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The purpose of this Association shall be:

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.

<div align="right">Article 1, Section 2. AMCAP by-laws (as amended Sept. 30, 1981).</div>

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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Call for Manuscripts

The *AMCAP Journal* seeks manuscripts of interest to the broad, interdisciplinary membership of the Association. Appropriate manuscripts may be reviews, theoretical articles, case studies, position papers, or reports of empirical studies, which address the association's mission as stated above. Articles may relate to the theory of counseling and psychotherapy, family therapy, social work, or may deal with the application of Church doctrine to an understanding of psychological processes, or to righteous or ethical practice.

Manuscripts submitted for publication should conform to the style of the *Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association* (4th ed., 1994), available from the American Psychological Association, Order Department, P.O. Box 2710, Hyattsville, MD 20784.

Double-check your references. Do text citations agree exactly (spelling of names, dates) with reference list entries? Manuscripts without reference list errors are surprisingly rare. Please retain the original text citations in your possession should the need arise for them to be checked. Follow the *Publication Manual of the*

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Type everything—including footnotes and references—double-spaced, on a six-inch line, 25 lines per page. Manuscripts should generally not exceed 20 pages. Use plain white paper. A dot matrix printer may be used. Also, when possible, send a copy of the manuscript on a computer diskette either in Apple Macintosh or IBM PC-compatible format. (You can send your electronic copy of the manuscript in WordPerfect® or Microsoft Word® word processing formats or as an ASCII text file.)

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The *AMCAP Journal* is a refereed journal. All manuscripts received in the format specified are reviewed by the editor and two consulting editors. Manuscripts will be acknowledged by the editor upon receipt. The review process takes approximately two to three months. Authors can expect to hear within that time regarding the status of their manuscripts. If revisions are required, the editor may choose either to accept revisions without additional review by consulting editors or put the manuscript through the entire review process again when the revised manuscript is received. Once a manuscript is accepted for publication, three to six months will elapse before the article appears in published form in the *AMCAP Journal.*

Authors should keep a copy of their manuscript to guard against loss. Send three copies of your manuscript to the editor:

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Editorial

I am pleased that another issue of the *AMCAP Journal* is ready for publication. I would like to thank Dr.'s Jan Scharman, Rondi Mattson, and Daniel Stout for their fine research articles about LDS blended families, LDS divorced women, and LDS women and the media. I believe their findings provide many important insights for LDS helping professionals. I would also like to thank Dr.'s Dennis Nelson, Lane Fischer, and Robert Gleave for their contributions to an interesting and important debate regarding the role of AMCAP and AMCAP members in professional organizations. I would also like to thank Elder F. Melvin Hammond for allowing us to print the inspiring address he gave at a recent AMCAP convention. Finally, I would like to thank Robert Gleave and Aaron Jackson for their assistance with this issue of the *Journal* in their roles as Associate *Journal* Editors. I also appreciate the fine efforts of Andrew Ehat, our Technical Editor, and Richard Potts, my editorial assistant.

I regret that we have only been able to publish one *Journal* per year the past three years. The reason we have not published two issues of the *Journal* per year, as we would like, is because we have not had enough manuscripts which have made it through the peer review process to fill two issues per year. This has been a difficult dilemma for members of the Editorial Board. We have considered a number of possible solutions to this problem. Perhaps it would be appropriate to share with the AMCAP membership some of the ideas we have considered. We would welcome other ideas and input

from the AMCAP membership because this is the *Journal* of our organization and its future is in our hands.

One possible solution to the *Journal* manuscript shortage would be to publish everything that gets submitted to the *Journal.* Another variation of this solution would be to publish all or many of the talks and presentations given at the AMCAP conventions. However, when we send manuscripts out for publication review, about 50% of the time, your peers indicate they do not believe a manuscript is worthy of publication in the *AMCAP Journal.* (I should mention here that we send manuscripts out for review to a wide variety of AMCAP members including those who are in private practice, agency, hospital, and university [counseling centers and academic] settings, and LDS Social Services.) In the majority of other cases when manuscripts are sent out for peer review, reviewers indicate that they believe the author(s) of a manuscript should make some significant revisions to the manuscript before it should be accepted for publication in the *Journal.* When we send out transcribed copies of talks and presentations which were given at AMCAP conventions, about 95% of the time, your peers indicate that while a talk or presentation was excellent when delivered verbally at the convention, it needs significant revisions and improvements before it will be ready for publication in the *AMCAP Journal.*

What has become clear to us as an Editorial Board, therefore, is that the AMCAP membership does have high standards for the *AMCAP Journal.* It appears that most of you want us to publish only high quality articles in the *Journal.* Unfortunately, as an Editorial Board we have found that when we send manuscripts back to authors with an invitation to revise and resubmit the manuscript, many authors do not do this. We realize it is often discouraging and time-consuming to revise a manuscript. Nevertheless, it is a reality that most of the time manuscripts need revision and strengthening before they are ready for publication. As an Editorial Board we would hope that authors will view an invitation to revise and resubmit their manuscript as (1) a success and (2) an opportunity. When you are invited to revise and resubmit your

manuscript, it means your manuscript has (1) survived its initial review, (2) is viewed of high quality by the editors and is being seriously considered for publication, and (3) can probably be made even better! (Okay, we admit, it is still a pain to revise manuscripts, but it can be worth it!)

Another possible solution to the manuscript shortage is for us as an Editorial Board to work with potential authors more and to provide more timely, encouraging, and helpful feedback to assist authors with the often difficult process of readying manuscripts for publication. We have received some helpful feedback already in this regard and are open to additional suggestions along these lines. Reviewing manuscripts and giving timely and helpful feedback about how to improve them is a time-consuming and difficult task and we realize that sometimes we have been less helpful than we might have been. We will keep making efforts to give more helpful, constructive feedback and to expedite the review process so that it doesn't take so long.

Another possible solution to the manuscript shortage is to publish more special issues of the *Journal* on topics of importance (e.g., the reparative treatment of homosexuality). As an Editorial Board, we do in fact wish to have other special issues of the *Journal* devoted to certain topics; however, it is not always easy to identify what these special topics should be and to identify authors who will write articles about them. We would welcome ideas and suggestions from the AMCAP membership regarding special issue topics and help in identifying potential authors who might be willing to contribute to special issues of the *Journal.*

Of course, another solution to the manuscript shortage is for AMCAP members to write more manuscripts for the *Journal.* In the hopes of encouraging this, I wish to emphasize again that we welcome a variety of different types of contributions to the *AMCAP Journal.* Traditional empirical research studies and literature reviews are, of course, always welcome, but so, for example, are other types of contributions, such as case studies, qualitative studies, and theoretical and position papers. The common requirement for all

types of contributions to the *Journal* is that they address concerns and themes relevant to LDS counselors and psychotherapists.

Finally, in closing this very lengthy editorial (I promise the next one will be short), I want to mention that we have been very pleased with the feedback we have received about the Fall, 1993, special issue of the *Journal* which addressed the issue of the reparative treatment of homosexuality. Feedback has been over-whelmingly positive from church leaders, AMCAP members, and many non-LDS helping professionals. We have also received much positive feedback from LDS people who struggle with homosexual issues and from their families. We printed twice as many copies than normal of this issue of the *Journal*, but the first printing is now sold out. We are currently exploring the possibility of doing a second printing of it.

P. Scott Richards, Editor

Balance:

A Perspective of Peace

Elder F. Melvin Hammond
Of the Seventy

My dear brothers and sisters: thank you for inviting me to be with you on this occasion. I realize in part the responsibility that has been placed upon me; therefore, I seek the Spirit of the Holy Ghost to be with me. And, I pray that you, too, will sense my desire and exercise your faith and prayers in my behalf.

This presentation will not be particularly scholarly. It certainly will not be profound. More than anything, it will be an expression of my personal observations and testimony garnered over many years of association with tender souls in and out of the Church.

Today, I would like to talk with you about the concept of balance as a perspective of inner peace. In doing so I feel, as Will Durant so aptly stated it, "like a droplet of spray proudly poised for a moment on the crest of a wave, undertaking to analyze the sea" (quoted by Hugh B. Brown, in a devotional address at Brigham Young University, 25 March 1958).

I refer to balance, not simply as a personality trait, but as an integral wholeness of character and life (Webster's Dictionary, 1986). Such balance, such harmony is an ingredient that many individuals lack, but when it does exist it produces tranquility, peace, and direction to man. As my model I would like to use the Savior, Jesus Christ, for he was the only example of a perfectly balanced, peaceful life.

The oft quoted scripture found in Ecclesiastes 3:1–8, has long been of interest to me. The Preacher presented a unique blue-print of contrasting "times" which God's progeny experience while in mortality. To me the uniqueness is not found in the substance of the scripture—for I have a difficult time with such words as, "kill," "war," and "hate"—but rather the uniqueness is found in the exquisite balance of life so carefully described by the son of David. Indeed, there is "a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven," and each individual is ultimately confronted by these "times:" birth, death, to plant, to harvest, to kill, to heal, to break down, to build up, to weep, to laugh, to mourn, to dance, to cast away stones, to gather stones, to embrace, to refrain from embracing, to get, to lose, to keep, to cast away, to rend, to sew, to keep silence, to speak, to love, to hate, war, and peace. Do we not all confront these seasons?   And in spite of those which seem so difficult and hard to bear, can we not all agree that "He hath made everything beautiful in his time." (Ecc. 3:11)

It seems to me that as we face each of the seasons mentioned above there are five personal attributes which we should develop. These attributes make the "whole person." They are in those who are in harmony with God, man and self. They are basic to the pursuit of inner peace.

First: Know Yourself. During the thirty-three years of his mortal existence the Lord came to know precisely who he was: the Only Begotten Son of Elohim in the flesh (see *Doctrine and Covenants* 93:21). He knew that he was sent to the earth to do the will of the Father (John 4:34). He knew that he was the promised Messiah who had come to give "Living Water" to those of God's children who would accept the Plan of Salvation and become clean vessels through his atoning sacrifice. With this amazing knowledge of who he was, what he was to do, and why—the Christ was able to move forward, even at great personal cost, accomplishing to the last detail his foreordained mission: that of laying down his own life and taking it up again, so that all mankind could live again as immortal souls (John 5:26).

Now you and I do not possess the same faculties or knowledge that the Son of Man possessed. Neither is our mission the same as

that of the Savior. Ours is to gain experience in the world, but to avoid becoming worldly. It is to subject the flesh to the spirit (3 Nephi 27:27), and become perfect even as our "Father . . . in heaven is perfect." (Matthew 5:48)

Nor are there two people who are the same. There are tall, short, thin, and stout people, each with differing degrees of perceived beauty—for beauty is only in the eye of the beholder. Even the Lord recognized this when he said, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" (Matthew 6:27).

God's children vary in intelligence from one another. "And the Lord said unto me: These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they . . . all" (Abraham 3:19). In light of this, I have taken great personal comfort and hope from the following words of the Prophet Joseph Smith, "All the minds and spirits that God ever sent into the world are susceptible of enlargement" (Alma P. Burton, *Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 268). We can progress intellectually; we can increase in knowledge.

Ultimately, we need to know who we are and what we are. We can know that we are the children of God: born in the spirit as sons and daughters of an Eternal Heavenly Father. We can know that this earth as well as our mortal parents were provided as crucial parts of the express divine purpose of bringing "to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39). When we balance our understanding of our capabilities, weaknesses, and limitations against our eternal potential to become like God we will have come a long way toward achieving that balance which produces inner peace.

Second: Empathize with Others. Do you recall the wonderful scene recounted in 3 Nephi 17 during the visit of the Savior to the people of the Americas following his resurrection? He was preparing to leave. He told them that he would come again the next day. Then he noticed that they were weeping and wanted him to stay with them a little longer. Their emotions touched his tender

heart and he said, "Behold, my bowels are filled with compassion towards you. Have you any that are sick among you? Bring them hither" (3 Nephi 17:6–7). All the sick, the maimed, the halt, the blind, the deaf were brought to him "and he did heal them every one as they were brought forth unto him" (3 Nephi 17:9). Following this great demonstration of his healing power, he commanded that all of their little children be brought to him. And he took them "one by one, and blessed them, and prayed unto the Father for them. And when he had done this he wept" (3 Ne. 17:21–22). Such empathy! Such understanding! Such tenderness! The Savior grasped the feelings, the thoughts, the needs, the righteous desires of all those sweet people and he was completely sensitive to them.

I am afraid that in our every day involvement with people we forget to empathize with them. Perhaps, we have been asked to hear the same problem for the one-hundredth time. Maybe, the same person has come back time and time again and we feel helpless to assist them any more. Are there those who come who seem too weak, too incapable to merit our professional consideration—that they are just be a waste of time? If so, we have become calloused and hard. We feign interest by looking at the person, but we look without really seeing. We listen without hearing. We say the proper words without feeling.

How can we recover those sensitive feelings which stirred our heart strings so long ago when everything was new and we were young and sensitive? Can't we dismiss the "it-is-just-another-case" syndrome and truly sense the sufferings of each individual? Certainly, we can if we will see before us a brother, a sister, or our own child in need. As is so movingly described by Georgie M. Gre in her work, "The Littlest Poem," there is such a need.

"It was a bright Spring day and the third-grade children were all excited about their English assignment. Each child was to write a short poem about 'Mothers'. The child who wrote the best poem would have a gold star placed next to his name on the blackboard.

Three o'clock came: time to read the poem. Debbie was first. "Mothers," she said:

> "Mothers buy dresses
>   and shoes and things.
> They give us parties and
>   rings.
> We wish them a Happy
>   Mother's Day
> We hope Mothers are here to
>   stay."

Bobbie came next:

> "Mothers make clown suits
>   and lemonades
> And fix sore toes with keen
>   band aids;
> But there's one thing she
>   can't and I wish she could—
> That's learn to like bugs, like
>   Mothers should."

On down the row they stood up, one by one, until at last there was Roberto Jose Martinez. His eyes were big and searching. "The words do not make rhyme," he whispered, "I tried very hard but my pencil just put on the paper what I feel in here. I will read it now, but it is very little—it is the littlest, I think."

> "Mothers . . . Mothers make
>   . . . well, Mothers make you
> hurt inside . . . when you
>   haven't got one."

For many days the big gold star shone on the blackboard. The small boy with the sad eyes wondered, each day, how the littlest poem that came out of his heart onto the paper could make such a big gold star for Roberto Jose Martinez." (quoted by Vaughn J. Featherstone, Tambuli, 1992)

Third: People Involvement. I am always amazed at how personally involved the Lord was with people. He interacted with family members, chosen leaders, complete strangers, even rulers. Each, in turn, was drawn into the web of his unusual influence.

Once, while he ate in the home of Simon, the Pharisee, a woman entered weeping and began to wash the feet of Jesus with her tears and wiped them with her hair. She kissed his feet and anointed them. Simon felt that if indeed Jesus was a prophet he would have known who and what kind of woman it was that touched him, for she was a *sinner*. The Lord knowing the thoughts of Simon, reprimanded him severely for his unforgiving heart and unrighteous judgment. Then he extolled the goodness and kindness of the woman for her beneficent acts to him. Finally, he forgave her for her sins and said to her, "go in peace." (Luke 7:50) Her expressions of repentant adoration of the Son of God brought forgiveness and peace.

While hanging on the hideous cross and suffering excruciating pains, the Savior was still aware of his Mother. With John the Beloved at her side, Mary stood at the feet of her Son. But the concern that he felt for himself at that awful moment was swallowed up by the magnitude of his love for her. Referring not to himself, but to John, he said, "Woman, behold thy son!" Then, turning to his disciple, he said, "Behold thy mother!" From that day on John "took her unto his own home" (John 19:26–27).

What a wonderful lesson Jesus taught on personal involvement. He helped us to learn that occasionally we must rely on others, forgetting pride and independence, allowing those near us to care and provide for our needs. He also taught that true discipleship demands a personal interest and commitment to others even outside the sphere of our own immediate family.

Perhaps, one of the most tender moments of personal involvement occurred on the night that Jesus met for the last time with his apostles. Laying aside his garments, the Savior took a basin of water and began to wash the feet of his disciples, drying them with a towel. Each in turn submitted to the washing of feet from their Master. Then he taught them the principle, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." (John 13:14) He was their Master and their God, but he ministered to them!

Even the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, was drawn into the remarkable influence of the Christ when upon hearing the Savior's testimony of truth, asked, "What is truth?" (John 18:38) In that precious moment Pilate missed the obvious answer to his question for the innocent Lamb of God was himself the proclamation of Truth.

While certainly our various church callings and our many professional assignments are extremely important, may I suggest that the most vital personal involvements ought to begin at home, with our wives and our children. The extent of our influence might well depend on the most simple activities with those dearest to us. I would like to share a personal experience that taught me a great lesson about involvement. This is the way I recorded it in my journal.

"We lay quietly together in the back of our jeep station wagon, listening to the gentle swish of pine branches blown by the wind, the constant buzzing of mosquitoes hovering at the closed windows, watching the hazy twilight gradually deepen into darkness—too exhausted to talk, just watching and listening.

Slowly, I turned my head and looked at the tiny red-headed boy with his eyes barely showing above the top of the flanneled sleeping bag. He was exhausted, but what seven-year old wouldn't have been, I thought, as I mused over the events of the day.

With no trail to follow, the climb into the canyon early that morning had been a hard one. He had held tightly to my hand as we slid our way down the steep slope to the creek below. I had clutched our fishing poles in my free hand and he had carried a canteen of fresh water in his tiny, strong grasp. The sun was bright and warm when we stumbled into the clear water of the stream. The laughter of a moment before changed to shrieks as the shock of the icy water turned our feet blue and made us scramble for relief onto a large rock close by. Quickly we removed our wet tennis shoes and socks and sat for a moment absorbing the warmth.

We fished together. I would cast the line out into the stream and then give the pole to the eager boy at my side. I had never seen such excitement. Every time a fish would strike, the canyon

would echo with shouts of happiness. "Oh Dad," he exclaimed, "won't Mother be pleased with this one!" I assured him that he was indeed a great provider, and yes, his mother would be pleased and very proud of him.

The day wore on, much too quickly it seemed to both of us. But with a full limit of nice pan-sized trout and the shadows and coolness of the late afternoon causing us both to tremble slightly, we began the long climb back to the rim above us. He scampered quickly up the mountain ahead of me with a challenging, "Come on Dad! I'll bet I can beat you to the top." The challenge was heard, but wisely ignored, for his small frame seemed literally to fly over, under, and around every obstacle. When every step I took seemed ridiculously like my last, he had reached the top and stood cheering me on.

Supper was a scrumptious feast of burned sausages, scrambled eggs—heavily peppered with ashes—squashed bread and butter, with a cup of hot chocolate to wash it all down. Afterward, we sat staring at the flames of our campfire as they consumed the last piece of wood, gradually becoming hot coals and finally ebbing into ashes.

We knelt on our bed, already unrolled and open to receive two tired bodies. His small voice rose heaven-ward in sweet, simple children's prayer to give benediction to our day.

There was a frantic scramble into the large double sleeping bag, with a good deal of pushing and pulling until finally his little body settled and snuggled tightly against mine for warmth and security against the night.

And now as I looked at my son beside me, I felt a surge of love wash through my body with such force that it pushed tears to my eyes. At that precise moment he rolled over, put his little arms firmly around me and said,

"Dad?"

"Yes, son."

"Are you awake?"

"Yes, my son, I'm awake."

"Dad, I love you a million, trillion times!" And immediately he was asleep.

But, I was awake far into the night, expressing my great thanks for such wonderful blessings clothed with little boy bodies.

Now my son is a man with a man's body and mind. And, yes, we both remember that one moment in time when more than blood taught us that our oneness depended on being together.

Fourth: Sacrifice. One of the most frequently discussed topics in the Church is that of Sacrifice. Yet, with all of our talk, we seem not to perceive the meaning and importance attached to this principle of the gospel.

It is true that most of us have a scriptural basis for accepting the supreme sacrifice of the Savior, Jesus Christ. We basically believe that this atonement was to allow the redeeming blood of Christ to wash away the sins of all those who repent and receive the ordinances of salvation from those who have the proper authority. However, in spite of our acceptance of this doctrine, we may still fail to see the necessity of personal sacrifice in our own lives.

Somehow we lose sight of the fact that to sacrifice actually means to give up something of value in order to receive a thing of greater worth. What we do not understand is that this principle of sacrifice is imperative if we are to receive the greatest blessing of all, Eternal Life.

One of the most famous New Testament scriptures refers to a young man who came seeking counsel from the Lord. His wish was to gain eternal life. He was told that he must keep the command-ments. Then Jesus reiterated them for him one by one, to which the young man responded, "All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?" "If thou wilt be perfect," Jesus said to the young man, "go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions" (Matthew 19:20–22).

Hearing this injunction Peter said: "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" To this

query our Lord replied: "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." (Matt. 19:27,29)

The principle is easily stated: Sacrifice produces faith which in turn produces the knowledge that our sacrifice is accepted by God. The Prophet Joseph Smith stated it in this way: "A religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation; for, from the first existence of man, the faith necessary unto the enjoyment of life and salvation never could be obtained without the sacrifice of all earthly things. It was through this sacrifice, and this only, that God has ordained that men should enjoy eternal life; and it is through the medium of the sacrifice of all earthly things that men do actually know that they are doing the things that are well pleasing in the sight of God. When a man has offered in sacrifice all that he has for the truth's sake, not even withholding his life, and believing before God that he has been called to make this sacrifice because he seeks to do his will, he does know, most assuredly, that God does and will accept his sacrifice and offering, and that he has not, nor will not seek his face in vain. Under these circumstances, then, he can obtain the faith necessary for him to lay hold on eternal life." (Lectures On Faith, Lecture Number Six, p. 69)

What more can I say? The true test is that we be willing to lay our all on the altar—everything that is earthly, even our own lives if they are required.

In the late fall of 1856 a group of Mormon immigrants began their trek to the great Salt Lake Valley by handcart. In October they became stranded in the Wyoming wilderness by an early winter storm that ultimately cost the lives of more than 200 of their group. Hearing of their awful plight, Brigham Young sent rescue teams to assist them. Three young rescuers, who had ridden ahead of the supply wagons, encountered the Martin Company stalled at the Sweetwater River, too weak to attempt a crossing. "Heroically plunging into the numbing water, the three men began carrying the sick and feeble across. This human fording continued until every person and his cart were safely landed upon the

opposite shore. When told of this valorous service, President Young wept. And while reporting it to the Saints assembled in general conference, declared: "That act . . . will insure David P. Kimball, George D. Grant, and C. Allen Huntington an everlasting salvation in the Celestial Kingdom of God, worlds without end" (Carter E. Grant, *The Kingdom of God Restored*, p. 476).

These three young men had placed everything on the line. They had made the sacrifice. It was accepted. Their reward was made sure.

There are many current examples of such personal sacrifice that I could relate to you, but I believe that the point is made clear that sacrifice or the willingness thereof is essential to obtain eternal life. All of us—you, me, those with whom we work can find the peace of a balanced life when we begin to understand the real meaning of sacrifice.

Fifth: Love Unfeigned. As the Savior walked from Bethany to Jerusalem he went to the top of the Mount of Olives. He looked across the narrow valley of the Kidron, westward to the walled city of Jerusalem and the Holy Temple. What awaited him there he alone could comprehend as he said to the Pharisees, "for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem" (Luke 13:33).

Christ knew that the day would soon come when he would enter the city and voluntarily give himself up to those who hated him, submitting to their outrageous cruelties as they mocked him in derision, cast their vile spittle in his face, and smote him with their hands. Then meekly he would subject his body to the cutting sting of the lash and finally in complete humility allow his persecutors to nail him to the awful cross.

Can you tell me why? Why, did he, the Son of God, he who had all power in his hands, submit to such terrible anguish? The answer is because it was He "Who so loved the world that he gave his own life, that as many as would believe might become the sons of God" (*Doctrine and Covenants* 34:3).

His love was completely unfeigned, absolutely genuine and sincere: As He healed the sick on the Sabbath contrary to the Pharisaic interpretation of the Law (Matthew 12:10–13); as he

grasped the hand of the twelve year old daughter of Jairus and raised her from the dead (Mark 5:41–42); as he took the little children in his arms and blessed them (Mark 10:16); as he comforted the woman taken in adultery telling her, "go, and sin no more" (John 8:11); as He kindly prayed to the Father for the Roman soldiers who had nailed his body to the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). All this was His magnificent manifestation of love. To those who followed Him he said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34). Yes, as the Beloved apostle has instructed, "We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

Now, my dear brothers and sisters, I want you to think about this concept of love not as a group but as individuals. We love those who first love us. In the wonderful musical production "The Sound of Music" there is a lyric which says, "A bell is no bell till you ring it. A song is no song till you sing it. And love in your heart wasn't put there to stay. Love isn't love till you give it away." But never dishonestly. Remember, we are speaking about love unfeigned. Adultery, fornication, unfaithfulness of any kind is dishonest, feigned love. Certainly, the idea that adulterers are also liars is true, for their lustful activities are the most vile deceptions of pure love. And their sins will dispel the Spirit of the Lord and they "shall deny the faith and shall fear" (*Doctrine and Covenants* 63:16). Such an awful pronouncement—almost more than the sensitive soul can bear. But true!

A lovely little vignette found in the biography, "LeGrand Richards," describes an occasion when his wife, Ina, lay very ill in a hospital bed, near death. He was at her side and said, "You can't leave me. I need you. I've told the Lord I can't live without you." His strength flowed into her and she rallied. They clung to each other and expressed their love in such tender terms that Nona (their daughter) bowed her head and left the room. Later she said, "I saw such pure love, I felt that I was in the hallowed halls of heaven and that if I raised my eyes I would see the angels." Truly, this must be what we desire for ourselves, that clinging, burning love, which cannot be broken even in death.

Unfeigned love is action, service, commitment and it's expression is reciprocal. In it there is no fear, no mistrust, only a most beautiful peace that subdues all the world and brings us close to Heaven.

Thus we have talked about the attributes of knowing who you are, having empathy for others, interacting personally with people, the sacrificing of all earthly things, and loving honestly and without deceit. These and many other things are the composites which form the peaceful soul of a balanced person.

As you leave this convention and return to the challenges of your own life, you might find this small personal experience helpful. It happened in the mountains near Boulder, Colorado, at a time when I needed more balance in my own life.

"I sat on a high mountain and viewed the world of valleys, plains and cities scattered beneath my lofty gaze. I felt how wonderful it would be to remain there forever, drinking in the beauties of life, high in the freshness of lofty peaks.

A golden eagle soared above my head and my eyes followed his flight as he drifted slowly and gracefully upon the cushions of air from one canyon to the next. How beautiful, I thought, and I imagined myself as the mighty bird floating on its heavenly flight.

As I dreamed, clouds had gathered themselves together into a huge thunderhead which threatened to, disturb my peaceful hour. Hesitantly I prepared to leave, resentful that solitude must be forsaken for the nervous scurry of society which awaited in the valley below. With one last longing look I followed the course of the great aerial monarch. To my utter amazement his giant wings had carried him from the peaceful flow of canyon breezes into the jaws of the maddened storm, as if searching to test his strength against that which was so ferocious. Into the force he flew. Destruction seemed imminent. The storm with that force only nature knows swallowed him up and carried him from my view. I turned to go, the illusion of such grandeur fading in the despair of the moment, but from the far edge of the storm a slender, powerful shape emerged and with huge graceful wings the bird circled until it had risen high—high above all that had challenged it below. He

was the master, he had proven his strength, his mettle and he soared grand and confident.

Now, I turned again and viewed the world below me. The world of men, stormy and threatening, presenting a challenge more formidable than any mountain storm. I squared my shoulders, lifted my head and descended. For what is life except a challenge that brings one either to destruction or to that soaring, elevated position of mastery which I had witnessed today."

My dear friends and associates, I love you for your goodness, for the efforts you make to bless the lives of Heavenly Father's children. I pray that your righteousness and your personal balance will bring the same to those who need you in order that they might live peaceably on the earth and throughout eternity.

God lives! The gospel is true! Jesus is the Christ! To follow Him is to have peace, harmony and balance. I testify in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Relationship Issues
in LDS Blended Families

Janet S. Scharman, PhD

I n recent years the topic of blended families has received growing attention in general fields of marriage and family study and research. However, incidence of this phenomenon in LDS culture in the United States remains virtually unaddressed. One possible explanation for this is that blended families often look very similar to first-marriage families. Some may therefore assume that there are no unique issues to address. My position is that indeed blended families are, in important ways, similar to intact families. But they are also significantly different in many aspects and may experience complications not present in a first-marriage family. Moreover, forces within LDS culture may strongly impact the remarriage experience.

There are a number of names given to describe this family type: blended, step, remarriage, bi-nuclear, or reconstituted families. However, none of these are perfectly satisfactory to all individuals. Some terms and expressions, such as "broken families," render obviously negative connotations. In this paper, I will use the term "blended family." A blended family is one in which at least one of the partners has one or more children from a previous relationship and there is continued contact with the children.

Not only has it been difficult to come up with terms which are acceptable to everyone, but legal ambiguities further confuse what the blended family relationship really is. A 12-year-old Utah boy presents a tragically clear example of this. His parents divorced

when he was an infant. Shortly after, his father moved to another state and remarried. His mother quickly remarried also. Over the years the boy had infrequent contact with his biological father and never knew his father's wife. His biological mother died and his father exercised his legal right to claim custody. I worked with this young boy to help him adjust to his impending move to live with his biological father, but the challenges did not end there. I also interviewed the stepfather. With tears in his eyes he said, "For 12 years I looked like this boy's father; I acted like his father; and I loved him like his father. But now that his mother is dead, I have no legal relationship to him."

When talking about blended families, it is almost always necessary to discuss divorce because one or both partners in second marriages are divorced. The divorce rate in the United States has remained fairly stable since 1980 at about 50% (Glick, 1989), although some predict that two-thirds of couples who marry for the first time in the 1980s can expect to divorce (Jenkins, 1990). Over the years, divorce statistics for LDS church members have typically been reported at approximately 20% below the national average. More recently, however, statistics indicate that the divorce rate for LDS church members (temple married and non-temple married) is between 40% to 50%, very close to the national rate (Jenkins, 1990).

No statistics are available about the rate of LDS blended families. In this study, it is assumed that they are similar to the national average. With more than 40% of all marriages being remarriages for one or both partners, the United States has the highest remarriage rate in the world (Coleman & Ganong, 1990). Approximately 1300 blended families with children under the age of 18 are formed every day (Eckler, 1988). Recent statistics (Ahlburg, 1992) suggest that one in three Americans is currently a member of a blended family. It is projected that by the year 2000 those numbers will increase to one in two.

These figures are important to understand for a number of reasons. First, the first-marriage family is the model used in most church auxiliary lessons, church media presentations, and talks given over the pulpit. But large numbers of members of the church

do not fit the first-marriage model. Rarely is reference given to other family types. When done, the comments often seem after-thoughts or token comments. To ignore reference to other family types tends to devalue them, or worse, suggests that they are unmentionable. Second, blended families often look like first-marriage families, and so their special challenges and dilemmas may go unrecognized. Third, helpful guidance and support may not be given if the need is not acknowledged.

Challenges of Blended Families

Loss

In most blended families there have been important losses for everyone, often because of death or divorce. Wallerstein and Berlin (1980) suggest that divorce may be the more difficult tragedy for the child to deal with psychologically. Death and the loss it represents is final; there is no chance that the individual will return. In that way death allows family members to put some closure to the family relationship as it previously existed. In contrast, in a divorce situation many children believe that there is always a chance, however slim it might be, that their two parents may some day get back together again. This is particularly true if the divorce was preceded by a series of separations. The children have recurring hopes that perhaps the problems can be repaired. On the other hand, death has a definite date and a clear cause regardless of how drawn out or how unexpected it may have been. Divorce is less clear, making it more difficult for children to acknowledge the finality of the act. With death there is usually some identifiable external cause such as a disease or an accident. In a divorce, children often assume the responsibility. For example, many children will feel, "If only I hadn't misbehaved so often, this may not have happened."

For previously divorced adults, the loss may be of their dream of a successful marriage. There is the loss of a marriage partner and of the structure, status, and stability that marriage often provides. When the marriage relationship ends, self-esteem may slip and courage to face the future alone also may quickly disappear. Often

there are significant financial losses, forcing individuals to make radical changes in the way they live.

One of the most difficult losses comes to the noncustodial parent who loses daily contact with his or her children (Furstenberg & Spanier, 1984). Upon remarriage, he or she often takes on the responsibility of the new spouse's children. Not uncommonly, this daily interaction with stepchildren intensifies the pain of losing contact with their own children.

People not previously married who choose divorced or widowed partners may become stepparents before ever having been biological parents. They give up expectations and hopes for a different kind of marriage, which did not involve dealing with stepchildren and a former spouse. They face the loss of privacy and intimacy they had imagined would be part of their newlywed bliss. Immediately after saying "I do" they face an instant family, which may be different from their "dream" family. According to Hobart (1988), no matter how hard each try, it is unlikely that either the stepparent or the stepchild will ever achieve the kind of priority or love that the natural parent or child achieves.

Children of divorce often experience a great deal of loss as they see their own lives dramatically changed while typically feeling they are powerless to affect the decision. Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989) noted in their longitudinal study that only 1 in 10 children experienced relief when their parents divorced. Most wish their parents would stay together. Even if both parents have remarried, some children still have reconciliation fantasies even years afterward. Frequently, children lose daily contact with one parent. If they have to move, they lose contact with the familiar, stable aspects of their lives such as school, teachers, schoolmates, and neighborhood friends.

Although dealing with losses may carry with it a negative connotation, Visher and Visher (1982) suggested that great benefit may actually be afforded members of stepfamilies who have had to resolve numerous difficulties. Dealing with the loss of the original family and the transition into a second "blended" family can better equip people to cope with the changes and losses that occur

throughout life. Family members may better understand that interpersonal relationships require hard work and that emotional closeness is important and possible. Other personal strengths also may result such as increased ability to problem solve, negotiate, cope effectively, and respond flexibly (Coleman & Ganong, 1985).

Unrealistic Expectations

One of the most common challenges of blended families centers around the expectations of family members as they begin their relationship together. Lewis (1985) and Coleman and Ganong (1985) studied common beliefs held by many stepfamilies that interfere with their healthy functioning. One of the most common is that the woman must be the "glue" that holds the family together. Paris (1985) suggested that women may be most vulnerable to the myth that in a successful family everyone loves everyone else, and it is the mother's responsibility to see that this happens. Unrealistic expectations can create misery in the stepfamily by allowing members to feel disappointed, inadequate, and even extremely discouraged.

In contrast to the adult perspective, children initially may have little desire to love or be loved by steprelatives. It is unrealistic to expect a child to accept as a parent an adult who is a relative stranger (Stuart & Jacobson, 1985). Cassell (1981) suggested that stepparents who define their role with their stepchildren as that of friend are usually the most satisfied and successful. This does not mean they have to be a constant buddy, but it does suggest extending support and empathy to a child as he or she grapples with complex feelings. Friendship is minimally threatening and allows the children time to get to know and respect the adult. In addition, Eckler (1988) stated that even though it may be hard, for many it is best to teach the child to love or to respect his or her natural parent, even if that parent has totally abandoned or rejected the child.

A surprise for many blended families is that sometimes when warm and loving steprelationships are established, children may experience loyalty conflicts (Visher and Visher, 1982). Bernstein (1988) studied the issue regarding the exclusivity of the parent

relationship. Society dictates that while it is acceptable to have more than one child, sibling, or grandparent, on the other hand, children, at least from their perspective, should have only one father and one mother. Increased caring for a stepparent, for example, may suggest to a child that he/she is abandoning or rejecting the biological parent.

Instant love and adjustment is not a realistic expectation for blended families (Paris, 1985). Integration takes time and depends on the age of the stepchildren and the length of time they have spent in the stepfamily household. Those who feel pressured to love another person immediately may miss the opportunity to relax and to determine if they really do like one another. Stern's (1978) research indicates that it takes stepfathers at least one-and-one-half to two years to be accepted into a family, even with very young children. Eckler (1988) suggests that the process of working through obstacles and developing a loving relationship for middle-aged children typically takes from 3 to 5 years, and Papernow (1984) found that when older children are involved, a satisfactory integration process may require 5 to 6 years.

Knowing what to expect can be very helpful in dealing with the time required for the integration process. During this period, family members may experience much pain and anxiety, but it can be comforting to know that does not necessarily mean dysfunction or signal long-term problems.

Complexity of Relationships

Wood and Poole (1983) suggested that there are important structural features that distinguish blended families from first-marriage families. For example, a remarriage for most couples represents a fresh start, a second chance, a new beginning full of hope and enthusiasm. For children, however, the remarriage of a parent often signals an ending to their dream of having their parents work through problems and somehow reunite. The establishment of a new family unit can trigger feelings of sadness and loss. Thus, children and adults may begin their lives together as a blended family experiencing very different emotions and viewing their future in significantly different ways.

Defining the family unit often produces different results for different family members. For the parental partners, it is the couple and each set of children they have from a former marriage. For children, family relationships become much more complex as children may have a biological parent, stepparent, and stepsiblings living in another household. This often means they are members of two households moving back and forth. New family relationships may extend beyond to stepgrandparents, step-aunts and uncles, etc. Even the relationships within one household can be difficult as children experience jealousy, feelings of mixed loyalty, and adjustment to new norms. Events which typically are happy occasions for first-marriage families such as baptisms, mission farewells, and weddings can become awkward and uncomfortable for blended families. Individuals who under other circumstances may not associate with each other are drawn together because of a common interest in the children. Family members are often forced to learn new coping strategies to deal with the many stresses of blended family life.

Couple Relationship

In stepfamilies the parent/child relationship predates the couple bond. This can impact the couple in many significant ways, particularly when children work as distractors. Extensive research (Lutz, 1983; Amato and Ochiltree, 1987; Steinberg, 1987; Skeen, Covi, and Robinson, 1985) suggests that children often have difficulty dealing with the transitions required with divorce and remarriage. Not uncommonly, children are unhappy about the parent's choice to remarry and may actively try to create some distance between the new couple. Problematic behavior may also be a way of testing limits or rules, and it sometimes represents an expression of anger, jealousy, or insecurity. Some children learn that acting out behavior often brings biological parents together as the adults work on solutions and options, a reward children may feel outweighs the negative consequences. As might be expected, it is not unusual for biological parents to feel caught between their children and their new spouse.

Many couples report a more satisfying marital relationship the second time around because of learning from previous mistakes,

improved communication skills, and choosing a more suitable partner. Even so, remarriages have a 50% greater probability of producing a divorce than first marriages (Furstenberg & Spanier, 1984). While children tend to be a unifying force in first marriages, the presence of stepchildren can be a destabilizing influence within remarriages and a major contributor to the greater rate of divorce. A nationwide study of 1,673 married individuals interviewed in 1980 and again in 1983 (White & Booth, 1985) indicated that there was a higher divorce rate among remarriages, but the higher rate was limited to families where there was at least one child in the household. The best predictor of remarriage success, these researchers say, may be the stepparent/stepchild relationship, not the couple relationship.

Visher and Visher (1990) indicated that in the midst of these obvious challenges, a strong couple relationship is a key element to the success of a blended family. Being willing to lock the door to have a private conversation or planning evenings alone together or weekends away from the children may not be luxuries but rather necessities in building the "couple strength" required in stepfamilies (Einstein and Albert, 1986). Einstein and Albert (1986) further suggested that a happy, cooperative couple presents a healthy model for children as well as provides a stable environment where good relationships between everyone can grow.

Successful Adjustment
Remarriage unquestionably presents families with many complexities and challenges. In spite of the difficulties, many families are able to successfully deal with the challenges, and they seem to have the following four common characteristics: (1) losses of all kinds have been mourned, (2) expectations are realistic, (3) satisfactory steprelationships are formed, and (4) the remarriage couple is unified.

LDS Specific Issues
All of the previous information refers to general blended family issues. The remainder of this paper deals with issues specific to LDS blended families and comes from a qualitative study conducted with 11 regular church attending LDS couples and their blended

families who live primarily in the Salt Lake City, Utah, area. This study is reported in greater detail in *Qualitative Study of Relationship Issues in Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Blended Families* (Scharman, 1992).

Methodology

Rationale

The bulk of the blended family research cited above is both quantitative in nature and used the first-marriage family as a model for comparison. The focus at the onset of many of these studies has been to examine and to quantify the deficits that blended families experience, and it is not clear that they have dealt with all or even most of the relevant aspects of blended family life. Because no research was found dealing specifically with the LDS subgroup, it has been unclear how membership in the LDS Church additionally impacts remarriage.

Qualitative methods of research offer the advantage of allowing issues and patterns to emerge as the research progresses without *a priori* expectations or necessary comparisons to other models which may, in fact, not be comparable. Therefore, qualitative research—specifically the model of naturalistic inquiry explained by Lincoln and Guba (1985)—seemed particularly appropriate for exploring LDS blended family issues.

Participant Sampling

Eleven couples (22 individuals) from the Salt Lake City, Utah, area were referred to the researcher by a "gatekeeper," a knowledgeable individual familiar with qualitative research. Participants ranged in age from 33 to 49 years. Length of current marriage ranged from as short as 2 years to 13 years. All individuals participated in at least one temple marriage, currently held a church calling, and viewed themselves as active members of the LDS church. Nearly half of the individuals held prominent church positions in their wards. One of the males interviewed was in a bishopric and previously served as a stake president; two were elders' quorum presidents; one was a scoutmaster, and one was in a young men's presidency. One of the women was in a stake young women's presidency, two were in ward young women's presidencies,

and one was in a relief society presidency. Education level for both males and females ranged from some college experience to doctoral degrees.

Procedure and Data Analysis

The format of a given interview was not specifically predetermined but emerged as information was collected. To begin, one couple was interviewed together for approximately one hour following a general but flexible format. Several broad questions served as general stimuli to the discussion. The information derived from this initial couple interview established a basis for later interviews. Additional couples were interviewed, one at a time, to add more data and to discover gaps. Sample size was not designated beforehand but was determined when couples began repeating previously given information. The eleven hour-long interviews were transcribed from audiotapes, analyzed for content, and examined for themes using the "Constant Comparative Method" as described by Glaser and Straus (1967). This method is a process in which information is collected and analyzed simultaneously. Data derived from one interview were compared with data collected from previous interviews. Through this process, categories or groupings of topics gradually evolved. In this study, no new information was generated after ten interviews suggesting that redundancy had been reached. Essentially all information provided in the tenth interview fit into categories already established from the previous nine interviews. That is, the list of questions was refined by the on-going process. With each new interview, questions were altered and new ones added to reflect issues articulated in later couple interviews. An eleventh interview was conducted to verify completeness. Moreover, follow-up interviews with the initial couples interviewed were conducted to validate that later findings were also common experiences for the initial interviewees.

Results and Discussion

Supports

Because all participants were active and participating members of the LDS church, it was not surprising that all of the couples talked about the strength and support they feel because of their

church membership. Their comments easily fit into three main areas: (1) Church teachings provide a focus for family life; (2) the Church organization provides a structure for carrying on the activities of family life; and, (3) the Church provides strength in dealing with the stressors of blended family life.

Focus

All participants talked of the value they place on their LDS membership. The church places strong emphasis on the importance of marriage and family, and this focus was viewed as helpful by many of the families, particularly when things were not going well. Typical comments of participants included the following:

> Because of the sacredness of the temple covenants, we put our family and marriage first, no matter what happens.

> I think church membership is a big help because that's where our priorities are. I think it's a big help with dealing with the children. It's just a little better perspective of where we came from and where we're going.

One woman said that her religious background helped her to stay in a difficult situation, even when she did not feel like remaining.

> I don't think I could have pulled this off without the gospel. It's really tough, you know. Kids have different habits and different ways of life, and you all come together and you try to work something out. There are times when I want to pull my hair out. There are times when I want to scream. And there are times when I want to walk away. But because of my gospel upbringing, I know that it's worth it to go back in and tough it out and work through the problem and try to love these kids that maybe I don't love right now.

Structure

The church organization and programs also provide a structure in which the blended family can function. Parents talked about the complexity of stepfamily life and the many different directions family members often find themselves going. Having a common plan to follow felt like a benefit to several of the families.

> Because of the church meetings and whatnot, everybody is on the same routine at least 1 day of the week.

> The church is really a blessing when it comes to family home evenings, scripture reading, prayer. Those are all times we interact that maybe we wouldn't otherwise. They have been helpful in other respects as well. I'd hate to try to do this without the gospel.

One stepfather appreciated the stability church membership offered.

> Some people belong to clubs. You know, their lives center around roller skating, for example. Having that base there always gives people an anchor. We belong to the Church and that's what the Church does for us, except that our anchor isn't roller skating. It's doing things like holding family home evenings and reading scriptures. It was an anchor for us when things were going rough. If nothing else, going to church on Sundays made a glue with each other when we were having real tough times. It made us associate with each other.

Spiritual Guidance/Assistance

One husband shared the concern he had had for a number of years that he would be able to meet a woman who would be a good match for him and with whom he would be able to share a happy married life.

> I'd been praying to meet the right one, whoever she was. As a result of fasting and temple attendance, I was given a blessing of knowing what the feeling would be like when I met the right person. It was a distinct, very definitely defined revelation. I had never experienced that before, but I experienced it then and I remembered it. . . Shortly after I met her (his current wife) that feeling came and confirmed that we were meant for each other and that the Lord had selected her for me and me for her. That gave a great deal of strength to the marriage, knowing you have a spiritual confirmation of what you're doing.

The word "extra" was often used in describing the help or support individuals felt because of their church membership. The following comments are from three persons:

> I know Heavenly Father is recognizing our efforts and is giving us extra strength.
>
> When you're having problems, there's extra support from the Church.
>
> Extra strength, extra courage, extra everything comes from being members of this Church.

Participants said the Church provides a focus for their efforts, that the various programs provide a structure within which to build

family unity, and that comfort, guidance, and reassurance come through fasting and prayer. Numerous such positive comments were consistent with what might be expected from individuals who have chosen to continue active involvement in the Church.

Challenges

Given the apparent strong commitment to church membership and activity, the concerns and dilemmas expressed by these same individuals seem very significant. Six broad areas of challenges they faced as a consequence of their LDS background are summarized in the following discussion. A surprise for the researcher was that all couples interviewed, without prompting, discussed their single-life experiences prior to their current marriages. Strong feelings were associated with the experiences they related. Most of them discussed, in some detail, what it was like for them to be single in an LDS setting. It seemed difficult for individuals to separate their single adult experience from their current marriage experience. Therefore, the topic of Single Life will be included in the discussion along with five other areas which emerged during the interview process: Bad Marriages, Remarriage, Temple Sealings, Help From Ecclesiastical Leadership, and Individual Impact of Remarriage.

LDS Single Life

The topic of marriage is frequently and forcefully addressed by leaders of the church. In a recent church-wide fireside for adult singles, for example, Elder Marvin J. Ashton (Sheffield, 1992) stated:

> Marriageable women should not delay marriage because of career goals, educational desires, or unwillingness to change their lives. . . To marriageable, mature men, I call them unto repentance. Do not procrastinate the day of your repentance. Believe us when we tell you there is someone for you and God will help you find her.

Clearly, marriage and family are highly encouraged. Additionally, there are numerous references from church authorities which link the concept of family and eternal life, and which strongly discourage ending a holy union. Without question, they would say that divorce should be considered only as a last resort. As previously stated, however, many LDS marriages do, in fact, end unhappily,

and those involved experience the same kinds of crises at the time of divorce as non-LDS individuals. What has not been addressed in the literature is the potentially stronger intensity of the pain LDS members may feel because of the deeper significance of what divorce often represents to them.

The LDS perspective is one of eternal family continuity. Active LDS members generally have a strong sense of a pre-existence, what their purpose in this life is, and where they are headed in an afterlife. Personal identity can be strongly tied with being part of a family, and, when the family structure is attacked, a person's eternal identity can be threatened. To many, divorce means that the individual is off-track, deviating from the accepted plan, and no provisions are given for dealing with that in the hereafter.

Without fail, every couple interviewed for this study addressed the issue of being an LDS single adult, although no initial questions were asked to elicit responses on this topic. Every couple made a connection between their former single life and their current blended family experience.

For most participants, the topic of single life came up as they talked about their efforts to be active in the LDS church, while not being able to fit into the ideal of the happy first-marriage couple. Even though a blended family in many ways does not meet all the expectations symbolized by the church, it much more resembles the ideal than does a single-parent family or an adult member living alone. Perhaps having experienced both single life and marriage sensitized them to the challenges. One woman said,

> It was really difficult to be single and be LDS. I felt like I didn't fit anywhere. I was too old to be a single person anymore, and even though I had lots of really great friends in my ward, I just didn't fit in. I wasn't a couple any more. Everything in the Church was just so family-oriented.

One of the men shared similar sentiments:

> There wasn't any place for me any more. People didn't know what to do with me even though they tried to be nice. I think they were uncomfortable involving me in their couple activities. . . I wanted to

scream in their faces: Hey, I'm the same guy I was before. I just happened to get divorced.

Participants talked of feeling lonely and isolated, believing that others perceived them as being strange, and feeling that ward members negatively evaluated them. One woman said,

> The support system of the Church is just that, it's a support system. If it falls apart, you still are expected to be big enough and strong enough to be able to pack your own load anyway. . . When that support system isn't there, you've got to go it alone. I felt alone a lot in those situations.

Others related these painful feelings:

> Single people [in the Church] experience the worst kind of isolation. I know the feeling because I was there. You're an outcast. You don't fit.

> You become an unmentionable in society, in the Mormon society. You become expunged from the normal flow of Mormon life.

> As soon as I was separated from my ex-wife, everybody wanted to know if I was sleeping with another woman. But nobody wanted to know if I was going to church, if I paid my tithing, if I was lonely and needed a friend. They were only interested in knowing if I was being immoral.

Not all of the negative feelings associated with being single came from other ward members or from external sources. Several participants talked of personal feelings of guilt. The following are two examples:

> It is a struggle to be divorced and to have failed—because that's what it represents. That is the key word for me. Divorce is failure. If I look at my life, I realize that I have had a lot of successes. But I sure have this big failure, and it's right here in front of me every day.

> You're taught all your life in the church that you're going to have this great marriage if you can just get to the temple. If you can just make it to the temple and get married there, then everything will be okay. Then, if the marriage goes bad, the implication is there's something wrong with you.

President David O. McKay's aphorism—"No other success can compensate for failure in the home" (1964, n.p.)—was frequently mentioned in connection with their feelings of failure in the face of divorce.

Bad Marriages

Some individuals talked about staying in personally destructive marriages too long because of not wanting to admit to failure in their homes and marriages; others wanted to avoid the stigma of divorce. The decision to divorce apparently was neither easy nor lightly made for any of the participants who initiated the process. The following are representative comments:

> I kept thinking of the teachings. Life is just a split microsecond compared to eternity, and I thought I can endure anything. Of course, I tried. The pressure is there—you stay in your marriage no matter what. Then you wither up and you die.

> I knew immediately that my first marriage wasn't going to last. But it was my temple marriage and I hung on far too long in that situation. It was a bad thing, but maybe I stayed in that bad marriage longer than was appropriate because of guilt, because of failing in that ideal.

Remarriage

Twenty-five percent of the participants in this study remarried within a year of the time of becoming single. The national average is 2.5 years. None explicitly stated that remarriage was a means for escaping an unhappy single life. However, some made statements suggesting a longing to recapture their "eternal family identity," such as this comment from one of the men:

> I felt out of it, kind of disoriented. . . During Family Home Evening, we used to sing the song "Families Can be Together Forever." That's what I want—a family that can be together forever.

Others said they learned from past mistakes and wanted a loving relationship.

> I learned so much from the mistakes I made the first time. I thought that if I had a second chance I could be a really good partner. I wanted that chance of experiencing a good family life. I wanted to be a good mother and a good wife. When I met this man, I knew that we could make it work.

Temple Sealings

Possibly one of the most confusing issues with which active LDS blended families must deal centers around temple sealings. While couples can receive a cancellation of sealing and subsequently enjoy an eternal marriage to another mate, no provisions are given for cancellation of children's sealings. Regardless of the marital status, children remain sealed to both parents. There are no formal explanations given of how eternal family relationships will be for divorced and remarried families, and this leaves many feeling uneasy and discouraged, as is shown by these comments:

> I don't know how to explain the idea that families can be together forever. I love to have the fantasy that we—this new family—is the family that will always be together. We love each other, we're trying very hard to be good parents. But I'm afraid it's just a fantasy because my ex-husband wants the very same thing. The children are sealed to him and they're sealed to me. You tell me how it makes sense.

> How does the idea of eternal family work? There is no effort to explain that in the context of a blended family. So we form the best answers we can because the kids want to know. Every time they sing "Families Are Forever," every time the issue comes up—Who are we going to be with? How does that work?—it's a problem that others would not have to deal with. The whole concept of families being sealed together is a very tough issue.

> I think being an LDS-blended family is more confusing for children, particularly when both parents have been previously married in the temple. The children are really getting some strange messages. A mother and father they've loved and a principle they've been taught, and they can't figure out what's going on. I mean, we go to church with our children, and our ex-spouses go to church with them, too, and I think it's really hard for the children to understand. If families can be together forever, then why isn't mine? And how come my parents are these good people going to church, but they didn't stay together?

Related to this is the issue of husband and wife sealings. Women can be sealed to only one man, while men may be sealed to more than one woman. Since temple marriages are not automatically canceled at the time of a civil divorce, it is not unusual for an LDS woman to be legally married to a man who has a temple

sealing to his former wife. This often happens because it is the wife who must initiate a cancellation of sealing and follow through until it is completed. Generally, the feeling shared is one of insecurity, as noted in the following examples:

> I have in this marriage finally found the man of my dreams. I am just so totally happy with him. But he has another wife that he is married to forever. It crosses my mind every second of every day.

> My husband is still sealed to his first wife. I try not to think about this much, but sometimes it creeps into my mind and I can't get rid of it. Wonder if she [first wife] lives this great life and in the end decides she really wants to be married to him in the eternities. Then I just get second place. . . I hate those thoughts. . . I wish I knew how it will all work out.

Since the rationale behind the procedures has not been clearly explained, confusion and frustration often result. Although identical procedures are not consistently followed, there are some very clear guidelines. The woman typically must apply for the cancellation only when she is ready to remarry in the temple. As part of the application a justification must be given why the first-marriage divorce took place, what measures were taken to keep the marriage together, and why it seems impossible that there is any future hope for its success. A letter of agreement from the former husband is requested to accompany the application, regardless of his current church standing. The guidelines strongly suggest a minimum one year waiting period for women from the date of divorce to the remarriage date. Until recently, a divorced male who chose to remarry had only to obtain a temple recommend; no waiting period was required. A lack of understanding about the procedures sometimes led to difficult feelings such as those expressed by one woman:

> Sealings are a strange thing. I'm trying to go through a cancellation of sealing right now and I don't like the way it's done. I think that it's unfair that the women have to do it and the men don't have to do it. That's why it's taken us so long because I have such negative feelings about it. Men don't have to be interviewed, don't have to write the letters, don't have to dredge up all the past.

Help From Ecclesiastical Leadership

Many participants expressed an interest in the church organiza-
tion and leadership helping them to understand and deal with their
specific dilemmas. Often, however, they were hesitant to do so
because of the negative feedback they received. One man shared
this experience:

> The regional representative made a statement in stake conference that
> about made me fall off my chair because he was talking about those of
> us who he hoped would be forgiven because we'd gotten divorces. Of
> course, we want to cherish marriage and we want to feel like you're
> going to stay in there, but there can be a tendency to go overboard . . .
> he didn't realize that for a lot there was no choice.

Another man talked about how he felt when he approached his
ward leaders. Whether real or imagined, he was left with some
uncomfortable perceptions.

> Never in a million years would I have thought that I could be one of
> those divorced people, one of those who couldn't make his marriage
> work. It was hard enough for me to realize that I had personally failed,
> I had blown this temple marriage ideal. . . What made it even worse was
> when the church also treated me like I had blown it.

Several suggestions were offered by participants which they
thought would benefit blended families, such as the following:

> We need to take our church authorities and give them some counseling
> on how to counsel and how to get people help with professionals when
> they need it. It's not their fault if they don't know what's going on here.
> I'm not sure you can really understand it unless you've been through
> this remarriage stuff yourself.

Other suggestions included having the issue occasionally addressed
in the various auxiliary lessons, creating manuals to help educate
blended families and church leaders, establishing support groups,
and having time-limited specialized courses (as is, for example,
already done with teacher training, missionary preparation).

Individual Impact

In spite of the sometimes overwhelming challenges and
frustrations experienced by these individuals, most report having
learned from their experiences and believe their lives are moving in

a positive direction. While church membership may pose some difficult dilemmas, it has also been a source of support, as evidenced by this woman's comment:

> I don't know what I would have ever done if I hadn't been a member of the Church. It's been my source of strength, my guiding light. With that perspective, I just know I couldn't quit. Somehow I believed that I could make this blended family thing work.

Some participants perceive their difficulties related to divorce/death and remarriage to be strengthening. One father shared how he viewed his family's experience as they have moved through major transitions.

> My children—and I think her children—but at least my children are so much better off than they were in our first marriage. So, for all of us, even though we've had to go through the jolt of a divorce, I think we're all better off. It's hard: there's no question. But at least for me, I'm clearer about what's important to me. I work harder on relationships. I'm more appreciative of the good that comes my way.

Participants commented on challenges they felt because of their Church membership. The most frequently mentioned difficulty was being a single adult within the LDS setting. Couples also cited expectations about temple marriage, concerns with temple sealings, receiving ecclesiastical support, and the personal impact of the divorce/remarriage process.

Summary and Implications for LDS Therapists

1. As with all specialized groups, it is vital that therapists understand and are sensitive to issues that may be peculiar to that population. Although blended families in many respects look like and are like first-marriage families they also differ in many important ways. There is much more complexity as family decisions are impacted by former spouses and significant financial decisions are often dictated by others outside of the immediate family. In contrast to first marriages, the couple in a blended family is, at least initially, the weakest unit. Where children tend to be a unifying factor in first marriages, they are clearly the biggest challenge to marital contentment in remarriage.

2. Although families may request help with their current marriage, unresolved issues from the first family and associated losses may strongly impact current functioning and should be addressed.

3. Techniques that are often helpful in first-marriage families may be counterproductive in a blended family. For example, a healthy and productive intervention for dealing with discipline by a biological parent in a nuclear family may create more distance and ill feelings when carried out by a stepparent in a recent remarriage.

4. Couples report that their LDS Church membership provides help and support to them as they deal with the challenges of being in a blended family. But, for some, their beliefs also create dilemmas for which there are no clear-cut answers, particularly regarding the eternal family unit. Thus, dealing with the present and learning to accept ambiguity may be useful skills.

Conclusion

Remarriage and the blending of families brings with it many complexities and challenges which are common to LDS and non-LDS families alike. LDS membership appears to impact an individual's ability to cope with those challenges. In many ways the impact is positive as the Church provides spiritual strength, focus and goals, and a structure within which families can function. The LDS belief system also produces some dilemmas, as members have doctrinal questions about how their couple and family relationships fit into the larger theological scheme of things.

Final Comment

All participants in this study were willing and cooperative. For some the desire to participate seemed touched by a sense of urgency. Here are some examples. One of the men moved a bishopric meeting back one-half hour in order to accommodate my schedule and allow him to be interviewed. An elder's quorum president fit his interview in between ward visits. He talked about the interview with one of his families, and the couple requested that they also be allowed to participate. A woman participant called

after her interview and said a jogging partner and her husband would like to be involved in this research. Towards the end of another interview, a husband happened to mention that he was missing his son's ball game to be talking with me. I had been previously unaware of the conflict and apologized. This was his response:

> Supporting my son with his games is important to me. But this is important, too. . . It feels so good to have someone willing to address these issues.

LDS blended families must deal with very difficult and complicated issues, many of which they do not fully understand. The couples in this study have been willing to take on the challenge, and they want to do that within the framework of the LDS Church. What they are requesting is to be accepted and understood, to be assisted in helping and understanding themselves, and to see structure within the Church to help that come about.

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Divorce in Mormon Women: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

Divorced women who reentered as undergraduates at BYU were interviewed using the naturalistic inquiry model for qualitative research. All respondents reported some negative reaction related to their divorced status from fellow Church members. Women who divorced non-member men received more support from ward members than those who divorced active members. Identification of the religion with ward relationships meant that insensitive treatment by leaders during divorce could precipitate a spiritual crisis and potential departure from the Church. However, renewed spiritual strength was reported after some resolution of issues.

An argument may be made that membership in the Mormon Church involves socialization into a specific, encompassing socio-religious culture (Bloom, 1992). However, Mormons, like their fellow citizens, do not appear to be immune to the problems presented by ever-changing and sometimes conflicting views of marriage, divorce, and the proper roles of women represented by the larger culture. Indeed, contrary to previous studies, recent demographic data "indicate a relatively high level of marital instability among Mormons" (Heaton, 1992, p. 26), which is also in contrast to the preferred role of the LDS woman in which "marriage and motherhood receive the major emphasis" (Gunnell & Hoffman, 1985, p. 35). This article will focus on the experience

of some LDS women who have confronted the issues of divorce as it occurs in the context of their membership in the Mormon Church.

Women and Divorce

Divorce means the loss of a meaningful life role as wife and a consequent narrowing of the woman's previous community of friends (Wietzman, 1985; Riessman, 1990; Bogolub, 1991). Yet this is just one aspect of the complex stresses which may be experienced by the divorced woman. Clarke-Stewart and Bailey (1989) report that while a small number of men do experience severe problems from divorce, women are likely to experience a less severe but more frequent and long-lasting myriad of physical and mental health problems due probably to uncertain finances, poor employment prospects, custody and child care stresses, and social isolation. "On global indices of psychological adjustment [divorced] women are likely to do more poorly than [divorced] men" (Clarke-Stewart & Bailey, 1989, p. 75). Lund (1990) comments on this disruption:

> Women generally report little social support from their married counterparts as they attempt to negotiate the transitions inherent in the divorce process. A divorce is often viewed as the woman's failure to do her job, as she is generally assumed to be the emotional caretaker of the family relationships. Society often treats divorced women as "failures who cannot (or will not) take and maintain a 'respectable' or 'responsible' family role" (Herman, 1981, p. 111, cited in Lund, 1990). If a woman succeeds in her attempts to become autonomous, she can be viewed as a threat to the stability of others' marriages and will receive less than (adequate) support (p. 61).

Divorce and The LDS Church

While the leadership of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints emphasizes the permanence of the marriage bond and officially disapproves of divorce (Ludlow, 1992), there are no ecclesiastical sanctions for divorce itself. Yet divorced LDS women still feel the effects of being formerly married "within a marriage-oriented church" (Shaw, 1985, p. 22). In such a family-oriented church, many divorced Mormons feel "a strong sense of personal failure, and [do] not fit into the

couple-and-family format of church activities" (Scharman, 1992, p. 135). Indeed, much guilt and grief can result in being separated not only from the financial, social, and companionate aspects of marriage, but faithful LDS persons may also feel keenly at odds with the requirement inherent in LDS doctrine that "the gospel of Jesus Christ affirms as its very crown and capstone the eternal perpetuation of marriage" (Covey & Madsen, 1983, p. 17).

This theological focus on marriage results in cultural and social mores which tend to devalue divorced persons (Norton, 1967; Shaw, 1991). Shaw (1985) describes "being divorced in the LDS Church [as] particularly painful" (p. 23) and continues:

> The divorced are not offered the status of the widowed nor do they have the feeling of "pureness" associated with the never-married. When an active member divorces, many changes take place in his/her relationship with the [LDS] Church which reinforce unworthy feelings and a sense of being a "second-class" citizen. (p. 23)

Divorce may also complicate ordinary activities such as "family nights, Scout programs, father-son [and] daughter-daddy activities, and family togetherness as the [LDS] Church teaches they should function" (Norton, 1967, p. 87).

Thus, the most acceptable role for the Mormon woman remains that of a married, stay-at-home mother. However, the leaders of the LDS Church have communicated some tolerance of working mothers, while expressing compassion for, but not approval of, the divorced person's status. In spite of these recent statements of support, the LDS woman who values her religion, yet who is divorced, employed, and perhaps a parent, may be vulnerable to the stress of not meeting the ideal role expectation which is a prominent part of her religion.

Method

The research study presented here explored the experience of divorced women who reenter Brigham Young University (BYU) as undergraduates. Eleven divorced reentry women [students older than 25] were interviewed in open-ended conversations resulting in 263 pages of transcripts which were examined according to the

procedure developed by Edward S. Halpern (1983, cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which specifies the collection of raw data, data reduction and analysis, and data reconstruction and synthesis.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) are seminal qualitative theorists (Scott, 1991) whose model, naturalistic inquiry, was used in this study. The reader is referred to their book, *Naturalistic Inquiry*, for a discussion of some basic differences in assumption between the positivist tradition and the qualitative model in terms of realities, knowing, generalization, cause and effect, and the place of values in research.

Certain procedures such as planning for trustworthiness and credibility follow from these assumptions. These differ from conventional research in two readily apparent ways. First, trustworthiness is the naturalistic version of reliability and validity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Reliability, in the conventional formulation, is not possible in naturalistic studies, as the studies are not replicable since they are time- and context-bound. So while statistical researchers seek validity, naturalistic researchers plan for credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

This study employed several strategies to achieve trustworthiness and credibility. First, the study was organized to provide for a trail of research records, including field notes and transcripts of the initial interviews with the participants. Follow-up interviews were conducted in which the perceptions of the researcher were checked with each participant. In addition, the researcher consulted with colleagues (termed peer debriefing) during the data analysis and the synthesis of thematic categories and used personal journaling to examine her own perceptions during the study. Triangulation with existing scholarly research reinforced the credibility of this study.

The first step in data analysis was the data reduction and analysis and an examination of transcripts for meaningful units: that is, for sentences and paragraphs which held a specific point of view or a piece of information discerned intuitively by the researcher in a process of thoughtful examination and reexamination of the data. To process the transcript data, an extra copy of the 263 pages of transcripts was employed in the division of data into categories.

This annotated and highlighted copy was cut with scissors into pieces containing the units of meaning with the line-numbering preserved to facilitate the tracking of the quotes. The pieces were placed into their respective categories and secured with large clips. An intact copy of the transcripts was maintained for reference.

In the process of comparing the units of meaning to one another, categories became apparent. Gradually, as information from succeeding interviews was considered, some categories were seen to collapse into each other, while others became better delineated and more distinctive until all the data was accounted for.

Thus, interviewing and analysis took place simultaneously until the interviews ceased to generate new categories. The details were different from respondent to respondent; however, a similarity of reported experience became apparent. Ten women had been interviewed when redundancy became clear. An eleventh interview further confirmed that redundancy had occurred, and no further interviews were held.

Because a qualitative study begins with no *a priori* hypothesis, there is no specific research question to be answered. Instead, there is a reconstruction of the data categories into themes which are synthesized into greater understandings and presented as descriptions and explanations about divorced LDS women, as well as the development of hypotheses stemming from data gathered at the source of the experience, the women of the study.

Contexts of the Study

A qualitative study is by its nature context-bound. So knowledge of the contexts is necessary for readers to make an appropriate decision as to the applicability of the findings to their own settings. An assumption is made for this article that the readers have a sufficient familiarity with the Mormon Church, BYU, and Provo, Utah, and so the contexts are not described.

The eleven women interviewed in this study were divorced reentry women at BYU. All were moderately active to very active Caucasian members of the Mormon Church, and each of them, without prompting, spoke of their belief in the divinity of Jesus

Christ and in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Five were born into the Church and six were converted. Five were in their early 30's; three were in their early to mid 40's; and three were in their early 50's. Seven had been married in temple ceremonies. They had married at an average age of 21 and their marriages had lasted from two-and-a-half years to 21 years. Although one marriage ended abruptly following the husband's arrest for molestation, the other women had made efforts to maintain their distressed marriages. Eight of the marriages included incidents of emotional, physical, spiritual, and/or sexual abuse. All of the women had children. Nine had children living with them, ranging in ages from 5 to 17.

All of the women interviewed lived in modest circumstances. Some of the homes observed contained furniture brought from the more affluent homes of their marriages, such as large china cabinets with fine china and crystal. All looked clean and neatly organized.

The women themselves presented great variation in their demeanor and apparent emotional states. Some wept as they recounted difficult episodes in their lives. Some showed on-going anger or depression. Others displayed a resolution of past issues and a forward-looking point of view. Many were accepting and humorous about problematic past events. The children observed appeared to be thriving; those not observed were described to the researcher with apparent concern and affection.

Results

Relationships in the Religious Culture

As the transcripts of the interviews were analyzed, common themes or categories began to emerge which clearly show that Mormon women have some experiences which are specifically related to their membership in the LDS Church. These categories, from supportive experiences to problematic ones, will be presented in the following order: (1) the support experienced by these women during and after divorce by their ward (congregation); (2) fitting into the religious culture as a divorced person; (3) a differentiation between widows and divorced women; (4) problems related to church functions and activities. This last area will be considered in

terms of ward dinners, callings, home teachers, Sunday School and Relief Society meetings, and family and singles wards.

Degrees of Ward Support During Divorce

Although part of an international church with a highly central-ized administration, the member's most relevant contact with the LDS Church is at the local congregational (or ward/branch) level. The most important local ecclesiastical leaders are the ward bishop and his direct superior, the stake president. Thus, an active member will usually look to fellow ward members and local leaders for friendship, support, and guidance, especially in times of distress.

The women in this study, as active family-oriented Mormons, looked to their ward and branch members and leaders for support as they went through the process of divorce. Some of them reported receiving strong and helpful support and others reported receiving little support.

An older respondent reported: "[My divorce from a non-member] was horrible, and the people in my ward were real supportive, understanding, caring, and really helped me, took good care of my kids." A second woman, whose husband was arrested, recalled: "I thought everybody at church was going to shun me [for bringing him into their midst], but they didn't. Members [in my home ward] were just great."

Two respondents, an older woman from the west coast and a younger woman from the midwest, gave accounts of their divorces as complicated by problematic relations with others in their wards. The older woman, who divorced a prominent member of the stake hierarchy, described a response different from the previous support-ive accounts:

> At first, my divorce was really painful because I was rejected and shunned and chastened by various people in the ward. I [was told] that they didn't want me teaching seminary because I was a bad influence all of a sudden. [My bishop] told me he had several parents come and complain because I was divorced. I had a stake president tell me that I would never hold a responsible position in the Church again [and] that my former husband would go on and marry a lovely new woman and have a wonderful little family, and I would grow old and lonely all by myself. It was a nightmare.

A much younger respondent reported an experience in another LDS couples' home. The husband in that marriage held a prominent branch leadership position. The respondent was with her abusive [member] husband in one room and the second woman had gone into another room:

> I don't even know what the conversation was about, but I asked him something, and he lost it. He threw me down into the piano. [The second woman] walked over to him and put her arms around him and said, "Are you OK?" And I was just sitting there on the floor and . . . she looked at me and . . . said, "What did you say to him?" It was awful. And then it spread [to other members of our branch].

The older woman described her experience of shunning:

> Oh, walking down the hall [in the church building], being the only one in the hall besides the person who's coming towards me and saying "Hi" to them, and having them just walk by without a word. And some of the men in the ward were very cool; where they would speak to me before, they wouldn't speak to me voluntarily. They would say hello if I said hello to them, but they wouldn't initiate anything beyond that. They would even move away from me.

The younger respondent recalled being shunned because she had divorced:

> I shouldn't say they treated me badly; [they] shunned me, which to me at that time was very painful. They wouldn't even talk to me, [and these] were the people . . . I'd known for many years in that branch. . . . I don't fault the people now, ... (but) I was pretty bitter for a long time.

The younger woman described her difficulty in making others understand her situation. She described her former husband as "fun-loving, funny, and [able to] always put people at ease." She recalled that while she made attempts to tell others of her abusive marriage, she did not perceive that she was believed. She stated, "One time when I tried to tell [my bishop] that I was afraid to drive home with [my husband] one day after church, he told me that was silly."

Fitting in as a Divorced Person

As divorced women, all respondents reported they have received negative responses in varying degrees from some other members of the Church. Some felt these as pervasive phenomena,

with great impact in their lives. Others perceived negative responses as acceptable minor features of their lives. For example, one woman stated: "There's just no way to totally fit in unless you're married. The Church [revolves] around the family experience kind of thing. You just have to make up your mind . . . that it's not going to bother you."

Another respondent described the way in which activities revolve around the family experience in her ward: "The elder's quorum had an activity at the park on Saturday [for the quorum and families]. Nobody invited the single women." She continued: "Those kinds of things signal [that] a woman and her family ought to be included, but they [aren't]. I'm sure that no one intends to exclude [us], but they just don't think."

Other subtle occurrences were noticed by these women. Several women told of mentioning their divorce experience and of having the subject changed immediately. The effect of this behavior is reflected in this woman's comment: "I don't feel rejected, but I don't feel full acceptance, either. Somewhere between the two is what I feel . . . nobody has been hateful or rude, and the bishop is very nice, very understanding." Another woman described her experience:

> There is this constant little thing to remind you that you're not what everybody else is, just that you don't have a priesthood holder, that your children don't have a dad, and you don't have somebody to sit with you in church. It's not even [the thought] that you ought to [have a spouse]. There's just an assumption that you do [have a spouse], and so you just feel left out.

Another respondent watched as couples were asked to speak in church soon after their arrival in her ward, but she had not been asked after being in the ward for a year and a half.

> I was sitting in [the Sunday church meeting] . . . and a family had just barely moved into the ward. They had only been there a week or two and they were there speaking, and it was kind of like the straw that broke the camel's back. I started crying and I bawled the whole way through [the meeting]. I was so embarrassed and . . . trying to hide in the corner of the pew. At the end, one of the [bishop's] counselors came

down and wanted to know what was wrong, so I just told him. I said,
"Don't I have any value as a person because I'm divorced?"

In the next few months this woman was asked to speak twice in
church. An older respondent in another ward concurred:

Only young married's get to speak in church. That's just the pat thing
in our ward. It's really weird. None of the older people get to speak.
You'd think they'd tap in on some of the maturity, but they don't.

Some bishops are reported to be especially understanding and
supportive of divorced mothers and their children. One respondent
reported that her bishop set up baby-sitting one night a week for
several single mothers in his ward. Following an incident in which
a married mother forbade her children to play with the neighbor-
hood's single mother's children, a bishop took the unusual step of
giving a child a calling to make her feel a part of the ward.

A Differentiation Between Widows and Divorced Women

Two aspects of being widowed as opposed to being divorced
were voiced. First, the widow is seen as having the prestige of
having had a successful marriage, regardless of its quality, whereas
the divorced woman has failed in hers. Thus, the widow appears to
have the natural compassion of the ward.

One woman commented that while both widows and divorcees
suffered great emotional loss, divorce had an additional element of
pain because, as she commented: "The guy is walking around on
two legs, seeing your kids, being a jerk about child support,
marrying again, having children, and coming around with his little
wife blowing in his ear in front of you at church."

The second attitude, which a divorced woman is not subject to,
is the view that a widow's life is finished. A respondent comment-
ed: "He's gone; they're done." The divorcee's life, while unfortu-
nate, at least is not finished.

Problems with Church Functions and Activities

A good portion of an active Mormon's time may be spent in
callings and at ward activities (Lee, 1992). The women in this
study also discussed this aspect of their lives. Several areas were
mentioned which will be reported in this section: ward dinners,

callings, home teachers, and Sunday School and Relief Society meetings.

Ward dinners. A ward dinner is a social gathering to which an open invitation is issued to all members of the ward. It is commonly held in the social hall of the church building, which may be equipped with a kitchen. These gatherings are held at various times during the year at the discretion of the local leaders. Some wards may have them more often than others.

The comments from the women in this study regarding ward dinners reflect a problematic view. One woman stated: "I hate ward dinners. It is such a family-oriented affair. It's awkward." Another stated, "When they have a ward dinner, you come by yourself. You'd better find some other single people to settle with because even if [you] bring [your] 8 kids with you, you're an outcast; you don't fit in." A third respondent did find other single people. She described her approach to ward dinners:

> At ward activities I felt kind of funny going by myself. A lot of times I would call someone ahead of time and ask if I could sit with them at a dinner or something like that, and kind of arrange it ahead of time. That helped, instead of just going in and thinking, "Who am I going to sit with? I feel out of place."

Callings. Lee (1992) refers to the participatory nature of the LDS Church, in which "the responsibility for the success of the ward rests with every member, not just with the bishop and other key ward leaders" (p. 80). There are dozens of "callings" (unpaid positions) available in any ward, having to do with teaching, music, service, and other activities for both men and women.

Having a calling in one's ward is not only a service to fellow ward members, it is also an important way of being included in the life of the ward. Although two of the older respondents have callings in family wards (as opposed to singles wards), one as ward music chair and the other as Relief Society luncheon committee chair, other respondents noted a striking discrepancy between their experience in previous wards and their present predominately married BYU student wards. One woman said of her ward:

They're very nice people; [but] it's been odd. I have not had a calling since I moved to Utah. I have a current temple recommend; I have never had any problems getting a temple recommend. But, in [my home state] I was in the Primary presidency, then I was the homemaking counselor in the Relief Society presidency, and then I came to Utah, and nothing for almost 4 years. It's just been difficult. It hurts to be living a good life and wanting to give service and see married couples come into the ward and be given callings immediately, even before their records arrive, and it just, I don't know, it's just been hard.

An older respondent stated:

They tend to ask married women only to be in positions. It's when they start getting strapped [that] they start looking at the single women. I think they need to look at women at large, not whether they're married or not, because they need to represent all women.

Another woman, who attends a BYU single student ward, presently holds a calling in the Relief Society presidency. She commented on her calling: "I don't think I would have had it in [her former, predominately married student ward]." An older, more assertive respondent told of obtaining her calling:

I'm in the Relief Society because I requested it. I said to the bishop, "I'm a woman who is alone without adult company most of the time. I will not be in the Primary for another 7 years. I want to be with adult women. This is something I would not have done 15 or 20 years ago. I'm older now; I can request where I want to be and not want to be and I wouldn't have thought of that before. I would have thought, "Oh, wherever I'm called."

Home teachers. "A central feature of Mormon practice is that members of each ward . . . are assigned to teach each other every month in the homes" (Lee, 1992, p. 60). Relief Society visiting teachers are pairs of women who visit the women of the ward; home teachers are pairs of priesthood holders (age 14 and up) who visit members' homes. The respondents in this study did not mention Relief Society visiting teachers. They did discuss problems with an absence of home teaching. Some of them attribute this absence to their status as divorced women who might be considered threats to others' marital stability. One woman recalled:

I had to go in and say, "Look, I don't have any home teachers. I need some home teachers." I said, "What's the matter? [Are] you having trouble finding a man whose wife won't be scared to death to let him come over and visit me?" I brought it right up. [And the leader said], "No, no, it will be OK."

A second respondent described her experience:

It wasn't as bad out of Utah. But . . . in Utah people are very protective of their husbands. [The women's separating themselves from me] used to hurt me a lot. [I decided] the best defense against this happening is not to speak to their husbands. I've had [my home teacher] want to stop and say something, then [he'll] change [his] mind. When I'd call for assistance, [his wife] would say, "What do you want. I don't think you ought to bother him about that." I said [to my bishop], "Don't send . . . any more home teachers to my house, because I don't want to be accused of something I'm not." So, he just kind of laughed, and they sent an older couple to my home, at my request.

Having an older couple function as home teachers was problematic for another respondent, who pointed out that the married couple would be unable to give her a priesthood blessing should she desire it. Thus, she felt the opportunity for her to have those priesthood activities in her home was thwarted.

Sunday School and Relief Society Meetings. Sunday School and Relief Society meetings are held on Sundays as part of the three-hour period of worship. These meetings are conducted by and for the adult men and women, and usually consist of prayers, hymns, and lessons. Participation in the lessons provide an opportunity for members to contribute their wisdom, experience, and opinions to the meetings.

Two respondents described the same general experience of being silenced in Sunday School and Relief Society meetings. They had stated their opinions (derived from their experience as divorced women), had been met with silence, and had said nothing further. After the meetings, they were then approached by women who supported their view, yet who had declined to speak out in the meetings. One respondent illustrated this:

There've been a few times . . . I've said a few things, but I can always tell who the divorced ones are, because after, they say, "I know

just exactly what you mean." They come right afterward . . . but not in the meetings. They'll give support after. It's like we don't belong and yet we do.

Family Wards and Singles Wards. Wards, the local congregational units of the LDS Church, are organized by geographical boundaries. Thus, if a person lives in a certain area of a city, he or she is a member of that area's ward, known informally as a family or home ward. Some wards are organized across geographical lines to accommodate special populations, such as a Spanish-speaking ward organized in a predominately English-speaking area.

Some singles wards have been organized in response to the Church's perception of the special needs of single members. The experience of the women in this study has been mainly in family wards; however, some have attended singles wards organized in the Provo-Orem area and at BYU. Their experience of both family and singles wards is reported here.

This respondent typifies the experience of the women in this study. She commented on her *de facto* restriction to female friends:

> Our family ward, the one I was in [when I got divorced], was quite friendly, but there's just a barrier. I think just the fact that you can't have men drop by in a family ward; it just doesn't happen. You can't be friends with males, because they're married, and most of the time their wives are uncomfortable, or people think you want them. I think a lot of us get [a] lost feeling. It kind of depends a lot on the ward, but I'm afraid that a lot of people feel pretty ostracized, especially if you're not really outgoing. I think a lot of women feel that way.

Another commented on her BYU married student ward, which she attends because her home is located within its geographical boundaries:

> Sometimes I get real tired of it. Sometime I feel like, "Let me out of here!" They tune into [me as], "I'm a single mother." They probably don't ever think about the fact that I was a young married mother at one time with a little child.

A respondent who attends a BYU singles ward stated: "[It] has alleviated a lot of problems for me." She reported an active social life and having both male and female friendships stemming from her membership in a singles ward.

Because only a few singles wards provide children's religious programs, single parents tend to remain in family wards for the instruction of their children. However, one divorced mother attends a singles ward that has children's programs. She described her experience:

> If you go to a family ward, they have their own kids to worry about. . . . In the singles ward it's nice because most of the people don't have kids, so they are always playing with my kids. The kids have a ball; they get lots of attention. They feel like it's their ward and they like going to church.

Another respondent, without young children, described her large singles ward: "Every month we have some kind of ward activity, like a dinner, a talent show. Our latest project was to furnish an apartment for homeless people. Here I'm . . . just one of the gang. I'm just like everyone else—I'm single."

Outside the tradition

The LDS Church places great emphasis on the traditional family, which is defined as husband, wife, and children. This concept extends to grandparents and other relatives as well as the ward family or church family. However, the conceptualization of family in the LDS Church is essentially patriarchal. Therefore, the question is, what is the experience of LDS women who divorce and who then are not connected to the patriarchal family through the central principle of marriage?

The women in this study, by their act of divorcing, deviated from the traditional ideal role of the Mormon woman, a conceptualization which tends to equate a woman with her roles as wife and mother. The fact of her return to school primarily for economic reasons and her probable future as her family's breadwinner further removes her from that traditional concept.

Different divorce experiences

As shown in this study, some LDS women who divorce receive much support from members of their ward family. As a result, they perceive support from the LDS Church in general, as their connection with the larger Church is through the personal

attachments of the local area ward. In these cases, the women's testimonies of the Gospel were strengthened. The women who reported this supportive experience were women who had divorced either non-member men or, as in one case, a man who was eminently rejectable on the basis of his revealed pedophilia.

Other women had vastly different experiences. Their's were scenarios of shunning, chastisement, and rejection by the other members of their wards. These women seriously questioned their commitment to their membership in the Church.

The reported instances of substantial withdrawal of ward support and difficult relations with ward and stake leaders occurred in divorces from men who were active members themselves. Apparently, divorce in these cases is viewed very differently from divorce from non-members or discredited members of the Church. The husbands in these situations reportedly maintained the support of the ward members. From these women's perspective, the major part of the blame was placed on the woman seeking the divorce, even though abuse and neglect from the husband was present, although not readily apparent to outsiders.

It appears that for this group of women, some divorces are more acceptable than others, depending on the religious status of the husband. This may be a function of the network of friendships among the men of the Church, which is promoted by the holding of the priesthood and the camaraderie resulting from priesthood meetings, projects, etc. For example, one respondent reported:

> The . . . bishop told me I was a raging feminist and that I did not want to obey the priesthood, and so did the stake president. [So] I got the two of them together, which was a very gutsy thing for me to do because I was a mess emotionally and I'm not confrontive. I got the two of them together in my stake president's office and I said, "OK, I want to know who you get the idea [from] that I'm this male-bashing, raging feminist?" Anyway, they wouldn't answer and I asked them again. Finally, the third time I said, "If you don't come up with what exactly I have done and you've observed me doing, being this priesthood hating, male bashing, raging feminist, then I repudiate these accusations . . . and I never want to hear them again." Finally, my bishop had the guts to say, "[Henry] told us." And they bought it because he told them. I said, "Well, I rest my case. What do you expect?"

Spiritual crisis

These women did not question the existence of God or the divinity of Jesus Christ. Rather, what was so problematic for them was the insensitivity of some individual members who unfeelingly reinforced the Church's emphasis on the nuclear family without regard to the women's current family status. These difficult experiences appeared to contaminate their religious connection. For example, one respondent describes her last meeting with her bishop during her divorce: "My scriptures were sitting in my lap and I shook my fist like this, and I said, 'If you people don't leave me alone, I'm leaving the Church.' He felt really bad at that point."

That these women remain in the Church and describe themselves as active members is a reflection of their deeply held beliefs in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It also suggests the depth of the emotional pain engendered by their perceived rejection by formerly friendly members and leaders.

Spiritual Strength

All of the women in this study demonstrated sustained and/or renewed spiritual strength. Their experiences are varied and reflect lessons learned in the process of divorcing and establishing different lives, as well as the development of non-traditional views. Several perspectives were apparent.

First, an older respondent commented on the effect of her religious affiliation: "Oh, I couldn't have made it without the Gospel in my life. I just would have fallen apart and just laid down and died." Another stated:

> Bishops don't intimidate me [anymore] and when I go to my darling Relief Society with the older women who say, "The bishop is coming; the bishop is coming to our dinner!" I'm going, "That's really nice, but he's just a guy." It's not like deity.

A younger respondent said: "I know when I finally came back around and started feeling it more spiritually, my life sure went a lot easier." An older woman commented:

> I was walking through this quiet new house, and then the thought struck me, this is the spirit of Christ. This is a Christ-like home. What

a tragedy I had to take the priesthood holder out to have a Christ-like
environment.

Another older woman commented:

> Part of [what] I had to get through was . . . David O. McKay's
> statement, no success in life can compensate for failure in the home, and
> I [had] failed . . . It took a long time for me to realize we were be-
> coming successful because of the divorce. I started thinking, what would
> have been the results if we'd stayed married with all these problems
> staying hidden, and I decided divorce is not a dirty word any more.

Still another woman found the spiritual sustenance missing in
her ward experience in her university classes:

> [BYU] is my Church family, too. I love the Book of Mormon class,
> [because the teacher] always encourages me to [talk] . . . School that way
> has become a spiritual guidance, too. [In my ward] it's like I just go to
> the meeting, I learn something, and I go home."

A young respondent stated: "After the divorce happened, I came
to the realization that Heavenly Father helps you a lot more than
what I ever realized before, and so I gained a stronger testimony of
. . . what Christ must have gone through." An older respondent
echoed her, with a variation:

> It takes a great deal of humility . . . and some tough knocks [for a
> woman] to find out . . . that she can find her place and be in harmony
> with Christ and Heavenly Father, and Heavenly Mother, and contrary
> to what some people are saying, I do talk about her, because I love her.

One respondent had this advice: "We cannot rely any more on
the testimonies of our fathers, or our brothers, or our bishops. We
need to know for ourselves, because there's going to come a time
when we're not going to have anybody to rely on."

Conclusion

As divorced women, these respondents reported experiences
similar to those reported in the literature generally regarding
divorced women in America. They experienced the same abrupt
and substantial decrease in income, disagreements with former
husbands over child support, and moves to more modest houses
and apartments. Entry into the university was motivated primarily

by the intent to increase their earning ability. Their divorced status
felt problematic in a church so oriented to the family, defined as
father, mother, and children.

Being divorced, the LDS woman is outside of the tradition and
culture of her religious faith and does not meet the heavily
emphasized ideal model. In the LDS Church, having access to a
[male] priesthood holder is important. The divorced LDS woman
is somewhat removed from that. The women in this study who
divorced non-member or discredited men apparently received strong
ward support during their divorce process, which strengthened these
women's faith in the Gospel and increased their degree of satisfac-
tion generally with the Church. However, the women who had
divorced active members of the ward reported being shunned and
chastised by ward members and leaders.

Spiritual crises occurred in which these women seriously
questioned their commitment to their religion. Positive feelings
eventually returned, and the women remained members of their
church. However, due to the identification of the religion with
ward relationships, it appears that insensitive treatment by leaders
during the divorce process could precipitate a spiritual crisis and
potential departure from the Church.

Implications for LDS Therapists

1. When dealing with any specialized population, the therapist
is well-advised to have a good understanding of that group's unique
issues and concerns. The treatment of a divorced LDS woman
would begin with the therapist's understanding of the dynamics of
divorce generally and the attendant feelings of loss and disorienta-
tion that most people go through as a marriage relationship breaks
up. Major changes in lifestyle are common, particularly for a
woman, who may go from being a full-time homemaker to
shouldering the primary responsibility for supporting her family.

An LDS divorced woman faces these and additional issues. She
may feel estranged from a good part of her identity as she perceives
herself removed from the "respectable position" she enjoyed in a
church that esteems marriage and family. This woman may report

feeling ignored, awkward, negatively judged, or unworthy to serve in her previously comfortable religious setting.

2. Sometimes a divorcing LDS woman makes judgments about the Church generally when her issues are more directly related to particular personalities within her ward family. Assisting her in exploring and understanding the differences between the Gospel and the specific culture of her ward or branch may be helpful. In this way she can be assisted toward a more beneficial stance which may include increased assertiveness, a more inner locus of control, and a more realistic (and less all or nothing) approach to these problems without the distress of discarding the Gospel as her source of a mature spirituality.

3. The therapist can teach the client to recognize if her ecclesiastical leadership or fellow ward members are behaving inappropriately and to develop ways to address and correct the situation. This intervention would also include teaching the client to recognize instances in which she may be projecting her expectations that negative reactions will automatically accrue to her because she is divorcing. Even if some ward members react negatively, not all will. Support and continuing friendship among Church members are to be found and will help in developing a realistic perspective on the naysayers.

4. While LDS women who have divorced share some commonalities, as much variance exists among single as there is among married individuals. A woman early in the divorce process may have very different feelings about remarriage, earning a living, acceptance by ward members, or a desire to be involved in church activities than a woman who has been divorced for several years.

Thus, while divorce and single parenting are challenging experiences for women, an LDS divorced woman can feel encouraged to move ahead and take charge of her life. Her life may be very different from what she had earlier expected or wanted, yet these new circumstances, for all their difficulty, still hold the promise of new growth and happiness.

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Resolving Conflicts of Worldviews: LDS Women and Television

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Abstract

While disagreement exists about the impact of television viewing on LDS family life, this research takes an audience-focused approach to the question of "media effects" by examining how a sample of LDS women describe experiences with television in their own words. Three "interpretive communities" reflecting different strategies for resolving television-related conflicts in the home are identified. These diverse perspectives about the role of television in LDS family life provide a useful point of departure for counselors and other professionals seeking to understand the relationship between television viewing and family conflicts.

This article looks at how a sample of LDS women define and resolve conflicts associated with television viewing. It argues that both attitudes about appropriate uses of television as well as "styles of talking" about the medium can be remarkably different. There is considerable disagreement about whether television can play a prosocial role in the home. A number of LDS women identify television viewing as a major area of contention, while others claim the activity is a positive source of family experiences. The differences described here may be useful to parents, church leaders, and professional counselors as they seek a broader understanding of the relationship between television viewing and family-related conflicts.

Religious audiences are often neglected by researchers of mass communication and consequently there are few studies of media-

related conflict among church members. Relevant work in this area
has been confined to studies of television viewing habits of various
religious audiences (Roberts, 1983; Gaddy & Prichard, 1985;
Hamilton & Rubin, 1992), analysis of religious television program-
ming (Abelman & Neuendorf, 1985; Abelman & Hoover, 1990;
Simpson, 1993) and ethnographic investigations of television's role
in the everyday lives of church members (Bourgault, 1985; Iorio,
1991).

The question of how LDS audiences define and resolve conflicts
related to television, however, is only beginning to be explored by
media researchers.

Television and the "Conflict of Worldviews"

Historically, church leaders in a number of Catholic and
Protestant denominations have suggested that many television
programs and movies conflict with religious teachings. In the
1950s, for example, organizations such as the National Council of
Catholic Women, The Legion of Decency, and the National
Council of Catholic Men criticized television for its opposition to
Christian values (see Spigel, 1992). In recent years, the "Christian
Leaders for Responsible Television" (See Hamilton & Rubin, 1992)
and the "Christian Film and Television Commission" (See Medved,
1992), for example, criticized media content thought to be
inconsistent with mainstream "religious values."

A number of popular writers and entertainment critics also
define the relationship between "the media industry" and main-
stream religious communities as one of tension and conflict.
Michael Medved (1992), a syndicated film and television critic,
argues that "tens of thousands of Americans now see the entertain-
ment industry as an all-powerful enemy, an alien force that assaults
our most cherished values and corrupts our children" (p. 3).

In other popular books in the mainstream press, Dobson &
Bauer (1990) describe this situation in terms of "incompatible
worldviews," and Lewis (1977) contends there is a clear distinction
between "television's worldview" and those embraced by main-
stream U. S. religious groups.

   While public rhetoric tends to define the relationship between the media and religious communities in terms of a "conflict of worldviews," little is known about how audience members themselves feel about these issues. In other words, by shifting the unit of analysis from media content to the audience, this article attempts to describe how television is experienced in the context of everyday life. How do audience members define and resolve conflicts that may arise when church leaders suggest a particular way of thinking about the effects of television? Given that content-centered analysis is restricted to an examination of the text, it is limited in its ability to say much about these types of questions. In order to explore the conflict issue from an audience perspective, the author examines how a sample of LDS women describe their experiences with television in the home. LDS women are an appropriate audience for the study in that the LDS Church advocates traditional roles and values (Campbell & Campbell, 1981; Gottlieb & Wiley, 1986; Wilcox, 1987) and has stated that many popular movies and television shows are inconsistent with LDS teachings. Examples of this include a Relief Society lesson on the effects of the media ("Come unto Me," 1991) and an article in the *Ensign* encouraging women to give up soap operas (Strong-Thacker, 1990). In 1989, appropriate television viewing was the topic of a "General Conference" address (Ballard, 1989).

LDS Women and Interpretive Community

   These warnings by church leaders serve to remind LDS women that television can be a site of value conflicts. The question of how women actually define and resolve such conflicts, however, cannot be fully addressed without careful attention to women's *interpretive communities.* The concept of interpretive community suggests that audiences do not uniformly conceptualize the role of television in their lives but discursively make sense of their viewing within their everyday networks of social interaction. Briefly stated, an interpretive community is a group that shares certain strategies of interpreting texts (Fish, 1980). According to Lindlof, Coyle, & Grodin (1988), the interpretive community phenomenon has been applied to "the problem of how media audiences produce meanings that are

variable, yet socially intelligible" (p. 3). In this way, interpretive community provides an alternative to predictions about media "effects" based on content analysis alone.

While the interpretive community concept has emerged in studies of female readers of romance novels (Radway, 1984), families and their use of VCRs (Lindlof & Schatzer, 1989), science fiction readers (Lindlof, Coyle, & Grodin, 1988), and women who use self-help books (Grodin, 1991), it has not been adequately applied to the study of religious television audiences. The main purpose of this research, therefore, is to extend the idea of interpretive community to audiences that deal with the problem of reconciling media content with institutional expectations and directives. With this goal in mind, three specific research questions are addressed:

1. Is it possible to create a general typology that describes the interpretive communities that exist among LDS women?

2. If so, how do LDS women in various interpretive communities differ in terms of their *style* of talking about television?

3. Is membership in an interpretive audience influenced by the social and demographic characteristics (e.g., age, marital status, family size, education, etc.) of LDS women?

At a practical level, responses to all three questions may illuminate parents, therapists, and others who seek a broader, deeper understanding of the role of television in family conflicts and how such conflicts are resolved. At a theoretical level, the results may have implications in a number of situations where organizations seek to influence their member's attitudes about the media including political parties, health organizations, and even families. In other words, the types of interpretive communities identified here may stimulate new research questions relating to a number of different audiences.

Method

In order to learn more about the ways Mormon women describe their experiences with television, a triangulation of research methods was employed. Cluster analysis of survey questionnaire

data designed to assess both attitudes about television as well as demographics was conducted initially. This was followed by a qualitative sorting analysis of open-ended written statements obtained at the end of the questionnaire.

Response Rate

The data were obtained through purposive stratified random sampling. Of 702 questionnaires, 29 percent were mailed to Mormon women living in the Houston, Texas Area of Dominant Influence (ADI), 34 percent to women in the Salt Lake City, Utah ADI, and women in the Los Angeles ADI received 37 percent. The mailing yielded a response rate of 61 percent. Of the total questionnaires received, 37 percent were from Salt Lake City, 33 percent from Los Angeles, and 30 percent from Houston.

The women sampled were mailed a questionnaire with a cover letter requesting their participation in an important study of television viewing among LDS women. A statement assured respondents of anonymity. Along with the letter and questionnaire, a complimentary decorative bookmark was enclosed in the envelope.

Demographics of the Sample

When compared to the demographic research conducted by Goodman & Heaton (1986), the sample appears to be more representative of Mormon women who are married, highly educated, affluent, and religious, than it is of LDS women in general. The sample does, however, parallel the larger population of LDS women in terms of family size and employment outside the home.

Cluster Analysis

A total of 16 television-attitudinal questionnaire items were factored using principle component factor analysis with VARIMAX rotation (SASS) in order to identify which items would be used for a cluster analysis of respondents. Items were selected for the cluster analysis if they had a loading of .5 on a factor with an eigenvalue greater than 1.0. Using this method, seven items were selected.

The analysis yielded three clusters of respondents based on differences in mean scores on the seven questionnaire items identified by the factor analysis. Table 1 lists chi-square statistics indicating significant differences between clusters at the p<0.01 level on all seven items.

These categories do not fully explain the complex processes at work when LDS women view television. That is, the clusters are not necessarily pure, isolated, or exclusive. Notwithstanding the methodological limitations, however, the clusters do identify three groups of women who have distinct responses to television and thus provide foundation data for further exploration of the various styles of television discourse of LDS women.

In addition to the survey data, open-ended written statements provided deeper descriptions of how women in the three clusters describe television in their own words. A total of 201 written statements were examined across the three clusters in order to uncover any patterns of response that might clarify or raise possible explanations of why Mormon women define the role of television differently.

Next, using a method similar to Browning (1978), the categories were shown to two readers not involved in the analysis who made comments about the strength of the categories and made suggestions regarding category labels.

Results: Three Interpretive Audiences

The analysis identified three types of television audiences among the Mormon women sampled: *Traditionals*, a young and affluent audience that tends to view television as a distraction from church-related activities, and, in discussing television places strong emphasis on what is considered undesirable or "immoral" content; *Independents*, who often describe television in individual, goal-oriented terms, and assess its value more from a personal, private point of view rather than an institutional perspective; and, *Contextuals*, who are highly religious, critical of television, and often feel guilty about their television viewing. Contextuals say they rarely enjoy television,

Table 1

Cluster Comparisons of Percentages of LDS Women who "Agree" with Statements Designed to Assess Various Attitudes about Television.

	Traditionals (n=197)	Contextuals (n=136)	Independents (n=95)	Chi Sq.
Television viewing is something I look forward to each day.	5.6	22.2	75.3	239.85*
Television is a consistent part of my daily routine.	12.4	32.6	92.6	222.09*
TV is an important source of entertainment for me.	8.2	61.1	84.2	257.22*
TV keeps me company when alone.	23.6	85.2	85.3	210.85*
I watch TV to get away from the ordinary cares and problems of the day.	15.4	60.5	54.9	134.51*
I often feel guilty watching TV.	11.2	50.0	28.0	94.90*
TV provides me with something to talk about with my friends.	8.2	15.5	58.9	154.47*

* $p < 0.01$
(percentages listed; n=428)

but are willing to watch in various contexts (e.g., family viewing, as a passive activity, etc.).

Traditionals comprise the largest cluster (n=197). Contextuals are second (n=136), and Independents are third in size (n=95).

Traditionals

"Traditionals" tend to criticize much of television content for its perceived opposition to the traditional values taught by their religious institution. In addition, they often characterize television as a "distraction" from what they consider to be more important activities (i.e., church duties, reading, and family responsibilities). They are less likely to describe personal benefits or positive uses of television other than educational or religious programming, and rarely talk about what is on television with family, friends, and co-workers. For example, one respondent said:

> I've found that . . . if "I hold to the iron rod" and really study the scriptures on a daily basis, my personal behavior improves, including a reduced desire to waste time with the TV.

As shown in Table 2, Traditionals tend to be younger than members of the other two clusters (Chi sq.= 22.746; df=8; p<0.01), are more likely to be married (Chi sq.= 18.002; df=4; p<0.01), have more children (Chi sq.= 133.995; df=8; p<0.01), and are more likely to be married in a Mormon temple (Chi sq.= 133.995; df=8; p<0.01).

As shown in Table 1, Traditionals are less likely to consider television a consistent part of their daily routine. Similarly, most deny that television fulfills needs related to entertainment, social interaction, escape, or companionship.

Traditionals and Television Talk

An analysis of 91 written statements identified three dominant themes in the ways Traditionals describe their television viewing. The first category of responses was labeled, *Distraction* (36 statements, 40 percent) which communicate a feeling that television always takes the place of something more important, especially church duties and responsibilities. Several of these comments reveal

Table 2

Demographics of the Three Clusters

	Traditionals (n=197)	Contextuals (n=136)	Independents (n=95)	Chi Sq
Variable				
Age	41.32	42.12	47.02	22.746*
(mean yrs.)				
Marital Status(%)				
Never Married	2.6	.7	3.2	
Married	92.3	87.4	85.3	
Widowed	0.0	3.7	7.4	
Separated	0.5	1.5	0.0	
Divorced	4.6	6.7	4.2	18.002*
Children				
(mean # of children)	4.0	3.68	3.28	16.352*
Temple Marriage(%)	71.3	62.2	46.7	133.995*
Employed Outside				
Home (%)	44.4	48.4	44.3	ns
Education(%)				
< 12 yrs.	1.0	2.2	3.3	
13-15 yrs.	55.1	67.9	63.8	
16+ yrs.	43.9	29.9	33.0	ns
Income (%)				
< $9,000	0.0	3.0	4.3	
10K - 19,999	5.3	5.3	10.9	
20K - 29,999	10.1	12.8	16.3	
30K - 49,999	28.7	33.8	30.4	
50K +	55.9	45.1	38.0	17.694**

* $p < .01$

** $p < .05$

ns not significant

an intense concern about the value of time and how it is misused in watching television. For example, one respondent commented:

> I consider TV on the whole, to be a terrible waste of human time and resources. I feel that anyone who watches it regularly is not contributing adequately to their home, community, or personal lives. There is almost always something more important to be doing than watching TV. The best years of our lives as a family were the two years that we did not have a TV in our home. In my opinion, the only reasons to keep the TV are to watch (1) family videos (home movies); (2) to entertain the children with a decent movie when we go out for the evening; (3) the news; (4) General Conference; (5) the viewing of church films for family home evening; and, (6) the occasional wonderful evening when we rented a great movie, popped popcorn and laid on the floor together as a family watching it. If it were not for these things I would not hesitate for even five seconds before throwing the TV in the garbage. I am not generally a radical in life, but I admit I am a radical in my disgust for TV!!!

Some Traditionals ascribe an "addictive" power to television which robs the viewer of precious time:

> There probably isn't a way to tell how many people are addicted to TV in this survey, but it would be interesting to know. One woman I know couldn't get anything done (housework, etc. shower even) because of TV.

The second theme characterizing Traditional's talk about television has to do with *negative effects of television content* (34 statements, 37 percent). The majority of these statements condemn television for what is considered to be excessive portrayals of sex and violence that is assumed to have a negative effect on the audience. When talking about television, terms such as "garbage," "pornographic," and "corruption," were often used to describe the potentially negative effects of the medium on one's spirituality. One respondent asserted: "I do not clutter my mind with the pornography of movies or TV so I can have divine inspiration to what is truly happening." Several respondents linked undesirable behaviors directly to television including sexual promiscuity, bad language, and disobedient children.

Another category of responses was labeled *Control* (14 statements, 15 percent) which related efforts to assure that rules regarding television viewing were enforced. Some of these statements describe arguments between husbands and wives while others talk about efforts to monitor their children's viewing. "We have a lock which gives us control over the TV" commented one respondent, while others spoke of "screening" programs before allowing children to watch.

Independents

While Traditionals are primarily concerned with the undesirable effects of television, Independents tend to define the activity more as an expressive outlet that serves a number of functions in everyday life. Unlike Traditionals, this audience describes television as a "personal" and "private" experience, and is much less critical of television content. Typical metaphors used by Independents to describe television include "teacher," "informer," "escape," and "link to the outside world." An example of this perspective is provided by a women who tried to convince her husband that television was serving a positive or prosocial role in her life:

> My husband thinks we should do away with the TV altogether because the children have disagreements over programs occasionally or don't hear what we say because they are involved in a show. However, it is my only "link to the outside world" at this time. He feels better when I explain that it gives me entertainment while I do exercises, read and play with the kids, and do housework.

Unlike Traditionals, Independents list a variety of important uses of television in their everyday lives. Independents are also older, have fewer children, and, although highly religious, are less likely to marry in a Mormon temple than members of the other two clusters (Table 2).

Of the three clusters, Independents are least critical of television, both in terms of content and use of time. As shown in Table 1, the majority (75 percent) of this audience look forward to television everyday, and most agree that it has value in providing routine (93 percent), companionship (85 percent), entertainment (84 percent), and as a provider of something to talk about with friends (59

percent). Also, fewer Independents (22 percent) agree that children would be better off without television.

Independents and Television Talk

A total of 44 statements from this cluster was subjected to analysis, and three dominant themes emerged in the ways Independents talk about television: *Situational Uses* (17 statements, 40 percent), a series of comments where Mormon women explain how television assists them in dealing with particular problems and situations in their lives; *Assessments of Content* (14 statements, 33 percent), a pattern of statements evaluating various types of television programs; and, *Choice* (six statements, 14 percent), which are requests for a more significant role in program choices in the home.

While Traditionals speak in terms of potential "effects" of television, and describe the conflicts it *causes* in their lives, Independents say little about this. The medium is described in more personal terms and is often related to some event or situation they are experiencing at that moment. One respondent, for example, related her television viewing to a struggle she was having in balancing career and family:

> Basically, I enjoy anything (on TV) that shows women in the working world, even if she is a parent, that she is not having a wonderful time baking cookies all the time. That she is struggling, trying to find out who she is, if she is trying to stay home and why.

Some respondents stated that television helped them in dealing with the challenges and pressures of homemaking. For example, one said that television takes "my mind off a huge mountain of laundry and dishes." Another explained that she watched television because the "eyes are too tired" to read. A mother of three children seemed to imply that television was necessary in coping with the challenges of child rearing: "I would go crazy if we didn't have a TV in our home because my kids would be after me constantly to do things with them."

Like Traditionals, Independents also criticize television for its excessive violence and sexually explicit content. However, Independents often praise many of the programs condemned by Tradi-

tionals. An interesting comment in this regard came from an active church-goer in her thirties who praised the cartoon comedy program, "The Simpsons:"

> Sometimes we watch TV shows together such as the Simpsons and discuss the social messages. If there is something inappropriate that unexpectedly comes on, I use that as a teaching opportunity to explain why we don't believe that way or do those things. I think it's important to teach children to do their own self-monitoring of what they watch. Parents won't always be around to turn off the TV as they get older and watch outside the home.

Comments like this are revealing in that they reflect a reliance on the personal as well as the institutional dimension of religiosity in resolving conflicts associated with television viewing. The above comment, while stating that elements of the program might be "inappropriate," also recognizes personal interpretations of a program that may justify viewing if the family feels a show stimulates discussion, is educational, or teaches self-monitoring.

Additional comments about talk shows seem to suggest that despite institutional criticisms of these shows, some viewers feel they have a positive impact on personal religious values:

> I like talk shows because it gives me an opportunity to see how others live [with] the choices they've made and how those choices affected their lives. More often than not, I reaffirm my own beliefs and choices in life as being wise. I feel grateful for the influence of the Church when I see others that don't have it and how unfortunate their lives have turned out.

These statements indicate that while the women sampled may be active members of the LDS Church, not all criticize the medium in the same way. That is, a distinction between Traditionals and Independents is an ability to divergently interpret the nature of television's "effect" despite common religious beliefs and behaviors.

Contextuals

Contextuals are much like Traditionals in terms of their criticisms of television, but, they are more like Independents in terms of their viewing habits. In other words, there is some inconsistency between their stated attitudes about television and

their willingness to watch (Table 1). Contextuals also feel guiltier than the other LDS women sampled when they watch television.

Contextuals and Television Talk

Written statements by Contextuals also lend support to the attitude-behavior discongruity. An analysis of 65 statements by Contextuals reveals both criticism of television as an activity, as well as a willingness to watch in a variety of contexts. Two of these include better *relationships* in the home and using television as *passive entertainment* while doing other things. Several women said they felt guilty if they weren't doing something else while the television was on.

The independent panel agreed that 17 statements (26 percent) from Contextuals stressed the importance of family relationships in their lives, and described television as a means of spending time together. Relationships, these women expressed, are more important than the act of watching television itself. One respondent comments:

> I sometimes watch television with my husband because of his work and church callings. TV takes no effort so it relaxes him. I'd rather be doing something better or different but I feel "holding hands" helps our relationship at times.

In a similar vein, one respondent remarked that "it is best not to watch," but "if we watch as a family, we can all learn and discuss together." Additional comments describe how women give in to other family members in order to avoid conflicts: "I mostly wind up watching *Current Affair* or *Inside Edition* because my husband puts it on—not necessarily my choice."

As mentioned earlier, Contextuals feel the most guilt about television viewing. Implicit in several statements was an assurance that if they were not doing something else, they would not be watching. A total of 15 statements (23 percent) expressed this view. One respondent gave several justifications for watching TV:

> My husband works long hours. After my daughter's bedtime, I will occasionally turn on the TV for company. If a program interests me I'll do some project while watching it. I will frequently go days without watching any television.

Here it is clear that the respondent values other things more than television, and the act of viewing occurs only in the context of what are considered to be more important matters. In this example, the event occurs while waiting for her husband and while doing a project. Additional statements explain television as a secondary activity while making dinner, paying bills, crocheting, and cutting coupons.

Summary and Discussion

This research identifies and describes three interpretive communities among a sample of LDS women. Each employs a different strategy in defining and resolving conflicts related to watching television in the home. Some women refer to institutional standards and directives in describing the role of television while others conceptualize the media in more personal and private terms. Still other women do not think of television as an isolated event, and place it in the context of what they consider to be more important activities in their lives.

Striking differences in the ways Traditionals, Independents, and Contextuals talk about media is a compelling finding. It is apparent that respondents draw on multiple dimensions of their religiosity in making decisions about the media. For example, a Traditional might criticize a program on religious grounds, while an Independent might use a religious justification to praise it.

In addition to Church directives, the LDS women sampled cite peer influence, educational value, and personal uses of television content in describing their view of the media.

Simple descriptions of a television program's content is inadequate to an understanding of how television is experienced in the home. Television, it seems, may not only allow for, but may even encourage a number of strategies for resolving media-related conflicts (see Valenti & Stout, 1994). Parents, religious leaders, and counselors may benefit from this perspective as they contemplate the role of media in family life. These data suggest that church members may be more active in the viewing process than previously

thought, and that there are a number of complex uses of the media that individuals find compatible with their religious beliefs.

Psychological and Counseling Implications

In light of these findings, the following recommendations are offered to counselors and therapists when working with families that describe conflict situations related to the use of television in the home:

1. *Recognize that diverse uses of media may exist in the home.* One or two family members may make assumptions about the effects of television only to find that it is being used in unexpected ways. Several women, for example, expressed disappointment that their husbands were not aware of the many uses that they had for television (e.g., entertainment, information about world affairs, something to talk about with friends, etc.). Counselors may want to encourage parents to better understand how family members use television rather than assuming uniform effects in all situations.

2. *Discourage over-reliance on media as the singular cause of complex family problems.* How parents define the link between television and behavior is a private decision and reflects personal religious values. In some cases it may be an important factor in defining family conflicts. The data presented here, however, suggest that at least in some cases, television becomes a scapegoat in explaining a number of difficult family situations (e.g., teenage promiscuity, lack of respect for parents, etc.). Yet such problems are rarely the result of a single factor or event, and are better understood in terms of a complex interplay between a number of social, cultural, and psychological variables. When parents focus too heavily on media as a cause of family problems they may fail to consider other areas that need attention such as parent-child relationships and family communication.

3. *Anticipate that male dominance may be an issue in television-related conflicts.* A common theme expressed by the women sampled had to do with frustration about the fact that their husbands and other family members had control over what and how much was watched on television. This may be one of the reasons so many women in the sample expressed guilty feelings when viewing. Those

giving advice to families will want to recognize situations where women are watching television in order to please others and make recommendations for compromise.   Gender-related conflicts involving television viewing may be a signal to counselors that additional problems in the family may exist and should be explored.

4. *Make families aware of information available on media literacy.* One's ability to think critically about mass media is often referred to as "media literacy." Although few schools have formal media literacy programs, parents can encourage analytical thinking by having family discussions and reading literature on the subject. Milton E. Ploghoft and James A. Anderson's *Education for the Television Age* and *Mind over Media* by Barbara Lee and Masha Kabakow Rudman are examples of books that discuss ways that families can become better educated members of the television audience.

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Professional Organizations: Whither Thou Goest Will I Go?

Dennis E. Nelson, PhD

This past month I experienced a professional anniversary of sorts as my twenty-fifth membership year in the American Psychological Association (APA) came to a close. There is an increasing probability that I may choose to make it the final anniversary of membership. The reasoning for such a decision is direct and forthright. It is my contention that during the past twenty to twenty-five years, the American Psychological Association as well as many other professional organizations, particularly those in the behavioral sciences and helping professions, have become powerful weapons in a culture war that is becoming ever more prominent in this nation's public life. Candidly, I admit that this culture war is in my personal view, a further extension of a more fundamental spiritual conflict that has a much longer history. In practical terms, my entertainment of resigning from the APA is fueled by a realization that professional associations repeatedly seem to take positions, and advocate policies that are in direct conflict with my own values and commitments. To a greater and greater extent, the traditional functions of professional societies are being made secondary to social advocacy. My own contributed dollars are assisting such groups to influence the world in ways which undermine the political and moral principles in which I believe. This essay's purpose is to motivate AMCAP members to assess their own professional organizations with regard to the issues I am raising, and, at least on an individual basis, if not an organizational one, formulate a response.

My early experiences with the APA and other guild-related groups were much different from those of more recent vintage. There seemed to be little, if any, propaganda for social and political causes. Continued membership did not bring confrontation with moral dilemmas, nor demand soul searching about the activities and objectives of the group. Traditional definitions of professional societies and vocationally-related organizations left room for advocacy in regard to work-related issues and professional concerns.

Back in the mid-fifties, the first professionally related organization I joined, the local musicians' union, seemed to exist primarily for the purpose of collecting dues, and its activities consisted mostly of providing a contact point for finding available jobs and feeble attempts at discouraging the public from hiring non-union personnel. Political agendas and attempts at social reform had nothing to do with the union and its functioning.

Nearly a decade later, as a graduate student and full-time public school teacher, I joined the state education association. Though I chafed at the group's push to require membership in the National Education Association, and observed that the national organization's rhetoric sounded more like an old line labor union than a band of professional educators, there was no serious discomfort in maintaining membership until my tenure as a teacher ended when I completed my degree.

During the four years of doctoral study which followed, my baptism of fire with respect to theological, political, and social warfare arrived. It was the second half of the 1960s and in the land of contrasts, California. Even then, however, professional organizations with which I came in contact remained, for the most part, in the mold of the traditional professional society. Their goals appeared to be the exchange and dissemination of scientific information, the encouragement of scholarship, and generally promoting their various disciplines. While the membership of such groups could likely have been characterized as somewhat left of center politically, what could be called political agenda oriented activity was minimal. Social pressure or attacks, open or subtle, upon those adhering to other intellectual positions was never a serious concern. Just as an aside, it is interesting to note that this

was not the case in a church context, where factions were often engaged in a bitter struggle.

My decision to join the American Psychological Association was fueled by practical motives similar to those that had contributed to earlier affiliations. There was also encouragement from professors who saw it as a natural part of becoming involved in the profession. Additionally, the need to stay informed on issues both career related and scientific was legitimate. In short, involvement in professional groups was simply a part of entering one's chosen field. Over the ensuing decade, membership in a number of educational and/or human services organizations seemed necessary or relevant from time to time. These included what was then called the American Personnel and Guidance Association, the American Educational Research Association, and the Association for Curriculum Supervision and Development, among others. To the best of my recollection, all of these bodies, during the decade of the seventies, seemed to confirm the notion that they largely remained professional societies in the traditional sense.

Gradually, due to changes in my career activities, membership in these groups became less relevant, and were dropped. Perhaps during that period my attention was so directed to career development and family concerns that fundamental changes in those organizations simply proceeded unnoticed on my part. It may be that my current views owe something to an increased political awareness or a solidifying of personal positions during that period. But notwithstanding those possibilities, I am asserting that during the roughly two decades spanning the end of the Vietnam war to the present, many professional organizations in the human services and behavioral sciences have undergone fundamental transformations in purpose and direction. Whether subtle or obvious, of constant or erratic course, historically documentable as to pivotal dates or not, the American Psychological Association along with other societies are now active voices seeking to change the cultural, political, and moral landscape of the country. Admittedly, my direct observations have been largely confined to the American Psychological Association. It seems likely, however, that AMCAP members in other professional organizations have seen parallel

developments within organizations relevant to their own specialties, or would quickly discover them upon closer examination. Among my personal associates are those, for example, who have resigned their membership in the National Association of Social Workers due to a transformation they have witnessed in that body.

In order to illustrate this view of radical organizational reform, and to exemplify what I believe will be found in other organizations to which AMCAP members belong, let me cite some personal observations with regard to the American Psychological Association. Using as source material the group's own publications directed to its membership, the organization has become a consistent advocate for every radical reform and social cause crossing the public stage during the past fifteen to twenty years. Its leadership have espoused the so-called "rights" of each new self-defined minority and special interest group complaining of discrimination or deprivation. Organization personnel and money have been engaged in filing "friend of the court" briefs or provided testimony in legal proceedings, invariably siding with the more liberal party involved in the action. Using techniques including selective coverage, the skill of journalistic nuance, and the misuse or fabrication of scientific data and conclusions, APA policy groups, leaders, and print media have consistently championed a range of social, political, and moral causes decidedly leftward in ideological geography. I view this development as being at odds with the traditional definition of a professional society, and is also, I believe, counter-productive in attempts to build a positive view of the profession among the general populace. The actions and positions taken are quite clearly out of touch with the inner workings of mainstream America. On some occasions, there appears to be a virtual disdain for the attitudes and beliefs of the public the profession serves.

Examples supporting these assertions are not few in number and range across issues as diverse as children's "rights," the effects of abortion upon women, the distribution of condoms to youth, and the acceptability of homosexual orientation and lifestyle. The two that follow, taken from the pages of the monthly APA *Monitor*, are not offered as thesis proof, but rather as illustrative of a pattern.

The *Monitor* is a newspaper of sorts informing the membership of advances in relevant research, organizational policies, position openings, and other professionally oriented features. Similar periodicals exist in most professions. Perhaps because of the *Monitor* examples I have selected—one each from the categories of political ideology and moral issues—it may be thought that they are naturally among the more overt available, they are, in fact, very representative in style, tone, and ideological content to dozens of others found in my informal recent review of nearly three dozen issues of the *Monitor*.

A part of the "Public Interest" section of the paper is devoted to a feature reporting court cases that "bear directly on the science or practice of psychology." It is contributed by Division 9 of the APA, the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. This is interesting in and of itself: it would seem more appropriate for Division 42, Law and Psychology, to be in charge of such a feature.

The subject matter for Judicial Notebook in September of 1991 was "victim impact" statements as admissible material for consideration by juries in their decision-making. This topic must be inferred, however, since the author entitles her piece, "Justice Thurgood Marshall: So Sad to See You Go," and brushes past the judicial case reported in the first half of the column in order to gush profusely during the second half about the great wisdom of Justice Marshall, and the implied narrowness and cretin-like mentality of the court majority. The author, a Ms. Blackman of Upper Montclair, New Jersey, then recites a tired old liberal cliché by using a quote from Justice Marshall that predicts the abolition of individual constitutional liberties by a less competent and heartless (translate: more conservative) court majority. The last quarter of the column is pure personal editorial diatribe which rehearses liberal litany about the evils of the American and the capitalistic system which criminalizes poor people and imprisons the homeless (Blackman, 1991).

Now my purpose in selecting this example is not to discuss the pros or cons of allowing juries to consider victim statements. In fact, the prime point is not even to emit a complaint concerning the misuse of column inches by having them given to an author

with apparent tendencies toward terminal judicial activist groupieism. Rather, it is to point out that at the major print organ of a supposed scientific society is using member dollars to propagandize a particular political ideology and social agenda. Whether or not it agrees with my own views, this is not appropriate. Even if it were agreed that such a setting was the appropriate place for such advocacy, intellectual fairness would demand roughly equal time and space for opposing or alternative views. However, the vast bulk of such propaganda is promulgated through authorized vehicles such as "Judicial Notebook" as if the material were reported news with no need of rebuttal. Using both the cloak and clout of supposed professionalism, the tacit assumption is apparently made that all right-thinking professionals agree with the positions taken. It is what could be termed "gnostic elitism" which is part of what I am censuring here.

If the membership desires it, fairly ground-ruled debate on all sorts of issues is legitimate. However, making monetary and literary assumptions about what is representative and thereby using the resources and influence of a supposed professional society to foster an ideological and political agenda while simultaneously ignoring the will of the membership regarding the appropriateness of such an objective, and to subsequently deny having done so while feigning objectivity and scientific neutrality is not only unacceptable, but deceptive and clearly unprofessional. In short, if I wish to read a journal of political commentary and opinion, I'll buy one.

But political/social advertising and persuasion isn't the worst of it. There is a moral component involved in this pattern of enterprise. A rather glaring example can be found in the March 1990 issue of the *Monitor*. It seems a group called "The Traditional Values Coalition" had held a conference two months before, in part to promote heterosexual ethics. The invitees apparently were mostly religious leaders and other individuals opposed to homosexual behavior. The *Monitor* reports that at the conference one of its leaders, a Reverend Sheldon, characterized homosexuality as an illness which could be cured.

The conference, or its contents, may or may not have been newsworthy. The real story, however, lies in the volcanic response

of APA in the form of Dr. Bryant Welch, at the time Director of the organization's Practice Directorate. Welch, with evangelical zeal, dogmatically uses alleged research findings to prove a moral (or in this case, an immoral) point. The article outlines a press conference held by APA during the Values Coalition meetings to denounce the Reverend's statements. The APA's Welch adamantly asserted that "the research on homosexuality is very clear. . . . It . . . is neither a mental illness nor mental depravity. It is simply the way a minority of our population expresses human love and sexuality" (Buie, 1990). Dr. Welch is as entitled to his personal opinions as is anyone else, even if they reek of "wished it" fantasies. But such a minor conference as that of the Values Coalition hardly requires the immediate attention of one of the APA's heaviest hitters unless a nerve has been exposed.

The article highlights an APA news conference held to refute the remarks of Rev. Sheldon and to demean anyone who would dare to hold such foolish and unacceptable opinions. The news conference participants included officers for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and a group referred to as "Parents-Friends of Lesbians and Gays." All are flanked in photographic splendor around Dr. Welch as if they were all scientists of the first order. The intent and motive of the article leave little room for doubt. Here sit radical reformists and aberrants masquerading as civil rights advocates in collusion with social scientists, under auspices of the organization that purports to represent psychology and its practitioners on a national level, passing off personal values and a splinter group political and social agenda as solid science. There is no attempt at even-handed discussion or presentation of diverse views on a highly controversial topic within a field (social science research) that is notoriously unsettled. Of course, no seminal studies were cited to buttress APA's position because there are none. Further, how could research findings ever be put forward as serious proof of Welch's assertion that homosexuality is simply a normal healthy expression of love by a portion of the populace? Validating such an assertion is not even a legitimate object of science. Research is largely irrelevant in what is first and foremost

a moral and value question. Relative to the course and destiny of
a nation, however, they are of utmost relevance.

Perhaps the news conference and the Traditional Values
Coalition meetings were then, simply, two religious groups, one in
disguise and the other not, battling for the "correctness" or
supremacy of their position. The nature of the APA response,
however, suggests something deeper. It reveals the uniform of a
soldier serving in the trenches of a culture war. There is no need
to postulate conspiracy theories to justify such an assertion,
although, depending on the definition one gives to the term, I
personally believe that at some levels it is. It may simply be the case
that the leadership in most of these professions, as is the case in the
entertainment media, is predominantly of a similar world view: that
they hold rather unitary personal values and see themselves as
peculiarly qualified to determine priorities, tastes, and correctness
of thought. It is quintessentially typical of this century's liberal
movement to behave in this fashion to a much greater degree than
the conservatives whom they condemn as being narrow, rigid, and
dedicated to forcing their way on others.

While the above examples have been drawn from a periodical
connected with a national group representing psychologists, similar
specimens are likely to be gleaned from material printed by groups
representing social workers, addiction counselors, psychoanalysts,
and other mental health workers.

For those disposed to ignore or dismiss out of hand the issues
I have raised, the topic is closed. For those willing to acknowledge
the truth of what has been said, either now, or after some investiga-
tion and consideration, there remains the question of response.
What is the best response to having the influence and resources of
a professional organization to which you belong used to undermine
the values and ideas which you are trying to conserve and promote?
Is vocal opposition the answer? Are the column inches of "letters
to the editor" pages the most appropriate battleground? Should an
individual simply renounce his membership in the organization and
resign as several dozen members of APA have done this past year?
Is the best response on an individual or a group basis?

Given that a large percentage of the members of AMCAP are also members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, wouldn't it be likely to expect considerable response from either the membership or the group as a whole to the state of things as I have outlined it? Or, in fact, is it actually the case that there is no response from either individual or organization to these issues because AMCAP is composed of individuals who so segregate their commitments and values from daily life that they do only what is perfunctory, superficial, or safe? Perhaps there is no organizational debate on these issues because AMCAP is held together by only a surface unity, defined primarily by careful encounters, and an avoidance of anything thought to be potentially divisive. Is there truly any common element, theological or otherwise, that binds affiliates of AMCAP together?

Admittedly, spotlighting primarily the LDS portion of AMCAP membership, there are several factors that might be helpful in explaining why virtually no attention has been given to what I have proposed as being a perversion of professional organizations during the past two decades. Many of these same notions might lead to predict that the topic will continue to be ignored, or avoided, and that only a handful of the membership will choose to confront the transformation personally. The paragraphs which follow are offered therefore as a stimulus to both individuals and AMCAP as a body to carry out the organizational review and personal assessment I have urged earlier.

1. Generally LDS people are unprepared by religious training and precept to be either confrontational or contrary. The cultural norm seems to involve being agreeable. Often, anyone who, in a Church context, questions or takes a position divergent from that which receives official approval is labelled as contentious. This label is usually supposed to automatically class the person's question or position as being invalid. This pattern of cultural experience may place a person at a disadvantage in resisting that which may merit resistance. This may be true to an even greater extent in the world of ideas than in the realm of overt behavior. In order to avoid real or imagined social sanctions or the disruption of a seemingly harmonious atmosphere, an LDS person might be more hesitant

than some others to take a vigorous oppositional position. One possible consequence of this, of course, is that if evil is packaged with acceptable authoritative wrapping, or in a desirable form, we may be willing buyers.

2. A second contributing factor may be the sometimes obsessive need among LDS people for permission or authoritative approval, or a program before doing virtually anything. Even in the face of a clear need for intervention or help, there is a possibility that the needed action will not be taken due to a lack of any acknowledged authority giving his blessing to that action. There is also manifest at times an attitude that seems to indicate that if no formal program exists or if no one is officially assigned to do a particular thing, that it need not be done, or that the need may not be legitimate. One consequence of such social needs and attitudes may be that a particular act of compassion that needs doing, or that an evil or wrong that needs to be fought, will simply not be addressed without institutional instigation.

3. When significant numbers of Church members do take a strong position, either under official Church auspices or not, there is at times a tendency to partially equivocate as to why they are doing so. One example might be the efforts made to defeat passage of the ERA amendment some years ago. If people are propelled to actions or influenced in their formation of opinions by their organizational commitments, their personal values, or their understanding of church teachings or principles, why should one be reluctant to admit it? Primarily because such motives are often discounted or disparaged by people whose approval is apparently very much sought; such as those in positions of power or influence outside the religious subculture. Perhaps LDS people want to follow their principles if they can also receive respect and approval from the world as well. Is it true that many LDS people are in the same category as Dr. Welch in that they hide both their motives and objectives so as to be seen in a more respectable or prestigious light? It is my own observation that there is a near obsession with image at some official levels of Church government. Do a significant number of AMCAP members suffer from the same symptoms? Is taking a stand on an issue, or following personal convictions,

contingent upon a calculation of possible perceptions and reactions to the position or action to be taken? There is no shame in formulating positions based, in part, or in whole, on personal values, moral convictions, church teachings, or any other grounds that might be viewed by others as less than valid.

4. Some LDS people appear to act as though the resolution of all emotionally inflammatory issues, political and otherwise, will somehow be brought about by divine intervention and that, as individuals, we need not grapple with them. One might just as well believe that since all knowledge will eventually be revealed that we have no need to study and pray in order to acquire it. Hugh W. Nibley, and others, have pointed out such a fallacy with respect to gaining knowledge. Could evil triumph if good men did nothing? Outcome, however, is not the only consideration here. Irrespective of the result, it is often the process toward outcome that is the most rewarding portion of life, and that part which reveals and/or builds character, leadership, and other qualities, both human and divine.

5. Other individuals are likely to see the issues I have explored here as being trivial or insignificant in the grand scheme of things. Therefore to address them is clearly a waste of resources. If so, what is the criteria for attention? If crops and flocks are to be prayed over, what is not? What cause merits passion? Are those people who seem dedicated to causes I find incorrect or repugnant all devoid of the ability to discern between that which is worth effort and that which is not. If politics is seen as merely a worldly, dirty business, then where will be found the men and women to make it anything else? If individual choices, and minuscule attempts at betterment of self or the uplifting of others, are of no consequence, then who will step forward to light a candle in the dark? Surely the doings of professional organizations to which we belong, and to which we often contribute time and money, cannot be inconsequential.

6. Many of us have likely become so enamored with relative comfort or dependent upon predictable income that we fear risking our economic security and/or our social acceptance. Do we want what the world has to offer so much that we sculpt our moral

likeness to match the current coin of the realm? Is the world too
much with us? Is the charge of some validity that the LDS culture
is one of technicians, professionals, and business types who see the
practical advantages of avoiding ideological risk, minimizing
creativity, and maximizing material gain? What are the possible
effects upon a professional career, and to sustaining a family if a
person is too vocal or active in countering the prevailing wisdom
and custom? Is there serious doubt that losing the approbation of
relevant professional groups would hurt a practitioner economically?
Perhaps there are those who remain silent on a number of issues,
or who act contrary to their convictions, due to these consider-
ations? Put in a theological context, just how much weight is given
in our decision-making to what man can do?

Though some will undoubtedly brand it as manifest paranoia or
doomsday rhetoric, I view the current world as filled with both
danger and promise. It is a world where a nation is born in a day,
and where virtually every aspect of behavior and thought is being
coopted as a combatant in a much larger ideological and spiritual
struggle. The fabric of society may be more tightly stretched than
most might like to acknowledge. As it nears rupture prior to
rapture, cultural, economic, social, and political fault lines begin to
emerge, and confrontation appears on several fronts simultaneously.
During this process, the restructuring of everything from informa-
tion exchange and resource distribution to the concentration of
political power and economic wealth will occur. This restructuring
will determine much of the daily life and destiny of individuals and
nations. In short, there is underway, if the phrase may be excused,
the formation of a new world order.

The nature and functions of professional organizations are part
of that upheaval. They will be shaped for good or ill in the struggle
and they will be shaped primarily by people who perceive the
influence such organizations can have, and who care enough, or are
dedicated enough to shape them in either direction. Events within
the last year would suggest, for example, that at some point in the
foreseeable future, competent men and women could be con-
demned or purged from membership in some mental health
organizations as a result of outspoken views in opposition to

homosexuality or therapeutic activities which support and advance the heterosexual lifestyle and value system. Is it really such a long road from the thwarting of vital animal research by radicals and activists and the ideological cleansing of academic departments to the use of professional ethics codes as a means of investigating and stripping therapists of their professional credentials due to the divergence of their values and beliefs from that which is "approved"? The inclusion of the ubiquitous but agenda relevant "sexual orientation" phrase in ethics codes and hiring policies may be only the beginning. Will there be standards of "profess-itically correct" thought and activity in the future? What does such a future hold for those who actively oppose such developments?

I have premised in this essay a rapidly escalating conflict of culture, ideology, and morality spreading to more and more aspects of daily life. Secondly, I have asserted that individuals in the helping professions hold no immunity from this conflict in which professional organizations have now become active warriors in the struggle. Additionally, I have attempted to stimulate members of AMCAP to consider seriously these premises and formulate responses to them on a personal and possibly an organizational basis. Several factors which may be impeding consideration and debate on the issues raised are also offered. In conclusion, I would suggest that in the scenario I have proposed, our pivotal choice is that of role. The two that readily come to mind are those of either victim or participant.

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Whither Thou Goest, Will I Go?
But I Say Unto You,
That Ye Resist Not Evil

Lane Fischer, PhD

N elson (1994) posited that a cultural war is at hand and bemoaned the politicization of professional organizations such as the American Psychological Association. He proposed that politicization is a perversion of professional organizations. Initially it was unclear whether he was more alarmed that professional organizations show political leanings or that the politicization has been "decidedly leftward in ideological geography." It was clear, however, that he viewed those leftward leanings as immoral. I was impressed and concerned by several of the author's statements. I was also stimulated to ponder my own resolution to the dilemma the author proposed.

I am convinced that Nelson (1994) was more alarmed by the leftward leanings than simple politicization. While he called the politicization a perversion, he also challenged individual members, and AMCAP as an organization, to come out and fight. In essence he asked AMCAP to join in the perversion, but to do so from, I assume, a right-wing position.

He set up a straw-man Mormon and accused him of being (1) unprepared for confrontation, (2) subservient to authority, (3) equivocal, (4) naively passive, (5) inattentive, and, (6) afraid to lose his relative comfort and predictable income. I find that caricature to be inaccurate. While examples of such people could probably be found, it is a straw-man with little substance supporting it.

I was concerned by Nelson's (1994) *ad hominem* name calling which was neither professional nor helpful. Phrases such as "terminal judicial activist groupieism," and "radical reformists and aberrants masquerading as civil rights advocates in collusion with social scientists" are intemperate and inflammatory. Clearly, he saw the situation as a polarized war between left and right, right and wrong, good and evil, moral and immoral. He showed no compunction against insulting "the other side." He sounded the battle cry to awaken and inflame the troops by calling them wimps and threatening that they could participate in the war or be victims.

Personally, I haven't joined in a fight because someone called me a wimp since I was twelve years old and the threat that I can be a victim or a participant is a false dilemma. Nelson (1994) presented only two bad alternatives; victim or participant. Whenever only two alternatives have been presented, all the possibilities have usually not been explored. Alternatives are numerous and do not have to be opposites.

I was pleased with the opportunity to reflect on my own experience with this dilemma. I found both experiential and scriptural support for a third alternative. I apologize for using my own experience, as it may sound self-righteous, but this is something I learned the hard way and I think that it is valid.

I completed my undergraduate and masters degree at BYU. I completed my doctoral training at the University of Minnesota and practiced professionally in the Twin Cities. I lived in Minnesota for eleven years. There certainly was a notable contrast in political climate between Provo and Minneapolis. I went to the University of Minnesota with considerable zeal. I challenged politics. My fellow graduate students and I met to discuss and debate philosophy and politics. What I discovered in those encounters was that overt conflict was antagonistic and only seemed to reify polar positions and entrench people in camps. We became more rigid than workable and our understanding did not grow. Relationships that might have been fertile and nourishing became rocky and anemic.

Later in professional practice, I worked with colleagues who were decidedly liberal and even quite radical. Support for abortion, homosexuality, extramarital sexual experience, and even the terrorism of the IRA was commonplace. I found that if I stopped the debate and listened to my colleagues, I did not agree with them, but I did love them.

I learned to do what I would do if I loved someone. It became much more valuable to rototill my colleague's garden than to wrangle about politics. It was far more rewarding to be concerned about the health of my friend's child than to worry about her sexual preference. I learned more about the suffering and healing of children from my Irish friend by watching her work than by castigating her terrorist connections. In the end, I probably had more influence on them as well. They certainly asked more questions after they knew of my love. They often experienced dissonance between what they experienced in our relationship and what they assumed about the LDS Church.

It is instructive to review the experience of Ammon, Aaron, and Muloki as they attempted to teach a people who were decidedly their political adversaries (Alma 17–22). These men were directed to

> Go forth among the Lamanites, thy brethren, and establish my word; yet
> ye shall be patient in long-suffering and afflictions, that ye may show
> forth good examples unto them in me, and I will make an instrument
> of thee in my hands unto the salvation of many souls. (Alma 17:11)

It was a daunting task "for they had undertaken to preach the word of God to a wild and a hardened and a ferocious people; a people who delighted in murdering the Nephites, and robbing and plundering them." (Alma 17:14) Ammon went to this people who were enemies of his people and offered himself as a servant (Alma 17:23–25). Only after King Lamoni had seen Ammon's goodness, loyalty, and courage was he able to listen to the message. Only then did Ammon begin "to speak with boldness" (Alma 18:24).

Contrast Ammon's strategy with that of Aaron, Muloki, and Ammah who went and "contended with many about the word" (Alma 21:11). They boldly decried against the Lamanites and were

rejected, tortured, and cast into prison (Alma 20:29–30). While they were patient in all their sufferings, they were not effective in having anyone listen to them.

Ammon's strategy worked not only with Lamoni, but also with Lamoni's father, the king of all the Lamanites, to whom they appealed for Aaron's release. When Lamoni's father saw the great love that Ammon had for his son he ordered Aaron's release from prison. When Aaron met Lamoni's father, he immediately employed Ammon's strategy. He said, "We will be thy servants."

The king refused to allow them to be servants and responded, "I will insist that ye shall administer unto me, for I have been somewhat troubled in my mind because of the generosity and the greatness of the words of thy brother Ammon" (Alma 22:2–3). Lamoni and his father listened because they knew of Ammon's love.

Bold declarations that are not founded in love are not influential.

I recall the words of the Savior which I think bear on Nelson's (1994) false dilemma.

> Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if a man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? (Matthew 5:38–47)

It seems to me that Jesus offered a third alternative and invited us to transcend the war. He invited us to live a life of peace.

It was also instructive to me to review the revelations that Joseph Smith received and what he wrote when he was faced with a more modern cultural war on two fronts. In 1832, the Church was centered in two major locations; Jackson County, Missouri, and Kirtland, Ohio. One front of the cultural war was outside the Church between the Mormons and some of the old settlers in Missouri and Ohio. Anti-mormon rhetoric, slander, and violence was prevalent in the entire region. On March 24, 1832 Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were attacked. Sidney was dragged by his heels with his head hitting the ground until he was unconscious and left for dead. Joseph was stripped, tarred, beaten, and scratched by a mob led by a local preacher.

The other front was within the Church between the saints in Missouri and Ohio. Early converts to the Church from New York were largely settled in Jackson County which had been identified as Zion. Edward Partridge was appointed as the Bishop in Zion. Later converts who were associated with Sidney Rigdon were largely settled around Kirtland where Joseph personally resided.

There arose personal and political antipathy between these two centers with considerable suspicions, backbiting and inflammatory prose both written and spoken. In April of 1832, Joseph went from Kirtland to Missouri to set matters aright. While in conference there, he facilitated a peaceful resolution to the conflict between Edward and Sidney.

After amicable relationships were restored, Joseph received the revelation which includes counsel regarding both fronts of the burgeoning cultural war. Regarding the inside front, the Lord commended the saints for their repentance. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, my servants, that inasmuch as you have forgiven one another your trespasses, even so I, the Lord, forgive you" (*Doctrine and Covenants* 82:1).

Regarding the outside front, the Lord counseled the people to seek peace. He said, "And now, verily I say unto you, and this is wisdom, make unto yourselves friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, and they will not destroy you. Leave judgment alone with me, for it is mine and I will repay. Peace be with you;

my blessings continue with you" (*Doctrine and Covenants* 82:22–23).

Joseph returned to Kirtland and within a few months much of the intrachurch antipathy reappeared in Missouri. On December 27, 1832 he received further revelation. He wrote to W. W. Phelps in Missouri in January of 1833. He sent a copy of the revelation which he characterized as "the 'Olive Leaf' which we have plucked from the tree of Paradise, the Lord's message of peace to us" (Roberts, 1930, p. 315).

I believe that the Olive Leaf brings peace because it forever dispels the false dilemma of dichotomized right and wrong, moral and immoral, heaven and hell. A careful reading of this treasure shows that people can be justified in living various levels of law which are accompanied by various responses from the universe. Note that there is a fulness for each qualitatively different lifestyle.

> For he who is not able to abide the law of a celestial kingdom cannot abide a celestial glory. And he who is not able to abide the law of a terrestrial kingdom cannot abide a terrestrial glory. And he who cannot abide the law of a telestial kingdom cannot abide a telestial glory. . . . Ye who are quickened by a portion of the celestial glory shall then receive of the same, even a fulness. And they who are quickened by a portion of the terrestrial glory shall receive of the same, even a fulness. And also they who are quickened by a portion of the telestial glory shall then receive of the same, even a fulness. . . . All kingdoms have a law given; And there are many kingdoms; for there is no space in the which there is no kingdom; and there is no kingdom in which there is no space, either a greater or a lesser kingdom. And unto every kingdom is given a law; and unto every law there are certain bounds also and conditions (*Doctrine and Covenants* 88: 21–24, 29–31, 36–38).

While right and wrong may be polarized, they are not dichotomous. Both within and without the Church, we are all finding our way to the law which we can abide. And while we can invite others by example and gentle persuasion to abide the more adequate law, we need to understand that not everyone will accept our invitation. Refusal to hear or accept the invitation does not make someone an enemy.

As an example, let me refer to a current professional dilemma and illustrate how I think AMCAP transcended a cultural war.

Fassinger (1991) reviewed the history of the treatment of homosexuality in *The Counseling Psychologist*. She noted three approaches to the treatment of homosexuality. It has been seen as mental illness and treated with reparative therapy. Homosexuality has been seen as innocuous and treated with a null approach. It has also been seen as an expression of personhood which has been oppressed by a hostile environment and needed to be treated with affirmative therapy. She opined that reparative and null approaches were unethical. She argued against null treatment because it tacitly allows societal abuses of homosexual people to continue. She posited that the only ethical treatment of homosexuality was affirmative therapy.

This can pose one part of an ethical dilemma for LDS professionals. How can LDS therapists ethically treat homosexuality with affirmative therapy if their views do not agree with Fassinger's ethics? They cannot lie to themselves, their clients, and their profession.

Bingham and Potts (1993) reviewed the writings of the prophets to establish that the Church views homosexual behavior as sin and antithetical to true personhood. They noted the invitation and ability to change such behavior through the power of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ with support from church leaders and counselors.

This poses the other half of the dilemma for LDS therapists. Many clients with issues around homosexuality neither believe in the Church, the prophets, nor the scriptures, and do not desire to change their behavior. LDS therapists cannot impose their values on their clients.

A professional/cultural war could ensue here. Two polarized camps could emerge. That would be unfortunate since both points of view have validity. Fassinger (1991) is correct in her report that society has been hostile toward homosexual people and that violence has hurt our homosexual brothers and sisters. There is no denying this reality. Bingham and Potts (1993) are also accurate in their report that the prophets have warned about the dangers of the misuse of sexuality. There is no denying this reality either.

I was pleased to see Richards' (1993) response to this dilemma which I believe transcended a possible war. Richards (1993) reviewed the appropriate use of reparative therapy for homosexuality and concluded his article by noting the ethical demand for all professionals to exercise tolerance of clients and one another. The transcendent term is *tolerance*. Both perspectives have validity and a place in the therapeutic community. Should either position attack the other they would be violating the higher order demand for tolerance.

President Spencer W. Kimball (1982) characterized tolerance as "the most lovable quality any human being can possess. . . It is the vision that enables one to see things from another's viewpoint. It is the generosity that concedes to others the right to their own opinions and peculiarities. It is the bigness that enables us to let people be happy in their own way instead of our way" (Kimball, 1982).

Elder John Carmack has written an excellent and pragmatic guide to tolerance that I highly recommend to all mental health professionals. Carmack (1993) characterized tolerance as an *active* principle, by virtue of which we are to energetically seek to understand and build relationships within our communities. Carmack (1993) allowed for strong beliefs and noted that

> our beliefs do not require or permit Latter-day Saints to be intolerant of others whose beliefs differ from our own. Can we not hold fast to everything we believe, yet have sympathy and understanding for those whose beliefs differ from ours? (p. 9)

Richards (1993) invited all professionals to maintain tolerance and transcend conflict. And if other professionals can't do so, Jesus invited us, as Latter-day Saints, to do it unilaterally.

Nelson (1994) showed courage to stand up and be counted. To him, this response may sound like an uncertain trumpet-call to battle. To me, it sounds like a more versatile trumpet that harmonizes the many notes between heaven and hell. I believe that the peace of the Olive Leaf comes from disavowing dichotomized right and wrong and transcending conflict.

I believe that we show more courage by extending active tolerance even when it is not reciprocated. I believe people are more influenced by our peaceable walk with the children of men than by our engaging in a cultural war.

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Ye are the Light of the World

Robert L. Gleave, PhD

Dr. Nelson (1994) in his article, "Professional Organizations: Whither Thou Goest, Will I Go?" raises some valuable and interesting points which are worthy of discussion and response. I agree in many ways with Nelson's (1994) conclusion that much more can and should be done to speak out for traditional values. I disagree, however, with the reasons that he cites for doing so. Nelson's (1994) approach was laced with alarmist cries and finger pointing, which attributes malicious intent to organization leaders. The tone and flavor of his article seems to leave us helpless, with only limited options, such as abandoning the organization.

I do not argue with Nelson's (1994) position that professional organizations are giving more effort to advocacy. I also do not argue against any individual making a personal choice to terminate support of an organization on that basis (or any other). It is also legitimate, as Nelson (1994) does in this article, to long for the "good old days" of yesteryear, and/or to prefer the "way things were." However, I would argue that none of these preferences can be used to support a current moral imperative with implied or stated expectation that all (or many) "should" act likewise. The more relevant question, it seems to me, becomes what can we do and what will we do to make our concerns public? What choices will we make given circumstances as they currently exist?

Nelson (1994) is critical of APA leadership for making assumptions about what is representative of the membership. Leadership

in all large associations has a responsibility, in my opinion, to operate on such assumptions. It is logistically impossible to take every decision back to the entire membership for a vote. In fact, it seems to me that this concept underlies the entire notion of a representative leadership. In a representative leadership system, the burden of getting one's views heard must rest squarely upon the individual constituent. It is unreasonable to wait for one's opinions to be requested by leadership.

I am aware, from personal experience, that leadership for the most part anxiously welcomes feedback from constituents, and is more than willing to make adjustments when called into question by those within the organization. It is unreasonable to expect that leadership would on a regular basis solicit such feedback from the entire membership. It is rather an expectation that each constituent will make his/her views known and his/her position clear when the organization diverges from his/her sense of propriety.

Nelson (1994) further criticizes the APA and other such professional organizations for adopting a stance which includes social advocacy. Social advocacy, while not (I would agree) a primary function of a professional association, is still a duty that cannot be totally ignored. Our social structure and governmental system are founded upon the premises of a representative society and for any group to avoid its responsibility to make information available to leadership is to perform less than its duty. Our society continues to ask for "expert opinion," and "light of the world" (Matthew 5:14) duty leads one to offer information. Our legislative system, as with other representative systems, works best when information is made available. There is a fine line, however, that we must bear in mind between offering information and discharging one's duty as a constituent in a representative system, and advocating single issue (special interest) specific actions.

Nelson (1994) appears to be aware of the above mentioned "salt of the earth" (3 Nephi 12:13) duty as evidenced by his article and his call for action. However, his request to the AMCAP organization to make an organized response to these other professional organizations seems to express a hope that AMCAP would become a social advocacy organization to censure social advocacy in other

professional associations. The difference, it appears to me, in what is requested is that, hopefully, the AMCAP position would be more to the liking of this particular author. I would guess that it was a similar feeling and motivation that began the before mentioned increase in social advocacy activity in professional organizations in the first place. Perhaps a cry for moderation and temperance could replace our outcry against social advocacy in general.

The question which Nelson (1994) raises, "Shouldn't AMCAP do something?" also reflects an attitude with which I am uncomfortable. This question seems to reflect a view that organizations are "they" and not "us." It is far too easy to avoid personal responsibility for action by crying out loudly that "they" are not fulfilling their responsibility, and should do differently. I can imagine that there might have been similar pleas from APA members in the early stages of the shift toward an increase in social advocacy efforts. Perhaps no one intended for things to "get out of hand." Perhaps "we" didn't attend closely enough to what "we" were doing, but rather complacently hoped that "they" would act appropriately. (Now we can complain that "they" didn't do very well and cut off affiliation with a clear conscience, even a sense of righteous indignation.)

Nelson (1994) has encouraged opposing or alternative views. From where will these views come if many of "us" abandon ship? Perhaps there is reason to join Nelson (1994) and to encourage the "silent majority" to no longer remain silent. It may be that it is often those with a "particular political ideology and social agenda" (Nelson, 1994) that generate the energy to overcome inertia and to write articles? Perhaps "we" could get energized to counter radical expression if it is offensive, or even put forward a proactive position suggesting action "we" would welcome. Those who publish the periodicals would surely respond to well written feedback.

Nelson (1994) criticizes the content of APA *Monitor* articles, suggesting that the editorial staff are purposely and maliciously choosing radical positions and content to be published. I have had enough experience with professional organizations and publications to wonder if the slant taken is the result of publishing what is available rather than purposely weeding out portions of what is

submitted. I have often heard editors' pleas for more options among which to choose go begging. Portions of Nelson's (1994) current critique would have made a great follow up article or letter to the editor.

Nelson (1994) suggests that there are specific impediments inherent in the LDS population which inhibit responding in the ways required by membership in a representative system. I would suggest that if there are such impediments, that they are not founded in doctrine, and therefore do not constitute sufficient reason for not discharging such duty.

There is indeed a great sifting that is apparent in the world in general. It is no surprise that this is also occurring, or is apparent in professional organizations. The questions that remain are still the same. Will we place our light upon the hill, or leave that to someone else? Will our leavening (Luke 13:21) influence be felt within the organization? Will there be alternative options presented to the organization from within, and be openly available to leadership in spite of the risk of censure to those who raise such alternative options? Are we sufficiently sure of our grounding to proceed forward in faith, confidence, and peace?

It is possible that the majority view is being expressed in APA, and that it may be valuable to maintain membership in the organization precisely to add a dissenting voice and to bring balance and reason back to a valued organization. Jumping ship and other forms of abandonment may not be the prudent course.

I applaud Dr. Nelson (1994) that this thought-provoking article was written and submitted. It is precisely this kind of effort that contributes to a more representative balance, for which he has advocated. It is my hope that Nelson's (1994) article has the effect of stimulating many more opinions to be expressed in a variety of forms including the process of submissions to journals and newsletters.

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Response:

To Love the Lord is to Hate Evil

Proverbs 8:13

Dennis E. Nelson, PhD

A MCAP Journal Editor, Dr. Scott Richards, has requested some written comments in response to Dr. Fischer's critique of my essay which appears in this issue. Before doing so, however, I want to give my personal thanks to Dr. Richards, Dr. Fischer, and earlier reviewers of the manuscript for the time and effort they expended, and for encouraging and participating in an open debate about ideas such as these.

Clarifying a point that Dr. Fischer sees as "initially unclear" is I believe the first order of business. It is strongly implied in Fischer's critique that I am more concerned with the nature of a professional organization's political stance (i.e., leftward) than in the fact that one is being taken. Such an assertion has a tinge of validity, but falls far short of the truth.

My view of professional organizations and scientific societies is a rather traditional one. Objectives of disseminating research findings and other intellectual products to members of the profession and the public is of high priority. Refreshing and stimulating the membership through meetings and workshops is also part of the groups mandate.

While such a view allows for vigorous internal debates regarding all sorts of things, it does not allow for the use of organizational resources and image to promote particular views on current political and social controversies, or to employ supposedly scientific data and authority to change national values or cultural policy.

There are of course rather narrow guild issues that are within the purview of the traditional professional society. While these are rather self-serving and perhaps make the group less than "pure," they may at least be rationalized on the basis of enhancing and uplifting the field of study represented.

When a scientific society either abandons such objectives and activities in the pursuit of others, or when the traditional forms and functions are in reality subjugated to another agenda, the legitimacy of that organization is in question. The furthering of political and social agendas is a legitimate activity and individuals are free to form groups dedicated to doing so. However, that is not the purpose of professional associations which represent an entire field of study or vocation.

I have no objection to the formation of a group called "Psychologists in Favor of Abortion," or one entitled "Psychologists Who Believe in God" for that matter. However, using the resources, influence, and structure of a national scientific society to fuel an attempt to remake the values, political policies, and cultural mores of a nation is starkly unethical. That is true irrespective of the direction such an effort takes.

It is true that the particular direction taken by many professional groups during the past two decades adds insult to injury by furthering causes and positions that directly conflict with those I try to live by and pass on to my children. This fact must, however, be seen as much as possible as a separate issue. Hopefully, this explanation will make it clear that I make a two-fold indictment against the changing nature of most learned societies in the behavioral sciences and helping professions. In a number of cases they have both left their traditional moorings and have set sail under a thinly veiled pirate's flag, denying both their course and its purpose.

Dr. Fischer chooses not to deal substantively with any of the hypotheses I raise regarding the paucity of response by LDS professionals. Instead, focus is placed on what is referred to as "name calling" which is labeled as "neither professional nor helpful"

and upon characterizing some phrases in my essay as "intemperate and inflammatory."

It is granting little to agree that there are rarely if ever pure types to be found, but simply asserting that hypotheses have "little substance" begs the question. Leaving aside anecdotal data, I believe considerable evidence could be marshalled from several of the social sciences as well as reviews of LDS historical material which would provide substance to several, if not all, of the original hypotheses.

Given time and space limitations, let me broach only two examples. Let an analysis be carried out on statements by LDS General Authorities from the Church's inception until, let us say, the beginning of the Heber J. Grant presidency. It is likely that considerable support would be found in such statements for independent thinking on the part of the membership. Would the same degree of support be found in a parallel study of statements from the same source since that time? My prediction would be in the negative.

In a meta-analysis of sociological studies on LDS populations and institutions might it be discovered that the same stages and problems that plague institutions in the world at large also afflict LDS organizations and programs? Would students of intellectual thought transmission find that the same waves of thought and behavior prevalent among the general population seep into Mormondom only at a slower rate, or with some patternistic time lag? The point is that if the LDS people can be legitimately framed as an ethnic group or subculture at all, there is likely some support for the hypotheses I raised.

With respect to the "intemperate and inflammatory" phrases Dr. Fischer finds so objectionable, phrases are sometimes selected to convey a vivid cognitive picture in the mind of the reader. At the worst, they offer a sharp-edged portrait of the writer's personal view. At best, they serve as a telling and accurate description of those characterized. There is no objection to having others who seek to praise the same individuals do so in terms of glowing hyperbole. However, to simply place new names on my descriptions

because of disagreement over their accuracy is no better behavior than the intellectual sin of which Dr. Fischer accuses me.

At the core of Fischer's critique however, lies an assertion that I have framed a false dilemma, and posited a war that need not exist. Unfortunately, the support for this notion rests on several assumptions about my position which are either untrue or seriously misconstrued.

No assertions were made in my essay that it is useful or even defensible to attack vigorously everyone who disagrees with us. Most of us have had similar experiences to those of Dr. Fischer, whether in a graduate study setting or otherwise. That is, we have encountered a number of people with whom we have formed a friendship, or from whom we have learned important lessons, who disagreed with us on some quite fundamental issues. That truth does not address the situation framed by my essay.

It is also unfortunate that Dr. Fischer tends to focus on the outcome of convincing, or converting those who are on the opposite side of a conflict. The fact that Aaron, Muloki, and Ammah converted few and were imprisoned tells us nothing whatsoever about the correctness or incorrectness of their approach to the situation. Were we to use such outcome based judgments, Noah and Christ would surely rank low on the "Wise Judgment" scale. There are times and places where conversion and teaching are neither a possible or even an appropriate goal.

At this point it is important to highlight Dr. Fischer's recurrent discomfort with images and references associated with confrontation and war. This seems often to be a hallmark of modern liberal thinking. Nothing is really worth going to war over, or dying for. This is partly a poisonous legacy of the Viet Nam war experience, and partly the result of a generation or two of young Americans having an abundance of material goods, and too little history of searing sacrifice.

An impression arises as one reads Fischer's phrases regarding a "wrangle about politics" or a "worry about her sexual preference." The impression is that Fischer sees such matters as trivial, or only focused on by somewhat petty people. This despite the fact that

these and other such matters will largely determine the context of the world in which we have to live on a daily basis. It would be instructive to ascertain just what issues, decisions, or situations would command passion, or sacrifice, or confrontation within the framework of such an intellectual mindset.

Tolerance seems to be the operative word in Fischer's recommendation for avoiding the horrors of potential war, cultural and otherwise. Unfortunately, the example selected for the application of this prescription again misses the mark. The need for tolerance among conflicting points of view regarding therapeutic technique, and the equally needful caution to not force ones views on the client are self evident. This says little or nothing about the world outside the fifty minute hour. As an aside, it is instructive to compare the liberal rhetoric regarding tolerance even in the therapeutic community and the recent attempt by the "other" APA to brand all therapists as unethical who attempt to help willing homosexuals change.

Looking a bit closer at Dr. Fischer's application of tolerance to the issue of homosexuality is useful in illustrating the inadequacy of the solution. To be sure, the shunning of physical violence aimed at homosexuals is basic. Tolerance toward those who engage in such behavior in their own private life is to be taught. Loving the sinner and despising the sin is the ideal to be emulated. Human help in whatever form feasible should be marshalled to any who wish to leave behind such thoughts and practices.

However, the wisdom of allowing active homosexuals to serve in certain specific jobs including portions of the military should be seriously questioned and debated. Taking a dogmatic "scientific" position on such a question is at least premature, and perhaps impossible. Conferring upon homosexuals the special status of a minority is not a professional or scientific issue. This kind of battle must be fought by individuals and organizations other than those referenced in my essay. One would hope that the vast bulk of active LDS people would be in opposition to the attempt to legitimize immorality by perverting a reasonable cause: that of human civil rights. Toward the radical extreme of this brief continuum of scenarios, the movement to legitimize homosexual

marriages should be passionately and relentlessly fought. However, doing so is not the role of traditional professional groups.

The point of this illustration is to assert that with regard to a number of issues it is clearly undesirable to avoid confrontation on at least some levels of human interaction. Tolerance can be both ineffective and totally inappropriate.

The other central difficulty with Dr. Fischer's recommendation is that it partakes generously of what I would refer to as the "tea party" mentality. By this I mean that it seems to be implied that people are to be assumed to be of good will. Thus, disagreements are part of the diversity of human personality, and that they can either be peacefully resolved, or safely left coexistent with our own.

Such a comforting belief system is refuted by the entire course of history, both mortal and pre-mortal. While personality is certainly diverse, so is the intent and basic nature of individuals. There are those on virtually all sides of an issue who are either ignorant, or misinformed, or who take a position while having minimal dedication to it.

Likewise, there are those who for various reasons are gullible or subject to duplicity in a cause without truly being conversant with either its true import or content. In addition, however, there are also others who because of their own involvement in sin, or affinity for darkness, power, money, or aggrandizement, know full well what they are advocating and why they are advocating it. Among these are many of the militant homosexuals, gender feminists, and committed intellectuals. It is my assertion that a substantial number of psychology's leadership on a national level, fall within this category. Others simply find it fashionable to be liberal, or have so little conviction to the contrary that they acquiesce.

What I have referred to as the "tea party" mentality is helpless against those who are deeply dedicated to a cause. This obtains somewhat due to an aversion for conflict and warfare, and somewhat due to the inability to fully acknowledge or recognize neither the nature nor intensity of evil. Their's is the realm of dialogue, tolerance, persuasion, and at worst, economic sanctions.

Such lack of discernment and will, can, depending upon the nature of the conflicted issue, result in physical or spiritual death.

It is my assertion that in addition to mere human disagreement and diversity, we are seeing the age old issues involved with the war to save or destroy souls, being played out on the stage of the behavioral sciences and their associated organizations. One of the best known of modern dispensation revelations (*Doctrine and Covenants* 89), was delivered as a warning in consequence of the subtle ploys of the adversary in the last days. To take literary license with Burke, it may be pointed out that all that is necessary to enable evil to triumph is for good men and women to be sufficiently tolerant.

Response:
Has the Light of the World
Experienced Brownout?

Dennis E. Nelson, PhD

R egretably, Dr. Gleave's manuscript arrived only days prior to my departure for an extended period. Along with the constraint of submission deadlines upon my return, only a few brief comments can be tendered in response.

The similar problems associated with representative government and institutional responsiveness are substantially as Dr. Gleave states them to be. However, I do not believe, as is implied by his statement regarding leader willingness to address membership feedback, that the organizational direction taken by the APA or most other professional groups for that matter is determined foremost by the rather innocent principle of "the squeaky wheel is the one that receives the grease."

Let me reassert here that I do indeed ascribe deliberate ideological intent to most of the policy related decisions of these leaders and governing bodies. Responsiveness to "feedback" is selective, based primarily on liberal litmus tests.

Dr. Gleave's point regarding the "we" versus "they" cognitive framework of much of my discussion has, upon further reflection, more validity than I would have at first perceived. Such a criticism highlights the tendency found in most of us to expect or hope that problems will be resolved by someone outside ourselves. Beyond the choice to get involved on a personal level, his comment also touches directly on a very personal strategic decision. Assuming an individual perceives the existence of some problem which merits a

response, there are those who are likely most effective in working for change through the system or via organized involvement. Others, are better suited or more comfortable operating quite outside the borders of any group effort. History contains sufficient examples of a broad spectrum of styles and approaches in working for change. Withdrawal, organized refusal to respond, protests by a group or by an individual, and many other strategies can be appropriate depending on the nature of the circumstances and of the aggrieved parties.

More implied than openly broached by Dr. Gleave is the criticism that I expect from AMCAP what I condemn in other professional groups, namely advocacy. Under duress, I confess there to be some truth in that indictment. It is so because of a lingering idealistic view of AMCAP. Let it be clear that I would have no quarrel with an AMCAP that followed the model of a traditional professional organization as outlined in my original paper. Yet, the idealistic portion of my heart yearns for the possibility that any organization composed primarily of LDS men and women could be something different, something more than merely a junior clone of so many groups available in the world at large.

If it is not, is it worthwhile? If the AMCAP membership is composed of individuals who are primarily therapists, or psychologists, or medical practitioners, then organizing seems redundant, except for social purposes. It is due to just such reasoning that I opposed the adoption of an AMCAP ethics code. It appears to be only another outward sign of legitimacy in comparison to other worldly organizations, rather than reflecting the uniqueness of its memberships presumably shared commitment.

Perhaps whatever binds AMCAP members together is not nearly as unique as I would prefer to believe. There may be no concrete realities to which the vast bulk of AMCAP members are anchored. If so, the salt is quickly losing its savor. Let me not be misunderstood. It is not totally unified, lock-step thinking and direction that I anticipate. But as programs, policies, and directions are proposed, and as problems are analyzed, there are correct principles that can be applied, and values consonant with the gospel that can be brought to bear in the process. If we wish to ignore such realities

it is within our agency to do so. However, if we so choose, then in my view, most of the justification for AMCAP itself fades from view.

As underdeveloped countries ape the West, much that is culturally distinctive disappears, and many of the remaining differences coalesce around the trivial. As ethnic groups become assimilated, valuable parts of their original identity can be exchanged for hollow practices, organizations, and entities that are in reality only imitations of their dominant culture counterparts, with ethnic facades or labels.

Institutions of all kinds can suffer a similar fate. Perhaps a once "peculiar people" have found acceptance and success sufficient to diffuse their light or worse. The LDS subculture has its sports stars, business giants, artists, and politicians. Do they really differ in any meaningful way from the comparable icons of the world at large? Some might say that the distinctive "community" of the saints no longer exists. Others might assert that even LDS theology gets more bland, and less distinctive each decade. Is AMCAP just another professional group whose membership happens to contain a high percentage of individuals whose names are found for one reason or another on the rolls of a particular religious institution? Is Zion in a state of brownout?

Perhaps it is vain to expect light to emanate from any organized group or institution. As Dr. Gleave reminds us, there is indeed a sifting process underway. Might it be that such a process requires a context wherein every man walks after his own God? Under such conditions, light would surely be scattered, refracted, and rarely if ever widely acknowledged. Its brightest and most resplendent rays would be encountered not in the doings of any structured group or official association, but rather in the lives of a relatively few individual souls. Each in his or her own way would be offering every other person they rub shoulders with an opportunity to ignite yet another spark.

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