. students of Professor Klaus Hansen, Queen's Historian well known for his studies of American and Mormon cultural history, will be present to launch the Journal and honor their mentor professor on his retirement. The Third Eye, a term adapted from Margaret Atwood, Canadian novelist, refers to Canada's unique geographical-historical view on the world.

"The Journal is published under the auspices of the Canadian Mormon Studies Association, which grew out of the 1987 Conference at the University of Alberta on "The Mormon Presence in Canada," making the centennial of Mormon arrival as colonists in the North West Territories of Canada. The first Conference sponsored by the Canadian Mormon Studies Association was in conjunction with the University of Lethbridge in 1990, where McCue and other contributors presented papers. The Journal's origin is directly related to the third major Conference held at Queen's, June 1995, co-sponsored by the Canadian Mormon Studies Association, the Mormon History Association and the John Whitmer Historical Association featuring the history of Mormons in pre-Confederation British North America. A Canadian voice in international scholarship on Mormons is a goal of the Journal."

This is a tremendous development for Mormon studies, signifying the growth of both Mormonism and its academic study. CMSA membership includes subscription to the journal, and is only \$12/year. For membership information contact:

Jim Rea, Secretary/Treasurer
CMSA/ACEM
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T2V 3E6

Social Science Bibliography

The Bibliography of Social Science Works in Mormon Studies, by Armand Mauss and Dynette Ivie Reynolds, soon will go to press. The book will be part of the University of Illinois Press's outstanding titles in Mormon studies. This will be an invaluable resource for social scientists, despite U.I. Press's attempt to place a value on it! Of course, the bibliography's worth will increase as it becomes more complete; those of you who have recently-published or in-press work on Mormon studies should send the citation to Armand at: P.O. Box 2061 C.S.

Washington State University
Pullman, WA 99165

A bibliography of Mormon Studies work published during the past two years will be included in the next issue of the newsletter, but at that point it will be too late to update the U.I. Press publication, so please contact Armand now to see that your work is cited.

Contemporary Mormonism

LATTER-DAY SAINT SOCIAL LIFE: SOCIAL RESEARCH ON THE LDS CHURCH AND ITS MEMBERS, edited by James T. Duke, will be published by The Religious Studies Center at Brigham Young University in late 1996 or early 1997. Jim, who is a member of the board of MSSA, has provided us with following abstract and table of contents:

In the past ten years, social research on members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints has expanded significantly. Most of this research has utilized the best scientific methods and has been published in reputable scientific journals, especially those concerned with the sociology of religion. Both Mormon and non-Mormon researchers have devoted considerable time and effort to understanding the LDS Church and its members. This corpus of solid scientific work is

both diverse and significant. Six of the papers are original to this volume or contain original material, and almost all of the articles have been published in the past ten years. By bringing these articles together in a single publication, this collection should provide the reader easy access to the latest and best research on Latter-Day Saints.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Duke, James T. "Introduction."
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- Cornwall, Marie. 1989. "The Determinants of Religious Behavior: A Theoretical Model and Empirical Test." *Social Forces* 68:572-592.
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- Judd, Daniel K. 1995. "The Relationship of Mormonism and Mental Health: A Review of the Literature 1923-1995." *Mormon Studies Conference*, Nottingham.
- Chadwick, Bruce R. and Brent L. Top. 1993. "Religiosity and Delinquency Among LDS Adolescents." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 32:51-67.

Christian History

A major new book has been authored by one of our colleagues, Rod Stark. *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History* examines events occurring in early Christianity from a new sociological perspective. *The Chronicle* of higher Education featured it in their July 12,

1996 edition (p. A10). Stark addresses a basic question: "How did a tiny and obscure messianic movement from the edge of the Roman empire dislodge classical paganism and become the dominant faith of Western civilization?" From Stark's perspective, earlier attempts by social scientists to answer this question reveal an underlying agenda that portrays "religion [a]s the great villain, and we've got to get rid of it."

Rather than adopt traditional explanations such as the "irrationalist argument" of martyrdom for the growth of Christianity, Stark uses sociological concepts such as group dynamics and dynamic population models to explain Christianity's growth rate under the Romans. The Chronicle quotes him as saying "Becoming a Christian was a sensible thing to do in the time and the place.... While membership was expensive, it was, in fact, a bargain.... By resorting to simple arithmetic I believe I have demonstrated adequately that the rise of Christianity required no miraculous rates of conversion."

The Rise of Christianity promises to be a major book in the field. It is available for \$24.95 from Princeton University Press (phone: 609-883-1759; fax: 609-883-7413).

Contemporary Polygamy

Polygamous Families in Contemporary Society, by Irwin Altman (Univ. of Utah) and Joseph Ginat (Univ. of Haifa), has recently been published by Cambridge University Press. It includes a forward by the late Sterling M. McMurrin, and has a list price of \$27.95 (pbk). A Cambridge University Press flier gives this description of the book:

"In this intriguing book, social psychologist Irwin Altman and anthropologist Joseph Ginat examine husband-wife and wife-wife relationships in contemporary Mormon Polygamous families. The authors describe how husbands and wives in plural families cope with their complex lifestyle in various facets of everyday life, including courtship, weddings,

honeymoons, adjustments to a new life, living arrangements, and the husband's rotation among wives. Other topics include budget and resource management, psychological attachments to homes, and the social-emotional relationships among family members.

"This pioneering and comprehensive analysis of life in modern day Mormon polygamous families uses first-hand interviews and observations to describe this unusual family lifestyle. It adds to our understanding of close relationships and complements knowledge on other modern relationship forms, such as single-parent families, blended families, and cohabitating partners. This volume belongs in the collection of anyone who desires an authoritative study of the complex and fascinating subject of polygamy."

Dues are Due

For those of you whose dues are not current, included with this newsletter is a request for dues. Use the convenient form and envelope to send dues (\$5.00/yr.) to Lynn Payne. Prompt payment of dues helps us avoid the cost of extra mailings.

You are Needed

Remember that your help is needed to make this newsletter useful to your colleagues. If you are aware of any information that should be included in the newsletter -- announcements, upcoming conferences, stories, or errata -- please contact Mike Nielsen. We could especially use volunteers to review books or make other contributions to the newsletter. If you'd like to help, contact Mike at:
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CHANGE OF GRADE FORM

The following form may prove useful for those of you in academia. The author is unknown.

STUDENT RAISE OF GRADE FORM

Dear Professor _____

Date: _____

My grade in _____ should be raised from _ to _ because:

- There must be a mistake somewhere.
- I actually studied for this exam.
- I was not well at the time of the examination.
- My mind always goes blank during an examination.
- This grade ruined my prospect of getting a scholarship / job / life / place in medical school.
- This is the only course in which I received a poor grade.
- The grade grieved my mother / father, whose pride I am.
- I knew the right answer but I wrote down the wrong answer by mistake.
- I was unable to study due to the pressing demands of fraternity or sorority activities / political demonstrations / sports events / jail / family crises / roommate suicide / gambling debts / litigation.
- Conditions in the room were not conducive to concentration.
- The examination was unfair and unfairly distributed over the subject matter.
- I have to work after school and nights; therefore I should be given a break.
- I am married and have a family; therefore I should be given a break.
- I am alone in the world; therefore I should be given a break.
- I was under stress; therefore I should be given a break.
- I no speak English good - give me break.
- I would have done much better if I had taken

the examination given to one of the other sections.

The person I got the notes from had neglected to write down several key points, and I should not be penalized for his / her laxity.

Several people around me copied from my paper during the examination yet they received higher grades than I did. Surely this is not fair.

The questions were ambiguous, and therefore my answers should be graded according to the reasonable interpretations I made of your question.

Many of the questions could not be answered with straight facts; they were matters of opinion. I should not be penalized just because my opinions differ from those of the instructor.

I know many people in the class who do not work as hard as I do and who got a better grade. I am recognized among my classmates as a good and conscientious student; just ask any of them.

I circled the right answers on the question booklet, as you can now see, but when transferring the information to the answer sheet I inadvertently marked the wrong blanks. Of course a University student should not be penalized for petty clerical errors.

I have studied this subject from the broad philosophical viewpoint and therefore was unable to answer your detail-oriented, technical questions.

I am philosophically oriented to the realm of ideas; I respond to the sweep and scope of great intellects. My work is beyond the interest in petty details and parrot-like memorizing of those who are merely students.

At the time of the examination I was suffering a severe case of cognitive dissonance and was incapable of coping with the stress of the hour.

It is not a higher grade I seek; I care nothing about grades; I think grades are wicked and I disapprove of them. However, this pernicious system of which I am a victim requires grades for achieving success, and therefore I seek a higher grade.

Signed, _____