



ASSOCIATION OF
MORMON COUNSELORS
AND PSYCHOTHERAPISTS

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- a) To promote fellowship, foster communication, enhance personal and professional development, and promote a forum for counselors and psychotherapists whose common bond is membership in and adherence to the principles and standards of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, both in their personal lives and professional practice.
- b) To encourage and support members' efforts to actively promote within their other professional organizations and the society at large the adoption and maintenance of moral standards and practices that are consistent with gospel principles.

Article 1, Section 2, AMCAP by-laws (as amended Sept. 30, 1981).

AMCAP supports the principles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; however, it is an independent, professional organization which is not sponsored by, nor does it speak for the Church or its leaders.

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CONTENTS

Editorial	Burton C. Kelly	10
Letter to the Editor	L. Alan Westover	11

ARTICLES AND ESSAYS

Confidentiality: The Basis of the Therapeutic Relationship	Val D. MacMurray	14
Panel—Conflicts in Confidentiality: Child Abuse and Other Issues		26
Response of Judge Franklin B. Matheson	Franklin B. Matheson	28
Response of B. Lloyd Poelman	B. Lloyd Poelman	36
Response of John T. Nielsen	John T. Nielsen	44
Response of Marilyn Sandberg	Marilyn Sandberg	49
What Has Happened to Sugar and Spice? Our Responsibilities in a Changing Society	Agnes M. Plenk	53
A Response to "What Has Happened to Sugar and Spice?"	Juel D. Gregersen	63
Successful Mormon Families	William G. Dyer Phillip R. Kunz	73
LDS Church Members in the U.S. and Canada: A Demographic Profile	Kristen L. Goodman Tim B. Heaton	88

BOOK REVIEW

Psychotherapy and Religious Factors: A Book Review	Allen E. Bergin	108
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BRIEF NOTICE

In Future Issues	Burton C. Kelly	113
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EDITORIAL

This is the first of our theme-oriented issues of the *AMCAP Journal*. We hope and trust that you will like it.

In case you are wondering from the table of contents, the theme for this issue, ethical–legal concerns in the helping professions, is treated by the presidential address of Val MacMurray and the four papers following given in a panel presentation at the AMCAP Convention last October. As with each of the theme-oriented issues, we plan to publish additional unrelated articles that we have received, so please send us any papers that you would like to have considered for publication. Thank you.

Thanks to each of the authors of this issue for your excellent contribution to our *AMCAP Journal* readers.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

It was good to attend the AMCAP meetings this past Friday, renew acquaintances, and enjoy well-prepared presentations. It was evident that many people provided hours of volunteer service to make the meetings possible. I am writing today, however, to share some observations and concerns regarding our April AMCAP meeting. Although I was an active member of AMCAP in the late 1970s and early 1980s I have not been a member of AMCAP for the past five years or so, and I have only recently renewed my membership. For this reason I am not acquainted with the recent evolutionary trends within the organization.

I was disappointed to make three observations at these meetings which have generated serious concerns in my mind:

1. Attendance was modest,
2. The medical model of identifying and addressing gerontological challenges dominated the conference, and
3. Several of the presentations were entirely secular in thrust; that is to say, the presentations might have been comfortably made at other professional meetings unassociated with the Church. No attempt whatsoever was made to draw from, nor integrate with, gospel principles in several of the presentations.

My interpretation of these observations might be summarized in a single statement: We as an organization may be moving rapidly away from the unique assumptions, values, beliefs, and purposes which distinguish the identity of AMCAP from other professional organizations. If this interpretation is accurate, there are serious implications for the organization.

Our members that are drawn to AMCAP precisely because of its unique LDS identity may not continue to invest in an organization which seeks to "out-do" other professional organizations which operate from a secular identity. There are many conferences, seminars, workshops, journals, texts, courses, etc., which can better meet any needs in this arena than can AMCAP. I suspect that members invest in AMCAP in the hope that it will highlight social/emotional issues and challenges from a perspective unique to our LDS identity. Should we violate our own purposes, goals, philosophical values, and beliefs, the primary incentive for membership and participation will be sacrificed and the viability of the organization compromised. It would seem to me that the risks listed above are unacceptable, and unnecessary.

I would suggest that individuals who formulate seminar themes, invite presenters, select journal articles, etc., presumably the Board of Governors and Editors, adopt formal guidelines by which potential contributions may be screened. Appropriate contributions would seem to include

1. The forwarding of gospel-based or gospel-compatible conceptual frameworks, models, theories, and methodologies.
2. The application of the research process to LDS populations.
3. The comparison or contrast, and possibly refinement, of prominent theories and methodologies currently used by LDS professionals as set against the measuring stick of revealed truth. This would naturally require a willingness of our membership to tolerate debate, professional differences of opinion, and open dialogue. The integration of religious and secular truths surely is a central challenge for LDS professionals. Brother Bruce Brown's intriguing article in the latest journal issue is an excellent example of this (although he disclaims any interest in integrating his gospel-derived beliefs and professionally derived beliefs about human behavior). It appears in fact that the journal article represents a point in Brother Brown's lifelong process of transferring "tacit, ineffable" knowledge into the realm of "explicit" knowledge. I am grateful that he has gone to the effort, because I learned from his article.
4. The application of gospel principles to crucial professional challenges of the day. The selection of gerontological issues for our recent seminar may not have been as problematic as the decision not to assess gerontological issues through the lenses of gospel principles. If there are not LDS contributors prepared to do this at this point in time, it may be developmentally premature for AMCAP to select such a narrow focus.

5. A decision to devote an entire seminar to a single topic necessarily precludes contributions on other topics. At a time when we are seeking to generate increased participation of our membership in the production of journal articles it would appear counter-productive to solicit contributions on a single narrow topic.

These comments should not be interpreted as a criticism of the presenters nor the presentations made this past week. Many of the presentations were informative and useful secular treatments of relevant issues. Any lack of appropriateness or fit in these presentations to an AMCAP audience is in no way a reflection upon the presenters, rather it reflects upon the adopted format.

As I stated earlier, I have not been sufficiently active in AMCAP in recent years to confidently assert that my observations are indicative of “mega trends” within the organization. Nonetheless, I find myself laboring under the nagging suspicions that much of what I have been describing may not be a mere blip in the graph so much as a concerted effort to increase the “professional stature” of AMCAP. I hope this suspicion is in error and that we have not fallen into the trap of confusing secularism with professionalism. It would be tragic indeed if we came to feel embarrassed by who we are, took a suite in the “large and spacious building” (1 Ne. 12:35–36), placing the proud letters of AMCAP over the suite entrance!

I recognize that mine is but one viewpoint, and I look forward to reading and considering other points of view on these issues in the months ahead.

L. Alan Westover, MS

CONFIDENTIALITY: THE BASIS OF THE THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP

Val D. MacMurray
AMCAP Presidential Address,
October 1985

Leo Tolstoy begins *Anna Karenina* with these memorable words:

Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.

Everything was in confusion in the Oblonskys' house. The wife had discovered that the husband was carrying on an intrigue with a French girl, who had been a governess in their family, and she had announced to her husband that she could not go on living in the same house with him. This position of affairs had now lasted three days, and not only the husband and wife themselves, but all the members of their family and household, were painfully conscious of it. Every person in the house felt that there was no sense in their living together, and that the stray people brought together by chance in any inn had more in common with one another than they, the members of the family and household of the Oblonskys. The wife did not leave her own room, the husband had not been at home for three days. The children ran wild all over the house; the English governess quarreled with the housekeeper, and wrote to a friend asking her to look out for a new situation for her; the man-cook had walked off the day before just at dinner-time; the kitchen-maid and the coachman had given warning. (Tolstoy, 1877/1939, 3-4)

While I do not agree that all happy families are alike, I think it is true that the unhappiness of an unhappy family is unique despite the number of unhappy families. My interest today is to raise a difficult issue that lies at the intersection of two sets of values: our values as Latter-day Saints and our values as professional therapists. I am doing this in a spirit of helpfulness, not of criticism. I am sharing the concerns I have heard from many of you and that I feel myself—concerns

for our clients, concerns for our community, and concerns for the values that shape the generations that follow us.

The intimate setting of the family has always been a place where either love or anger, kindness or hurtfulness flourish. There is no comfortable distance in intimacy. The match is always touching the striking surface, ready to flare up either into brilliant joy or into painful hurt. In intimacy, there is no place to hide. Precisely for this reason one of the promises of intimacy is also extreme peril.

I know many families trapped in the painful situation of Tolstoy's Oblonskys. I have heard a frustrated parent confess to almost wishing that a disobedient child would be found too late to be brought back from a drug overdose. I have heard couples in deeply troubled marriages admit there are times when the thought of their own or their partner's death has flitted across their minds. Intimacy, contrary to popular belief, is not born of passion but the other way around. It is in intimacy that the passions—ranging from deepest tenderness to rage—are born.

As therapists, we are invited to enter this intimate space. I would like to address some issues for LDS therapists today that relate to our intrusion—even if invited—upon that intimate space. Our obligations grow out of our professional commitment to maintain confidentiality as we enter those intimate spaces. We have a professional obligation to enter respectfully, to—in the minimum language of the Hippocratic oath of physicians—do no harm even if our ability to do good is limited, to establish a therapist–client relationship that is also, in its own way, an intimate relationship so that we can foster the process of healing and health, and yet be able to terminate the professional relationship without the damage that most terminations of intimate relationships bring. I would like particularly to address the professional obligation of confidentiality that rests upon us all.

Intimacy comes from a Latin adjective, the superlative form of *interior*. In other words, it represents the ultimate in privacy, the supreme “inside job.” Intimacy is a state of coexistence in the same space, space so private that only the people in it can make the rules for how to share and use that space. In healthy intimacy, as in a marriage or in a parent–child relationship, for instance, the deepest essence of the other person's being is savored, even if it cannot be truly known; appreciated, even if it cannot be truly understood, rejoiced in, and celebrated. As a husband, I accept the essential personhood of my wife, delight in and am delighted by its manifestations in her personality, nurture her growth in directions that deepen her personhood, and care profoundly for her eternal well-being, not only as my wife but as an eternal sister,

comrade, friend, confidante, and—yes—honorable competitor in this cooperative venture we call marriage. Similarly, as a father, I rejoice in the personhood of each child, accept the surprises, deal with the dismays, share the secrets of my own growing toward personhood, and gratefully learn from their own growth.

Inherent in intimacy is the concept of sharing essential information at close quarters where the privilege of sharing is also the power to harm. In this situation as possibly in no other, knowledge is power and “no power . . . can or ought to be maintained . . . only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned; by kindness and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy; that he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death” (D&C 121:41–44). Needless to say, most of us, whether client or therapist, seek with varying measures of success to incorporate these qualities perfectly into our family life.

Family space is intimate space. Each family, no matter how troubled, exists in the same intimate space. As a therapist, I approach that space hoping to help family members see a new way to arrange the space, share the duties, make rules that will deepen and protect that intimacy. Yet in many cases, we are dealing with distortions of intimacy: with intimacy that does not know how to give as well as take, to respect as well as need, to nourish as well as feed. We are invited because the need for help is greater than the need to maintain privacy, because the hunger of intimate personal needs is driving an individual into seeking strange food—in extreme cases, adultery, abuse, and incest.

I think, just as we are now teaching children that there are “good secrets” and “bad secrets,” that it is time for us to talk about “keeping secrets.” About keeping secrets as therapists. About keeping secrets as Latter-day Saints. About keeping secrets as human beings. I choose to do it in the context of sexual abuse, particularly incest, simply because we are all newly sensitized to this situation. No doubt each of you is familiar with statistics in your state; but while reports of child abuse in Salt Lake County have increased 53 percent in the last four years, there has been about a 300 percent increase in reports of child sexual abuse—297 percent in one Utah district and 304 percent in another (Panel, 1985, 1). And the questions of confidentiality become particularly keen given the legal requirement to report child abuse to the proper authorities.

The Requirement of Confidentiality

According to the American Psychological Association's "Ethical Principles of Psychologists":

Psychologists have a primary obligation to respect the confidentiality of information obtained from persons in the course of their work as psychologists. They reveal such information to others only with the consent of the person or the person's legal representative, except in those circumstances in which not to do so would result in clear danger to the person or to others. Where appropriate, psychologists inform their clients of the legal limits of confidentiality.

There are specific requirements governing disclosures to third persons, of preparing written reports, of making professional presentation, of storing and disposing of records that will "avoid undue invasion of privacy" and of taking "special care to protect . . . [the] best interests" of "minors or other persons who are unable to give voluntary, informed consent" (Schulz, 1982, 152-153).

The basis of the therapeutic relationship is *confidentiality*, a word that stems from a root that also produces such words as *fidelity* and *fiduciary*. We go into the intimate space of people, hoping to restore their abilities to have healthy intimacy in their personal lives. We are allowed to enter under the seal of that confidentiality so that, in an atmosphere of trust and honest disclosure, self-knowledge will come. Out of the powerful truths will, ideally, come the power to change behavior and patterns of thinking that have been negative, entrapping, and enslaving. The concept of confidentiality is the assumption that the client can think out loud about his or her behavior and feelings with the confidence—a word of two meanings—that the therapist will not use the information to injure him or her or will not divulge it to third parties. The pattern of common practice and legal cases establishes such confidentiality as the client's right. This is an important point, for, as therapists, we sometimes feel that confidentiality is *our* right.

Confidentiality, privileged communication, and privacy are related concepts, but there are important distinctions between them. . . . *Confidentiality* . . . relates to matters of professional ethics. Confidentiality protects the client from unauthorized disclosures of any sort by the professional without informed consent of the client. . . . The purpose of confidentiality is to safeguard the client's rights and . . . sanction . . . violations of confidentiality. . . . *Privileged communication* [is] the legal right which exists by statute and which protects the client from having his confidences revealed publicly from the witness stand

during legal proceedings without his permission. Privileged communication, then, is a *legal* concept and refers to the right of clients not to have their privileged communications used in courts of law without their consent. If a client waives this privilege, the professional has no grounds for withholding the information. . . . Privacy [is] the freedom people have to choose for themselves when to share or withhold from others information about their attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and behaviors (Corey, Corey, & Callahan, 1979, 122–123).

In actual fact, there are several situations that would modify such assumptions. Therapists frequently need to supply data to insurance companies about diagnosis and treatment, sometimes routine and sometimes requiring client release. They also need to provide information to hospitals or answer requests from other medical personnel. Sometimes these are referring physicians, but sometimes their client is an agency, not an individual. The information is sought for an organization's best interests, not those of the client. Peer review of difficult cases, particularly at the request of third parties, is becoming more common, and more people thus inevitably have access to the facts of a case.

Breaches of Confidentiality

Therapists also have a legal right to breach confidentiality when there is the probability of harm to another. The landmark case in this regard was *Tarasoff v. the Regents of the University of California*, a 1974 case. A client told his therapist, who worked in a University of California hospital, that he intended to kill his girlfriend. The therapist told the campus police, both orally and in writing, that "Poddar was dangerous and should be taken to a community mental health center for psychiatric commitment." The police talked with the client and released him when he promised to stay away from the girl. However, he shot her and then stabbed her fatally. Her parents sued the therapist, the university regents, and the campus police for failing to notify her. Although the Supreme Court refused to award punitive damages, it ruled in favor of the parents and charged the therapist with irresponsibility. The California state legislature passed a statute: "There is no privilege if the psychotherapist has reasonable cause to believe that the patient is in such mental or emotional condition as to be dangerous to himself or to the person or property of another and that disclosure of the communication is necessary to prevent the threatened danger" (Corey, Corey, & Callahan, 1979, 123; Schwitzgebel & Schwitzgebel, 1980, 205). As a therapist, you need to know how this case would apply in your state.

Parallel issues come up when a client threatens suicide. Should someone else be warned? Should the client be hospitalized? What about someone who talks about beating his wife or a girlfriend? What if a client is using or dealing drugs? What if a client admits burglary or fraud? Disclosures of past events are problematic enough, but what if the revelation is of a future intent? In a recent case in Pennsylvania, a patient told her therapist that she wanted to kill her employer. When the psychiatrist warned the employer, the employer naturally fired her, and the client sued the psychiatrist for breach of the state confidentiality statutes. The court ruled against the psychiatrist's defense of "legal duty" and upheld the patient's right to sue (Monahan, 1984, 29).

And what constitutes hurt? If an active Latter-day Saint, man or woman, tells me in therapy about an affair, I can safely predict damage to the individual, to the spouse, to the children, and to the partner as well. Certainly part of my therapy would involve encouraging him or her to deal honestly with the marital issues that led to an affair and eventually talk to his or her bishop; but it is difficult for me to imagine a scenario where I could believe that reporting this person to his or her bishop or spouse would be other than a grave breach of confidentiality.

Child Abuse Reporting Requirement

Not least important in this catalog of exceptions, therapists in this state as well as others are expressly required by statute to report cases of child abuse or sexual abuse, or even suspected abuse. This requirement presents several interesting aspects of legal and moral responsibility, but from a professional perspective, the requirement to report is absolute for us.

The assumption of confidentiality has historically been extended to therapists by extension of the doctor-patient privacy rules, not by extension of the priest-penitent privilege. As Latter-day Saint therapists who deal largely with a Latter-day Saint population, sometimes the distinction between the two may become blurred in our minds and in our practices.

However, as a practical matter, neither analogy is particularly helpful, for the doctor-patient privilege has been so consistently overridden by the court's "need to know."

In parallel fashion, the priest-penitent privilege is not an enjoiner of absolute silence upon an ecclesiastical leader. Such an enjoiner may exist, but it does so as a result of the internal standards of the priest's own religious order. Instead, the priest-penitent privilege is a narrow legal exemption, that he may not be examined upon matters which he learned about in confession or in another private and official setting.

In the Catholic church, where confession is anonymous and a sacrament, the seal of the confessional is absolute. A priest is absolutely forbidden in any way or manner to betray a penitent either verbally or otherwise. The penalty for doing so is automatic excommunication and a suspension of his priestly duties. The classic seminary example is this: Mrs. Riley, your own housekeeper, comes to early morning confession and, without knowing who is on the other side of the curtain, confesses that she has just put arsenic in her priest's morning coffee. You are that priest. What should you do? The answer: drink the coffee. This answer presupposes, of course, a forced choice between revealing and keeping the confession and does not allow other options such as persuading Mrs. Riley to change her mind through the very proper channel of withholding absolution until she repents, deciding to fast that morning, etc. The LDS context of lay leadership and confession—confidential but certainly not anonymous—does not have an exact analogue to this kind of canonical law. It does not even have an approximate one since I know of no action, except possibly release, taken against a bishop who divulges confidences without an urgent reason.

Probably no professional here has any doubt that the state of Utah's statute requiring that child abuse be reported applies to him or her. Since the statute specifically requires doctors to report, clearly no legal exemption would be made for mental health professionals under whose umbrella they most usually take shelter.

Reality is seldom as uncomplicated as the rules, however. Let me share a personal experience. Some time ago, I received a call from a bishop who wanted me to consult with one of his ward members, a man past retirement age and terminally ill who had come to him with a confession of having sexually abused boys in their early adolescence. He had been an active member of the Church all of his life and had, as a result, been called to positions of trust and confidence. It was from these positions that he had been able to attract, seduce, and abuse these boys.

The bishop was fiercely determined that this man, almost certain to die within a year, should not be subjected to legal processes; but he had consulted me because he felt the man's mental state required the services of a professional. The bishop could not assure me that all abuse had stopped. Nor could he assure me that the man's victims, some of whom would now be middle-aged, did not need care in their own ways.

As a therapist and a former bishop myself, I was in a dilemma. I saw the man in his bishop's presence. I did not ask his name. I did not inquire about on-going abuse. I did not ask searching questions about restitution to the man's victims. I simply dealt with his current

crisis and was, I think, helpful. How responsibly or irresponsibly was I behaving? It was some comfort to me that the man was so obviously ill that I felt *almost* certain his condition would preclude continuing abuse, but I knew the statistics and I couldn't be sure. In this case, I shielded myself from reporting by shielding myself from the information that would require me to take action.

But sometimes, the thought of those boys—some of them mission-age now, some of them married and fathers, some of them holding the same position that this man held when he approached them—flashes across my mind and I do not feel entirely comfortable. The man's bishop was his advocate in that situation, but who was the advocate for those boys? I would have said, if asked, that my first value was protecting children and my second value would have been helping offenders. But when it came right to the test, did I reverse those values?

The Therapeutic Situation

It seems to me that the therapeutic situation is a situation involving human pain with the therapeutic task in part being to help others process their pain.

I am sensitive to the fact that in this association, a majority of the therapists are men. In the setting of the Church, ecclesiastical leaders are always men. I think that some unique therapeutic challenges may therefore exist in cases of sex abuse. Sometimes I wonder if we are able to understand and imaginatively comprehend *all* the human pain with which we must deal. When a bishop faces an incestuous father across his desk, he typically faces a man torn by remorse and sorrow. I think it is at least probable that the bishop will deal very well with the proximate pain of the father in trying to move him into the pattern of repentance that the bishop has great faith in. However, I wonder if he is sometimes distracted from recognizing the pain that is not in his office: the pain of the abused daughter, pain which may not be acknowledged or dealt with until years later; the pain of the betrayed mother who, in turn, has betrayed her child; the pain of the other children in the family who, on whatever level they know or sense the abuse, must struggle with issues of their own love, loyalty, outrage, and emotional well-being. I think it may also happen that the bishop may not have the time or resources to process his own pain.

Marilyn Sandberg, director of the Weber County Task Force on Child Sexual Abuse, investigated the Victim/Witness Program in our county and testified about six months ago regarding 10 cases where the daughter or victim had reported the abuse to a religious leader.

In all 10 cases, the leader had called in the father, who had, in each case, confessed. (In the typical 10 cases, I would suspect at least 3 or 4 denials.) Usually the father was excommunicated but—and this was the key in her testimony—*in every case the molestation had continued* (Panel, 1985, 22).

If one generalization is true about people who sexually abuse children, it is that they are addicted to their behavior. Acting out that addiction, they will abuse again and again until they receive concentrated and thorough treatment over an extended period of time, treatment that involves reorganizing and reeducating the whole family so that the daughter knows how to relate differently to her father, and the mother knows how to relate differently to him. In 1983, the average molester had abused 67.5 children before being caught. Many molesters admit to hundreds or even thousands of incidents of sexual abuse of children. In the U.S., 1 in 4 girls will suffer some kind of sexual abuse before they reach 18 years of age. The ratio for boys ranges from 1 in 5 to 1 in 7. In Utah, the estimate for both boys and girls is 1 in 6 (Panel, 1985).

In examining programs of incest treatment that seem to be successful, that of Santa Clara County in California, which is thorough and concentrated, has been a model for several years. It is deliberately multiagency. This program reports that offenders who are court-ordered into treatment stick with it and that a treatment program involving the entire family has produced hopeful results. In sexual abuse cases “more than 92 percent of the children return home, and more than 75 percent of the marriages remain intact. . . . The recidivism rate is 0.6 percent for those families who have completed the program. . . . In ten years, more than 3,000 families have been provided services.”

Need for Cooperation

We need to stop keeping this disease of family abuse from ourselves. We need to stop communicating to victims that they must continue to maintain the secrets. As a colleague in the state Department of Social Services has observed, “Lay clergymen do the best they can with the training and resources they have, but there’s a tendency to think they can solve problems which they are *not able* to solve.” He reported many cases where a lay clergyman thought a problem had been “taken care of” only to discover that it was far from being resolved.

One of the those inconvenient ecclesiastical realities is that the statistical probability of a bishop learning about a case of incest from the abusing father is much less than learning about it from the daughter (sometimes when she is an adult) or from the mother—in other words,

from a third party. The Utah law quite clearly requires a bishop under those circumstances to report abuse. It is possible that a bishop, identifying with an active, priesthood-holding father, or being reluctant to report for other reasons, might find himself faced with a dilemma. If a 14-year-old girl comes to him and begins to tell him something about her father that seems to involve improper conduct, what should he or might he do? It is possible that he will stop her to say, "I think you need to know that if you're going to tell me that your father has been sexually abusing you, that I'll have to report him to the authorities and the following things will happen to him. . . ." Depending on the tone of voice, I suppose it is possible for the bishop to communicate, "You'd better tell me that he's a great guy and you've got a terrific family."

In this case, the pain of two people—the bishop and the incestuous father—will have been assuaged at the cost of increased pain and betrayal for the daughter—who had to work up her courage for who knows how long—and for the rest of the family. Perhaps this could happen even though the Church's legal position on the issue has made it quite clear that under Utah law an LDS Social Services worker who learns of sexual abuse under any circumstances must report it, that the bishop who learns of sexual abuse from anyone but the perpetrator as a formal confession must report it, and that when he learns of the abuse *only* through the confession of the perpetrator, he should encourage him to agree to have it reported, preferably by Social Services personnel (Panel, 1985, 12). This would apply to any therapist, LDS or not.

In some ways, the line between being a counselor and being a judge in Israel can be confusing. It is helpful for a counselor to be accepting and nonjudgmental. It is absolutely counterproductive for a judge to refuse to evaluate spiritual and moral qualities. At the same time, it is unrealistic to indulge in what Father Peter Van Hook, rector of All Saints Episcopal Church in Salt Lake City, has called "fantasies of power," namely, that ecclesiastical approval, advice, or disapproval can effect a change that requires the involvement of spiritual authority, the force of the state, and the skilled help of a therapist (Panel, 1985, 16–17).

Dealing with the Therapist's Pain

Statistically, among a group this size and with the ballpark figure that 1 of 6 children is sexually abused—1 in 3, according to some studies—I feel safe in saying that many of us here today have had this experience. That this room does not contain victims of sexual abuse who were also victims of incest is also statistically improbable. I recognize that pain and the courage it takes to reach beyond it to help others

experiencing similar pain. The issues may be somewhat different for people with this personal experience than they are for the other 5 out of 6 who did not have the same experience, but the therapeutic issues are the same for each.

As therapists, we are not in much of a position to offer help if we have no emotional control over the situation ourselves. As Lynn Roundy has suggested:

Few subjects have the explosive effect that is associated with the sexual abuse of children/adolescents, especially by a member of the family. . . .

It is very important that each helping professional examine his/her own feelings, and where there are biases, and/or significant unresolved issues, that they be dealt with. In order to be of help to another person who has experienced the potential trauma of sexual abuse, the professional must be able to present himself as a person who views the subject with reason and measured behavior. Victims need to see that the issue can be survived (1984, 1).

In other words, therapists also can need therapy, and the place to get it is in the confidential setting of another's office.

Conclusion

Trust, that essential cornerstone of healthy intimacy, cannot be coerced or commanded. It must be earned. Often we are in the position of dealing with families trapped in patterns of unhealthy intimacy, whose members no longer trust each other because that trust has been forfeited by unloving acts. They are in the position of some of Jacob's hearers when he accused them: "Ye have broken the hearts of your tender wives, and lost the confidence of your children, because of your bad examples before them" (Jacob 2:35).

Our task as therapists—indeed, the reason we were invited to enter that intimate family space in the first place—is to give them, if we can and if they have the will to follow through, the tools and skills to rebuild that confidence, to restore those broken hearts. True intimacy will generate "good secrets" that bind heart to heart. "Bad secrets" are in themselves a perversion of intimacy that will eventually contaminate and poison even the vestiges of true intimacy. No service is done anyone by perpetuating such terrible distortions of intimacy. The purpose of confidentiality is not to protect these "bad secrets" or to protect people from the consequences of creating and keeping "bad secrets." It is to teach them a better way of sharing that intimate space so that the relationship can be a nourishing one.

Restoring true intimacy in human relationships has profound implications for an individual's ability to experience true intimacy in

dealing with the Savior as well. In fact, I cannot differentiate the parts of the process. Repentance before the Lord often generates the will and the skill to make things right within a family circle. Seeing hope for healing with damaged loved ones often generates the confidence that a loving Father and his Son actively care about the outcome of that process. It is for this reason, I believe, that the promise was given: "Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God" (D&C 121:45).

Christ is the prince of grace as he is the prince of peace. To help someone, burdened by habits of addiction and oppression, lift his or her eyes to that visage of perfect love, perfect mercy, and perfect justice is truly a work of liberation, a work that the Lord has chosen "to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free" (Isa. 58:6).

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PANEL—CONFLICTS IN CONFIDENTIALITY: CHILD ABUSE AND OTHER ISSUES

Burton C. Kelly

The following four papers are addresses given in a panel presentation and discussion at the AMCAP Convention, Friday, October 4, 1985. The 1986 General Session of the Forty-sixth Legislature of the State of Utah made changes in Title 78, Chapter 3b (Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect Act), effective April 28, 1986, which resolved a major issue the panel discussed, that is, whether a clergyman or priest needed to report an incident of child abuse or neglect received in an official confession made by the perpetrator of the act. However, it was decided to still include the panelists' presentations because of the many insightful comments made on the issue of clergymen reporting, because of comments on other related issues and because a number of our AMCAP readers may have within their states child abuse and neglect reporting acts which are unclear on the issue of clergymen reporting confessional information.

Because of its relevance to these presentations, Title 78, Chapter 3b of the Utah Code (as amended) follows:

78-3b-3. Neglected or abused child—Duty to notify— Exception.

(1) Whenever any person including, but not limited to, persons licensed under the Medical Practice Act or the Nurse Practice Act, has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to incest, molestation, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect, or one who observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect, he shall immediately notify the nearest peace officer, law enforcement agency, or office of the division. On receipt of this notice, the peace officer or law enforcement agency shall immediately notify the nearest office of the division. If an initial report of abuse or neglect is made to the division and the abuse or neglect has caused serious injury, the division shall immediately notify the local law enforcement agency.

(2) The notification requirements of Subsection (1) do not apply to a clergyman or priest, without the consent of the person making the confession, with regard to any confession made to him in his professional character in the course of discipline enjoined by the church to which he belongs, if:

(a) the confession was made directly to the clergyman or priest by the perpetrator; and

(b) the clergyman or priest is, under canon law or church doctrine or practice, bound to maintain the confidentiality of that confession.

(3) If a clergyman or priest receives information about abuse or neglect from any source other than confession of the perpetrator, he is required to give notification on the basis of that information even though he may have also received a report of abuse or neglect from the confession of the perpetrator. Exemption of notification requirements for a clergyman or priest does not exempt such person from any other efforts required by law to prevent further abuse or neglect by the perpetrator.

1986

Effective April 28, 1986.

RESPONSE OF JUDGE FRANKLIN B. MATHESON

Franklin B. Matheson, Judge

This is a very frightening experience. Normally I have you before me, now I'm before you. As I was preparing for this panel discussion today on confidentiality and privilege, I was reminded of the story in the recent issue of *Reader's Digest* of the individual penitent who worked for a lumber company. For years he had been pilfering supplies, enough to add on to his home, help one of his children build a home, and build a cabin in the mountains. Finally after all these years this was beginning to bother him, so he went to his priest and made a full confession of what he had been doing. The priest said, "Well, that's a very serious thing." He said, "We have got to think of an appropriate penance which would satisfy the ecclesiastical demands." So the priest thought for a minute and he said, "Have you ever done a retreat?" The individual likewise paused and then responded, "Well, no, but if you can get the plans, I can get the materials."

My assignment for this afternoon is to take about 20 minutes to lay the foundation or set the stage for the discussion of the problem, or at least outline to you what I understand to be the problem. I suppose I was asked to do this because I was in the legislature when the Child Abuse Reporting Act was passed, and when other types of protective services acts have been passed. I drafted and sponsored several of these intervention statutes and subsequently worked with them as an assistant attorney general. Also I have had quite an interest in and a concern for those things. As chairman of the State Child Abuse and Neglect Advisory Council, I guess I should know something about it.

I have passed out an outline to you and I am going to follow that for a few minutes. Having that in front of you might be helpful to you.

First of all, by way of statement of problem, I refer to the following recent newspaper clippings:

- Headline in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 8: “What Happens When Priests Hear Confessions on Child Abuse?”
- Headline in the *Deseret News*, May 19: “Is Clerical Privilege Shielding Molesters?”
- Headline in the *Deseret News*, August 15: “Ministers Oppose Law on Reporting Child Abuse Cases.”
- Headline in the *Ogden Standard Examiner*, September 21: “Minister Must Guard Secret Confession.”

I think those headlines illustrate the dimension of the problem we will discuss; that is, what are the responsibilities under law for a clergyman to report an instance of child abuse that comes to his attention, as opposed to the so-called privilege which protects that confidential communication?

I have set out for you, to begin with, the pertinent or the most significant portions of the Utah Child Abuse, Neglect and Reporting Act on the first page of the outline; let me point out the significant parts.

It begins, “Whenever any person, including but not limited to persons licensed under the medical practice act or the nurse practice act, has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to incest, molestation, sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, has been physically abused or neglected or observes a child being subjected to these conditions or circumstances which could reasonably result in sexual abuse, physical abuse or neglect, they shall immediately notify the nearest peace officer, law enforcement agency or office of the division.” Then the section goes on to indicate what would be done with these reports. An investigation is to be made by the Division of Family Services and a referral is to be made to the law enforcement office in the case of serious injury. That’s the basic statute adopted in 1978. It’s the law in the state of Utah. [See the introduction to this panel for a copy of the changes made by the 1986 General Session of the Forty-sixth Legislature of the state of Utah that are relevant to the panelist’s response.] The question and the problem is, is the clergyman excluded from that requirement to make the report. I suppose it might also be interesting to this group of social workers and psychologists as to whether you also have a privilege from this type of reporting.

The report is to be confidential; it is to preserve the anonymity of the person making the report (the bishop, priest, clergyman); it protects the person making the report from suit; it provides for the establishment of a statewide central register in which the names of both the abuser and the victim are to be retained, and it does specifically waive the physician/patient privilege. Then it prescribes a penalty for failure to report.

Now, is that reporting section of the Child Abuse Act in opposition to the privileged communication statute in our judicial code. That statute is set out for you on the second page of the outline and reads, "There are particular relations in which it is the policy of the law to encourage confidence and to preserve it inviolate; therefore, a person cannot be examined as a witness in the following cases." There are several privilege relationships specified in that code. I cite only number three, regarding the clergyman or priest. "He cannot, without the consent of the person making the confession, be examined as to any confession made to him in his professional character in the course of discipline enjoined by the church to which he belongs." Therein we have the apparent conflict . . . the duty to report under the Child Abuse Act versus the privileged communication protection under our judicial code. I wish to make the point, however (and I will probably make it several times this afternoon because I think it's critical and extremely important), that the privileged communication statute is found in the judicial code as a rule of evidence. You will note very carefully that it says, "The priest cannot be examined as to any confession made to him in his professional character," referring to an examination in a court of law. So, in my opinion, this privileged communication statute, although it's referred to as a protection or a shield for the clergyman in relation to the duty to report, is really irrelevant to such duty. The duty to report is not part of the evidentiary rules of this state regarding court testimony; it's a substantive piece of legislation that the legislature has mandated regarding the reporting of child abuse. I am sure that will be discussed further as we go on through the discussion.

Now, just for your information, I have set out the respective positions. There was a related attorney general's opinion February 17, 1983, which reads:

Members of the clergy have a legal responsibility to report incidents or knowledge of such child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities, but they cannot be forced to testify in trial as to the contents of the confidential communication.

So it was the attorney general's opinion that, unequivocally, clergymen had the duty to report, although they could not be compelled to testify in court as to the information that was conveyed to them.

Now as opposed to that or in distinction from that is the opinion issued from the General Counsel of the Church which reads: "Ecclesiastical leaders coming within the scope of the priest-penitent privilege are *not* required to report under the Utah Act." That sets the stage, I think, and that will be the

difference to which we will address ourselves, I assume, most of the afternoon.

I have attached to the outline pages 5 and 6 of a recent LDS church pamphlet entitled *Child Abuse*. I'm sure most of you have seen this booklet and the pages that refer to child abuse reporting duty [included at the end of this address]. I have also referred to the LDS church *Handbook of Instructions* [Section 8,8.3], although that is not attached. Some of you may be familiar with that information as well. I'm tempted to go into some of that information because quite frankly to me the situation is still somewhat uncertain. As I read those pronouncements from the Church, I am still a little bit in doubt as to just what should be done by the clergymen with relation to a confidential communication of child abuse. Apparently the bottom line is that if he is in doubt the bishop is to contact his stake president, who is to contact the area presidency, who may then contact the General Counsel of the Church. I suppose that's the ultimate solution if there is a concern or doubt in the mind of the local LDS clergyman as to what he should do.

As to the societal issue involved, it is presumptuous for me to comment because that is your field and not mine, but I have weighed the various considerations regarding a policy of reporting or nonreporting.

The paragraph at the conclusion of this address outlines some proposals for legislative compromise and cooperation which have been proposed. Note that in the attorney general's opinion it is suggested that ultimately the only resolution to any ambiguity or conflict will have to come from the legislature. In my opinion, the existing legislation is clear and the decision now, I think, rests with the court.

Let me just mention something that I perhaps passed over too quickly, and I'm sure Mr. Poelman will want to speak to it. When I make the point that we are dealing with a statutory directive and that the privilege is a rule of evidence, I don't mean to ignore and overlook that there is a very real argument that, irrespective of the privilege statute, there is still a constitutional protection as to the exposure of confidential communications. This rests not on the privilege statute, but rests on the first amendment and the fifth amendment and even perhaps the fourteenth amendment to the Constitution which protects inviolate the practice of religion. Within that framework, the confidential communication might be protected. I am not aware of a case that has met that issue yet, but I assume there will be in the near future.

Going quickly to some related matters that might be of interest to you, Paragraph VI of the outline refers to the "Confidential Communications for Sexual Assault Act."

- VI. Affect of "Confidential Communications for Sexual Assault Act" (Section 78-3c-1 et seq.)
- A. A True Confidential Communication Statute—not a "Privilege" Statute.
 - B. Shifts "Privilege" from Confessor to Confidante.
 - C. Application to Unlicensed or Noncertified Counsellors.
 - D. Impossible Hiatus by reference to 78-3b.

Now I think most people are unaware that recently the legislature passed a specific confidentiality act. Section 78-3c-1 of the Utah code is specifically a confidentiality statute and it provides that sexual assault counselors are not obligated to divulge, either in court or otherwise, a confidential communication that was relayed to them by the victim of the assault. It's a very difficult statute, and in my opinion a very poorly worded statute, because after it gets through saying that, it doesn't establish any criteria as to what a sexual assault counselor is, nor does it provide any parameters to that privilege. As a matter of fact, the act transfers what is normally the confessor's privilege (not the confessee) to the prerogative of the counselor to determine when the information will be disclosed and when it will not. Finally, it ends up by saying in the last section of the act that this provision is still subject to the provisions of the Child Abuse Reporting Act. So we are still with the same dilemma as to whether or not the Abuse Reporting Act, since it is specifically referred to in the Sexual Assault Counselor's Act, preserves the duty of the sexual abuse counselor to report.

It may be of interest to you that both the legislature and the courts have been chipping away at the problem of requiring juveniles to testify in sexual assault matters and being required to confront the abuser in those cases. I have indicated to you several acts that have been passed just recently allowing hearsay statements of the child, which I think reflect the legislative concern for that problem. Utah law used to state that a child under a certain age was incompetent to testify. That restriction has been removed, both by the rules of evidence and by the legislature. The assumption now is that an individual of any age is a competent witness unless there is some other impediment to his or her testimony.

We now have a law that admits out-of-court statements by the child victim, and the Juvenile Court Act permits those kinds of statements if they are made to a person in a trust relationship. In other words, the report made by the four-year-old to his mother or someone else in a trust relationship is admissible, even though, of course, traditionally that would be hearsay-type evidence. Perhaps the greatest stride that has been made in protecting the child victim or witness is an act

which is referred to as the *res ipsa* statute. This statute provides that if you establish the abuse and that only one person was in the presence of the abused in a position to commit the abuse, then you can presume that that person was responsible for the abuse without the testimony of the victim or a witness. The burden then shifts upon that individual to establish his own innocence. That particular statute, to my knowledge, has not been tested by specific reference in court yet. However, the philosophy of this statute has been tested in court—in two cases, the Tanner and the Watts cases, that went to our Supreme Court. Although these cases did not refer to that particular section of the code, they did say that if you have a circumstance where it is obvious the child has been battered (the Battered Child Syndrome), by expert testimony to that effect, and you can establish the likelihood of an individual's committing that act, that even without direct testimony, without observation, without witness, without accusation, you have sufficient evidence to convict a person of child abuse or sexual assault.

Well, those are some inroads that are being made, and perhaps the problem of proving the abuse without the presence of the child and without the direct confrontation of the accuser is being solved.

There are also some new registry laws that you should be familiar with. We passed an act just recently that an agency can't place a child in an alternate care or substitute care, unless they first check the state child abuse registry to make sure that the proposed placement is not in the home of an individual whose name is in that registry.

We now have a missing-children registry statewide. We are also requiring registration of sex offenders. That requires that a convicted sex offender, if he transfers his residence, must register the new residence with the law enforcement people.

Then we have a new reporting statute which requires an individual to report if he or she suspects that a newborn is born with a drug addiction. That report must be made to the Division of Family Services. The act doesn't say what happens after the report, but supposedly that provides some type of prevention and intervention.

Finally, a new provision in our state provides for Ex Parte Protective Orders in the juvenile court. Similar to procedures under the Spouse Abuse Act, we can now in the juvenile court (it isn't allowed yet in the adult courts) remove the abuser or the child from the home. As most of you are aware, it is usually quite a trauma to the youngster to be removed from the home. He or she often feels responsible, and thus feels guilty. So we now have a provision in our law that by the use of an Ex Parte Protective Order, we can remove the alleged abuser and leave the children in the home, thus separating the abuser and the abused.

Well, that is briefly what I was told to do and I have kept within the twenty minutes. Thank you.

1. Editor's note: The complete outline is not included, but when Judge Matheson quotes an excerpt necessary to his thesis, that excerpt is included.

Report from the *Child Abuse* booklet distributed by the LDS church to all its ecclesiastical units (Summer 1985).

Before true repentance can occur, any serious transgression must be confessed to the bishop or other appropriate Church officer. (See Mosiah 26:29, D&C 58:43, D&C 59:12, 1 John 1:9.) Church officers have a duty to keep any information received in a member's confession strictly confidential. However, if the member indicates he has violated a civil or criminal law, try to persuade him to clear the matter with civil authorities as a condition of repentance and forgiveness.

Laws in most states in the United States and provinces in Canada require citizens to report suspected child abuse in order to protect children and help offenders, victims, and family members obtain needed assistance. Learn the reporting requirements for your area. LDS Social Services agencies can provide general information about local reporting requirements. (See note following for *information on referrals* to the Area Presidency.)

When any information regarding child abuse comes to you or another Church officer from other than the confidential confession of the offender (probably from a victim or a victim's parents), local law *may* require it be reported to civil authorities. If a disclosure intended to be confidential must be reported under local law, inform the person making the disclosure (in advance if possible) that confidentiality may not be protected because the law requires that you report certain matters to civil authorities.

Counsel Church members to comply with reporting laws; offer support and assistance in meeting reporting requirements. Try to keep a good relationship with the offender, the victim, and family members so you may provide continuing spiritual support. Any required reporting of child abuse should usually be done by the offender or by others having knowledge of the problem.

Reporting incidents of child abuse should be a protection to the child and perhaps to other potential victims. A person guilty of serious child abuse rarely changes his pattern of behavior without facing up to all consequences—criminal penalties, Church discipline, social ostracism, and others. Facing up to the consequences may need to include professional help in addition to spiritual counseling. Fines or imprisonment may not be involved if the offender (1) voluntarily reports the abuse to civil authorities, (2) agrees to temporary separation by leaving the home, if necessary, and (3) accepts a treatment plan from those trained to deal with child abuse problems.

Be guided by the spirit of your calling in these sensitive matters, as you strive to help protect children, reform offenders, and preserve family relationships.

Exception to Legal Duty to Report

In the United States and some other countries, a Church officer's legal duty to report child abuse to public authorities may be superseded by the constitutional right to free exercise of religion. This right should protect the confidentiality of facts disclosed by a transgressor to a bishop or other designated Church officer in a confidential confession or in the course of Church court proceedings. (See *General Handbook of Instructions* [1983], section 8, p. 53.)

If this circumstance arises, the stake president or bishop (through his stake president) should consult with the Area Presidency if *both* of the following conditions exist:

1. The Church officer knows of a child abuse incident only from the confidential confession of a member who after careful counseling still refuses to report the incident or to allow it to be reported by others; and
2. Local law seems to require the Church officer to report the information to public authorities.

If necessary, the Area Presidency may seek legal advice from the office of the General Counsel at Church headquarters or from local counsel in countries outside the United States.

V. Proposals for Legislative Compromise and Cooperation

A. In Relation to Protection of Confidential Communication.

1. Restricting duty to report those circumstances where clear and present danger to child exists.
2. Requiring reporting of abuse but allowing concealment of identity of abuser.
3. Specifically excluding duty of clergyman to report.
4. Specifically mandating clergyman's duty to report.

B. In Relation to Evidentiary Privilege

1. Defining and restricting privilege to "Disciplinary" and "Confessional" church proceedings.
2. Specifically waiving privilege in regards to priest-penitent communications regarding child abuse provided priest encourages penitent to report.
3. Specifically preserving priest-penitent privilege as a clarification of legislative intent.

Frank B. Matheson is 2nd District Juvenile Court judge, state of Utah.

RESPONSE OF B. LLOYD POELMAN

B. Lloyd Poelman, JD

I share Judge Matheson's pleasure and consternation in appearing before you today. When I stand before a group of therapists, I always have the feeling I am being psychoanalyzed. I just want you to know that it's a two-way street because, as a lawyer, I have been looking you over and evaluating you as potential expert witnesses.

I don't come to you as an expert on child abuse. My closest current involvement is the perception of our nine children that they are abused when I ask one of them to do the dishes on a Friday night. I think the only instance from my own youth that I can vividly recall was once as a pre-teenager when I brought my school lunchbox home and left a little garter snake in it. As I laid the lunchbox on the kitchen table, my mother opened it. I later regretted that she bruised her arm in the course of administering the well-deserved punishment to my backside. I have long since forgiven her of that (I think before she ever forgave me), and I don't think the episode has adversely affected me—or at least I can't blame any of my present psychological condition on that event.

We are here to talk about a very serious concern. I would like to let you know the evolution of my recent thinking because I believe it has important bearing on what I would like you to see through my eyes today. Two years ago I would not have given serious consideration to child abuse matters. This issue wasn't part of my upbringing. As I read statistics about the prevalency of child abuse, I had trouble believing them. They didn't seem congruent with the milieu in which I was living. But as I started learning more of this issue, mostly through being a legal advisor for LDS Social Services and with the help of many organizations that are represented here today, my eyes were opened. I have evolved from a position of cautious suspicion to conviction in several areas.

First, I now realize the problem is much more prevalent than I had ever suspected, not just because reporting has increased, but because I believe the incidences of child abuse have significantly increased in recent years.

Second, the devastating impact on the victims of child abuse is far worse than I had suspected, sometimes even from what some may deem to be very minor or casual encounters.

Third, children usually are to be believed in these instances.

And fourth, it rarely, if ever, occurs (and I tend to suspect the “if ever”) that one who is guilty of such abuse, especially in the sexual area, can ever truly reform without public disclosure and without professional assistance.

Having come to those conclusions myself, I found that I was constantly being asked, “Why doesn’t the LDS church react differently than seems to be its posture?” I have participated in very close interaction with the leadership of the LDS church concerning the child abuse issue, and I believe the evolution of thought I just described for myself has, in fact, recently occurred rather uniformly among the General Authorities of the Church. One of the results has been development of a child abuse pamphlet entitled *Child Abuse Helps for Ecclesiastical Leaders*, which was distributed recently. Telling you that the final product is Draft Number 57 may help you understand that it was a very carefully considered document. The challenge we still face is bringing that information and that conversion of thought down to the level of local leaders, where it has the most important meaning and application.

The pamphlet is only a first step. A training procedure is also in process of development. Much more undoubtedly will be necessary, but I am convinced the LDS church is in the process of making an educational change that cannot happen with the snap of a finger. It takes some reasonable time, and I hope you will perceive yourselves as instruments of that change as well.

Now, let’s move directly to the announced issue. I have great respect for Judge Matheson who, at the time the attorney general’s opinion he referred to was issued, was employed by the Office of the Attorney General. One of the great challenges for lawyers is being able to disagree without being disagreeable. That is especially true with respect to a judge before whom one might still want to practice. I would like to point out the areas in which we concur and those in which we disagree, together with the reasons, from my perspective, for that disagreement.

If there is any conflict of purpose between child abuse reporting requirements and priest-penitent provisions of the law (and I am not

saying there is), it's not just an ecclesiastical difference; it is a social difference as well.

The purpose clause of the Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect Act says, "It is the purpose of this act to protect the best interests of children, offer protective services to prevent harm to the children, stabilize the home environment, preserve family life whenever possible, and encourage cooperation among the states in dealing with the problem of child abuse." I believe the posture I am going to describe for you is completely consistent with that.

Judge Matheson has pointed out to you the purpose clause relating to Utah's priest-penitent provision. It states, "There are particular relations in which it is the policy of the law to encourage confidence and to preserve inviolate; therefore, a person cannot be examined as a witness in the following cases . . . " and then it lists the traditional husband-and-wife exception; an attorney/client exception; a public officer, on account of his public duty; and physicians or surgeons with respect to patient care. But squeezed in as number three among those is a provision stating, "A clergyman or priest cannot, without the consent of the person making the confession, be examined as to any confession made to him in his professional character in the course of discipline enjoined by the church to which he belongs."

I don't appear before you today as an official spokesman for the LDS church or for LDS Social Services. But I can at least accurately reflect the kind of advice I give them when these matters come to me for opinion.

First, with respect to LDS Social Services personnel, there is absolutely no privilege exempting them from reporting child abuse. As I have said to some of you in this group in another setting, you may get a phone call from a bishop who says, "I have just had a conversation with so and so" (and he specifically identifies that person). Then he adds, "Nearly two years ago he had a problem with fondling a child; he feels bad about it and has voluntarily confessed it to me. I want him to get some counseling to help clear it up, but I would rather that you not report this." You have to say, "I'm sorry, Bishop, that is reportable. I already have enough information; I must report it."

The bishop replies, "Oh, but you don't understand. This man is a pillar of the community, as you know."

"Yes, I know that," you answer. "I have to report it."

"But you know that his wife is not a member of the Church."

"I know that, but we have to report it."

"Do you know that she is suicidal and this will probably have disastrous results and consequences?"

I must say, as legal advisor, there is no exemption from reporting that. The reporting requirement is unqualified.

In another instance someone may come to a Mormon bishop and say, "Bishop, I have reason to believe there is something wrong going on in that home," and then maybe he or she discloses some facts. Those facts are not privileged. That is not a confession.

A close case arises if a wife comes in and says, "Bishop, I want to tell you something in confidence. I believe there may be something inappropriate going on between my husband and his stepdaughter (my daughter)." The question is raised, "Is that a confession?" Strictly speaking, no. That communication would probably require the bishop to report the matter. The only instance where it is clear that no reporting is required by a bishop or similar ecclesiastical officer is when the bishop learns of child abuse in a confessional setting from an offender who is a member of that bishop's congregation.

What is the bishop instructed to do in that limited situation? The *Child Abuse Pamphlet* says, "Before true repentance can occur, any serious transgression must be confessed to the bishop or other appropriate church officer." Then after citing various scriptural examples, it states, "Church officers have a duty to keep any information received from a member's confession strictly confidential. However, if the member indicates he has violated a civil or criminal law, try to persuade him to clear the matter with civil authorities as a condition of repentance and forgiveness" (p. 5). So, even when disclosure of child abuse occurs in that confessional setting to a bishop, ecclesiastical officers are instructed to encourage the offender to make that disclosure voluntarily or to authorize the bishop to do so. In most instances I believe the bishop would urge the repentant member to receive some professional assistance, perhaps through LDS Social Services or a similar organization, which would then assist the offender in making the required report.

In every instance of this type that I am aware of, the bishop has been successful in persuading the person to permit that reporting to be done. The consequence is that the offender then presents himself before the law in a more favorable light. He has made a confession; he has consented to get professional help; he is receiving religious support from the Church and professional help from Social Services or some other organization; and he is in a posture where he can be aided.

The only circumstance in which I believe the bishop would not be permitted to make a disclosure would be when, after all of this has been explained and attempted, the confessor says, "Bishop, I appreciate what you are saying and I came here hoping to relieve myself of guilt. But I can't report the matter at this stage, and I can't give

you permission to report it.” In that instance, it is my opinion that both under present law and under the United States Constitution it would be improper for the bishop to make a report of that incident. That doesn’t mean the bishop, with that knowledge, would be excused from taking action to protect a child that may be in danger. But he cannot be compelled to report or to testify.

Judge Matheson makes an important point that our priest–penitent privilege is an evidentiary privilege and is not substantive legislation. I really hesitate resorting to a discussion of legal history, but let me briefly explain how the law evolved to its present state.

We are talking today only about Utah law. Most other states in the union have passed similar legislation, though almost none of them are of identical wording or scope. The Utah Division of Family Services first proposed legislation requiring that child abuse be reported. The proposed law went through several revised drafts. Draft Number 6, dated November 23, 1977, contained as Section 10 a provision which was later deleted. This provision, under the heading “Abrogation of Privilege Communications,” stated, “Any privilege between husband and wife, or between any professional person, except a lawyer and client, including but not limited to physicians, ministers, social workers, counselors, hospitals, clinics, day care centers, and schools, and their clients, shall not constitute grounds for excluding evidence at any proceeding regarding child abuse or neglect of the child or the cause thereof.”

Now, that provision was originally part of the proposed law, but it was deleted before the bill was passed. The only remnant left in the law as enacted is the present provision that the physician/patient relationship is not grounds for failure to report. Traditional rules for interpreting legislative history compel the conclusion that by eliminating this proposed exclusion the legislature reaffirmed the existing priest–penitent privilege. The opinion of our office that a priest–penitent privilege exists with respect to child abuse reporting was based on this legislative history.

There is also a question of the constitutionality of requiring a bishop, under the limited circumstances I defined for you, to make that disclosure. That has an interesting history as well. You are aware that one of the sources of our law is what we call the common law. It is the judge-made law that we inherited mostly from England and western Europe. The Catholic church’s position on confession is exceptionally strong. As you know, if a Catholic priest discloses anything he hears in the confessional, he is automatically excommunicated unless excused by the Pope himself. That’s how strongly the Catholics feel about confidentiality of confessions. Until the Reformation, while the Catholic

church was dominant in England, this priest-penitent privilege was part of the common law. After the Reformation, although it was not strictly a part of the common law, the priest-penitent privilege tended to be observed in tradition and administration of the law.

When the United States Constitution was adopted, including the Bill of Rights, the First Amendment declared that Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or abridging the free exercise thereof. The question then became, "Does this priest-penitent privilege have constitutional basis?" The first test of that question in the courts occurred in a New York case in the early 1800s when a Catholic priest refused to disclose information he had received in a confessional setting. The court held that his refusal was a free exercise of religion under the First Amendment of the Federal Constitution and he should not be compelled to testify. Four years later another New York court, considering similar refusal by a Protestant minister, reached an opposite conclusion and the minister was cited for contempt of court. Before the sentence could be implemented, the New York legislature met and adopted the first priest-penitent privilege statute in the United States. Thereafter, each of the other 49 states adopted similar legislation in one form or another.

As a result, the question of whether the priest-penitent privilege is a constitutional right has never reached the United States Supreme Court. There are cases where that court and lower courts have spoken favorably concerning the existence of that as a constitutionally protected privilege, but that issue itself has never been directly presented. However, in recent years as child abuse reporting statutes have been enacted by the various states, there has been a tendency to carve out of the priest-penitent privilege an exclusion for child abuse reporting, thereby raising the constitutional issue.

Last year in Florida there arose a case which I thought was going to be determinative and result in a U.S. Supreme Court pronouncement. In the case of *Mellish v. State of Florida*, a Nazarene minister in a child abuse case was called as a witness and claimed the privilege because the accused asserted it. Incidentally, this privilege does not belong to the priest; it belongs to the penitent. The priest cannot waive it unless the penitent does. The penitent did not waive the privilege in the *Mellish* case, and the court held the minister in contempt for failure to disclose what had been said in a confessional setting. The contempt situation was appealed in the state court system. The Archdiocese of the Catholic church filed a "Friend of the Court" brief in that matter raising exactly the constitutional issues I have described. But in January 1985 the Florida legislature amended the state's child

abuse reporting act and made a specific statutory exception for confessions to clergymen.

That explains why we believe that, in the limited circumstances I have defined, the Utah statute must be read as including a priest-penitent exception to child abuse reporting.

Let me conclude with a final comment on why I believe these two legislative policies are not as sharply in conflict as they may first appear. I believe that if a bishop were required to disclose a confidential confession, the result would be a substantial erosion of the doctrine and practice of confession in the Church. There is no question but that the requirement of confession as a condition of forgiveness is scriptural and fundamental. LDS doctrine clearly defines confession of serious transgression as the necessary route to laying claim upon the atonement of the Savior.

If the practice of confessional confidentiality is to be changed, then with 150 years of history of bishops giving assurance that anything said in that confessional setting is strictly confidential, the bishop, I believe, would come under duty to give a forewarning: "If you are going to confess something related to child abuse, you should know that anything you tell me I must immediately report to the nearest police officer so that you can be charged and prosecuted."

I believe such a step would undermine the whole practice of confession, not only in the area of child abuse but in many other areas. There would not only be a chilling effect, but a freezing effect. If that were to occur, I believe we would deny our ecclesiastical leaders many opportunities they now have to provide assistance. By allowing this reporting exception, the door is opened for bishops to counsel with offenders, to help them seek necessary aid in reforming their lives, and most importantly, to become aware of children who need protection and help.

Such is my personal conviction. I respect the fact that others may see it differently. I believe that constitutionally, legislatively, and also on social policy grounds, the priest-penitent exception to child abuse reporting should be maintained and preserved.

Nothing deserves our greater concern than the abuse of children. The Savior reserved his harshest judgment and condemnation for those who would inflict that evil. In preserving the priest-penitent privilege in its constitutional setting, the desire is not to limit any assistance to children but is in full harmony with the declared purposes of the reporting statute, which purposes include stabilizing the home environment and preserving family life whenever possible. This can best be done by maintaining inviolate the confidentiality of

all confessions, thereby permitting compliance with a fundamental doctrine of salvation.

B. Lloyd Poelman is the senior attorney in the law firm of Kirton, McConkie, Bushnell and is legal advisor to LDS Social Services.

RESPONSE OF JOHN T. NIELSEN

John T. Nielsen, JD

I am grateful to be here with our traveling show. We have gone through this before. We had a fascinating experience about two or three months ago, being on a similar panel with the Salt Lake County Commission of Youth. Represented on the panel, other than those of us who are members of the LDS faith, were priests, ministers, and other clergy from virtually every major denomination represented in Salt Lake Valley. I can tell you that the problem we struggle with in our church is no more prevalent than in any of the other faiths. Brother Poelman has already indicated to you the strictures of the Catholic church regarding the violation of the priest-penitent privilege. Nothing quite as stringent can happen in our faith, but it is a problem that is common in religious circles and is being circulated with great currency among the various denominations in the United States.

Let me briefly summarize with you my personal background in this area. I am presently the Utah State Commissioner of Public Safety. That job is law enforcement related. Previous to that, and for the last ten years, I have been chief prosecutor in the Salt Lake County Attorney's Office. During the course of those years, I have been involved on many, many occasions with the problem we deal with here today—that of child abuse.

In the early 1970s, when I was first involved with police work and prosecution, I had a lot of exposure to the investigation and subsequent prosecution of these cases. In the days before it was fashionable to think of victims' rights and to think of the trauma a child suffers on the witness stand being interrogated by aggressive defense attorneys, the child had to confront the accused, who was often his or her own father or a very close relative. In those days it was an extremely difficult proposition. I am happy to report to you today that child abuse investigation and prosecution have been made perhaps a bit more tolerable

by sensitive legislators who recognized the problems inherent in child victimization and afforded some relief to our little ones who have experienced such horrible trauma as a result of these crimes.

In the Salt Lake County Attorney's Office where I practice, we had a very forward-looking program of child abuse investigation and prosecution, with emphasis on assisting these children to get through the process as easily as they could, by inflicting the least amount of trauma as they proceeded through the system. I was involved intimately in the investigation, the recovery of the bodies, and the subsequent prosecution of Arthur Gary Bishop. Those of you who are not from the state of Utah may not know that this involved the arrest and prosecution of a young man, a returned missionary incidentally, who confessed to the murder and homosexual contact of five young boys. It is a case that I suppose will affect me for the rest of my life. There are scenes and words that I have seen and heard that I will never be able to erase from my mind.

At any rate, I think I have learned a few things as a result of those experiences, and I would like to share them briefly with you here today. Let me just set the stage, first of all, by explaining that what we are talking about with regard to child abuse is not just child sexual abuse. Child abuse is not limited to that at all. There are many kinds: physical abuse (the beating and mistreatment of children other than sexual abuse); sexual abuse (both nonfamilial and incestual) of children; emotional abuse (which can be every bit as devastating as actual physical abuse); and, certainly, child neglect and abandonment which, unfortunately, is very prevalent in our society and which Judge Matheson sees in juvenile court far more frequently than he would like to, I'm sure.

The child victim, in my experience as a prosecutor and investigator, is by far the most vulnerable of all victims, not only because of age but also because of the emotional problems the child has. The child is confronted with one who is an authority figure, one the child generally trusts and in many cases has a strong emotional attachment to. A child can be extremely difficult to communicate with. While a child may be loquacious and talkative in an initial interview with police, once confronted by the different personality of a prosecutor or a counselor (and most assuredly in the court), the child may simply not be capable of describing the incident further. One of the most graphic demonstrations of that, and I think many of you might have seen the clip of this on television, was the little child from Utah who was kidnapped in Coronado, California. They allowed a certain number of courtroom cameras, and as the child was asked by the prosecutor to identify her

abductor and to describe the incident, she was simply incapable of doing that; she could only cry and could not communicate.

The child is frequently confronted with terrible conflicts. Here is the child's father or trusted confidante or a loved uncle, and he or she is suddenly thrust into the posture of having to harm that person, as he or she may see it. From an evidentiary standpoint in many child abuse cases, direct evidence is frequently missing. The incident of abuse is sometimes reported days, weeks, or months after the actual occurrence. There is no physical evidence. The prosecutor and investigator have to rely upon a hearsay statement or simply the statement and word of the child.

Many times the perpetrator is a prominent individual—if not prominent, certainly one of generally understood upstanding character . . . a good church man, someone who is revered as a fine father and example in the community. That in and of itself makes it difficult for the jury to believe the child. The perpetrator is generally in a position of power or authority over the child and uses that authority to make the child submit. The perpetrator almost always has serious emotional, psychological, or mental problems. The affliction called pedophilia is, in the minds of many psychologists, incurable, with no successful intervention that can be brought to bear. He will always have a preference for children and will, in fact, ply his particular preference on children irrespective of the amount of intervention, including threat or incarceration. It is the opinion of many that those who can be so classified should be removed from society and locked up to keep them away from our children. Many of those individuals progress to more serious behavior (I have seen this as a prosecutor) from mere fondling to experimentation, to more aggressiveness and boldness, and, as in the case of Arthur Gary Bishop, eventually to homicide. In summary, what we generally see in these cases is a very difficult investigation and prosecution, given the nature of the crime and the evidence before us. Certainly the saddest part of all are lives shattered, forever devastated by the experience.

Now to the point that we are talking about today. Occasionally these situations, difficult as they are already to the investigator and the prosecutor, are complicated by the efforts of well-meaning clergy who try to handle the problem without professional help. There have been instances where these cases have gone for years unreported, where there have been clergymen who have encouraged noncooperation by witnesses, and who have encouraged nondisclosure. Before I came here today, I was telling one of my deputy commissioners what I was going to talk about and he responded, "You have hit a subject that makes my blood boil." Now, my deputy is a former sheriff, former bishop's

counselor, and former stake high councilor, but he sat me down and regaled me for an hour with horror stories of his experience with bishops and stake presidents. I have had personal experience that I will briefly relate. In one particular case of incestual behavior, the bishop attempted to handle it entirely by himself, and before someone else reported it, the offender had literally gone through every child in the family. The bishop thought he had cured the problem but was never aware that all he had done was perpetrate the evil.

In another situation a 12-year-old girl was having regular sexual relations with the man for whom she was babysitting. Through a youth interview she made a confession to her bishop, and the bishop told her not to tell her parents. The parents allowed her to continue to babysit for this same individual, who continued to abuse her.

In another situation a member of the clergy had actively encouraged witnesses to a particular crime not to cooperate with the police and prosecution.

In one situation in which I was involved, a letter addressed to me personally by a bishop, on church stationery, ordered me in no uncertain terms to quit harassing his parishioner in the investigation of, not a sexual abuse case, but a very serious charge of fraud.

These are some graphic examples. I would like to think, and I do believe, that they are truly exceptions; but you can imagine the consternation of the law enforcement community as they have confronted such obstructions.

What this all means, I suppose, is that we have got to come to some accommodation between the legitimate needs of the Church and the need to protect the victim (almost always a child and almost always innocent) from further abuse. I think most prosecutors realize the very kinds of things that Lloyd Poelman has pointed out to you, that there are some compelling policy reasons for the privilege. The argument of the prosecutor and the law enforcement officer is that the privilege is in fact testimonial. It does not prevent the reporting. The attorney general has so ruled (there are some divergences of opinion), but if in fact that is the case, would a policy requiring bishops to report discourage voluntary confession? I don't think there is any question that would be the result. There is no question also that the present privilege, obstructive as it may be to certain investigative techniques, does encourage the disclosure of child abuse that would perhaps not be disclosed or discovered otherwise. Not only does it allow the bishop to work with the perpetrator but also to take some action to protect the child victim. Without the ability of that person to go to his bishop or stake president to confess, believing that the communication is inviolate,

incidents of abuse may not be discovered. It is better to know, perhaps without the ability to prosecute, than it is not to know.

I am not sure that we can ever come to a complete accommodation between the need and the legal requirement to report the legitimate ends and the needs of the Church. I think, however, that there are some things that can be and need to be done. I have been involved in priesthood leadership meetings now for 20 years, as a counselor in two bishoprics, elder's quorum president, a high priest leader, and stake high councilor. Frankly, I am tired of going through, chapter by chapter, the Aaronic Priesthood guide book. I think it's time that we realize the need for some substance on how to better help Church leaders in those priesthood leadership meetings. We need to teach the bishops how to recognize the symptoms of child abuse; how to conduct good youth interviews, which can be the most fruitful way to discover these kinds of problems; and how to deal with kids, with people. We need to teach them the psychology of interviewing, the psychology of people, particularly children; the problems of the victim; and the recognition that incestual relationships, unlike any of the others, present a particularly difficult problem. In this regard, that is the area where we really have our most difficult problem. Most other examples of child abuse, neglect, abandonment, and that sort of thing can be readily discernible by anybody who knows the symptoms, can be reported by anybody, and should be. But it is the incestual case where the bishop generally becomes involved, in a confidential communication. I think there must be an absolute recognition that the welfare of the child is first; that the child, if there are such problems, must be protected, either by his or her removal from the situation or, preferably, by removal of the offender. I think parents have a right to know of problems which endanger their child. I think spouses have a right to know if in fact their spouse is involved in this kind of abuse with their children. Now granted, all of this may fly in the face of the privilege, but we are talking about the weighing of the equities here and, in my view, the welfare of the child may far transcend both. I believe eternally the privilege to keep inviolate under any circumstances the substance of that confessional conversation. I applaud what has been done by the Church so far. I have had the privilege of being involved with the Brethren in suggesting ways that this problem can be handled, and much of what appears in the child abuse pamphlet are matters that we have discussed and brought to their attention. I am grateful that the Church is taking steps in recognizing that this is a major problem in our society and in the Church—one deserving of our most urgent attention.

John T. Nielson is Commissioner of Public Safety for the state of Utah.

RESPONSE OF MARILYN SANDBERG

Marilyn Sandberg

I am very honored to be a part of this presentation today to share some of my personal experiences and feelings about the problems that we are dealing with concerning child abuse, and specifically child sexual abuse. I would like to give you some background about myself and my experience so that you can better understand my attitudes concerning this issue. My involvement has included the following: in the area of prevention and education I have developed school-based programs which teach children their rights, how to report abuse, and how they can get help. I have been involved in both the juvenile and criminal courts in the development of the Weber County Guardian Ad Litem Program and the Weber County Victim Witness Program. I have participated with law enforcement and social service investigators in establishing policy and procedure for effective investigation which addresses the needs of the child victim.

I have been actively involved in legislative issues, and I was one of the individuals who lobbied for and was able to convince the authors of House Bill 209 to include the exception list for incest offenders who were considered treatable and could qualify for probation. This original bill required that *all* offenders, regardless of the circumstances, would be required to serve minimum mandatory sentences.

I believe that abuse of children is the most serious problem that exists in society today and that the ramifications are extensive and extremely far-reaching. Some of the results of child abuse include criminal behavior, sexual perversion, dysfunctional marriages, poor parenting, prostitution, juvenile delinquency, and many more.

Many of our existing laws do not address the needs of children. And I doubt that when our forefathers established laws and regulations, like the accused's right to confront his accuser, they thought that the accuser might be a four-year-old child trying to compete with

a mature, sometimes articulate adult. The child victim, more than any other victim, is at an extreme disadvantage. The child does not have the sophistication or the maturity to change the situation. The child becomes sacrificed to the offender and in some of the cases feels the sacrifice has been authorized by the individuals he or she trusts and loves.

In my presentation today, I will not address the legality of the Child Abuse Reporting Law versus the priest-penitent privilege, but I would like to discuss what is in the best interest of the child victim. During my two-year association with the Weber County Attorney's Office Victim Witness Program, I reviewed 100 % of the cases of child sexual abuse in which charges had been filed in Weber County. Most of these cases were referred to the legal system by individuals other than religious leaders, and yet in many of the cases the abuse had been brought to the attention of clergy members long before it was reported to the authorities. My intention today is not to place blame on anyone but to help you understand some of the circumstances that we deal with every day when we work with these children. One particular incest case I worked with had been reported to six different bishops, and none of those bishops reported it to the authorities. The molestation continued for a period of eleven years. Another of my cases involved a fifteen-year-old victim who had been sexually abused by her father for several years. Her father had impregnated her and then arranged for an abortion. After the abortion, the father, the victim, and the mother, in this case, went to their bishop and later stake president for help with their problem.

The father was excommunicated and the bishop began counseling with the family. In the victim's words, "After his excommunication, my dad didn't molest me again for four days, and then he came back to my bedroom. I couldn't take it anymore so I ran away." What do you think this young girl felt about her mother and her church leaders? She realized they knew about the problem because they had been told; therefore, they must approve.

When I first became involved with these cases, and time after time was informed of this type of case management, I became very angry and frustrated that the Church and those who I thought should care about children allowed their continued molestation. Fortunately, I had a very understanding friend who helped me through this anger and who helped me determine a positive direction in which to assist with the problem. My friend, Larry Jacobsen, serves as director of LDS Social Services in Ogden.

I realize that the handling of these cases is done with the best intentions to protect the child. Unfortunately, that protection does

not always take place. Some law enforcement officers and prosecutors feel a violation of the reporting law warrants the filing of charges against the nonreporting clergy member. I am convinced that this is not the solution to the problem. Many Church leaders have encouraged the input of child-protection professionals and have requested information and expressed concerns. The recently published Church pamphlet on child abuse is excellent, and I am thrilled that it has been widely distributed to Church leaders. This development has illustrated that through communication and understanding we can make appropriate and effective change.

I would like to emphasize to bishops to be very careful not to turn what is *not* a confessional situation, and therefore protected by the priest-penitent privilege, into that situation. Mr. Poelman, in a prior presentation which was sponsored by a Salt Lake Commission on Youth and the Utah Child Abuse Advisory Council, advised bishops who learn of child abuse through any other source than a confidential disclosure that they are clearly required to report the abuse to the authorities. No priest-penitent privilege protection applies in those circumstances. For example, information obtained by an LDS bishop from the victim, the spouse of the perpetrator, a neighbor, or any source other than the confession of the abuser, requires the notification of the legal authorities. If a bishop, upon hearing this information, calls in the offender and confronts him with the accusation, the accused will likely confess and ask to be allowed to repent; but the confession would be a result of a forced situation, placing the bishop in a very difficult situation to protect the victim. I encourage the bishops to not "set up" a confession that does not genuinely exist.

I am comfortable with the situation where the offender comes initially to his bishop, on his own accord, and confesses to the abuse. In my experience, this type of admission is extremely rare, but if an individual has the courage to come forward and make that kind of admission, the prognosis for correcting the behavior is much more likely.

Although we have made much progress in our community awareness and education of Church leaders, we still have a long way to go and a lot of hard work ahead of us. Religious leaders need to be continually and adequately informed about what constitutes abuse and how to appropriately handle a reported case. They must realize that these cases require intricate and extensive work, a combined effort which involves not only religious leaders but the therapeutic community and the legal system if the cycle of abuse is to be stopped.

I would also like to encourage Church leaders to reach out to adults who were molested as children.

A few years ago in the Relief Society Manual there was an excellent lesson titled "Safeguarding Our Children." Because I had some experience in the area and because there was some discomfort with some of the sisters concerning the delivery of the lesson, I was invited often to give the lesson in many of the local wards.

Every time I gave the lesson someone would ask to talk to me afterward and would reveal that they had been molested as a child. In two of the cases the women were over 70 years old, and with tears in their eyes they told me that as children they had been sexually abused. For all of these years they had carried that secret with them and had never been able to talk to anyone about it. My question to you is, "Why do you think after all those years of secrecy they chose me to share their feelings with?" They didn't even know me. The reason was that I had walked into their lives and said, "Child molestation is not right; it shouldn't happen to anyone; no one has the right to violate a little child, and *the child is never to blame.*" I encourage the continuance of this awareness. Please open the lines of communication and support these adults. They need to be told that the molestation was not their fault. They desperately need your support.

I would encourage clergymen also to open up the lines of communication, and during youth interviews to ask specific questions about inappropriate touching by family members or someone else and then to inform youth that they will help if such a situation ever does exist.

I also encourage the development of Church curriculum for children which provides education about inappropriate touching, informs children of their rights, and tells how to get help in stopping the abuse.

I strongly believe that child abuse can be prevented. With education, cooperation, and understanding, the day will come when abuse does not exist in our society. I celebrate and compliment the progress made within the LDS church concerning child abuse, and I challenge continued development in the areas identified.

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WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO SUGAR AND SPICE? OUR RESPONSIBILITIES IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

Agnes M. Plenk, Ph.D
AMCAP Keynote Speech,
October 3, 1985

About a year ago I was asked to participate on a panel arranged by the B. H. Roberts Society. The panel dealt with outsiders' views about living in a Mormon community. The group was an interesting one, their expectation of that panel probably mixed. The reaction of many people to my accepting this assignment was very revealing. Some of my non-Mormon friends were wondering when I am moving out of the state, assuming that the opinions I would express would make my stay here fairly complicated, particularly as executive officer of a community agency. My Mormon friends on the other hand were hoping that I would bring up some issues which they would like to have clarified but are not able to do in the roles in which they find themselves. I probably disappointed both groups. I was not vituperative enough for the anti's and not positive enough for the pro's. Though the group as a whole was probably more liberal than, let us say, Ezra Taft Benson, they might have expected firmer opinions. The same thing might happen again today. Some of you might have similar questions and feelings which you feel you cannot openly express but would like for somebody to discuss, and others of you will become uncomfortable when I come up with criticism. I am not really going to try to make you all uncomfortable this morning, but I would like to stimulate our thinking and widen our focus.

The title of my speech, "What Has Happened to Sugar and Spice? Our Responsibilities in a Changing Society," has probably given you an idea what my major focus will be. It will be on women and children and our responsibilities toward them, as therapists, as people living in the state of Utah and particularly belonging to a specific religious group. I'm guessing that many Mormon therapists represent

a continuum—some totally orthodox, some quite liberal, and most in between. The liberals are probably not here because they would not wish to belong to a group united by religious preference, and the orthodox ones might be turned off by the issues that they think I might bring up.

I would like to divide my remarks between two major issues: the one philosophical, the other practical. The philosophical issues center around the function of therapists in today's world. Psychotherapy is a social interpersonal action characterized by an exchange of personal ideas and feelings, says Perry London, in one of my favorite books, *The Modes and Morals of Psychotherapy*. He assigns to us the role of a moral agent who functions more like a clergyman than a physician. The medical model involves no moral issues, though this has changed somewhat lately with the appearance of the artificial heart and other artificial organs. That the moral issue is a new one for our medical colleagues is proven by the diverse opinions among them concerning artificial organs and their availability to all.

Presumably we as therapists cure by talking and listening, by imposing our own values, not by being impartial scientists and unprejudiced helpers. We only rarely discuss the dilemma this poses for many of us as if we were unconscious of these difficulties and could overlook them by not talking about it. For a long time psychotherapists have followed the medical model, insisting that the therapist is no moralist and has no business becoming involved in the clients' moral, religious, or political beliefs and that he has no right to make value judgments of his clients. We are supposed to help alleviate the anxiety, the guilt, the neurosis, depression or psychosis of the clients, not to change their way of life along philosophical moralistic lines.

This attitude is valuable and has freed us to produce much needed objective data. But outside of the laboratory we are not researchers, but clinicians, and as such deal with the value systems of our clients every hour we see them and with every issue they bring up.

But most of our training does not deal seriously with the problem of morals and values. We learn a great deal about principles of procedures, diagnosis, and goals, but nothing about their moral implications. There are certainly some issues which can be treated quite clearly as technical ones, whereas others are equally clearly moral ones and need to be handled as such. Let us look at some examples: those of us who work with young children are skillfully avoiding the issue of values and can say quite easily that toilet training, getting dressed, and sleeping through the night are clearly technical problems which need to be solved on that level. Another example might be a phobia

in a child or psychogenic physical symptoms. Most therapists can easily relate to the fact that children should not be phobic and that dressing and eating are pretty basic. But how about a client who reports that he has sexually abused a child or has been beating his wife? The former has now to be reported to the police, so we are saved from having to discuss our feelings about the issue, but what about the latter—wife abuse? Does it not depend on our feelings on violence, the issue of male supremacy and female submission? What should the therapist do? Be noncommittal, refer to societal codes and ethics, or explore the unconscious for the determinants of that behavior? There certainly are techniques which we can use, for example, reflect, interpret, ask the client to free associate. By the modality used, the therapist does say something but avoids expressing an opinion about the moral issue *per se*. But how helpful is this for the clients? They want guidelines of behavior which will make life more meaningful and satisfying. Most clients invest the therapist with a great deal of importance as they view us as agents of resolution of conflicts. The neutralist position might be hard to maintain, and many issues brought into our offices demand answers.

This obviously leads to the question of short- and long-term goals we are trying to achieve. The technical skills we have learned will help with setting and achieving immediate goals, but ultimately we frequently want to alter the client's life. Perry London argues "that the therapist himself is a human being, that he lives in society and that wisely or unknowingly, responsibly or casually, has made moral commitments to himself and the society he lives in." Most of our effort is directed toward developing a therapeutic relationship which involves interaction between participants, not private experiences of each participant. So, how can we refuse to become involved?

Our usual admonition to clients to bring up any issue which is of importance permits clients to interpret our reaction to their remarks. Even neutrality at times is interpreted by the client as either tacit approval or condemnation, possibly adding to his or her confusion or guilt about the issues involved. Do personal beliefs affect our functioning as therapists? I certainly believe so. If we consider ourselves moral agents, we must become aware of our own personal commitment; whether it is the *laissez faire* attitude of neutrality or that of a strong stand—it needs to be declared. Perry London states that we have no right to stay in business if we will not assume responsibility for the behavior of our clients in real life.

In many ways therapists have left the medical model and have chosen an educational or societal one. But do we fit these models? Educators

can define in concrete terms what they want to achieve and can measure it, while, to quote Perry London again, "psychotherapy is an undefined technique, applied to unspecified cases, with unpredictable results." Though this quote is possibly meant facetiously, there is something to it.

Let me suggest that the scientific function of psychotherapists is that of manipulators of behavior, while their moralistic function is that of a secular priesthood. We might all have trouble with this dual definition, but it does or should give us food for thought. There is not much question that we manipulate behavior, some of us more obviously than others. We start out by taking a history which we then use to discover motives, on which we base later happenings, diagnosis and, frequently, outcome.

If we are the gurus of the twentieth century, we must also be *of* the twentieth century—examining what is going on and if necessary changing our attitudes. If we remain static while the world around us keeps moving, our value system and that of our clients will be in conflict, and questions of our effectiveness will arise. We might at times increase rather than decrease the pain of our clients.

Which brings me to the second part of my remarks, namely, what has happened to sugar and spice? Has it gone underground, or is it still viable in some places, like, for example, Utah? Has there really been a revolution in our midst but we have not recognized it? Are there really fundamental changes taking place in male-female relationships? Some of us think so. The changes are even obvious in working with young children. At the Children's Center, for example, which is a day treatment center for emotionally disturbed young children, the number of girls between the ages of two and five referred to the agency has almost tripled during the last year. Whereas the ratio previously in most child guidance clinics was 3 or 4 boys to 1 girl, the ratio is now almost 1 to 1. To what are these changes due? Is it possible that there is a greater awareness of female children and therefore more attention is paid to their behavior, or is it that little girls aren't quite as sweet and submissive as they used to be because they are surrounded by more assertive and self-assured females? The sugar-and-spice group might have changed to a bread-and-butter group, meaning that women on the whole are beginning to gain greater economic independence and that this brings with it greater assertiveness. Is it possible that the ideal of the quiet, submissive, curly-headed blonde who is at home, takes care of the children, and keeps a clean house has changed to a curly-headed blonde, but who now has either a law degree or directs traffic in a construction zone. Many men and women lament this change

and blame it either on left-wing liberals, the institutions of higher learning, or the media. However, closer examination reveals that this reasoning is overly simplistic. The change from sugar and spice to bread and butter is based on economic considerations as are many major changes in our history. Think, for example, of the exploration and discovery of the New World. That was based on economics, a desire for more affluence and power of newly emerging subgroups. The spirit of exploration and adventure certainly helped, but what came first? Once women have achieved economic independence, sugar and spice will become less frequent and harder to maintain because if one earns one's own living, one doesn't necessarily have to be sweet unless one feels like it; economic dependency as a bond between human beings is stifling and demeaning.

Let us, however, take a closer look at women's independence. For the majority, it still means working for low wages, lower ones than their male counterparts receive for the same work load. Utah has an even lower wage scale for women than the nation at large. This might be due partly to the general lower wage scale in Utah, but it might also be an expression of the general attitude of disapproval about women working.

Women and children historically have been and in many countries still are the most suppressed group. Women were subjugated by social customs and economic policies, but mostly by established male supremacy. This originated at a time when hunting, fishing, and fighting were prerequisites for remaining alive. This, however, is not the case any more, but the concept dies hard. Are the changes now taking place significant, signaling new modes of behavior and relationships?

And where does Utah stand? Women used to play an important part in the religious and political life. In 1870 Utah was the second state in the Union to give the vote to women. The Relief Society and the young women's organizations were quite independent of the priesthood and the Church's male leadership. After the war, however, strong measures were taken to curb this independence. The so-called correlation movement made father the representative of the priesthood in the home, limiting the role of women in the Church and finally stripping them of financial autonomy. Women were firmly established as homemakers and baby-makers. These changes infantilized women and created many conflicts. Mormon feminists appeared around the 1970s, surprising and frightening the male leadership and pushing the male leadership to take strong stands against the ERA, day care, and professional careers for women.

In the meantime, fundamental changes were going on in the world at large, and as hard as Utah tried, she could not stem the tide totally.

The pressures on Mormon women, as well as on all others, resulted in increased psychological problems, notably depression and anxiety states. I imagine that many of you treat men and women affected by these changes in our society. The high divorce rate, teenage pregnancies, and drug problems are at one extreme—causing pain; the ever-increasing number of women in the work force represent the other extreme—establishing independence and gaining a feeling of greater self-worth. If we return for a minute to our guru-like state, how are we handling these changes? Are we encouraging women's economic and emotional independence? Or are we still insistent on the sugar-and-spice variety? Many religious groups are struggling with these concepts, are ordaining women and bestowing upon them all the rights and privileges of the male ministry. Some important church groups, however, lag behind, overlooking the changes going on. What are the results? And what are our responsibilities? Much will depend on our ability to be flexible and introspective and to leave hypocrisy behind us. Each of us will have to look at his or her own ledger sheet first.

Another major issue of controversy and change is the general attitude toward divorce. We all know from professional or personal experience how devastating this can be on children. Judith Wallerstein, whose studies offer the most complete research we have at this time, says rather clearly that the parent-child relationship and the quality of life after the divorce are more important than the divorce itself in determining the long-term outcome on the children in the family. In the latest issue of the *Harvard Mental Health Review* a summary of Dr. Wallerstein's work indicates that if the children are expected to carry too much responsibility for themselves, or the parents, or if they are exposed to continuous battles between the parents, depression and interrupted development are frequent. Younger children seem to suffer more at the time of the divorce, whereas adolescents are resentful even ten years later and feel a sense of deprivation. Probably most of us can substantiate these findings in our own clinical practice. Adolescent girls growing up with mother become more and more negative toward her in their early twenties and fear commitment and true intimacy with men. Many of them idealize their "Santa Claus" daddies only to be disappointed when they are looking for a real relationship. They look for romantic love and a lasting marriage, only to discover that the ghost of their childhood still rides with them. According to Wallerstein, there is evidence of a higher rate of divorce among children of divorced parents.

I see many children who show a variety of behavior problems after their parents' divorce and have found that these children respond well to play therapy or, if a little older, to an open discussion of the issues

involved. They sometimes think that their parents divorced because of them, that they “wrote on the wall with a magic marker,” as one six-year-old declared just recently. The reading of the book, *Divorce Is a Grown-up Problem* frequently opens the gate to a flood of personal material.

The issue is sometimes complicated by the fact that parents do not level with the children, possibly because of their own guilt feelings. Imagine you treat clients on an individual basis, considering all the factors, maintaining neutrality, or thinking you maintain it. What has priority—one’s value system based on family tradition, church dogma, and personal belief, or the teachings in graduate school about empathy, distance, and objectivity?

We must frequently deal with a variety of courts, lawyers, and legal issues which prolong the process and are not in the best interest of the children. A family court would simplify the procedures and permit the families to get on with their daily lives.

One of the major strengths of the Latter-day Saint church is their members’ close-knit feeling for each other and their helpfulness in times of stress. These positive attributes are helpful for the givers’ and the receivers’ mental health.

We all know that physical and sexual abuse of children is a major problem in our community. Spouse abuse and incest rank high in our statistics. How does this work in a close-knit community? Will, or better does, the Mormon therapist call protective services or overlook the incident out of strong feelings of religious identification? Again, one is one’s own severest critic. If research is to be believed and today’s abused will be tomorrow’s abusers, anything but treatment appears irresponsible. However, many of the children in spouse abuse cases, for example, are not evaluated or treated—carrying with them feelings of fear, confusion, and distorted modeling. Could we as professionals help stem the tide? I believe so . . . by providing treatment, support, and healthier models. This seems to me to be a more productive approach than spending money on countless examinations of children, within an adversary system demanding proof, thus deepening the feelings of shame and confusion. Unfortunately, children are not high on our or society’s priority lists, so they are the last to receive, and receive the least. American society, and particularly Utah, prides herself on being child-oriented. Wouldn’t it be nice if this would express itself in our spending money on early intervention, sex education, and good schools rather than just in a high birthrate? The school districts have identified 12,000 emotionally disturbed children and that does not even include preschoolers. The state mental health system saw 4,497

children between the ages of 0 and 17 in FY 1983/84. What happened to the other 6,000 plus? Maybe another 1,000 were seen by private agencies and practitioners, but I presume nothing was done until they hit the court system, were picked up for offenses against themselves or society or the family system.

These children are the future citizens of the state, the parents of the next generation, the bearers of religious convictions. Are we doing all we can for them? Are we actively involved in disrupting the cycle of unhappiness, violence, and self-destruction? Are we realistic in advertising our state all over the world if we cannot adequately help these unhappy children? The best snow on earth is great, but not really enough to sell the state to the outside world. Care of children and the elderly is the mark of civilization. How are we measuring up? Many of our children live in desperate poverty—while living costs have gone up, AFDC grants have been cut. Are we actively supporting increases in assistance grants or hiding behind professional neutrality?

Let me just bring up one more issue, namely foster care, before we try to find some solutions to the problems cited, particularly geared to the group represented here today. An average of 900 children are in foster care every month with 60 percent of those under 12 not having had a permanent home for over a year. Being moved to two or three homes within a very short time is not unusual. The existing group homes for children are few and far between and are frequently not utilized by the Division of Family Services. How many “parents” can a small child relate to? How will this effect their later ability to trust anybody and form lasting relationships? Foster care was supposed to be a temporary placement, but some children are in foster care for four years. Oh, yes, court reviews are held, but the end result is usually that the parents are given another chance to become better parents and the child sits waiting for this miracle to happen. Sometimes the parents, removed from the everyday responsibilities of child care, do look better, only to collapse again under its burden when the children are returned. We don’t teach parenting any place. No license or credits are demanded. With the birth of a child we are also supposed to receive a good dose of child development, patience, humor, and a strong back. Well, to many it does not come naturally. We need to research and come up with better alternatives for foster care, like, for example, permanent planning on a statewide, well-thought-out basis or home-based intervention. Children are best off with their parents, but only if the parents are able to *parent*. Otherwise the risk is too great, the pain too deep, and the cost too high. Could we support parent education more effectively?

Teenage pregnancy, premature birth—we could go on and on with our stories of misery and woe. Has there really been a revolution in our midst, but we have not recognized it? Will the changes that have taken place in the lives of many women be looked upon in the future to be of equal importance as, let us say, the industrial revolution? Utah is probably not the place where this is most obvious. Or is it? Are we the last bulwark of the old order? Are the female children we see in greater number in clinics the preamble of the future? Will the next generation be more assertive, and will that assertiveness become more acceptable as time goes on, so that these children will not be referred for treatment, because their behavior is the statistically normal one?

In your practice, is assertiveness in women and their daughters acceptable or handled with a benevolent father attitude, as “daddy always knows best”? Is the client’s guilt increased by some of the dogma inherent in any orthodox religion? Can we free ourselves of our own prejudices and look caringly at our clients? Orthodox psychoanalysts manage rather easily by not responding to many reality issues and thus bringing distance between themselves and their patients. However, it seems to me that the psychoanalytic model is not the one followed by most therapists. Maybe the most comfortable and most acceptable treatment modality for many is one that does not demand insight but looks upon observable behavior only. After all, the unconscious might be a dangerous place, while learned patterns can be changed and unlearned. Is this true for depression, hopelessness, and loneliness?

Change and lack of a judgmental attitude demand flexibility, not usually the main ingredient of fundamental religions. It must be extremely difficult to manage one’s own belief system within an ever changing, sometimes not so nice world. Can we find solace in Maslow, Rogers, Perls or Satir, or must Skinner be our prophet? He is also for change—only in a somewhat more orderly, prescribed, and chartered way. It seems no accident that psychiatry did not really come into this valley until 1947 and that the Mental Health Act had a rather difficult time getting through the legislature, and only then by including some limitations. It seems that many in the community had, and maybe still have, the idea that psychotherapy will poison the mind and turn good people away from the churches, lessen their influence upon the individual, and ultimately lead to an abandonment of faith. Hopefully, the best we can expect from therapy is to raise the level of responsibility, increase communication skills, make people more productive, and be able to relate more closely to a few, and more thoughtfully to many. How could any religion be against that? So why is there such denial and avoidance and at times open suspicion directed against

psychiatry? It seems really a sign of anxiety and insecurity within established religious bodies. All of us here will need to become missionaries for acceptance and outreach to those whose life is burdened. Being one's brother's keeper is not easy; we need to replace the rescuer with the facilitator, and dependency with independence.

Is the sugar-and-spice idea so firmly established and conceived as the ideal of Mormon culture that women and children will not be able to assume their rightful place in our community? I do not think so and hope that all of you will join me at the next legislature to lobby for bills relating to some of the issues we have discussed and that you will give thought to the philosophical aspects of our profession. Thank you.

Agnes M. Plenk is clinical director of the Children's Center in Salt Lake City.

A RESPONSE TO “WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO SUGAR AND SPICE?” BY AGNES M. PLENK

Juel D. Gregersen, MSW

To be graced by the presence of Dr. Agnes Plenk at our October AMCAP conference was an honor for us. Few have given so much to so many as she has. The good resulting from her work in the lives of many children, now adults, is immeasurable. We love her as a sister because she is loving to our children and accepting of love from them. She exemplifies Christ's words, “Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me” (Matt. 18:3–5).

Dr. Plenk set the stage for plain talk with the intent to help. It was stimulating, though painful, to be so honestly confronted. I hope my responses to her presentation are equally honest and well intended. I agree with and will amplify some points she made, and I disagree with and will challenge others.

Therapists Are Moral Agents and Value Brokers

Dr. Plenk and Perry London are right. All therapists are moral agents who function “more like a clergyman than a physician.” If we as LDS therapists do not declare our values in therapy, we are incongruent with ourselves. However, our critics and our members alike share the confusion as to how can we share our convictions *with* others without imposing our values *on* others. When we stick to the widely accepted values of protecting wives and children from abuse, we are popular. If we oppose homosexuality, social drinking, premarital sex, pregnancy without marriage, and abortion, we stir up claims that we are imposing our religious values on others. Some of us feel intimidated and retreat to the neutral medical model, keeping our religion and our values a secret. In some professional settings this neutrality is expected by the administration.

An example of this dilemma is how we professionals counsel unwed, expectant parents. About 25% of the births in Utah involve unwed

mothers. These new mothers are usually young and immature and have the least financial and educational resources. Church leaders teach abstinence from premarital sexual relationships, oppose abortion, and tell unwed parents that if they do not marry, the placement of their infant for adoption is a wise alternative. In doing this, are they valuing children and the quality of life for both the parents and the newborn infant, or are they imposing their values on the community? Such value statements are usually left up to LDS bishops, while LDS therapists, even in LDS Social Services agencies, remain neutral in helping unwed parents explore their alternatives and make their own choices.

Therapists Are Responsible for Their Own Behavior, Not the Client's Behavior

Dr. Plenk and Perry London, in expecting the therapist to "assume responsibility for the behavior of clients in real life," have gone beyond the scope of therapy. How can we be responsible for things over which we have no control? Is influence control? Certainly not! There is a big difference between *declaring our own convictions* and *giving directions*. Being responsible for our clients assumes a superior-inferior relationship, perpetuating low self-esteem in our clients and burn-out in us.

Keeping Current

Keeping pace with the knowledge explosion in such a fast-moving world is a real challenge. Brigham Young advised us, "Search after truth in all good books, and learn the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God, and put them together and you will be able to benefit yourselves" (*Journal of Discourses*, 12:313). The Savior told his Apostles, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16).

The Value and Values of Women

Dr. Plenk's observation, that some women have achieved enough educational and financial independence that they don't have to be sweet unless they want to be, is interesting. Even though these women no longer use sweetness as a manipulative tool to gain the approval of their husbands and neighbors, they still find themselves competing in the business and professional world where they must, just as men do, please their supervisors and their clients. Money, success, and power have become their values, and sweetness remains a tool. Is exchanging the approval of husbands and neighbors for the approval of an employer or consumer a step up or a step down? How does this enhance the value and values of women?

Women who value kindness, service, graciousness, and sweetness above money, success, and power are often run over by children and adults who are selfishly competing for more attention and a greater share of this world's goods. After working for long hours at low wages, these women may not have enough energy left to be true to their values and remain sweet when they come home to play the role of homemaker.

Women who know they are daughters of an eternal Father, and who know of their eternal potential, value themselves and have a sense of self-esteem that allows them to value kindness, compassion, and Christlike service to others. This same assurance also allows them to have their down days without being down on themselves. For these women success, independence, position, and status have value mainly in serving their Heavenly Father by serving their fellow humans. It is this eternal perspective rather than financial independence that gives women (and men) freedom to be sweet.

But let's come back down to earth. Motherhood and homemaking have relatively little status in this world. No wages, no quitting time, no annual or sick leave, no medical or retirement benefits, no sabbatical or educational leave, no leave with pay, not even leave *without* pay. We must agree with Dr. Plenk that women who seek status or a livelihood through employment often receive less of either than men in the employment field.

Dr. Plenk and many others seem to misunderstand the Church position on mothers working outside of the home. Many changes took place in our society after World War II. During the war, many women joined the work force to help our nation preserve peace and freedom for the world. After the war, many of these women remained at work outside of their homes to supplement the family income.

In an effort to retain the greater benefits of a mother's influence on her children, the Church opposed mothers' working outside the home if it was solely to gain added luxuries. This counsel did not apply to family businesses or farms where the family worked together; and it did not apply to single parents who *had to* leave their children so they could earn a living.

Curbing Independence in Women

Dr. Plenk refers to "strong measures" taken to curb the independence of women in the Church. If curbing women's independence were the intent of the Church leaders, it would be very disturbing.

Relief Society bazaars to raise money were commonplace through the 60s. In the 70s, the IRS modified their tax regulations. It was compliance with government tax laws, not a desire to control women, that

prompted Church officials to put an end to Relief Society fund-raising activities. It was not only the women who were affected by these new government regulations. All Church groups who worked to earn money for any reason were put out of business. The only services that remained were those central to the mission of the Church and which paid taxes on any profit.

Church procedures continually change to meet the current needs of Church members. The councils that make high-level decisions include representation from the Relief Society, the Young Women, and the Primary. Further, all groups in the Church are accountable equally to the councils, and to curb one group more than any other group would be wholly inconsistent. The Lord told Joseph Smith, "Let every men esteem his brother as himself, and practice virtue and holiness before me" (D&C 38:24).

These "strong measures" related to the correlation movement have placed more responsibility on the fathers in the homes and have produced more rapid growth in the men of the Church. Before fathers can become Christ-like, they must learn to be leaders, not dictators. The Savior taught that "whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Matt. 20:26-28; 23:11; Mark 9:35; Luke 22:26-27). Too few homes have great fathers, and some homes have no fathers; thus, the children in these homes have no male models of greatness unless they seek them elsewhere.

Dr. Plenk says, "Women were firmly established as homemakers and babymakers. These changes infantilized women and created many conflicts." The way she says it degrades the role of homemaker. This is contrary to her other statements about valuing women as mothers. She implies it was the male Church leaders who placed women in these roles. Who did assign to women the role of bringing babies into the world? It may have been their own choice. "Man [and woman] was also in the beginning with God . . . [and was] independent in that sphere in which God . . . placed it, to act for itself" (D&C 93:29-30). We do not know when or how or if we chose our gender, but we know that we willingly came to earth to have this experience. We did not come here under protest.

Rather than criticizing the Church for encouraging women to be mothers and homemakers, let's elevate the role of mothers and homemakers in our society. It does, in fact, take more skill and energy to be a homemaker than to perform any other kind of work. The influence of homemakers on our future is more profound and greater than the influence of any other profession.

I think some tough questions for the Church and its members have

to do with our attitude toward the never-married, the divorced, and widowed mothers. Are single mothers who care well for their young children considered productive citizens, worthy of financial and commodity support which would allow them to stay home and be homemakers if they wish? Or do we expect them to “work” for what they get? Do we limit our definition of “work” to activities that produce cash flow? Actually, many of these mothers want to work, at least part time, so they can associate with other adults and feel productive; but they ought to have the option to stay home.

Motherhood has status primarily in heaven—a long wait for a single mother and a bad reflection on how distant this world is from heaven.

Do we as Church members contribute generously enough to the fast offering funds to make adequate care possible? Of course there are abuses by those who receive help, but does this excuse us from sharing the burdens of the single mother? Should these mothers and their children live below our economic standards? We seem to view single mothers who receive welfare assistance as lacking in ambition and productivity. Even when adequate care is given, such care is viewed as a handout, not as the recipients’ just due. This attitude is so pervasive that many such mothers feel guilty if they buy an ice cream cone for their children. A newer car is out of the question. Church members might well consider what the Lord told Joseph Smith: “And you are to be equal, . . . you are to have equal claims on the properties, . . . every man according to his wants and his needs, inasmuch as his wants are just— . . . every man seeking the interest of his neighbor” (D&C 82:16–21).

Unmarried mothers who spend time with their preschool children and train them to become responsible, productive citizens can be as productive as mothers who leave their children in the care of others while they earn a livelihood. We ought to encourage these mothers to be with their children by providing adequate assistance and adequate status by treating them as queens. The poor among our members should be limited to those who are able but who refuse to work.

Women and Self-Esteem

When Dr. Plenk discussed the value of women and motherhood, she focused on more money for education, welfare benefits, day care, and other programs for single mothers. The real solution lies in how men view women and how women view themselves. On the surface men may say women are equal, but if they really believed it they would routinely treat women with *mutual* respect. As men, we pay a hypocritical tribute on Mother’s Day. We heap on very high expectations as we

portray the ideal mother, followed by returning mothers to their prescribed, subservient roles.

Women themselves present several paradoxes. They may fight for equality on one hand but continue to contradict it on the other.

Some women dress and act to please men. Some go further and engage in pornography and prostitution. Perhaps they feel contempt as they watch lustful men seek the pleasures they offer, and gain revenge as they receive high pay for their services. Premature sexual involvement is often the result of submission by women to more persuasive males.

Women who play the role of one who is weak and helpless, one who needs protection and provisions from their male heroes, feel only a small measure of success mixed with resentment and anger for their own dependence and feelings of inadequacy. Some wives play the traditional role of "inferior assistant" to their husbands. They dutifully obey without question and lose their individual identities in exchange for security. (The scriptural role assignment "help meet" is not synonymous with "help mate." The word *meet* means "ideally suited for," implying "equal to" or "just right." Our Creator seems to describe woman as a help "ideally suited for, equal to, and just right" for man.)

Some more aggressive women are highly competitive with men in the marketplace. They abandon motherhood and fight hard to play the traditional male role. They run for political offices and corporate positions. They seek education and professions in a formerly all-male world. This is healthy to the extent that it is a true reflection of their interests and abilities, but in some cases these drives reflect doubt in the value and status of motherhood and homemaking.

If women clearly saw their value and their unique motherhood role, they would prepare themselves to be better persons, mothers, and citizens. They would be better educated and better prepared for leadership. They would command, instead of demand, respect. They would respect themselves instead of being robots for the more aggressive, manipulating males.

Helping Women Esteem Themselves

How do we help the women of the nation feel their true worth? One way is to rear them in good families where mothers have status as individuals and as women. Developing a good family is a responsibility we all share equally. Mothers who respect themselves can rear sons who respect their mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters. Women who resent the male tyrants in their lives have more difficulty loving, nurturing, and training their sons to be kind, gentle, and self-confident.

We could also provide better education for motherhood (and fatherhood) in the schools.

For those mothers who are divorced, we could provide better church resources, acceptance, moral support, educational opportunities, financial assistance, commodity support, and day-care centers.

We can teach women about their eternal role and value in the eyes of our Heavenly Father.

It is a tradition in our society, not in heaven, for women to bear the greater burden of child rearing and homemaking. It is easier to leave home each day, go elsewhere to work, and return home to escape from work, something a homemaker cannot do.

This tradition is contradicted in the scriptures, where equal or more emphasis is placed on fathers being the teachers of their children (see Moses 6:50–62; 7:1; Ephesians 6:4; Book of Mormon, Enos 1:1; Mosiah 4:15; Alma 56:47; 57:21; D&C 29:48; 68:25–28; 93:40, 47, 49). In each reference, the duty of parents to teach is elevated as an important and eternal role. There are few scriptural teachings about housekeeping and groundskeeping. Apparently these roles are to be equally shared (see Moses 5:1).

The ERA

Dr. Plenk describes the male leadership in the Church as being “frightened” by Mormon feminists into taking “strong stands against the ERA, day care and professional careers for women.” The Church views the ERA as a moral issue, not an equal rights issue. This debate has been carried out in detail elsewhere and there is no need to repeat it here.

I think we have already shown that the Church is not opposed to day care nor to professional careers for women. The Church opposes anything that interferes with the more important roles of wife, husband, mother, and father. Men are included in this attitude.

Recent women’s meetings of the Church have encouraged women to develop their talents and abilities as human beings, while at the same time being true to their opportunities to become wives and mothers. Those who do not have opportunities to become wives and mothers are esteemed by the Church (though, perhaps not by some members of the Church) and given the same hope for the eternities as any other worthy woman.

Pressure to Maintain a Facade

The economic and social pressures on Mormon women, referred to by Dr. Plenk, do not stem from the gospel but from our inability to live the gospel. There is something in our human nature, both male and female, that motivates us to compare ourselves and com-

pete with others. Our failure to conform to our high standards leads us to build and maintain a facade that "all is well." Seen by our neighbors with whom we are competing, this facade further escalates the comparisons, competition, and facades. This type of competition motivates public performance, but jeopardizes self-esteem.

Those in the Church who are honest in self-disclosure belong to a wonderful support group. Those who continue to compare and compete are depressed, anxious, and neurotic. They need some good therapy and some truly Christian neighbors.

Perhaps too much is made of independence, both by Dr. Plenk and by the Church. Mutual interdependence seems to be a higher law. Not one of us is self-sufficient, self-reliant, or self-supportive. Our goal is to become capable of doing more for ourselves and for others. Some of us grow gardens and have our year's supply of food, clothing, and fuel in storage so we could survive in a crisis, and yet we depend upon many others to maintain our quality of life. If we were totally independent, we would raise our own sheep for wool, spin our yarn, weave our cloth, and make our own clothing. We would grow our own lumber and manufacture all the other raw materials to build our own homes. We would similarly provide our own transportation, publish our own books, and educate our own children. But none of this would be necessary because, being self-sufficient, we would never marry and have children, and humans would become extinct.

God created us to need each other, to work together, and to serve one another. He wants us to take care of the poor. Our eternal salvation is based on visiting the sick, fellowshiping the stranger, clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, and so forth. We must all take our turns in both roles, the giver and the receiver. Without generous givers, the needy have no hope of survival and growth. Without the needy, gracious receivers, the giver has no hope of salvation. The single mother may choose to gracefully receive financial assistance while she is giving to the world children who are well prepared for productive adult roles.

Divorce Is Most Stressful

I agree with Dr. Plenk that separation and divorce must be among the most stressful of all experiences. I think it is much worse than losing a spouse in death. There are continual reminders of past pain and lost happiness. Common bonds and interests continue, and old wounds are reopened. There is no official, acceptable mourning period to provide closure. Divorced people are nearly deserted by the mainstream of the Church. Most people do not know what to say to the divorced person.

Divorce is also very difficult for the children who are caught in the

middle with torn loyalties. Their trauma leads to behavioral problems that further challenge the single parent. We in the Church believe that the decision to divorce a spouse must be an individual choice after careful thought and prayer, and after having exhausted all available resources to strengthen the relationship. But when one makes a decision to seek a divorce, he or she remains worthy of the same love and acceptance as any other member.

To paraphrase, “pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless [the neglected, the abused, the poor, the divorced] and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27).

Reporting Child Sexual Abuse

Contrary to Dr. Plenk’s implication, all of the Mormon therapists I know report child sexual abuse because the “close-knit feeling for each other” is closest to the child victims. Our greatest challenge is in being patient and kind with the offender who is in a state of denial and who with his smooth talk has minimized his offenses in the minds of others. He needs immediate Church discipline, with time to get his life in order. We view this life as the time to overcome our problems and prepare to meet God. Excommunication from God’s kingdom on judgment day may be final. (The Church has just recently refined and improved its procedure for reporting child abuse and neglect.)

Another challenge is dealing with the very slow, and often brutal, investigation and prosecution process. Often the investigation by civil authorities retraumatizes the victim.

Education and Role Models

Certainly Dr. Plenk is right in her wish for better role models and better parent education groups. There seems to be little interest in parent education until some of our children create enough stress to motivate us. Then we say, “I wish I had known this ten or twenty years ago.” The *Becoming a Better Parent* course is available in many stakes under LDS Social Services supervision. An *Infant Parenting* course is also available in many agencies. Numerous similar classes are available in many community agencies.

The best place to learn these attitudes and values is in a good home, but the traditional family of two parents and several children is less common. The best resource to the family ought to be the Church, but too few attend church and some church meetings are not practical. Thus, by default a greater burden falls on community resources. If there is a panacea, it lies in the good home with the Church as its

resource. Community agencies can be of greater service as they strengthen family life and support Church programs.

Money and Commitments

Money may demonstrate our priorities, our commitment, and our values, but money is also used to escape responsibility and as a substitute for love. Our “Santa Claus” divorced fathers use money to load their children with entertainment, goodies, and gifts and then return them to their mothers to do chores and homework. If we really valued motherhood, we would give money and more. We would give motherhood the status it deserves. We would be prayerful and creative in learning to apply gospel principles to our problems. We would take greater advantage of the relatively inexpensive resources of the Church and help each other to strengthen our families instead of turning to the government to solve our problems at considerably higher cost.

Being Christian

The gospel of Jesus Christ as taught by Alma in the Book of Mormon describes Christians as those who “are willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light; . . . mourn with those that mourn; . . . and comfort those that stand in need of comfort” (Mosiah 18:8–9).

Perhaps we ought to remind ourselves, and I’m sure Dr. Plenk would agree, that to be good Mormons we must first be good Christians.

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SUCCESSFUL MORMON FAMILIES

William G. Dyer, PhD
and Phillip R. Kunz, PhD

C current literature on the family indicates that we deal heavily with problems. As social scientists we talk a lot about divorce, drugs, child abuse, suicide, incest, premarital pregnancy, and so on. We wanted to examine families from a different perspective. Our question was, what goes on in families that are successful, or in families that are trying to be successful and for the most part are succeeding? In those families what do parents and children do that builds cohesion and harmony in the home and results in children who stay out of trouble, becoming good candidates to be the parents of families like they were reared in?

We were influenced in the format of our research by an amazingly successful book, *In Search of Excellence* by Peters and Waterman (1982). These consultants identified what they felt were the eight conditions that approximately twenty successful American companies had in common. This structure seems to be a reasonable approach to look at the family—certainly a critical organization. We felt that by looking at strong Mormon families in America we would be able to ascertain some of the activities and attitudes that build family solidarity. Effective families from other subcultures could have been studied, but we decided to study the families we knew best.

While Mormon families have a different theological base from other families, we suspect that they are very much like non-Mormon families. Except in Utah and a few scattered communities in some of the surrounding states, Mormons are a minority—they work, go to school, participate generally in the activities of their communities, and we assume they are very similar to other families.

With this orientation in mind, we sent a letter to Mormon church leaders in various parts of the United States and asked them if they

would supply us with a list of 15 families in their stake that they assumed to be the best—the most effective or most outstanding. The definition of “best families” was left up to these stake presidents. We found afterwards as we interviewed them, however, that many of them assumed that success should be measured by relationships between the husband and wife and the parents and children. We assume that church activity had some part to play in that evaluation as well. In addition, we asked the stake presidents to include only those families where there was at least one child still living at home. We did not want the family to remember how it was; we wanted them to still be living as a family. We also wanted them to have a child old enough to have left home for school, for a mission, for marriage, or for some other purpose. We were not looking at families that were newly starting, although many of them still did have infants in their home.

The sample was drawn from the United States; we do not know if the families here would be representative of Mormon families in Germany, Peru, and China. We expect in some ways they would, perhaps not in others. In most of the families surveyed there was both a husband and a wife; some of them had been widowed and had remarried. We also had some single parent families. The stake presidents judged them to be among the most successful families in their stakes; being single parents didn’t preclude them from this definition.

From all the lists we got from the stake presidents, we then sampled 200 families. If you were not selected as one of the families in the study, perhaps it is not because your stake president didn’t choose you; it may be that we didn’t choose you in our sampling process.

We sent out a very lengthy questionnaire. As it turned out, we coded 490 variables from the questionnaire. In addition to answering the questions we asked, many of the respondents wrote in the margins, on the back of the questionnaires, and some typed additional pages. Some wanted to amplify what they were doing and how they did it. In addition to the information obtained from the questionnaire, we supplemented the study with interviews, not with all of the families, but with many of them.

We found 12 conditions that we identified as significant to successful Mormon families.

Condition One

The parents had a high commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ and the restored Church. In the survey we asked, “What do you consider has been most important in making you a strong family?” The overwhelming response from these families included some statements like this:

We as parents are absolutely committed to the gospel. We as parents are in love and absolutely committed to each other. We work hard at teaching our children what is right and helping them to channel what we respect in terms of their own free agency.

Commitment to the Church was most apparent in three areas where virtually 100 percent of the parents complied: attendance at church meetings, full payment of tithing, and accepting church positions.

One family said:

The thing that has been most important to us in our family is the great feelings we have about the gospel. We know what the purpose of life is, and we know that our children are important. Our whole life revolves around the Church. Heavenly Father is a partner for us, and we certainly count on him to assist us after we do our part.

We can forego a lot of things the neighbors have because we know that helping a child is so much more important—much more important than a house or a boat. We just think that missions, temple marriage, and sticking close together is what it's really all about.

Another family said:

In looking back, we find that church activity has been a great help—good seminary teachers, good MIA teachers. For a time we lived over 25 miles from the nearest church. Our daughter used to get up in the early morning to go to seminary. She walked across the frozen snow for two miles to catch a ride. Sometimes we used to feel bad when it was so cold out, but we knew that it would all turn to her good in this life and even hereafter.

As part of the study, we included interviews and questionnaires with some not-so-successful families, families that had real problems. One of the things that we noticed in terms of these families was a lack of their commitment or a lack of involvement in the Church. For example:

We've had our share of problems as a family. My wife and I have not always been able to get along like we should. Some of our kids have acted out, and this has brought a lot of embarrassment to us. I see families who seem to have things together, and I wish we could be more like them, but we don't know how. I guess we've made our bed and now we have to sleep in it. All of my sisters' families did pretty well, and my wife's brothers and sisters, but we've just had a hard time. I don't know how we would do any different. Mother said we're not what you'd call a special family. In almost every way we've botched it. Our family fights a lot, and the marriage has about come apart for a number of reasons. I doubt we'd do any better if we were starting over again. Nobody taught us to be parents and we certainly didn't get it from instinct.

One more example:

I don't know, but we were just at that stage where we had several teenagers and they were acting about the way we did when we were younger. We've attempted to fix the problems up but it never worked as good as we hoped it would. I guess we'll just have to live with it and maybe the kids will shape up when they get married. That's all we can hope, I suppose.

The differences between the highly effective families and these less effective families, particularly those who have some degree of church activity, seem to be one of degree. The committed families were totally involved; 48 percent usually had family prayer together. When we looked into the matter of family prayer a little closer, we found that many of those families who said they only have family prayer occasionally said so because they did not define it as family prayer unless everyone was there, and schedules sometimes precluded that.

One family said,

We have family prayer once in a while but it's hard to do since our children work out of the home. We're seldom home at the same time. Sometimes there are only four or five of us at a time, sometimes two or three. But on Sundays we always have prayer together.

We looked at family home evening. Many of these families had already been launched far into their family life before the family home evening program came out, but even though some did not hold family home evening on a formal basis, they had a rough equivalent to it.

You might ask, "Where does religious commitment come from for these effective parents?" Do all these parents come from strong LDS families where they were taught to love the gospel, went on missions, graduated from seminary? The answer to all of these questions seems to be "no." There was no clear evidence from our data that effective families are replications of their own parental homes. Many of them were converts to the Church. Less than half of the fathers in our sample went on missions. Less than half graduated from seminary. A little over 20 percent were baptized after they were the age of eight. Of course, there were a lot of these parents who did come from active families. Some of those had traditions of several generations in the Church, and they talked about those traditions and how important they were in terms of how they reared their children.

The crucial thing seems to be, however, that at some point these couples made a commitment that they were going to have an active home, that they were going to have a successful family. Some of them sat down and talked about it and made that sort of commitment with each other; others just sort of grew out of an unconscious interaction from their socialization with their families.

Condition Two

Next to the powerful influence of the Church in their lives, these families identified the feelings of love and unity as the thing that had helped them most. Love and unity. We might ask, are they inherent in families, are they a result or are they born there, or do these people do something that brings about that kind of love and feeling?

Love, support, and family unity do not come automatically for most families but result from planning and efforts the parents make initially. Thus, parents may encourage all of their children to attend ballgames where a brother or sister is playing. Other times they may go to a symphony where a sister is playing. A parent may say to a child who goes out of his way in that kind of a supportive activity, "Thanks for going to Sarah's concert. It means a lot to have the family support her." They constantly try to reinforce family ties and what the children are doing.

One family has had scrapbooks for the children in which they included the programs where brothers and sisters had participated. The children kept these and treasured them as family mementos. It was a way of not being competitive as brothers and sisters, but of being mutually supportive.

Even in these effective families the children sometimes fight. The parents indicated that they certainly hadn't arrived at perfection. No parent likes to have children fight, but in the process of growing up some amount of teasing and fighting may exist. Overcorrecting this and stressing the fighting rather than the positive interactions of the children may not decrease the fighting but may bring even more undesirable consequences into the family.

One parent said:

We feel that the children love each other and we attempt to have them do all kinds of positive things. We have noticed that some of the other family members (our brothers and sisters) spend a good deal of time talking about their fighting children. I don't think they fight any more than other families, but they keep focusing on it rather than on the good things that happen. Life is pretty much what you make it. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

The feeling of unity and support is developed early in the family experience. Anyone who has attended "Back to School" nights, for example, will oftentimes see both parents there. Sometimes you see one parent who is sort of conned into doing his or her duty. Other parents never go at all. The children are aware of the kind of support parents give them. Obviously, parents cannot always do everything

they would like to, but these parents try to be supportive even in those cases where they cannot do something.

For example, one mother said:

We have a fairly large family . . . and sometimes we can't attend the games or the meeting where our daughter is speaking, but we go out of our way to say something like, "Brother Briggs told me you really gave a good talk."

Again, the reinforcement.

Church was not the only source of family interaction. These people did a lot of things in the home, working together and playing together. Family vacations became a unifying experience. Let me just read a quote from one family:

One thing in which we invest heavily in the family is the vacation. We go somewhere every year, just our family. Perhaps the neighbors have wondered why we don't do more things with them, but we have such a good time on the vacation. We have a few cross words—sometimes we go a few miles without anyone speaking to each other—but that soon heals. We do a lot of singing and playing and telling jokes; we don't have interruptions from the telephone or television; we always try to visit some place that will be educational or spiritual, or near relatives. We take a lot of pictures and do other things. The children remember these pictures. Hardly a week goes by that they don't talk about some place they've been. That, we think, is important.

Well, the sharing of these activities together often results in the kinds of feelings that these parents identified as important.

Condition Three

The families had a vision and goals. We mean a vision and goals in terms of knowing where they were going, not some kind of crazy picture in their head.

These people talked about being together as a family, not only in this life but as a "forever family." They had a vision about being married and sealed together in the temple and being with each other forever. This vision was translated into certain specific goals that had been identified, and the parents and children were able to articulate these quite well. Most of these families had a plan of action on how they were going to obtain those goals and how they were going to achieve that vision.

Families in this study placed high priority on service, for example. Many of them mentioned that as a family they had done service projects for neighbors or for other people who needed help. Thus charity, in a gospel sense, seemed to be a fundamental part of these people's

lives. While they had personal and family goals, these goals were set in an atmosphere of living in society and being responsible for part of that society. They had high goals regarding education, missions, and temple marriage. With many of the families there was a rather constant evaluation process that took place—how well are we doing? If they felt as if they needed to do something to change direction a little bit, they might plan a special family home evening around that. Or sometimes if it was just one child causing some difficulty, the parents might plan a sort of mini family home evening around that child and give some direction.

Condition Four

These parents spent a good deal of time talking with their children, trying to teach them, helping them to cope with personal problems and concerns. In other words, the parents were doing things with and talking with their children.

One family said:

The fact that we have been able to talk freely with each other and our children about feelings, problems, goals, hurts, and joys has been our greatest asset. We talk together while we're working or playing. Sometimes at mealtimes, which are always a sit-down-around-the-table-all-together times, we may stay an hour after the meal talking. We may look things up in reference books, share it with the family, read aloud to each other, tell jokes.

Another family said:

We are a happy family, finding fun in work as well as play. We laugh, sing, and talk when we're canning beans or cleaning or gardening. My husband and I had a goal when we were married, which is the key I think, to have a large family and to teach them to be happy. In most cases we have succeeded, but in one area I think we have failed. We have been so content as a family that they are not very outgoing and aggressive as sometimes is necessary in the business world.

In this group of successful families we found parents who made the most possible use of the various social institutions. They did not "stay to themselves" but they got out into the schools and the community groups, the Little League and the Boy Scouts, the symphony, and so on. The parents indicated they had made a commitment to their family and that involved a lot of sacrifices. They did not look at institutions as having the primary responsibility. The parents assumed that responsibility but they used whatever additional help they could get.

A wide variety of activities existed in the home where the children learn. The parents were role models. They structured teaching activities

such as family home evening and informal teaching moments (which many of them stressed), monitored what the children watched on television and read, supported formal programs in school or church, and participated in various family projects.

One son indicated:

When we go out to build fences or work with machinery, we talk together as father and son. Sometimes we talk about the gospel and my mission. Sometimes we talk about political issues, sometimes just about things that are happening around the world. Sometimes we just work.

Family night was identified as an important learning situation for two-thirds of these families, but regular scripture reading appeared to have been a vital experience for only about a third. Even that, however, varied a great deal among families.

One father said:

Our stake president used to talk in stake conference about how each morning they would get up as a family and read the scriptures. We felt like we should do that, too, as a family, but we didn't have time for it. So we got together as parents and children, and we decided that if we got up every morning ten minutes earlier we could read the scriptures. We read about four or five days a week now. So far we have read the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and are now reading the New Testament. We start reading sometimes while my wife is still frying the eggs. But that works pretty well.

There are also the formal teaching periods in the home. One quote from a father said:

There is an old saying in the Church that the family night is the only family fight that is opened and closed with prayer. That is not exactly how our family home evening sessions should be, but sometimes they are like that. The best lessons in our home are given by our children.

Talking seemed to be the glue that bound these people together. The one factor in family life most often identified in popular literature as characteristic of the problem area of modern families is the lack of communication, particularly between parents and children. The modern home is portrayed as a place where people eat and sleep but do very little else together. Parents are seen as being too busy for their children; children, likewise, have no interest in what their parents are doing. We didn't find this in our sample of successful families.

One father put it this way:

I would say if there was one thing that has made a difference in our family it has been that we have always talked together. When our children were little they would all come and climb into our bed and we would talk. The children loved to hear about how we met and got married

and how they were born and the circumstances surrounding our lives. That's continued, even after they have gone to college and married. Sometimes we talk about sports or gospel issues or current events or personal concerns, but we talk.

We found that these people really did spend a lot of time talking together. Part of this learning experience involved good books. These families indicated that when they compared their libraries with the libraries of their neighbors, they thought theirs were better. They assumed that they used them better. Ninety-seven percent of these families subscribed to the *Ensign* magazine, and most of them took the *New Era* and the *Friend* if they had children of that age. In addition, they had magazines like *National Geographic*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Reader's Digest*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Seventeen*, and *Popular Mechanics*; they subscribed to a lot of magazines and read them.

We surveyed television watching. We asked them, "How much, on the average, per week do each of you spend watching television, each of the parents and the children?" Comparing these figures with a national sample from the Gallup poll, we found that these families watched television *less than half as much as the national sample*, even controlling for the amount of education they had, because educated people do not watch quite as much. When we asked them, "Do you control what television your children watch?" most of them said that they did; but control meant all kinds of things to them. For some it just meant that they gave some rough guidelines and pretty much allowed the children to do what they wanted.

One parent said:

When our twins were asked what their favorite T.V. show was in a school survey, they wrote, "The news." They were eight years old. This was probably because we all watch the news together and discuss the day's events.

It's impressive how the various activities of these families were intertwined and structured together so that one thing reinforced another. Their library reinforced their values and goals of education. The use of a library by having assignments in the family and talking about issues got the children into the books, helping them in school but also bringing about interaction between parents and children.

Condition Five

We found, much to our surprise, that these families had few rules but high expectations. We found almost all of the families had three rules, or some variation of them. One, treat each member of the family with respect. Two, let your parents know where you are and when you're

going to be back. And three, be honest and dependable—do what you say you will.

Despite the number of these formal rules, hardly any of them said they had lists posted on the refrigerator or cupboard or anywhere. Instead, they had a built-in structure, a control that the children had learned in the process of socialization so that they knew what the parents expected.

One young man said:

I remember when one of my friends was over to our house on a Saturday night and asked if I'd like to go to a movie with him on Sunday afternoon. Of course I said no, and he wanted to know why. He asked me if that was one of our rules. As I thought about it, it suddenly dawned on me that it was one of our rules except nobody had ever told me that. It's just one of the things that our family would never do.

We saw that sort of thing occurring over and over again. Somehow they got the rule built in so it became an inherent part of their family life. Nevertheless, children don't always behave well and parents then have to figure out some way of disciplining, an area which we'll talk about in a moment.

The rule, "Where are you going and when will you be back?" seems to say to the child, "You are important; we want to know where you are."

One mother said:

Whenever my children come home late at night they have to come to my bedroom and kiss me goodnight. That serves several purposes. First of all, I know they are home safe and don't have to worry about them. Secondly, it assures the children that I'm interested in their well-being. And third, I think that the children were not tempted with the Word of Wisdom because they knew that when they kissed me goodnight I would be in a pretty good position to smell any deviation.

The third step was that of integrity. These people talked a lot about honesty—doing what you said you would do, even if you don't enjoy it—following through on your word, keeping your commitment.

If we left the kids with the cow-milking, we just assumed that it would be done; the milking had to be done and there was no room for any kind of excuse. They knew that if they were detained somewhere for some important reason those cows still had to be milked. They had better get in touch with the neighbor and make sure the neighbor got over and started the milking. The children are taught the idea of dependability.

Condition Six

These parents disciplined by talking, not by spanking. When they found that the children didn't do what they were supposed to, they had to do something with them. What they did was talk with them. They tried to reason through. If that didn't work, they backed off a step and talked to them. If that didn't work, they scolded. If that didn't work, they generally withdrew privileges of some type or another, and eventually they would spank, although that would occur more with younger children, we suppose, than the older ones. But the parents indicated that discussion was the primary disciplinary mechanism. Instead of a punishment for disobedient behavior, they tried to reinforce and use positive kinds of things to get the children to do what was appropriate. They would reward them in some way by praising or giving them some privilege if they provided good behavior.

Condition Seven

These families thought that they were open with their expressions of love and praise of worthy action. However, just as disapproval was likely to be met with a period of talking rather than spanking, approval was likely to be rewarded by praise rather than kissing. These people were huggers more than kissers. One mother said, "There is a lot of good feeling between our boys and their dad. They may not kiss or hug much but they wrestle a lot in a fun sort of way." Ninety-seven percent of these people said that the family told each other frequently that they loved one another. Ninety-six percent said they expressed love by doing special things for each other, ninety-four percent by hugging, eighty-five percent by kissing. Again, that seemed to be a little more frequent with younger children. Interviews indicated that these families varied in the way and the ease with which they expressed openness and love. One mother said, "In our family we have a 'me too' thing. If I tell my husband I love him, he says, me too." Some parents were able to tell their spouse they loved him or her in testimony meeting more easily than they could around the family. But these parents seemed to do a great deal of hugging, touching, and loving.

Condition Eight

Strong families give support during times of adversity. Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of effective families is the way the family works together to deal with problems.

These families all had problems and afflictions and difficulties. Just because they were effective didn't mean they didn't suffer. But instead

of the families breaking up under adversity, they seemed to coalesce and grow together. Most of them had experienced a great deal of adversity, as we indicated. But some of them didn't really define it as adversity. They would tell us about problems which we would define as real misery, but they would say, "Well we're not as bad off as Joe was," or something like that. They would have death, financial problems, fire sometimes, and so on to deal with.

One father said:

We have had a number of family problems. I have had a heart attack, but I recovered. We had to take care of aged parents for many years. My wife's brothers and sisters have had a number of divorces, but most of our kids have fulfilled missions, so we don't count any of those problems as adversity.

Another man said that he had lost three wives in succession. Each of them gave birth to a number of little ones and then died, leaving the small children. Some had a lot of accidents on the farm, a lot of crop failures, but no real adversity.

One parent said:

Our son eloped and our youngest daughter was discovered to have cancer; we had a boy who started drinking and who got on drugs; and then the business partnership went sour and the other partner pulled out, leaving us all the debts to pay.

But again, they did not really list this as adversity.

We asked these families, "How did you handle the adversity? What did you do when you had problems?" Most of them replied: "We turned to the Lord in prayer and fasting, exercised our faith, girded up our loins, developed patience, called our children together, discussed the problems." Very few of them went to social agencies, and in fact very few even went to their bishops with the adversity. "We called on our family." One quoted Ether 12:27:

And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.

And some of these people who have had lifelong adversities still believed the strength to deal with them came from their families.

Condition Nine

These families had a base of support larger than their immediate family. This involved their extended family, grandparents, cousins, and other relatives, as well as older children who had married and left

home. These effective families stayed connected with these relatives—they identified with them.

We asked them, “Who are your family heroes?” You know whom they listed most often? President Kimball. And right after President Kimball were grandparents and cousins. Others were Johnny Miller, Steve Young, and Danny Ainge. They had some heroes like that, but most of them were family members, except for the prophet.

One said:

We all follow BYU sports and identify with various figures but the children look up to their grandparents more than anyone else. They were strong, exceptional people. Even our married children talk of them and their ideals and their sacrifices for the Church in their early days.

It says something about the family that has grandparents or other family members for heroes. These families are reinforced constantly with the terms, “My grandfather, our parents, our cousins.” One family was listed in *Who's Who in America* and the children delighted in showing that entry to everyone. “Family” meant scrapbooks, photographs, reunions, visits, histories, a pride in that extended family.

In addition, of course, these children had many friends. We found out how much time they spent with their friends and how parents controlled that, and we found that these parents said friends were very important but the parents had control of who the friends were. They did that mostly by having parties in their own homes—inviting their children’s friends to their house so they would become acquainted with the friends, know who they were, how they behaved, and what they were doing.

Condition Ten

Home was a busy place. Everybody in these families was involved in a variety of activities in the home, work, school, and church. They were not isolating themselves from the world and trying to hide together in a coalesced little family but were working to help each other in all kinds of activities: music, drama, debate, clubs, dating, dancing, working outside of the home. They got involved in a number of activities, some more in music, some more in sports, and some in other kinds of activities.

One mother observed:

With all of our boys in Little League sports we spent every summer for 10 years just going to baseball games, followed by football and basketball. And I believe most of the time every family member that could would be present at those games to support them.

The thing that jumps out at you from the data is that there was a tremendously high level of activity. Everybody was doing something.

They were actively engaged not just in the home but outside the home as well.

These parents used some sort of reward system within the family to maintain control. They set up schedules. They used rewards to help their children achieve certain things that they would like to do. But we found that there was no common reward system. These parents very seldom had allowances for children, for example. When they discussed the topic of money, they said it was something to be used, a tool. Any member of the family could have whatever money was necessary as long as it was available. They had jobs: they had to work in the home or outside of the home. But money was not really seen as the end; it was only a tool within the system.

Condition Eleven

Family members worked. Almost all of these parents indicated that their children had to work in the household. They had to help with the family. They had to help around the farm, the yard, or whatever they had. It was a rare family that said they were not concerned with the work habits of their children. They wanted to build good work habits. They saw that as important in terms of the children's later life.

But the work was not an overpowering demand either. The father was supervisor, and everybody had work assignments; work could be adjusted. Anybody in the family who had a good excuse could get out of work and the rest of the family would fill in for him because they saw a lot of things as equally important or more important than work. These parents did not seem to be workaholics. They used flexibility and adjustment in terms of their time.

One father said:

The Bible teaches that man is to earn his living by the sweat of his brow, and we have taken it upon ourselves to teach this to our children. A lot of the problems in the world of work result from people who never learned how to work or never learned dependability. It is not as easy for us as it was for our parents who lived on farms. When we were young the jobs never ended, but here in the city the jobs end sometimes. We as parents have to scout out work for our children. Sometimes a couple in the neighborhood is glad for some yardwork, and our daughters all babysat to earn money, but it takes special efforts. Jobs don't come easily all of the time. We have to help the children sometimes by putting up signs and letting others know that our children can babysit and so on. Some of the kids have delivered newspapers and worked in special Scout programs or something like that.

Condition Twelve

The Mother and Dad love and support each other. When asked to rate the happiness of their marriage on a scale from 1 to 9, with 9 as the high, the average score for these families was an 8.5. Nearly three-quarters of the parents said their marriage was a 9.

In these families there was a general acceptance of the traditional roles between husbands and wives. Most of the men were the wage earners, although a number of the women also worked out of the home. Women took the primary responsibility for the home. Both girls and boys did duties in the home. It was surprising how many of the boys indicated they had to help clean the house and take care of the dishes, particularly for those who were on the nonfarm part of our sample.

These families described the husband-and-wife relationship as a good team. They pulled together. These parents had common goals for themselves and their children. It was important for them to have a close family.

We fell in love a long time ago and made a commitment to team up in this life. Some of the time we have had difficulties, but we've worked at it, and we love each other more as the years go by. Some of the hardest things were when most of the children were starting to get older, but we stuck it out. We really do love each other, and our children sense that. We talk and share; we pray together and do a lot of planning about our family. We think the Lord helps us in our family and with our children.

Well, the generally high score that these parents reported for their own happiness as spouses was supported by those judgments of the stake presidents, who saw them as the successful families. It is important to stress that these couples had many similar interests and goals. You knew they were committed to a good family orientation.

These parents spent a good deal of time talking to and teaching their children. It was honestly their goal to rear a good family. They tried to prepare as much as they could for a celestial heritage. All of these families acknowledged weaknesses and shortcomings; none claimed to be perfect. Many indicated that they were not sure they were successful. They said, "Wait until our grandchildren are raised." But the essence of their lives was clearly that they were trying to live as close to the standards and values as they could. They want to be close and unified as a family.

When parents are truly committed to the above-stated goals, they are happy in their marriages, they believe they are accomplishing something good, and they sense a real commitment and contentment in their lives.

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LDS CHURCH MEMBERS IN THE U.S. AND CANADA: A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

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In the absence of accurate, representative, and accessible information about a particular group, perception of that group depends on selective experience, impressionistic sources, and often, the group's ideology. Such is the case with the membership of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The public image of the Church depends on exposure by mass media reports which vary in content, accuracy, and favorability toward the Church. General Authorities may imagine the typical Church member to resemble the local leaders with whom they have contact. Converts may see the missionaries as typical Latter-day Saints. Counselors and psychotherapists may have an image which is overly influenced by their clientele. Moreover, the LDS ideology about families often brings to mind the type of middle-class family displayed on magazine covers—with a husband, wife, and at least two happy children. There is some empirical basis for each of these images, but each describes only one subset of members. Random samples, statistical procedures, and quantitative methods can provide a more balanced, even if less personalized and intimate, description of Church membership.

Church leaders have been concerned about the lack of accurate, reliable, and representative information about members that goes beyond the data on membership records. Therefore, in 1980, they approved a demographic study of Church members in the United States and Canada. This paper will summarize some of the major findings of that study, which have been published previously in other professional journals, the *Ensign*, and the *Church News*. The findings are drawn together here in a single source to provide a concise description of Church membership. The data to be presented focus on age and sex structure, family characteristics, and social-economic status. Each section points to some

of the possible implications of these data for Church leaders and members.

Method

Data collection was initiated in the spring of 1981. In the first stage, questionnaires were mailed to a random sample ($n = 7446$) of LDS adults, aged 18 and over, in the U.S. and Canada. A reminder postcard was sent out two weeks later. These two mailings generated a response rate of 54%. The second stage involved interviewing respondents who had not returned questionnaires. With this personal follow-up an additional 5% return was achieved. A third step was to extract information we already had about nonrespondents. This provided information on another 15% of the sample. Finally, an attempt was made to interview the remaining nonrespondents by telephone, yielding an additional 7%, for a total response rate of 81%. From all of these steps combined, only 4% of the original sample refused to respond, 1% had died or were no longer members of the LDS church, and the final 14% of the sample were unknown to local bishops and unavailable to telephone or mailing approaches.

We suspect some bias in the reported frequency of religious participation since those who refused and those who were not located are probably less involved in the LDS church. Many in this group would probably not identify themselves as LDS, however, implying comparability of our results with surveys which rely on self-reported preference to establish religious membership. The variables analyzed are observable historical events rather than religious attitudes or opinions. Thus we believe that response bias, due to Church auspices of the survey or patterns of religious involvement, is minimal. We have confidence that our sample is fairly representative of general Church membership in the U.S. and Canada.

Age and Sex

On the average, LDS church members are typically younger than other Americans. The median age in the Church is 24.7 years compared with 30.0 years in the general population of the U.S. and 24.2 years in Utah (*Church News*, September 24, 1983). Over 40% of Church members in the U.S. are under age 20, compared with 32% of the general population. Because there are so many young people, the proportion of members over age 60 is less than in the general population—10.8% for Church members and 15.8% for other Americans (see Table 1). In the Church, a greater share of resources is devoted to the young. Emphasis on youth programs is clearly justified

but such emphasis might cause a greater risk of forgetting about the elderly.

TABLE 1
AGE DISTRIBUTION FOR LDS AND U.S. POPULATIONS

<u>AGE GROUP</u>	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>LDS</u>
0-4	7.2	12.3
5-9	7.4	11.4
10-14	8.1	9.2
15-19	9.3	7.6
20-24	9.4	8.9
25-29	8.6	9.0
30-34	7.8	8.5
35-39	6.2	6.1
40-44	5.2	4.5
45-49	4.9	4.1
50-54	5.2	4.1
55-59	5.1	3.5
60-64	4.5	3.4
65 +	11.3	7.4
Median Age	30.0	24.7

SOURCES: 1981 Church Membership Survey, U.S./Canada;
1980 U.S. Census

Not only are Church members young, there is also a high ratio of female members. Table 2 shows that for every 100 LDS women in the prime marriage ages (20-29 years) there are 89 LDS men. The sex ratios become more uneven at older ages. Singles age 30-39 years have 95 men for every 100 women, but for singles age 60+ years, the figure drops to 24 men for every 100 women (*Church News*, November 6, 1983).

There are important regional variations in these sex ratios. The ratios are much more balanced in Utah than in the eastern U.S., where women make up a much greater proportion of the total. For example, the ratio of males to 100 females age 16 and over is 94 in Utah, 89 in other western states, and 85 in the remainder of the country.

Even when the numbers of men and women are similar, there may be a mismatch on salient demographic characteristics. Single women

TABLE 2
SEX RATIOS FOR LDS MEN AND WOMEN

Total Age 20–29	$\frac{89 \text{ Men}}{100 \text{ Women}}$
Single Age 30–39	$\frac{95 \text{ Men}}{100 \text{ Women}}$
Age 40–49	$\frac{53 \text{ Men}}{100 \text{ Women}}$
Age 50–59	$\frac{35 \text{ Men}}{100 \text{ Women}}$
Age 60 +	$\frac{24 \text{ Men}}{100 \text{ Women}}$
Weekly Attenders (Singles 30 +)	$\frac{19 \text{ Men}}{100 \text{ Women}}$

SOURCE: 1981 Church Membership Survey,
U.S. / Canada

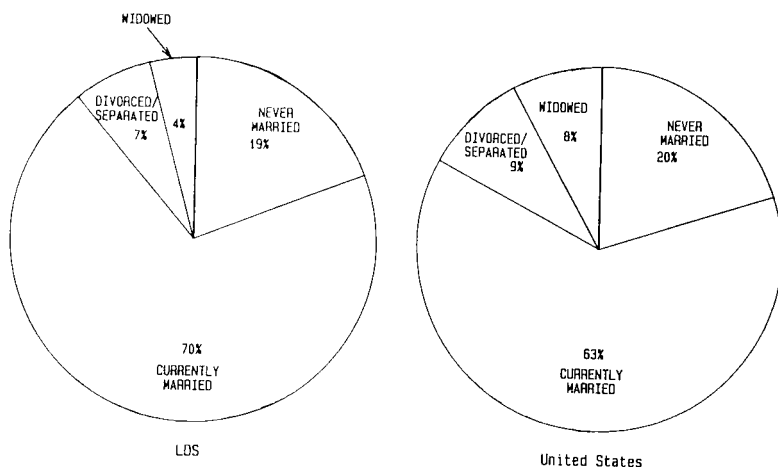
over 30 have higher levels of education, occupation, and Church activity than single men. For example, never-married women over 30 are more likely to have four years of college (42% compared to 18% for never-married men) and professional occupations (70% compared to 38%). For all singles over 30 there are 19 active men (who attend Church weekly) for every 100 active women.

Clearly, marriage to an active male is demographically impossible for many active single females over 30. And even when there are available males, they may possess other personal characteristics that rule them out as potential mates. Marriage is not a universal solution to singleness if the only acceptable marital option is marriage to an active LDS partner.

Family Characteristics

Although sex ratios make marriage prospects look pretty bleak for older single LDS women, most Church members *do* marry. Figure 1

FIGURE 1
Marital Status For LDS And U.S. Adults



SOURCES: 1981 Church Membership Survey, U.S./Canada
1980 U.S. Census

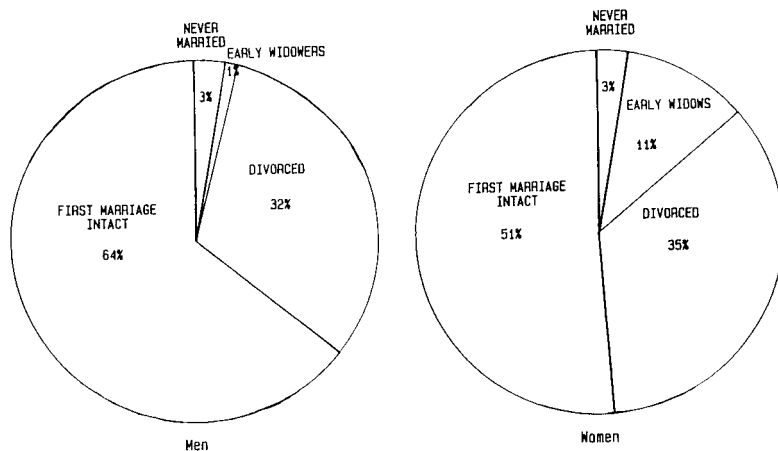
shows the current marital status of adults age 18 years and over. Currently 70% of the LDS sample are married, compared with 63% of Americans in general.

While 19% of adult members have never married, we project that most will have the opportunity for marriage. Figure 2 shows our estimate of men's and women's marital experience before age 60, for men and women now age 18–30 years (*Church News*, November 6, 1983). If we go to today's young people when they are 60 and ask them to describe their marital experience, we would expect a distribution like that shown in Figure 2.

About 3% of both men and women would say they never married, 11% of the women and 1% of the men would say they were married but their spouses died; another third would report they were divorced (35% of the women and 32% of the men) with many eventually remarrying. We estimate that only 51% of the women and 64% of the men would still be in an intact first marriage at age 60.

FIGURE 2

LDS Men's And Women's Marital Experience Before Age 60
(Estimated For Men And Women Now Age 18-30)



SOURCES: 1981 Church Membership Survey, U.S./Canada
Current Population Reports, P-20, No. 312

These findings suggest three important implications. First, while only 70% of adult members are currently married, 97% can expect to marry at some time (but not always to an active LDS spouse). Second, although LDS marriages (and particularly temple marriages) are more stable than other marriages in the country, divorce is becoming a more common experience for Church members. Only 7% of adult Church members are currently divorced or separated, but a third of the members can expect to be divorced at some time before 60 if current trends continue. Two-thirds (67%) of the ever-divorced men and over half (53%) of the ever-divorced women also report a remarriage (Heaton & Goodman, 1985). Third, a growing minority of adults will remarry at some time, and more children will be living with stepparents.

In 1981, 16% of ever-married Church members reported that they had been divorced. The figure for whites in the U.S. (the most comparable group) was 23% (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983). Temple marriages are more stable than nontemple marriages; they are 5 times less likely to end in divorce (*Ensign*, July 1984; *Church News*,

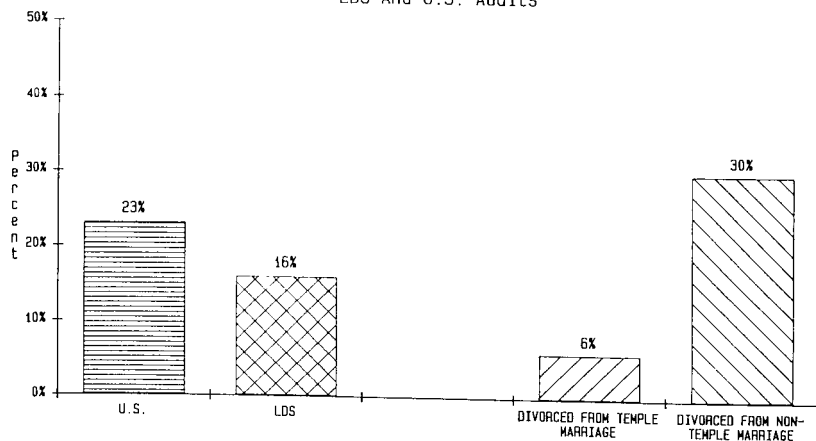
December 9, 1984). Only 6% of temple marriages have dissolved in divorce compared with 30% of nontemple marriages (see Figure 3). Persons who marry nonmembers have the highest rate of divorce.

It is no coincidence that those with temple marriages have more stable marriages. By passing successfully through the screening procedures—interviews with bishops and stake presidents—these people have demonstrated a commitment and a life-style compatible with gospel principles and are initially at lower risk for divorce. Typically, the candidates are older (not teens) and have more education than those who choose another type of ceremony. Although temple marriage is the strongest single predictor of marital stability, age and education also contribute significantly, and independently, to marital stability.

These findings imply that better preparation and appropriate counsel can reduce the risk of divorce. Personal preparation to be worthy of temple marriage combined with an older age at first marriage (over 18 but less than age 30) and a completed education are all related to greater marital stability.

FIGURE 3

Ever-married Persons Who are Ever Divorced:
LDS And U.S. Adults



SOURCES: 1981 Church Membership Survey, U.S./Canada
1980 U.S. Census

When an LDS woman does marry, she can expect to bear more children than her non-LDS counterparts. LDS women in our sample have borne an average of one more child than other U.S. women—3.27 children for Church members and 2.23 for other U.S. women (standardized for marital duration in an intact first marriage) (Heaton & Goodman, 1985). Moreover, temple-married women have more children (average number is 3.46) than those not married in the temple (average is 2.62). Rearing and providing for children is a major concern for younger and middle-age couples.

Another way to view family characteristics is to focus on household composition rather than individual characteristics. Figure 4 summarizes household composition for LDS households in the United States. A third of all LDS households are single adult households, containing an unmarried person living alone or with others; 5% of all LDS households are single parent households with children in the home.

In contrast, 68% of LDS households have a married couple, and most of these couples include two members of the Church married to each other—47% of all households. In well over half of these married-member households (31% of the total), the couple has a temple marriage. This is about equal to the frequency of marriage to a nonmember (21% of all LDS households).

On the final branch of the “tree,” 19% of all households contain two members with a temple marriage *and* children in the home. Lower proportions of the other married households have children in the home.

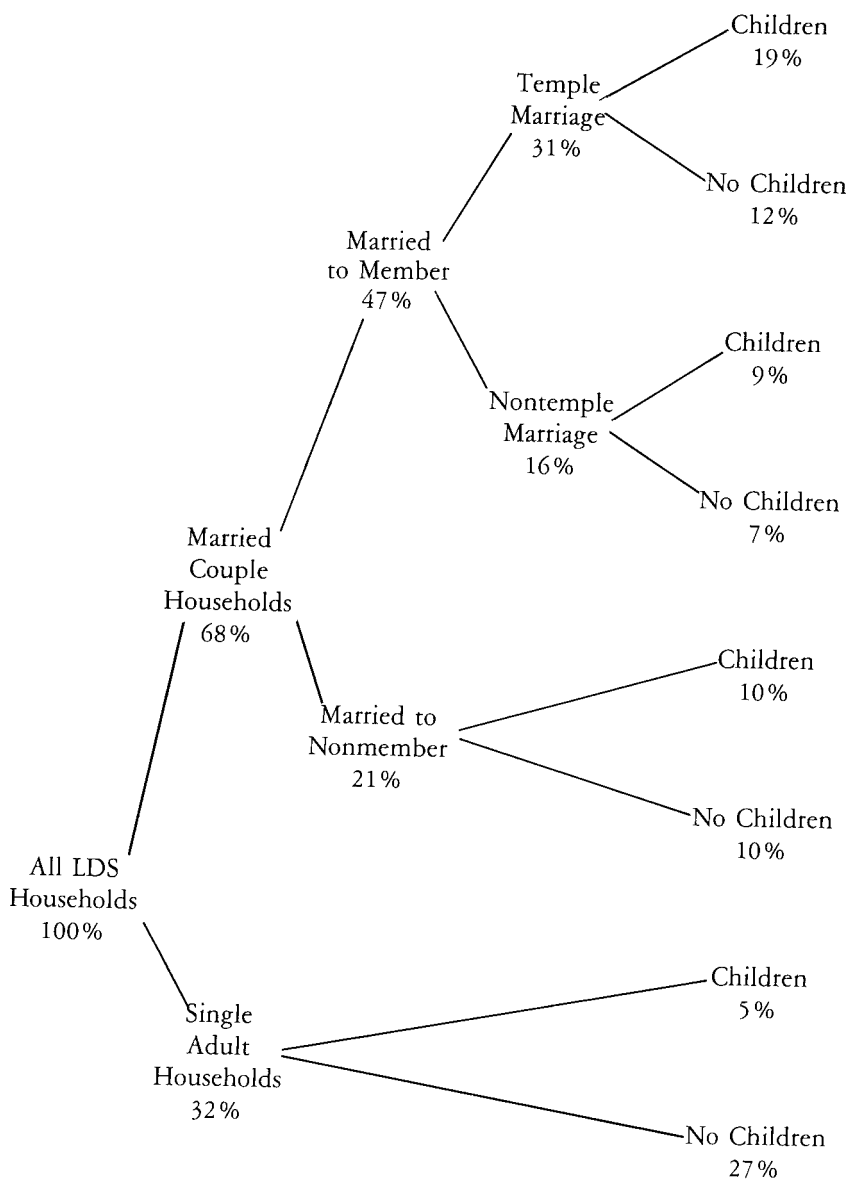
When viewed in this light, less than 1 out of 5 households currently has an “ideal” family situation with temple-married parents *and* children in the home. However, many more people may be in this situation sometime as they progress through the family life cycle. Some temple-married couples, without children now in the home, may have children who have grown and gone; others may not yet have started their families. Additionally, some nontemple marriages will be sealed in the temple at some future date.

In short, there is considerable diversity among members’ living situations—a diversity that requires not only understanding and acceptance but that may also require careful evaluation of existing programs, policies, curriculum, and activities, to make sure that the broad spectrum of people, circumstances, and social conditions are adequately considered and addressed by the Church.

In summary, these findings show that LDS teachings about the importance of family life are translated into the behavior of Church members. When compared with national averages or other religious groups in the U.S., LDS church members are more likely to marry and

FIGURE 4

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION OF LDS HOUSEHOLDS



SOURCE: 1981 Church Membership Survey, U.S./Canada

have more children, and are less likely to divorce but more likely to remarry if there is a divorce. One of the major hurdles faced by members (particularly women) in attaining the ideal of temple marriage is the unavailability of suitable LDS men for potential mates. But when a temple marriage is achieved, the couple generally has more children and the marriage is less likely to end in divorce than a nontemple marriage. Also, while many individuals may have a temple marriage with children in the home for a period of time, it's only a low proportion of them that are in this situation at any one time.

These data demonstrate the fallacy of equating life-cycle and cross-sectional descriptions of family experience. For example, a vast majority of Church members will marry and rear children. This will be a fundamental experience for most members of the Church. Thus, the programs and emphasis of the Church on family life have the potential of providing a great benefit. On the other hand, only about a third of the households, at any single point in time, consist of a married couple and children. Other types of activities and programs may be more relevant for these households. Just as different types of families experience different types of problems, the nature of family problems changes over the life cycle. Overemphasis on a particular stage of the cycle is bound to leave some groups feeling more isolated or unattached.

The diversity of family situations is reflected, to some extent, in the variety of programs established by the Church. These programs differentiate the membership by age, gender, and marital status. Evaluation of program effectiveness lies far beyond the scope of the demographic project. Our data do indicate, however, that programs and activities must be very broad in scope, if they are to incorporate the diversity of the membership.

Socio-Economic Characteristics

We now turn our attention to socio-economic characteristics of Church members and the relationships between these variables and religiosity and family variables. Education is a key measure of socio-economic status and an indicator of economic preparedness. LDS men have completed an average of 13.4 years of school and LDS women 13.0 years. Comparable U.S. figures are 12.6 for men, 12.4 for women. Table 3 shows that 53.5% of the men and 44.3% of the women have at least some college experience. This is about a third more than among U.S. men and women. In short, Church members are, on the average, more educated than the general population.

High educational attainment raises questions about the relationship between education and religiosity. Information on both sides of

TABLE 3

YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED FOR LDS
AND U.S. MEN AND WOMEN

<u>Years Completed</u>	<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>	
	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>LDS</u>	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>LDS</u>
0-11	30.7%	15.3%	31.8%	16.4%
12	32.8	31.2	40.5	39.3
13-15	15.6	25.0	14.1	28.6
16 or more	20.9	28.5	13.6	15.7
Median years	12.6	13.4	12.4	13.0

SOURCE: 1981 Church Membership Survey, U.S./Canada
1980 U.S. Census

the debate, about religion and secularization, are presented by Albrecht and Heaton (1984). To summarize, most research has shown a negative relationship between education and religious commitment, but often a positive relationship between education and church attendance. These discrepancies are explained by the social nature of church attendance. Using LDS church members as a case study, Albrecht and Heaton demonstrate that LDS members with higher education are more likely than those with less education to participate in a variety of religious activities, including attending church weekly, paying tithing, praying daily, studying the gospel, and saying their religious beliefs are very important to them.

Table 4 shows the relationship between education and these indicators of religiosity. Overall, there is a strong positive relationship between educational attainment and the variety of religious behaviors and beliefs for LDS men. The relationship is generally positive for women, but those with a grade school education sometimes score higher, while those with postgraduate education score lower than adjacent educational groups. Nevertheless, women with a postgraduate education are more likely to report religious involvement than women with only a high school education. Thus, higher education generally appears to be a substantial asset rather than a liability.

Employment status is another socio-economic characteristic to consider. As expected, men are more likely than women to be in the labor

TABLE 4
EDUCATION AND RELIGIOSITY FOR LDS MEN AND WOMEN

Education Level	Activity							
	Percent Weekly Attendance		Percent Full Tithing		Percent Daily Prayer		Percent at Least One Hour Study Weekly	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Grade school	34%	48%	40%	50%	52%	72%	41%	56%
Some high school	48	52	51	48	44	61	37	45
High school graduate	43	54	42	49	44	58	37	44
Some college	65	71	57	59	54	63	46	53
College graduate	71	82	68	73	60	75	48	52
Graduate school	80	76	71	73	68	62	61	48
							71%	95%
							75	82
							70	85
							81	88
							81	93
							87	83

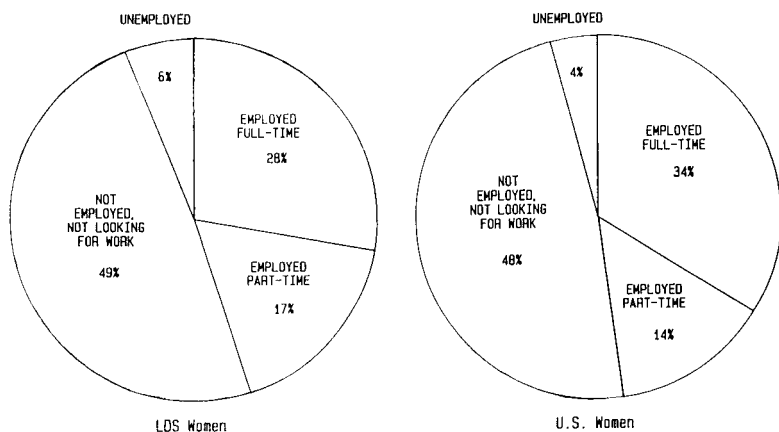
SOURCE: 1981 Church Membership Survey, U.S./Canada

force—85% of LDS men and 51% of LDS women are either working or looking for work. In the U.S., 77% of the men and 52% of the women are in the labor force. These data show that LDS women are as likely as other women to enter the labor force.

Although the total rate of labor force participation is similar for LDS and other U.S. women, there are important differences. First, fewer LDS women are working full time and more are working part time (see Figure 5). Second, marital status and the presence and age of children have a large influence on LDS female employment rates. Figure 6 shows that over 80% of single women are in the labor force, compared with about 50% of married women. Only 36% of mothers with preschool children (0–6 years) are in the labor force compared with 57% of mothers with schoolage children (6–17 years). All single mothers have high levels of participation—over 80% are in the labor force. In summary, LDS women are more likely to work part time, and participation rates are much less for married women with children at home.

FIGURE 5

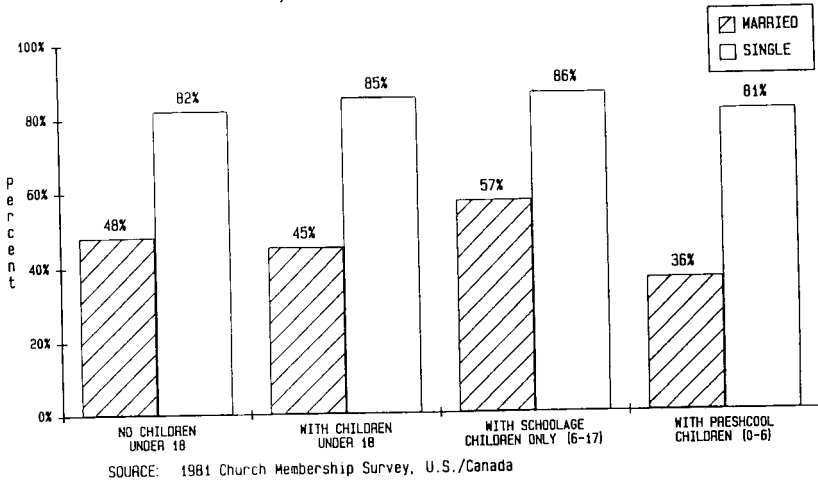
Labor Force Participation Of LDS And U.S. Women



SOURCES: 1981 Church Membership Survey, U.S./Canada
Employment And Earnings, January 1982

FIGURE 6

Labor Force Participation Of Married And Single LDS Women
By Presence And Age Of Children



Occupational distributions for LDS and U.S. men and women are shown in Table 5. Patterns for Church members are basically similar to those of other Americans, but LDS men are more concentrated in professional, managerial, and craftsman occupations. When compared with men, women typically have lower status occupations—in the professions, clerical fields, and as service workers. Distributions for LDS women are similar to those of other U.S. women.

Total household incomes for married couples and female householders are shown in Table 6. Again, LDS and U.S. distributions are not significantly different. The main differences are between married couples and single females. Almost half (48.7%) of married couples had incomes of \$25,000 or more in 1980. Only 10.7% of female householders had such high incomes, while 45.6% had incomes of \$10,000 or less.

Federally established poverty levels increase with family size: a two-person family would be considered as living in poverty with an income of \$5,338 in 1980, while a four-person family with an income of \$8,414 would be considered at poverty level. Figure 7 shows 7% of the married couples with two children in our sample are at/near the poverty level, while a third (33%) of single mothers, with three children, are in this

TABLE 5

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION FOR LDS
AND U.S. MEN AND WOMEN

OCCUPATION	Males		Females	
	U.S.	LDS	U.S.	LDS
Professional	15.5 %	20.5 %	16.8 %	18.8 %
Managerial	14.4	15.3	6.9	6.0
Sales	6.0	6.4	6.8	7.4
Clerical	6.4	5.1	35.1	34.7
Craftsmen	21.0	23.9	1.8	3.0
Operators	16.8	10.5	10.7	6.1
Laborers	7.0	6.6	1.2	1.8
Farm	4.0	4.9	1.2	1.1
Service Workers	8.7	6.8	19.5	20.9

SOURCE: 1981 Church Membership Survey, U.S./Canada
Employment and Earnings, January 1982

situation. Generally, the proportion of families in poverty increases with family size.

To summarize socio-economic characteristics: LDS men tend to have more education than other American men, are more often in the labor force, and are a little more likely to be in professional or managerial occupations. LDS women also have higher education but are equal with other U.S. women in their labor force participation and occupational distribution. However, LDS married women are less likely to be working when they have high-income husbands and young children in the home. LDS household incomes are similar to their U.S. counterparts, and single parent families are particularly likely to be in poverty. Middle-class tendencies are evident but most socio-economic segments of society are represented in the Church membership.

These data imply that most LDS church members place a high value on education—which may facilitate their church participation. For example, an organization which relies on lay administration finds skills and abilities gained through formal education to be valuable in carry-

TABLE 6
HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR LDS AND U.S.
HOUSEHOLDS, BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	Married Couple Households		Female-headed Households	
	U.S.	LDS	U.S.	LDS
0-4,999	3.9%	4.4%	23.6%	22.0%
5,000-9,999	11.1	6.8	26.8	23.6
10,000-14,999	14.5	12.7	21.2	20.0
15,000-24,999	31.0	29.4	19.7	23.5
25,000-49,000	33.5	37.3	8.1	7.8
50,000 and more	6.0	9.4	0.7	2.9

SOURCE: 1981 Church Membership Survey, U.S./Canada
Current Population Reports, P-60, No. 127

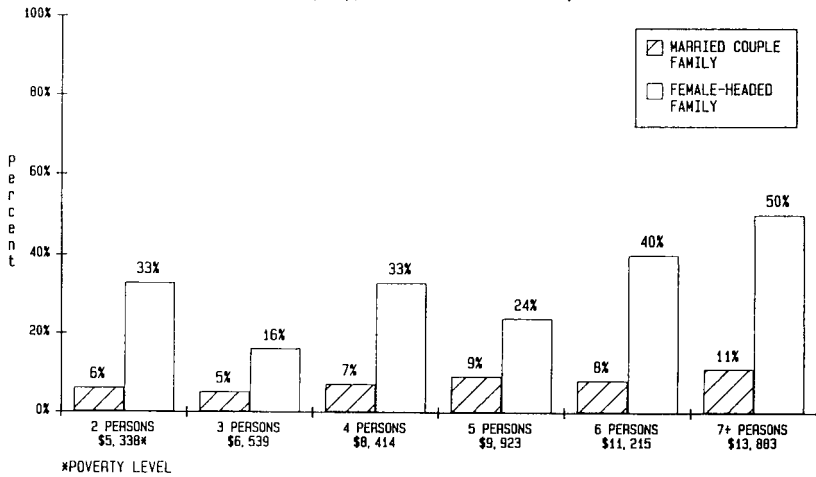
ing out the programs and policies of the Church. But within such a social setting, members with less educational experience are less "active" and may feel left out or passed over for particular callings.

The rough similarity between Church members and others in the U.S. on socio-economic characteristics suggests that Church members experience the same types of economy-related problems as the national population. There is a definite status hierarchy: the skilled are differentiated from the unskilled, the rich from the poor. Concern about making ends meet, promotions, layoffs, and the daily exigencies of getting one's work done are probably just as prevalent in LDS families as anywhere. For example, poverty is a very real threat to single women. The "feminization of poverty" is a concept that applies as well in the LDS context as in the rest of America.

Women's employment is a related issue. Official statements from Church leaders communicate that it is preferable that women are not employed outside the home and about half of LDS women conform to this norm. However, for those who do work outside the home, questions remain concerning how they feel about the messages they receive from leaders and other members and how they balance family, work,

FIGURE 7

Poverty Rate For LDS Families,
By Type And Size Of Family



SOURCES: 1981 Church Membership Survey, U.S./Canada
Current Population Reports, P-60, No. 127

and church responsibilities. Many of these women clearly have financial reasons for working. Single women need to support themselves and their families, and many married couples need the wife's income to maintain even a modest standard of living. Others may work to enhance their own psychological well-being. The stresses and strains of the job may be heightened for some of these women by official opposition to employment as well as by greater family demands stemming from having larger families.

Guidance about female employment would be helpful at all levels of the Church hierarchy. This could include teaching young women the importance of being prepared and teaching both young women and young men how to deal with nontraditional roles of men and women that they may encounter in their own lives or marriages. Where women are already employed or desire to be, counsel, training, and support could help women (and men) gain or upgrade education and/or employment skills that are needed to provide adequate income. Women could be encouraged to train in high-paying fields not traditionally female. Long-term solutions should also be considered, particularly for women in female-headed households, who must provide for themselves and

their families. Although many LDS women do remarry after a divorce, there are few active LDS men available; the need for a good provider in the family should not force these women into an unsuitable marriage. Financial and social-emotional support are critical for these women.

Conclusion

The popular image of the middle-class nuclear LDS family receives some empirical support in these data. Such tendencies, however, can easily be overemphasized. Poverty, divorce, and single parent families are not rare anomalies but are realities which many must deal with on a personal basis. These findings indicate a need for creativity in designing and implementing effective and relevant programs and activities on an institutional level. A spirit of love and acceptance is also needed to incorporate diverse segments of society into our religious community.

Local Church leaders must not only be concerned about the administration and adaptation of Church programs, they must also deal with the application of principles and policies to individuals. For example, while it may be preferable that women are not employed outside the home, thoughtful career guidance may enable women who must work to find better jobs—to “work smart” instead of long hours. At the same time, scheduling meetings and activities at times when employed women are available to participate would also be helpful.

Where sex ratios and local marriage markets make marriage to an active LDS mate very unlikely, local leaders must be prepared to help women weigh the real alternatives and the consequences of staying single or marrying outside the Church. They must also lead the way by showing continued love and support, helping members who choose different options to stay integrated and religiously involved.

At the individual level, the data suggest that while we are striving to obtain a certain socio-economic and family life-style we should be flexible in adapting to the realities of our mortal existence. We should be prepared to face economic and family hardships in our own lives, as well as in the lives of our close friends and associates. Not all families will have a full-time mother at home or be able to provide a variety of music lessons and other opportunities for their children. Increasing numbers will be touched by divorce, either in their own families or through their friends, and will face the difficult tasks of building new personal relationships and dealing with old ones in constructive ways.

The diversity of members' characteristics warns against making too close of a connection between fundamental gospel principles and the specific socio-demographic status of individuals at a particular point

in time. Although the principles of hard work, personal preparedness, and willingness to share with others are valued, neither wealth nor poverty are primary indicators of individual righteousness. Eternal marriage is a basic gospel principle, but marital status is not a safe indicator of worthiness. Indeed, marriage may pose a dilemma when available mates would not make suitable eternal partners. Members are taught that parents should care for children and also be self-reliant, but these two principles may come into conflict for single mothers. Thus, employment status is not a good measure of conformity to gospel principles. In short, we caution against statements which imply a close connection between individual worthiness and socio-demographic status.

Rather, we suggest that the specific challenges of living gospel principles may depend on socio-demographic status. A single mother with small children faces different daily circumstances than does an older married couple or a college student. Ideally, Church programs will provide assistance to people in each type of situation to improve their spiritual lives. Knowledge about members' characteristics thus becomes a tool to assess the adequacy of Church programs and activities in helping all segments of the Church membership. The information in this report may help to provide this broader context within which to view individual members and evaluate current programs.

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PSYCHOTHERAPY AND RELIGIOUS FACTORS: A BOOK REVIEW¹

Allen E. Bergin

These two books [Robert J. Lovinger, *Working With Religious Issues in Therapy* and Mosche Halevi Spero, ed., *Psychotherapy of the Religious Patient*] mark a turning point in the relationship between the field of professional psychotherapy and religion. They denote a historic juncture in that (a) the authors are respected professionals educated in distinguished clinical psychology programs (Lovinger at New York University and Spero at the University of Michigan); (b) religion is taken seriously as a potentially positive ingredient in personal change and adjustment, thus countering in a rigorous way the stigma associated with religiousness in much of the clinical literature; (c) the psychodynamics of defense and countertransference in the attitudes of antireligious therapists are analyzed; and (d) procedures are outlined in detail for competently handling religious themes in therapy as they arise in client, therapist, and social context. None of the foregoing precludes analyses of pathological or antitherapeutic themes in religious experiences and practices. The authors prove as adept in that skill as they are in discerning the integrative aspects of religion; however, it is in their decidedly sympathetic stance toward the religious client that their works stand out.

Lovinger's book is unique. *Working With Religious Issues in Therapy* is the only contemporary volume that thoroughly examines, in historical, social, and clinical terms, every facet of the religious factor in therapeutic change. Few therapists could match Lovinger's sophistication in these matters. He provides what is essentially an instruction manual for therapists who wish to educate and attune themselves better to religious issues that affect the therapeutic transaction.

He does this in an evenhanded way, dealing with the issues largely from the vantage point of the scientist-practitioner model. His theoretical orientation is psychodynamic, with object-relations and ego-psychology emphases.

Although he identifies with his Jewish heritage, he approaches the subject matter in a comparatively neutral way. He says, "My aim has been to inquire into the meanings and functions of a patient's religious beliefs and experiences to improve understanding without taking a stand on ultimate questions" (p. xii).

The book begins with an astute analysis of the diverse backgrounds of therapists—how they develop their attitudes toward religion, the psychodynamic processes that occur in their relationships with people of various religious orientations, and how all of this may negatively or positively influence the treatment process. Therapist orientations are classified into the following subgroups: religiously nonaffiliated, anti-affiliated, formerly affiliated, religious but "unconverted," and religious with a conversion experience. He encompasses the psychoanalyses of therapists' attitudes and feelings in the context of history and culture, in much the same sense that Erik Erikson showed the case history to be embedded in history.

This material provides a condensed introduction to intellectual history and the relationship of biblical cultures and beliefs to that history. For instance, the discussion of the nonaffiliated therapists briefly describes how the scientific *weltanschauung*, the humanistic orientation, and a liberal political outlook are related to Judeo-Christian roots. The complexity of biblical and religious history is shown equally clearly by illustrations of opposing trends that trace their roots to the same Bible.

The middle section of the book considers numerous conceptual, historical, and denominational issues that set the stage for the discussion of specific treatment strategies that follows. Although I found this section interesting and educational, many readers are likely to become bogged down in the analyses of values, philosophical questions, theologies, rituals, historical antecedents and present status of religions in America, and numerous other topics. In my view, the best part of this section consists of two chapters outlining how various religious orientations affect personality development, attitudes, and feelings. Religion is considered in these chapters both generically and denomination-by-denomination. The content is largely descriptive, clinical, and historical rather than empirical; however, here as elsewhere in the book, the author is true to the scientist-practitioner model by including reference to empirical studies wherever possible.

The chapter on assessment and therapy procedures that follows is the most useful in the book. It is an excellent treatment; but its 44 pages constitute less than 20 percent of the volume, and it left me hungering for more. This chapter shows how the therapist can open the way for clients to express deeply felt, and often dynamically significant, religious

attitudes. He quotes Oskar Pfister's notion that one's perception of the Bible is a sort of "royal road," or projective test. "Tell me what you find in the Bible, and I will tell you what you are" (p. 181).

In addition to providing the usual descriptions of religiously linked disturbances in clients, such as Pruyser's list of eight religious pathological syndromes, this book contributes the specification of integrative features in religion that can be used to aid recovery. For instance, among the numerous cases described is one of a woman with intimacy difficulties and fear of abandonment who improved as a result of joining an evangelical religious group. The same case is used in another way that distinguishes this book, namely, it illustrates the careful elucidation of therapist countertransferences. The therapist had a strong negative reaction to the client's conversion. Therapeutic supervision helped her recognize the developmental and familial basis of her reaction.

The book concludes with an unusual chapter on the diverse translations of the Bible and the way in which various passages, and variations on them, can be used therapeutically with Bible-believing clients.

This book will stretch the imagination of every practicing therapist. It is informative, erudite, and compassionate. Although it is not accurate in every detail and makes some assertions about religion with which I cannot agree, this is to be expected in such a comprehensive effort. Although Collins's denominationally oriented books (1977, 1980) are of equal merit, from the perspective of mainstream professional psychotherapy this book stands by itself without peer.

Spero's work is an edited volume of 10 chapters, including one by Lovinger. *Psychotherapy of the Religious Patient* is a nice complement to Lovinger's book in that it is laden with more clinical detail throughout. It is on the whole, however, slightly less sympathetic to religion and somewhat more traditional in its psychodynamic interpretations of religiosity.

Spero introduces valuable sections on neurotic versus healthy religiosity, the management of countertransferences with religious cases, and special problems in diagnosis and psychological testing with such persons. He argues that the religious person presents the clinician with many technical and ethical dilemmas, yet current training does not educate practitioners in effectively dealing with such matters. This book therefore deals with such deficiencies as (a) lack of knowledge about specific clients' religious systems, (b) lack of familiarity with the psychology of the religious personality, (c) countertransference reactions based on neurotic determinants in the therapist's personality, and (d) conscious biases based on ethical and ideological precommitments.

John R. Peteet, a Christian psychiatrist, describes the important role he plays as a consultant to therapists who may need assistance in resolving specific religious issues. He also provides a valuable account of the management of client and therapist values in a compassionate, facilitative approach to dilemmas experienced by a Christian homosexual.

Paul Kahn, in a brief but excellent chapter, describes candidly the dilemmas faced by a clergyman who is also a psychotherapist practicing among members of his own faith. Kahn is an Orthodox Jewish rabbi, many of whose cases are also Orthodox Jews. The chapter is an intensive study of one case that presented painful dilemmas for both therapist and client. How the ensuing transferences and counter-transferences were effectively dealt with provides a lively and interesting chapter.

As a further example of the candidness and courage evident in this volume, David Halperin and Ira Scharff describe in clinical detail the variety of tight situations Jewish psychoanalysts can get into with Catholic cases. They focus specifically on Jewish–Irish dialogues, which illustrate powerful language, life-style, self-concept, and belief barriers that must be overcome in successful treatment.

The last five chapters of the book present case studies. Paul Bindler notes the advantages and disadvantages of being an Orthodox Jew treating Orthodox clients. His own sophistication regarding his subculture and his ability to use a rabbi as a therapeutic resource provide a prototype for therapists of other religious persuasions who may be working within their respective subcultures.

Seymour Applebaum provides a moving account of the rediscovery of spirituality in a Jewish client as a result of intensive psychotherapy. He states that the idea, belief in, or experience of God can be health producing if worked with properly. This spiritual dimension “encompasses the psychic drive for integration, wholeness, balance, creative purpose in life, joy, episodes . . . of expanded consciousness, a deep ethical sense, and a capacity for unity . . . between one’s self and the many relationships and commitments in one’s life” (p. 152).

David Bradford describes the difficulties and possibilities in an existential–phenomenological approach to the therapy of religious imagery in a paranoid schizophrenic. As he says, “The madman’s religious experience poses an impressive barrier to his therapist’s understanding” (p. 173). Penetrating that barrier and staying *with* the client through the tortured inner images of his world are depicted here.

Robert Lovinger continues in this volume his careful analysis of therapeutic issues with religious persons by case study of a borderline client that highlights problems of intimacy, guilt, and responsibility.

Leon Salzman concludes the book and pulls no punches in his accounts of religious conversion and paranoid states. He defines spurious versus true religiosity, and progressive versus regressive conversion. Six cases are presented to elucidate his points. The strange phenomenon of very positive and very negative aspects existing under the one rubric of "religion" is documented.

A footnote on this book pertains to copyediting and production by the publisher. The print on different pages differs in darkness. There are too many typos, misspellings, incorrect references, and unedited sentence structures. (A check of two other recent books from Charles C Thomas publishers revealed a similar standard of production.) Otherwise, the book is sound and is a worthy companion and complement to the Lovinger volume.

These books give limited recognition to the important trend toward religious psychology (Collins, 1977, 1980); but as psychology of religion, they are illustrative of a decided turn in the interests and sympathies of behavioral scientists. A dozen new and rigorous books on the topic have recently appeared. This return to the study of religion is aided by methods of inquiry and masses of information that were not available to earlier generations who approached and then left this topic behind. Religious studies are now being put on the same rigorous footing as studies in gender, culture, and ethnicity. The present books are a positive step forward in that direction.

Allen E. Bergin is a professor of psychology at Brigham Young University.

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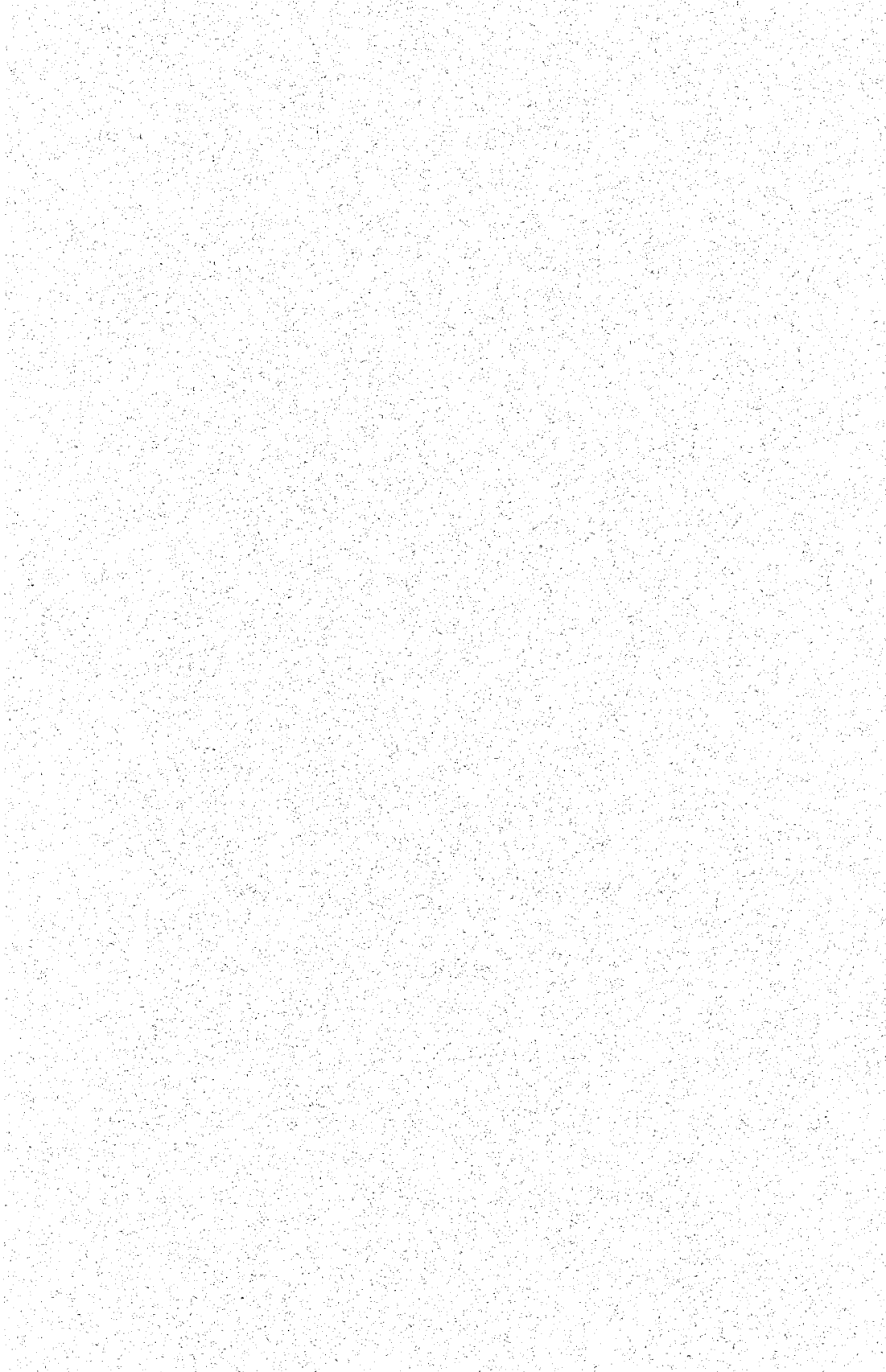
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IN FUTURE ISSUES

The next issue of the *AMCAP Journal* is to be devoted to the theme “Vulnerable Populations within the Church.” The concluding article of this issue, “LDS Church Members in the U.S. and Canada: A Demographic Profile,” provides a good preview for that issue. To get the next issue out on time, we will need to receive your manuscripts by November 1. To date we have only one theme-related article for the next issue, so please send us any papers you may have written, or yet will write, and encourage your colleagues and friends to do likewise. If you are aware of published articles that you would recommend reprinting, please send those also.

The following issue is to be devoted to “Principles of Therapeutic Change,” from both a professional and a gospel perspective, and we will be happy to start receiving your papers for that issue now. Please send them as soon as they are completed, but prior to March 1, 1987. Thanks!



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