

MORMON SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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Ryan T. Cragun, Editor

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President's Message

The 2003 meetings of the SSSR/RRA are coming up: Thursday, October 23rd through Sunday, October 26th in Norfolk, Virginia. We are sponsoring two MSSA sessions: "Contemporary Issues in Mormon Studies," and a book session on Armand Mauss' *All Abraham's Children*. Both are scheduled for Sunday morning. Unfortunately, our MSSA business meeting is scheduled for Friday at noon. Those of us who have arrived by Friday will need to meet, but we will also need to touch base with those who arrive later. Things we need to discuss at the business meeting include: nominations for MSSA president and for board member; the 2004 Vernon Lecture; and sessions for next year. The 2004 SSSR/RRA meetings will be held in Kansas City, October 22-24. The SSSR theme for Kansas City is "Overcoming Boundaries in the *Scientific* Study of Religion." To paraphrase from the call, the boundaries in question are the disciplinary, national, religious, and even ideological and organizational commitments that isolate us and narrow our scopes. It seems to me that the MSSA can contribute substantially to this theme. Our sessions could include disciplinary influences on Mormon studies, globalization of Mormonism; and learning about Mormonism by comparative study with other religious movements. Keep in mind, 2004 is the year of our next Vernon Lecture; so I think it would be appropriate to invite a scholar who can contribute to this theme. Also, the RRA theme for 2004 is "Linking Social

Action and Religious Research," and emphasizes scholars' "accountability for the social, cultural, and political changes that are often unleashed by their research." Session proposals are due mid-January and paper proposals mid-March.

Daryl White

MSSA Sessions @ SSSR

MSSA Business Meeting
Friday, Noon

MSSA-Sponsored Sessions

J2 - MSSA Session: Author Meets Critics
Sunday, 10:15-11:45
Brandon A

Book: *All Abraham's Children: Changing Mormon Conceptions of Race and Lineage*, by Armand Mauss, University of Illinois Press, 2003.

Organizer/Convener: Gary Shepherd, Oakland University, shepherd@oakland.edu

Panelists:
Rex Cooper, LDS Research Division, cooperre@ldschurch.org

Massimo Introvigne, CESNUR, cesnur@tin.it

Jan Shipps, Emeritus, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, shipps@iupui.edu

Response by Author: Armand L. Mauss, emeritus, Washington State University, almauss@cox.net

I2 - MSSA Session: Contemporary Issues in Mormon Studies

Sunday, 8:30-10:00
Brandon A

Organizer/Convener: Daryl White, Spelman College, dwhite@spelman.edu

Papers:

Sister Missionaries: Gender in the LDS Missionfield, Shauna J. Sweet, Hamilton College, ssweet@hamilton.edu

Abstract:

Despite the growing participation of young women in the mission field, the experience remains both explicitly and implicitly gendered. This paper examines the variety of obstacles (personal, structural, etc.) that young women face as a result of their decision to serve a full-time mission. I also address how they work to meaningfully incorporate missionary service into their identity as Latter-Day Saints. The findings presented in this paper are based upon extensive interview and focus group data of current and returned missionaries, and church officials, as well as participant observation as investigator and 'honorary sister' in the New York Utica Mission.

Women in LDS Literature, Susan Ellis, Wayne State College, SuEllis1@wsc.edu

Abstract:

Although women account for 54 percent of the population of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, they lag behind men in publication, and the type of publications differs between men and women. This paper compares the number of publications by men and women in LDS theological literature, focusing on the official publications of the church, and the genre of those publications.

The Origins of the Mormon Intellectual Movement, Ryan T. Cragun, University of Cincinnati, r_cragun@hotmail.com

Abstract:

Using a political processes social movement model I analyze the events taking place during the late 1950s and early 1960s that led to the formation of the Mormon Intellectual Movement. These events include: challenges to the authority of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, advances made in the Civil Rights Movement, the secular and professional education of Mormon scholars outside Utah.

Implications of Becoming a "New World Religion": Redefining Mormon Identity, O. Kendall White, Jr., Washington and Lee University, WhiteK@wlu.edu

Abstract:

This paper examines arguments of sociologist Rodney Stark, historian Jan Shipps, and literary critic Harold Bloom, suggesting that Mormonism is becoming a "new world religion." While Stark's demographic argument is based upon the phenomenal growth of the LDS church and Shipps' assertion of a "new religious tradition" is dependent upon a theological and experiential separation from "orthodox" Christianity, Bloom's speculations are grounded in both theological distinctiveness and demography. Following an examination of these arguments, I discuss the responses among Latter-day Saints, especially church officials, in terms of implications for an emergent LDS identity.

Latter-day Saints in India: A Study of Conversion and Culture, John J. Pallett and John P. Hoffmann, Brigham Young University, jip73@email.byu.edu, John_Hoffmann@byu.edu

Abstract:

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) reports more than 5000 members in India (Church Almanac, 1999-2000). The LDS church is well known for its emphasis on missionary work, yet it has had little missionary presence in India until recent years. The past 10 years or so, however, have seen missionary work increase substantially and membership on the rise in this large non-western nation. The goal of this paper is to explore Indian members' experiences in the LDS Church and determine the cultural and interpersonal factors that hinder or support conversion into a western religious faith. Based on a number of qualitative interviews and participant observation among LDS church members in India, the data are analyzed using an inductive, exploratory model that considers cultural factors unique to India, institutional factors unique to the LDS church, and sociological models of conversion.

An Interesting Exchange in *Anthropology News*

In the February 2003 issue of *Anthropology News* (Volume 44, Number 2), the monthly newsletter of the American Anthropological

Association published a report entitled, “Genetic Research a ‘Galileo Event’ for Mormons” and prompted three comments that appeared in the May issue (Number 5). The first article was written by Thomas W. Murphy, chair of the anthropology department at Edmonds Community College in Washington, and Simon G. Southerton, a senior researcher at a division of the Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, and was accompanied by a photograph of a December 8, 2002 protest at Temple Square. The main figure in the photo is identified as “an Apache Indian, protesting the Lamanite DNA issue in support of Thomas Murphy.” The text briefly summarizes the authors’ (separate) analyses of current DNA research of Native American, Polynesian and other populations—both of which reveal close genetic kinship with northeast Asian populations and consequently undermine traditional Mormon claims that Native Americans and Polynesians descend from ancient Israelites. Identified as “a Latter-day Skeptic” who may face excommunication, Murphy is quoted as saying, “As Mormons, we have a moral and ethical obligation to discontinue this view of Native American origins and publicly disavow the offensive teaching that a dark skin is a physical trait of God’s malediction.” The article briefly describes the Indian Student Placement Program and adoption as illustrations of Mormon paternalism regarding Native Americans. Finally, the article identifies the present as a historical moment in Mormonism—a moment when fewer and fewer Mormons (described in the article as “scientifically literate Latter-day Saints” in “today’s multicultural world”) feel comfortable with traditional and folk Mormon ideas about the origins, curse and whitening of Native Americans and Polynesians.

In the May issue two responses to the February report and a reply were printed. T. Allen Lambert at SUNY Albany criticizes the article for its sensationalism and proceeds to identify two related areas of weakness: One is a set of basically methodological arguments that the relevant facts are not in yet, that the research in question was not adequately peer reviewed, that the sample size was not sufficient to include those Native Americans whose DNA could demonstrate links to ancient Israel. The last argument stems from the author’s other criticism—the claim that “the actual text of the

Book of Mormon makes no claims...regarding various peoples of the Americas and their possible relationships.” Kevin L. Barney further develops this latter argument in the second letter. (The editor notes this is a shorter version of a letter appearing in *The FAIR Journal*, February 2003.) Barney writes, “For at least 50 years (and in some quarters substantially longer), serious students of the Book of Mormon have read that book in light of a ‘limited geography’ model.” This model sees Lehi and kin as “a limited incursion into an extensive population” and consequently makes Murphy and Southerton’s research irrelevant. Moreover, Murphy’s criticisms of the LDS church are presented as evidence that he has moved from science to theology thereby limiting his ability to contribute to debate on this scholarly question. In his reply, Murphy argues that both DNA and archeological evidence remains crucial in judging historical and scientific claims based on readings of the Book of Mormon. He affirms that historical and scientific claims establish that the Book of Mormon is folklore and that claims based on it “emerged from the 19th century Mound Builder myth.” In his conclusion Murphy addresses the theology question raised by his critics by affirming that scientific and historical inquiry “cannot determine if the text is scripture.” That, he writes, is a theological question.

(Daryl White)

Summary of ASR Meetings in Atlanta

I attended the Association for the Sociology of Religion conference in Atlanta this summer. As far as I could tell, there was only one paper that addressed Mormon topics. It is entitled, “A New World Faith? Tempering Claims of Mormon Church Growth” by Rick Phillips, Department of Sociology, University of North Florida. Here’s the abstract: “Sociologists pay a great deal of attention to growth within the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A recent survey of religious denominations in the United States asserts that Mormonism is the fastest growing large church in the US, and the nation’s fifth largest Christian faith. To date, however, there have been no sociological analyses of how this rapid growth affects Mormon congregations. This paper uses participant observation and in-depth interviews with Mormons to show how the

church's extensive missionary program affects that programs and social climate of a typical Mormon congregation. I then examine worldwide church growth statistics to demonstrate the micro-level problems uncovered in this congregation are indicative of larger problems within Mormonism caused by the organization's heavy emphasis on growth. The paper shows how the Mormon church inflates its membership statistics and fills church rolls with "converts" who are only marginally affiliated with the church. The ramification of these facts for several important theories in the sociology of religion is addressed."

(Daryl White)

Book Review: Under the Banner of Heaven

Though the book is advertised as a history of the chilling murders of Brenda Lafferty and her daughter by two of her brothers-in-law, Dan and Ron Lafferty, nearly half the book is made up of historical accounts and discussions of other elements of Mormonism, both mainstream and fundamentalist, that the author sees as related. Prominently featured is a rather one-sided view of some incidents in Mormon history, including a summary of Joseph Smith's life and many of the events surrounding his death and his involvement with and revelation on polygamy (Section 132 of the Doctrine and Covenants). There is also an account of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, followed by some history on John D. Lee and the federal investigations resulting from the massacre.

The events surrounding the kidnapping and eventual return of Elizabeth Smart by Brian David Mitchell and his wife are also discussed. Though the account is not particularly detailed or very thorough, it does offer enough details for the author to relate what happened to what I believe to be his primary argument, which I will discuss below.

The author also visits a number of relevant locations then uses descriptions of them to introduce additional topics. One chapter begins with his description of his visit to Palmyra, New York to witness the Hill Cumorah Pageant after which he turns to a discussion of the roots of Mormonism. The author also visits Colorado

City and Bountiful, two polygamist enclaves located in Arizona and Canada respectively, in order to gain a better understanding of what life is like in these towns.

The author concludes with an explanation of why he wrote the book and a brief summary of his own beliefs, characterizing himself as something of an agnostic that has always been interested in Mormonism.

Though the format of the book is initially a bit confusing, jumping from location to location and backwards in time then back to the present, the apparent goal of the author by discussing these events and elements of both fundamentalist and mainstream Mormonism is to illustrate how they are all related and that they ultimately resulted in the death of a young Mormon woman who happened to marry into a family that took religion to a level where legal statutes play second string to divine decree.

There are several problems with the book that I feel warrant detailed discussion. There is also the issue of what the author was trying to accomplish by writing the book, something he never explicitly states but I believe can be summarized by two points: obedience and faith. But first, the problems...

The first problem one notices in reading this book is that it isn't objectively historical. The primary reason I would not consider the book to be objective history is due to the one-sided approach employed in relating Mormon history. The author chooses to focus on the most negative events from the LDS Church's past, including the destruction of the Nauvoo Expositor and the Mountain Meadows Massacre, to the almost complete exclusion of any of the faith-affirming events, like the rescue of the Martin Handcart Company from certain doom in Wyoming. Included in this one-sided approach is the usage, by the author, of antagonistic sources. The majority of Krakauer's information about the polygamist groups in Colorado City and Bountiful comes from individuals that have left the groups and now feel somewhat hostile towards them, some to the point of creating activist groups with the intent of legally hounding the groups out of existence. There are a few pro-polygamists that are given a brief voice in the book, but entire chapters are

dedicated to the anti-polygamist apostates; the result is a book that screams its political bias – polygamy is bad. As for the author’s sources concerning the shared historical past of Mormonism, his sources (Fawn McKay Brodie and D. Michael Quinn, among others) are not without their own controversies and are generally seen by the mainstream Church as negatively reflecting upon Church history.

A second problem with the book involves assertions made by the author about the far-reaching influences of certain historical events. For instance, “It was this single change in ecclesiastical policy [discontinuation of polygamy], more than anything else, that transformed the LDS Church into its astonishingly successful present-day iteration” (p. 7). Though the discontinuation of polygamy was definitely influential in bringing Mormonism closer to the mainstream of conservative religions, it is by no means the solitary factor involved or, likely, even the most important factor. Other scholars (Shipps, 1987; Shepherd and Shepherd, 1984) have explored the changes that have taken place over time in the now mainstream LDS Church and have found that it is a combination of factors that have resulted in the more widespread acceptance of Mormonism as a viable religious alternative, not least among these includes the LDS Church’s emphasis on the nuclear family, which endeared it to the post-war Baby Boom generation. Although growth rates began shooting upwards in the mid-1960s, the Church’s growth also received a boost from its decision to allow blacks to receive the priesthood in 1978 and other scholars (Shepherd and Shepherd, 1996) have found striking correlations between the number of full-time missionaries in the mission field and converts to the LDS Church. Thus, despite polygamy being an important factor in reducing the antagonistic attitudes towards Mormonism, it cannot accurately be depicted as the most important transformative element in the increased popularity of Mormonism.

A third problem with the book is the amount of seemingly unrelated information, which is not explicitly tied to the other events to make a coherent argument. It could actually be argued that there is neither an explicit nor coherent argument to the entire book, but that is really another issue. An entire chapter is used to

explore the possible fates of three members of Major John Wesley Powell’s expedition down the Colorado River. Krakauer argues that these three explorers might have been killed by Mormons who covered up the murders by blaming it on the local Indians, in a similar fashion to the Mountain Meadows Massacre. Obviously the chapter is intended to illustrate that this tendency is prevalent among Mormons (though Krakauer is only able to come up with two incidents, one of which is wholly unconfirmed). But the connection of this story to the murder committed by the Lafferty brothers is definitely not explicitly stated and even given a number of liberal machinations is hard to see as implicitly related to the murders. It’s almost as if Krakauer has come upon a number of rather negative incidents, some confirmed and some not, and has thrown them all into the mixture hoping that the end result will make a convincing case that Mormonism, either directly or indirectly, is responsible for the murder of Brenda Lafferty and her daughter.

The final problem is the number of unconfirmed or unreferenced generalizations made by the author. For instance, the author’s discussion of Mormon Fundamentalists’ views on sexuality is not referenced and appears to be the result of rather casual observation, “For all their fecundity, Mormon Fundamentalists are strangely squeamish about sex. Boys and girls are forbidden to date, or even flirt, before marriage. Sex education consists of teaching children that the human body is a shameful vessel that should be veiled from the eyes of others at all times” (p. 33). The tendency of the author to generalize to entire populations from individual interviews was pointed out by Richard E. Turley, managing director of the Family and Church History Department and ‘an authority on Church history and doctrine,’ in the LDS Church’s rebuttal to the book (<http://www.lds.org/news/article/0,5422,116-17190,00.html>). Though I found Turley’s criticism to be rather harsh, I do believe Krakauer has made some rather sweeping generalizations about mainstream and fundamentalist Mormons that are rather baseless. Given the extensive bibliography included in the back of the book, it is possible that a number of the claims are backed up by research, but without specific citations it is difficult to be certain that they are not just the

passing thoughts of the author.

Having considered some of the problems with the text, let me now turn to what I believe to be the major goals of the book. The first goal of the book, I believe, is to question the encouragement of 'blind obedience' to authority found in both mainstream and fundamentalist Mormonism. Krakauer explicitly states his dislike of this practice at several points in the text, for example, "When Debbie was six, her birth mother died, and Mem grew even more violent in her treatment of Debbie, who, even as a young girl, was proving to be intelligent and willful and disinclined to defer blindly to authority. Debbie tended to ask questions and to think for herself – qualities not regarded as attributes in the Fundamentalist Church" (p. 30). Krakauer follows this assertion with the following, "Mormonism is a patriarchal religion, rooted firmly in the traditions of the Old Testament. Dissent isn't tolerated. Questioning the edicts of religious authorities is viewed as a subversive act that undermines faith. As the eminent LDS first counselor N. Eldon Tanner famously declared in the official church magazine, *Ensign*, in August 1979, "When the prophet speaks, the debate is over." (p. 31). The first major point, then, I believe is rather plain – Krakauer dislikes 'blind obedience' and believes that the structure of the Mormon church, which has carried over into fundamentalist break-offs and been magnified, encourages such behavior.

The obvious next step in this logic is the ramifications of blind obedience. Though Krakauer never explicitly states that blind obedience played a part in the murder of Brenda Lafferty, it is definitely implied. Much of the author's conversation with Dan Lafferty focuses on Dan's 'blind obedience' to his brother's 'removal revelation,' resulting in Dan claiming that he performed the actual executions when the very revelator, Ron, was unable to carry through with the divine edict. I believe that ultimately Krakauer is arguing that blind obedience can result in drastic and terrible outcomes, including the murder of a young woman and her innocent child. As a result, Krakauer is questioning the design and organization of both the mainstream and fundamentalist Mormon churches and probably hoping to effectuate some change. He probably isn't advocating that all Mormonism-related

churches be disbanded, but he is definitely arguing that institutions that wield such power can be dangerous.

The second point I believe Krakauer is trying to make is that it is difficult to determine if religious belief is rational or irrational. This point was attacked by Mike Otterson, director of public relations for the LDS Church, in his public rebuttal (<http://www.lds.org/news/article/0,5422,116-17190,00.html>). I can understand why it may seem that Krakauer is arguing for the irrationality of religion because of quotes like the following, "But such criticism and mockery are largely beside the point. All religious belief is a function of nonrational faith. And faith, by its very definition, tends to be impervious to intellectual argument or academic criticism." (p. 68). But if you continue reading this paragraph you find that Krakauer immediately qualifies what he means, "Polls routinely indicate, moreover, that nine out of ten Americans believe in God – most of us subscribe to one brand of religion or another. Those who would assail *The Book of Mormon* should bear in mind that its veracity is no more dubious than the veracity of the Bible, say, or the Qur'an, or the sacred texts of most other religions. The latter texts simply enjoy the considerable advantage of having made their public debut in the shadowy recesses of the ancient past, and are thus much harder to refute" (p. 68). Though superficially it may seem that Krakauer is claiming that all religious belief is irrational, if you look past the initial assertion to what follows it becomes more apparent that he is really raising this as a question to be addressed. By pointing out that America is a highly religious society where the standard is actually religious belief, it would be foolish to claim that religious belief is irrational unless you fully intend to claim that 90% of the U.S. population is irrational.

Due to the rather strange organization of the book, the reader has to wait another 230 pages before Krakauer readdresses this point. However, when he finally does come back to it, he does not answer his earlier questions but instead explicitly states the questions, "... if Ron Lafferty were deemed mentally ill because he obeyed the voice of his God, isn't everyone who believes in God and seeks guidance through prayer mentally ill as well? In a democratic

republic that aspires to protect religious freedom, who should have the right to declare that one person's irrational beliefs are legitimate and commendable, while another person's are crazy? How can a society actively promote religious faith on one hand and condemn a man for zealously adhering to his faith on the other?" (p. 294). I believe if Mike Otterson had read to this point without becoming incensed by what must have seemed a full frontal attack on religious belief he would have found that Krakauer was actually raising the question and not claiming to answer it.

Krakauer may have let it slip in the first quote that he is a skeptic and finds religious belief a bit hard to swallow, but I don't believe he is arguing that religious belief is completely irrational. I believe he is making the argument that religious beliefs *can* be irrational, but only when taken to extremes or when they have been illustrated to be founded on false information or faulty premises. If you choose to adhere to the more hard-line interpretation that Krakauer finds all religious belief irrational, then by admitting at the end of the book he occasionally prays to a god that he only occasionally believes in, Krakauer would be including himself in that group of irrational individuals, which, in fact, he may be doing. But I think what he was really trying to accomplish with this second point is to raise this issue as a question rather than claim that he has all of the answers.

There is one other comment I feel should be made about the book before closing. Despite the negatively biased approach to Mormonism, as a sociologist of Mormonism (in training) I could not help but think that Krakauer had actually succeeded in painting a relatively accurate picture of Mormon theology from a skeptic's point of view. He hit upon all of the major points that are generally addressed in scholarly forums and most of the major criticisms leveled at Mormonism. By no means is the book a fair assessment of Mormonism, but it is likely what a pessimistic skeptic would conclude after a fair amount of study.

There are numerous additional comments that can and probably should be made about this book. In many ways it is iconoclastic – it has taken investigative journalism to another level by affronting religious belief generally and an

increasingly popular religion specifically. But given space considerations I will leave the rest of my potential comments for future discussions of the book with interested parties.

In conclusion, it can probably be argued quite convincingly that this book is not 'good' historical or sociological scholarship. The author follows a format that results in a rather biased depiction of Mormonism, though it makes for engaging, if not completely accurate, reading. If you choose to look at this book not as strict historical or sociological scholarship but instead as an attempt to raise certain questions surrounding blind obedience and the rationality of religion, Krakauer has done an excellent job of bringing these questions into the open, despite never explicitly stating that as his intent. What's more, I don't believe Krakauer has offered any answers. He doesn't explore what should be done with the encouragement of blind obedience in religious groups nor does he offer a rule of thumb to distinguish between rational and irrational religious belief. What he likely has done, however, is stir the already muddy waters between the religious and non-religious, though where it will lead I can't be sure.

(John Krakauer is the author of several other best-selling books, including: *Into Thin Air* and *Into the Wild*)

(Ryan T. Cragun is a graduate student in Sociology at the University of Cincinnati)

Announcements

Harold T. Christensen, one of the pioneers in the sociological study of Mormons, died peacefully at his son's home in southern California on August 30, 2003, at the age of 94. After a prolonged mission for the LDS Church to New Zealand (during the final portion of which he was the acting mission president), Harold served on the BYU faculty for a few years before moving to the Department of Sociology at Purdue University for a career of some three decades. He retired from Purdue in 1976 and spent the rest of his life with his charming wife Alice in La Jolla, near San Diego. Alice survives him but is in a weakened condition from a stroke.

A specialist in family life and sexual behavior, Harold's publications on Mormons reach back into the 1930s. They are found in several different sociology journals, including ASR, AJS, and JMF, as well as in *Dialogue*. There were earlier sociologists of national distinction who had LDS backgrounds, such as Kimball Young, Lowry Nelson, and Nels Anderson, but Harold Christensen and Glenn M. Vernon were the first ones to devote appreciable portions of their careers to the study of Mormons. His list of works on the Mormons fill an entire page (small print) in the recent and massive bibliography, *Studies in Mormon History, 1830-1997*, compiled and edited by Allen, Walker, and Whittaker. A few years ago, when the JSSR and MSSA meetings were held in San Diego, one of our sessions was devoted to Harold's career in Mormon Studies, and he was present to respond to the kudos of his younger colleagues. Harold's extensive personal papers, and a summary of his life, can be found in the archives at Brigham Young University. Personal reflections on his career can be found in his essay, "Memoirs of a Marginal Man," published in the Fall, 1987, issue of *Dialogue*.

(Contributed by Armand Mauss)

The Mormon Social Science Association announces the creation of a network of scholars interested in international and cross-cultural expressions of Mormonism. Included in such a focus would be the relationship between Mormonism and the local, political, and legal frameworks, the local cultural heritage, and local prospects for retention and growth. Various local syncretic accretions and adaptations would also be included. Comparative studies with other non-establishment religious might be useful too (e.g. JW, SDA, and Pentecostal). As soon as an enduring core of scholars and potential studies can be identified, the network can take on a more organized form and seek funding for ongoing projects. Meanwhile, a great deal of mutual sharing and "cross-fertilization" can be achieved. The network would benefit by as many bilingual and multilingual scholars as possible and non-Mormon scholars are especially welcome. Interested scholars should contact the main coordinator of the emerging network, Dr. Henri Gooren of the Netherlands, h.gooren@compaqnet.nl, or Dr. Armand L.

Mauss, almauss@cox.net, who is assisting.

***Dialogue* appoints new editorial staff**

Following a six-month search, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* has just announced the appointment of the team that will be in charge of editing the journal from 2004 through 2009. Named new editor is Karen Marguerite Moloney, a professor of English at Weber State University. Professor emeritus Levi S. Peterson has accepted the appointment as associate editor. Moloney and Peterson will succeed Neal and Rebecca Chandler, who have served as *Dialogue* co-editors since 1999, and Keith Norman, who, since 2000, has served as associate editor.

Moloney's involvement with *Dialogue* goes back to 1977 when she spent two months in Virginia as an intern for then editor Mary Bradford. Following her internship, Moloney remained on the journal's staff for a while longer and served on the editorial board from 1979-82. Moloney holds a Ph.D. in modern British and Anglo-Irish literature from UCLA and has published poetry and essays in *Dialogue*, *Sunstone*, *Twentieth Century Literature*, and other venues.

"Karen is a long-time supporter and author," observed *Dialogue* board chair Armand Mauss in an interview with *Sunstone*. "She has built a distinguished career in teaching and in publishing. She has a wonderful grasp of literature and the English language, and she will be a terrific editor."

Associate editor Peterson is a retired professor of English and a prolific writer. He is the author of short stories, novels, and the award-winning biography *Juanity Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian*. Peterson is perhaps best known for his award-winning novel, *The Backslider*.

With Moloney living in Utah and Peterson in Washington state, the pair will rely heavily on the telephone and email to carry out their duties.

The new *Dialogue* team also includes Brent Corcoran as production manager, Todd Compton as history editor, Karen Rosenbaum as fiction editor, Lisa Bickmore as poetry editor,

Timm Archer as book review editor, and Linda Sillitoe as personal essay editor. Warren Luch will continue in his position as art director.

Queries, proposals, and manuscripts can be submitted to dialogueMSS@aol.com.

(from *Sunstone*, issue 127:75-76)

Eighth Annual Religion and the Humanities Conference – 23 October, 2003

Sponsored by the Center for the Study of Ethics at Utah Valley State College

10:00 a.m.

Teaching About Religion: Civic and Constitutional Issues
Charles Haynes, Senior Scholar, Freedom Forum
First Amendment Center, Arlington, Virginia

11:30 a.m.

Religion in the Public School Curriculum
Warren Nord, Director of the Program in Humanities and Human Values University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

1:00 p.m.

Panel Discussion
Negotiating Religious Diversity in the Classroom
Marcia Beauchamp, Chair Religion in the Schools Task Force
American Academy of Religion (moderator)

2:30 p.m.

Methodological Issues in the Study of Religion
Amanda Porterfield, Professor of Religious Studies
Florida State University

4:00 p.m.

Panel Discussion
The Value of Religious Studies in Higher Education
Patrick Rogers-Horn, Associate Dean of the School of Religion
Claremont Graduate University (moderator)

For information:

Contact Brian Birch,
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The Center for the Study of Ethics can be reached at: (801) 863-7455

Or on the web: <http://uvsc.edu/ethics>

FUTURE SSSR MEETINGS

2004: October 22-24, Kansas City, Missouri

2005: November 4-6, Rochester, New York

2006: October 20-22, Portland, Oregon