

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RHETORIC USED BY MORMON
WOMEN TO ARGUE EQUAL SUFFRAGE IN UTAH: 1870-1896

by

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CHAPTER I

The Ballot in the Hands of the Women of Utah should be a Power to better the Home, the State and the Nation.¹

INTRODUCTION

Monday, February 21, 1870, was a unique day in the history of Utah for two reasons. On this day the Territory undertook the first election in which two parties, the People's (Mormons) and the Independents took part; and women, due to their newly acquired right, were allowed to vote.²

The first woman to vote, even though only a few women cast their ballots, was Miss Seraph Young, the daughter of B.H. Young and the grandniece of President Brigham Young, President of the Mormon Church³ at this time.⁴

To understand the significance of these events, and the unrest that followed them, it would be wise to evaluate the happenings leading up to this milestone in Utah history, and to look briefly at the history of the Mormon Church and the selfless but strong convictions of its people.

¹Front page caption immediately following the name of the Woman's Exponent, from 1897 to 1913.

²Orson F. Whitney, History of Utah, II (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons and Co., Publishers, 1893), p. 404.

³The official name of the Mormon Church is "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." Mormon or Mormons is a common nickname and will be used throughout this document to signify the official name of the Church.

⁴Whitney, op. cit., II, p. 405.

The Credence and Constitution of
Mormonism

The central figure in the Latter-day Saint religion is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, after whom the Church was named and by whose authority it was established and operates. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is neither "protestant" nor "reformed." It is believed to be the "restored" Church, re-established by the Lord in our own time with the same authority, organization, principles, and ordinances which He brought to earth 2,000 years ago.⁵

The "restoration" of the Church and subsequent establishment of Mormonism began in 1820, when a fifteen year old boy named Joseph Smith, concerned and confused about which denominational Church to join, (and taking the advice in James 1:5, "to ask of God"), went into a forest to pray. There he was visited by two Personages "whose brightness and glory defied all description" standing above him in the air.⁶

When Joseph was able to control his feelings, he asked his questions and was told that none of the Churches were right for him, that he should join none of them, and at some future time the fullness of the gospel would be made known to him.

Four years later, in a divine experience, Joseph Smith received gold plates which contained the original Book of Mormon, an ancient record Latter-day Saints can prove supports and complements the Holy Bible.⁷

⁵Doyle L. and Randall L. Green, Meet the Mormons (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1972), pp. 2-3.

⁶Ibid., pp. 14-16.

⁷Ibid., p. 18.

Over the years since, misunderstandings have arisen between Mormons and non-Mormons for the same reason they have occurred between different ethnic and religious groups throughout the ages: human nature is afraid of and resists what it does not know (or understand). It therefore seems necessary to declare Mormon Articles of Faith pertinent to this study (an prerequisite to seeing the futility of all the ruckus stirred by Gentiles⁸ in the late nineteenth century.)

To The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the question of authority is all important. "We believe that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands, by those who are in authority, to preach the gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof."⁹ "No man taketh this honour unto himself," wrote the Apostle Paul, "But he that is called of God, as was Aaron."¹⁰ From this perspective the reverence Mormons hold for Joseph Smith's divine experience and the principles for which he lived and died is evidenced.

Revelation from God has always determined the values and behavior of conscientious Mormons as well as their positions on contemporary and political issues. "We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God."¹¹

Freedom of religion, a principle established in the United States Constitution, is another article of the Mormon faith: "We claim the

⁸The term "Gentile" is used by the Mormons to designate non-Mormons. It comes from the Biblical time of Jacob, during which, a Gentile was one not of the House of Israel.

⁹Green, op. cit., p. 76.

¹⁰Hebrews 5:4.

¹¹Green, op. cit., p. 76.

privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may."¹²

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves," wrote Paul (Hebrews 13:17), and re-established Joseph Smith in the Articles of Faith: "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law."¹³

The Equality of Mormon Women

Women, according to Mormon doctrine, have always been permitted a voice in the affairs of the Church. This is and has been the doctrine from the time the Church was organized on April 6, 1830. Women are considered equal to their male counterpart, the only difference being that the man is first in the Church order and the woman is his help mate.¹⁴ In the broadest and most exalted sense, ". . .they twain as one."¹⁵ The Apostle Paul set this precedent originally:

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. . .As the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. . .Men ought to love their wives as their own bodies. . . For no man ever yet hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church;

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴A detailed explanation of the Mormon Church and its organization will be contained in Chapter II.

¹⁵Edward W. Tullidge, The Women of Mormondom (New York: Tullidge and Crandall, 1877), p. 500.

For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh.¹⁶

Misunderstandings of Mormonism

We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul--We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things.¹⁷

Thus wrote Joseph Smith, probably visualizing the unique life style of Mormon people would be taken amiss, and cause strife with those unacquainted with their policy of non-aggression as far as interfering with the rights and privileges of non-Mormons was concerned.

And if he indeed anticipated harrassment for his people, he was right. The history of Mormonism is interwoven with the history of many states as constant persecution pushed the Mormons from Upper New York state, to Kirtland, Ohio, and then to Independence, Missouri, and then to Nauvoo, Illinois, and finally in 1847, to the Utah Territory. Many varied circumstances and situations caused this negative feeling toward Mormons by non-Mormons, and both parties were at fault. Fanned by constant antagonism, the stories and rumors unfriendly toward Mormons multiplied quickly and spread rapidly.

For example, it was a common misunderstanding by the non-Mormons in the Utah Territory that the Mormon Priesthood hierarchy dominated the people of Utah. This misunderstanding formed the basis for much of the difficulty that characterized the non-Mormons attitude toward Mormons.

¹⁶Ephesians 5:22-25, 28-31.

¹⁷Green. op. cit., p. 76.

The Mormon society being a very close knit society added to the confusion and mistrust of others causing more trouble and persecution, which had become a common relationship between Mormons and Gentiles (or non-Mormons).

Even though it seems there has always been in America, a certain proportion of men and women ready to throw in their lot for a new creed or religious belief, it is difficult to account for the success of Mormons. Why, under such trying circumstances, did they continue to progress and to exhibit such a strong conviction to their religious beliefs?

It has been suggested by some, that the real miracle of Mormonism, or the true feature of success, is not that Mormonism has been able to attract believers, but has been able to establish and keep together a membership who acknowledges its supreme authority to be God, in politics as well as religion; Mormonism is a distinct organization which does not conceal its purpose to bring God's word to every nation.¹⁸

The Ingression of Woman Suffrage

Into this setting, the woman suffrage movement came. Women perceived they would never get to vote through the evolution of the existing order, and began demanding the ballot.¹⁹ This concern for woman suffrage added to the ongoing conflict and caused increased persecution and trouble because of the very much criticized practice of polygamy by the Mormons. Would not the wives of each Mormon man vote as he voted and thus add to the already dominant Mormon political power in Utah?

¹⁸Walter Williams and Floyd C. Shoemaker, History of Missouri, I (Chicago: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1930), p. 520.

¹⁹Robert S. Cathcart, "New Approaches to the Study of Movements: Defining Movements Rhetorically," Western Speech XXXVI (Spring, 1972), pp. 87-88.

The Territorial Legislature gave women the right to vote on February 12, 1870.²⁰ This bill passed the Territorial Legislature without a dissenting vote. Anti-Mormons accused President Young: the bill was intended to serve the purpose of the Mormon Church rather than to benefit the newly enfranchised class (women), and woman suffrage in Utah was only designed to further enslave Mormon women. Mormon women had taken no part in the passage of this new right, they said, and had no soul in its exercise.

These accusations proved to be untrue and nearly the reverse was the case. As soon as the Mormon women were granted suffrage, they exercised it as a part of their religion, or as the performance of their life duties as marked out for them in the economy of divine providence. It was with an apostolic spirit and attitude that the Mormon women took up this newly granted political power.

"Downtrodden Women of Mormondom"?

Mormon women were a faithful, adaptable, courageous, and responsible breed before suffrage. In accordance with the fundamental Mormon view of an essential partnership existing between the man and the woman in all things, female organizations had grown up, were set apart and blessed for woman's ministry in this life. These organizations, called Relief Societies, were organized in Nauvoo, Illinois, before the Mormons were driven to Utah.²¹

²⁰See Appendix, A for the complete text of this Act.

²¹The General Board of the Relief Society, History of Relief Society, 1842-1966, (Salt Lake City: The General Board of Relief Society, 1966), pp. 18-139. The Relief Society was organized on March 17, 1842, in Nauvoo, Illinois, and is still in existence today throughout the Church. The present worldwide membership is well over 378,000. Membership is open to any woman who would like to join regardless of her religious belief or convictions.

The sphere of Relief Societies extends to every department of woman's mission and they may be viewed as female suffrage societies in any female suffrage movement--mates of any masculine movement which might arise to shape or control human affairs, religions, social or political.

It was this society that in a moment aroused fifty thousand women of Utah to simultaneously hold mass meetings throughout the Territory against the Cullom Bill,²² a bill which created almost as much agitation in Utah as if it had been passed by Congress and approved by the President. Mormons believed that the Cullom Bill, like others similar to it, was framed in Salt Lake City in an effort by anti-Mormons to overthrow and destroy Mormonism. They thought the objective of this and other anti-polygamy bills was to compel them to renounce their religion or else abandon the country which they had redeemed and rendered fruitful and beautiful.

To the wide-eyed wonder and astonishment of the Gentile civilization, a mass meeting of Mormon women was convened in the Tabernacle of Salt Lake City on January 13, 1870, to protest the passage of the Cullom Bill. Three thousand of these so called "down-trodden women of Mormondom," alleged slaves and playthings of a "polygamic hierarchy," eloquently and earnestly declaimed and resolved against the elimination of the shackles and restraints with which Christian statesmen, orators, and editors insisted that they were bound.

²²The Cullom Bill was one of several anti-polygamy bills introduced into the United States Congress. General Shelby M. Cullom from Illinois introduced this bill to the House of Representatives in the winter of 1869-1870. The bill failed to pass. See Chapter IV for a detailed discussion of Mormonism and Polygamy.

Sarah M. Kimball, the leading Mormon woman of the day, was chosen to preside over this assembly, and stated that the object of the meeting was to consider the justice of the Cullom Bill, at that time before the Congress of the United States, ". . .we are not here to advocate woman's rights, but man's rights." According to her, the bill in question would not only deprive the men of the privileges bequeathed to citizens of the United States, but it would also deprive the women of the privilege of selecting their husband.²³

Like the incorrigible Bourbon, the anti-Mormon of that day, ". . .never learns and never forgets"--never learned anything good nor forgot anything bad about his Mormon brothers. They sneeringly asserted that these women of the Relief Society were meekly carrying out the mandate of their masters; that they were still acting as slaves under the iron hand of the Priesthood authority which they dared not disobey; that the whole movement was a big farce to influence Congress, deceive the country, and secure the defeat of the measure (the Collum Bill) pending in the House of Representatives. From the Mormon viewpoint, this assertion was most inaccurate and insincere.²⁴

It is true that Mormon men were generally in full sympathy with this mass meeting of Mormon women, but to say that the Mormon women were coerced or intimidated into holding this meeting, or in expressing other than their own sentiments on the subject is completely untrue, a fact that anyone associated with the Mormons for any length of time would know. Mormon women as well as Mormon men upheld equal

²³Whitney, op. cit., II p. 397.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 395-396.

rights and the plurality of wives as a divine principle and conscientiously insisted upon the right to practice polygamy.²⁵

This meeting of the Mormon women was only the initial meeting of many such meetings held throughout the Territory during the next few days to protest, in a similar manner, against passage of the Cullom Bill.

Edmunds Versus the Quality of Mormon Faith

On March 6, 1886, another mass meeting was convened to appeal for freedom, justice, and equal rights in a continued protest of the Edmunds Bill²⁶ which had become law on March 22, 1882. There Mormon women protested against the tyranny and indecency of Federal officials running things in Utah at that time, and against their own disfranchisement without cause.

The attitude of most Elders²⁷ arraigned for violations of the Edmunds Law, in preferring fine and imprisonment to freedom, was based on obedience to a statute aimed at a principle of their religion. Over a period of time, it convinced those connected with this crusade against polygamy, that in ordaining the destruction of the plural marriage system of the Mormons they had set for themselves a much harder task than at first imagined.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 395-397.

²⁶Orson F. Whitney, History, History of Utah III, (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons Co., Publishers, 1898), pp. 188-189. This bill was enacted to punish and prevent the practice of polygamy in the Territories of the United States and other places. Polygamy was defined and declared illegal, advocating a fine of five hundred dollars and five years in prison for convicted offenders. It declared cohabitation as a misdemeanor, punishable by a three hundred dollar fine or six months in jail or both and that no polygamist or any person cohabiting with more than one woman would be entitled to vote or hold office.

²⁷Elders is the common name for Mormon men who hold the Priesthood.

The administrators of the Edmunds Law, like the enactors, had not given the Mormons sufficient credit for sincerity of their religious convictions. The motives of the men who practiced polygamy had been improperly evaluated and the threat of penalties provided by Congress in the law failed to make those endorsing plural marriage sever Mormon marriage relations as they had intended to do.²⁸

To Every Man His Chance?

Seventeen years after the women of Utah gained the right to vote, they lost it. The climax of the cursade against Mormonism came in February, 1887, when the United States Congress passed legislation known as the Edmunds-Tucker Act.²⁹ Framed to do away with polygamy, the bill also called for repeal of woman suffrage in the Utah Territory and disincorporation of the Mormon Church.

Since use of the ballot was restricted to monogamous male voters in electing the Territorial delegates in Congress and in selection of members for the lower house of the legislature, this bill, in effect, was both anti-woman suffrage and anti-Mormon. It disfranchised only women and not men for the alledged crime of plural marriage and bore equally on all women regardless of whether they were married, unmarried, or married to a man who practiced plural marriage. Utah women were supported by other suffragists in their argument that

²⁸Whitney, op. cit., III, pp. 414-415.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 188, 414, 547, 574. Failure of the Edmunds Law led to enactment of the Edmunds-Tucker Law by Congress in February, 1887. This bill passed the Senate by a vote of 37 for; 13 against and 26 absent or not voting. It was sent to President Cleveland on the 3rd of March and ten days later became a law without his signature.

the bill compounded injustice.³⁰

". . .It shall not be lawful for any female to vote at any election hereafter held in the Territory of Utah. . ." ³¹ said Section twenty of the Edmunds-Tucker Law entitled "Female Suffrage Abolished."

From the beginning, Mormon women, who many said and sincerely believed to be slaves of the Mormon Priesthood, had freely established their own course. Organized throughout the length and breadth of Utah into Relief Societies, they not only spoke and voted upon questions in their own meetings, but also always voted at conferences and gatherings of their people whenever matters had been presented to the congregation for that purpose.

It was these women who established their own paper, "The Woman's Exponent"³² to voice their views to the world. It was these women who brought about the elective franchise which so many thousands of Gentile women in free America had sought for so long. On February 12, 1870, acting Governor S. A. Mann, a non-Mormon, approved the Legislative Act giving women this right.³³

But the loss of their voting privilege after seventeen years of honorable and just utilization of this right left Mormon women with

³⁰Eleanor Flexnor, Century of Struggle (New York: Atheneum, 1971), p. 163.

³¹Whitney, op. cit., III, p. 570.

³²Lula Greene Richards, ed., Woman's Exponent, Vol. I, 1872, p. 8. The Woman's Exponent was a semi-monthly journal published by the women of the Church from June 1, 1872 to February, 1914. The aim of this publication was to discuss every subject of interest and value to women. It contained brief and graphic summaries of current local and general news, household hints, educational matters, articles on health and dress, correspondence, editorials, miscellaneous readings and speeches. It further aimed to defend the right, inculcate sound principles and disseminate useful knowledge.

³³Whitney, op. cit., II, pp. 401-402.

undaunted spirits and determined to regain their freedom. While they had enjoyed suffrage, they voted as intelligently as men, and they always voted carefully and prayerfully. They were swayed by their sentiments, but divided across the political fences and always voted quicker and far more relentless in their decisions on moral issues than men.³⁴

If Congress had the power to disfranchise one class, it undoubtedly had the power to disfranchise another. What free man in such a case is secure in his rights?

The effort to reverse the direction of these Mormon women only strengthened within them new impulses to surge forward!

"To every man his chance," wrote Thomas Wolfe, "--every man, regardless of his birth, his shining, golden opportunity. . .this, seeker, is the promise of America."³⁵

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The woman suffrage movement in general has not had an official ideology. Its participants and leaders have had every conceivable view of current events and have represented most every philosophical position thinkable. During the time frame of this study, most women and some men agree that women should have the right to equal suffrage, there was however, disagreement on why they ought to have this right. The struggle for woman suffrage and the circumstances causing this struggle is what generated the rationale of the movement.

³⁴B.H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Vol. VI (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1965), pp. 54-55. William E. Berrett, The Restored Church (14th ed.; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1969), p. 40. Woman's Exponent (Salt Lake City), Vol. 17, No. 18, February 15, 1889, p. 137; Vol. 17, No. 21, April 21, 1889, p. 162; Vol. 18, No. 20, March 15, 1890, p. 159; Vol. 23, No. 15 & 16, February 1 & 15, 1895, p. 234.

³⁵James Morgan, ed., The Beauty of America (Kansas City, Missouri: Hallmark, Inc., 1971), p. 30.

The history of the woman suffrage movement must be understood as an important chapter in the intellectual history of the American people. It reflected the ideas, aspirations and weapons of the suffragists involved. In fact the many ideas of the suffragists were their most potent weapon. The arsenals of arguments used by the suffragists, could, in themselves constitute a study, but to examine the thinking and speaking of the thousands involved is beyond the scope of this study. However, an analysis of the thinking, speaking, principles and strategy of a small group is both possible and instructive.

The focus of this study, on the rhetoric of Mormon women involved in the suffrage movement in Utah between 1870 and 1896, is almost completely untouched by rhetorical critics as a field of analysis. This writer feels that this in itself is sufficient justification for further research.

Before Congress conferred the Territorial form of government on the settlers of the Salt Lake Valley in 1852, women held the elective franchise in all civic and ecclesiastic matters in the Utah Territory. Between 1847 and 1852, men and women voted by ballot in matters relating to the government. Prior to this, the women had always voted in the religious meetings on matters pertaining to the Church. As previously stated, the right of suffrage, granted by the Territorial Governor and the Legislature Assembly of Utah in 1870, was withdrawn by Congress in 1887, resulting from the practice of plural marriage³⁶ by the Mormon people. When Utah achieved statehood in 1896, the state

³⁶The Mormons did not use the word polygamy in referring to their religion's commandment of plural marriage.

constitution included an equal suffrage clause.³⁷ Prior to this, on September 24, 1890, the Mormon Church made an official declaration renouncing plural marriage.³⁸

The years between 1870 and 1896 constituted a key time in the Mormon woman's suffrage movement and is of utmost importance in analyzing the rhetoric of Mormon women. Having lost an important right and heart felt responsibility, the renewed interest and involvement of Mormon women to once again obtain the right to vote was both physical and emotional. Coupled with this was the fact the subject of equal suffrage was foremost in the minds of all residents of the Utah Territory, both Mormons and non-Mormons, male and female alike.

The previous experience of the Mormon women in exercising their right to vote, in conducting meetings and giving speeches gave these women the added advantage of experience and helped to improve their ability to argue their position. Having already proved themselves as intelligent and able citizens who had shown much wisdom and thought in exercising their responsibilities, lent credibility to their position, methods and speaking strategy in arguing for continued equal suffrage.

The life a Mormon woman leads is determined by her belief and conviction to Mormon doctrine. Her devotion to these religious beliefs becomes her way of life and influences her every action. Based on this,

³⁷Susan Young Gates and Leah D. Widstoe, Women of the "Mormon" Church (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News Press, 1926), pp. 8-9.

³⁸Whitney, op. cit., II, pp. 743-744. See Appendix B for the text of "The Manifesto", the official declaration of the Mormon Church renouncing plural marriage.

a study of the rhetoric of Mormon women should disclose that they used the scriptures and their religious convictions in arguing for their cause, the focus of this study.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Unlike most frontier settlements, the family pattern of the Mormon Church was kept intact as the Mormons migrated to Utah and the initial balance between the sexes was almost equal. It was assumed that a woman's vote in Utah was a Mormon vote and under a polygamous rule, both alien women and under age girls could vote.

Naturally, then, the issues of woman suffrage and polygamy were very much intertwined. Many felt woman suffrage in Utah was an effort by Mormons to bolster and maintain the power of the Mormon Church, to which the vast majority of Utah residents belonged. Since polygamy was the main issue, an effort was made by Mormons to disprove the many accusations about polygamy being synonymous with slavery. Mormons felt there could be no better way of proving that their women were not being degraded and kept as slaves, than to give them suffrage.

But the move toward woman suffrage was felt by those antagonistic to Mormonism, to be politically motivated. It was thought to be a calculated Mormon effort to forestall federal intervention in regard to polygamy and to maintain Mormon domination. The increasing numbers of people brought by the newly established railroad (May, 1869) and federal efforts to interfere with a matter of Church doctrine (the polygamy issue) were felt to be threats to the new found security of the Mormons.

With this as background, several questions come to mind that need answers. What was the motivation of the suffrage movement in Utah? Was it motivated by the Mormon Priesthood hierarchy to maintain political power in Utah, or was it a matter of Mormon principle that women should vote, or was it both? Was the suffrage movement motivated by polygamy, or was it contrived by the Mormons to maintain their political position?

The purpose of this study will be an attempt to gain some insight into these questions by analyzing the rhetorical strategy of the Mormon women. Specifically, this study will focus on determining how the Mormon women used scriptures, their doctrinal teachings and their religious convictions to argue for equal suffrage. An attempt will be made to gain some insight concerning the often made charge that Mormon men were only interested in woman's suffrage as a means to maintain political power and what effect, if any, this had on the strategy and tactics of the arguments the women used. Lastly, will be an attempt to determine if the Mormon women were trying to convince Mormon men or non-Mormon men that they should have the right to equal suffrage, and how the audience affected their strategy.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

This study appears to be unique in focusing on how the Mormon women of Utah used the scriptures and their religion to argue for equal suffrage. No other studies of this nature were found in researching the various indexes and abstracts listing completed and ongoing studies.

Two related studies were discovered. One was the Masters Thesis of Ralph L. Jack, completed in 1954, for the Brigham Young University History Department, entitled, "Women Suffrage in Utah

As An Issue in The Mormon and Non-Mormon Press of the Territory, 1870-1887." The other study was a doctoral dissertation completed at Stanford University in 1958 by Merrill C. Hansen, entitled, "The Role of Rhetoric in the Mormon Suffrage Debates in Idaho, 1880-1906."

Jack's study analyzed how the newspapers reported the various aspects of the woman suffrage movement. The official publication of the Mormon Church was The Deseret News, and this paper maintained a constant and even attitude toward the issue. The Salt Lake Tribune, was the newspaper of the Liberals and initially supported the movement, but as things progressed, the Tribune became violently opposed to it. The Tribune was a crusading newspaper and constantly tried to force its opinion and demands upon the people, especially the Mormons. The Liberals' attempts to involve the enfranchisement of women with the more explosive issue of polygamy and Priesthood domination by the Mormon hierarchy, was helped by the support of the Tribune with ultimate success.³⁹

Hansen's study focused on the rhetorical arguments found in political speeches, letters and editorials and the role rhetoric played during the controversy in which a minority religious group, (The Mormons), lost and regained the right to vote. The debates Hansen studied stressed polygamy. The anti-Mormon political orators used every available means to convince the Gentiles that polygamy was a moral evil, that Mormons practiced polygamy and, therefore, Mormonism was evil and that this evil could be controlled by disfranchising

³⁹Ralph L. Jack, "Woman Suffrage in Utah As An Issue In The Mormon and Non-Mormon Press of the Territory, 1870-1887" (unpublished master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1954).

all Mormons. This, they did. When the Mormon Church renounced plural marriage, they once again obtained the right to vote. Renewed attempts to reverse this right failed. Since the debates stressed polygamy and this was no longer valid, it appeared to Hansen that the use of rhetoric unsupported by reality is not persuasive.⁴⁰

SOURCES AND MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Adequate source material is available to complete this study. The Church Historian's Office and the Church archives in Salt Lake City, Utah, to which the writer has access, have on file numerous writings, speeches and articles on and by Mormon women. On file and available is a complete set of all the Woman's Exponents and subsequent women's magazines that have been published to date, as well as copies of the current newspapers of the time. The Woman's Exponent published most of the women's speeches following their delivery. As was the custom, trained recorders were present to take down the remarks of the speakers at any important event.

Other sources include numerous personal copies of Church publications of the writer and the local Church membership. The University of Kansas Library System, including Spencer Research Library has the seven volumes of the History of the Church, a partial listing of the Woman's Exponent, the Congressional Record of the time and several other non-Mormon publications on Mormon history and Mormon life. The Brigham Young University Library has a special Mormon collection which includes a vast number of documents of the Mormon

⁴⁰Merrill C. Hansen, "The Role of Rhetoric in the Mormon Suffrage Debates in Idaho, 1880-1906" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1958.)

Church and the complete history of Utah.

THE PLAN OF THE STUDY

The remainder of the study will be presented as follows:

Chapter II: This chapter will consist of an overview and description of the organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, with emphasis on women.

Chapter III: This chapter will focus on a detailed explanation of Mormon doctrine concerning the status and position of women in the Church.

Chapter IV: This chapter will be a survey of Mormonism and polygamy. Polygamy was advocated by the Church as a result of revelation from God and was the root of Mormon persecution during this period of time. The Mormon Church made an official declaration renouncing plural marriage in 1890.

Chapter V: This chapter will survey the speech constituents specifically developing the occasion, the speakers and the situation.

Chapter VI: This Chapter will focus on the analysis of speeches given by Mormon women involved in the suffrage movement in Utah between 1870 and 1896. References of a religious vein will be catalogued and categorized as to their importance in arguing for equal suffrage. Further, will be to make a judgment as to the effectiveness of these speeches.

Chapter VII: This chapter will be a summary and list of conclusions as to how Mormon women argued for equal suffrage and the effectiveness of these arguments.

CHAPTER II

WOMEN--INTEGRAL TO AND INSTIGATORS IN MORMON CHURCH ORGANIZATION

Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth¹ His secrets unto His servants the prophets.

INTRODUCTION

On the one-hundredth birthday of Mormonism, April 6, 1930, the eminent Dr. Thomas Nixon Carver, Professor of Political Economy at Harvard University, said of Mormons:

I have never found more sound and wholesome personal habits than among the Mormons. I never mingled with people who showed fewer signs of dissipation. I have never studied groups of people who seemed better nourished and more healthful. I have never know people who took more pains to educate their children.

This gives a clue to the success of the Mormons as colonizers and nation builders. The power to save skill, talent, and genius from going to waste, is as near divine wisdom as anything we are ever likely to know in this world.

Whether this power comes from superior organization, or from superior personal insight, it is equally valuable. The Mormon Church seems to have possessed it in high degree.²

In a country where too many spend the greater part of their energies in getting the comforts and conveniences of life and then frittering away what is left in amusements which do little more than

¹Amos 3:7.

²William E. Berrett, The Restored Church, (Salt Lake City: The Deseret Book Company, 1965), p. 348.

kill the time that hangs on their hands--In a country where ultimate concern is directed to the hopeless, drug-reliant, rebelliousness of its youth--such a statement is bound to attract interest.

The exceptional fruit of Mormon living is no accident, nor is it a mystery to Mormons and those acquainted with the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Mormon thoughts, commitments, declarations and choices have brought about the realization Dr. Carver proclaimed.

The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is two-fold. The first is to eliminate misunderstandings of Mormonism which existed in Utah between 1870 and 1896, by outlining Church organization, a construction which this author considers to be essential to seeing why Mormons in the late nineteenth century behaved as they did. The second is to show how women are an integral part of the function of the Church, which is set up to enable this people to live lives exemplary of the purpose for which God created us all--whether or not we can accept the fact of Joseph Smith's divine experiences and objectives.

THE BEGINNING

Ten years after Joseph Smith had gone into the grove to ask of God which Church to join, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized. On April 6, 1830, in a Fayette, New York, home, six men signed the Articles of Incorporation: Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, David Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, Jr., and Samuel Smith.³

³Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Vol. I (Salt Lake City: The Deseret Book Co., 1951), pp. 39-43, 60-70; Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1955), Section 20: 1-4.

For Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery especially, it had been an eventful ten years. The time had been filled with prayer, training, the instruction of heavenly messengers, study and inspiration. Just as Christ left the Keys of the Kingdom (Priesthood authority) in the hands of Peter, James, and John following His resurrection,⁴ Mormons believe these three Apostles granted this authority (the Priesthood) to Smith and Cowdery.⁵

According to Mormon doctrine, the name of the Church was revealed to Joseph Smith in April, 1838.⁶ The designation "Latter-day Saints" was to differentiate between Mormon people and those people of the Church established by Jesus in the Meridian of Time.⁷

Thus the Mormon Church is a body of believers, organized by the Priesthood according to divine law. It is invested with the necessary right, powers and authority to carry forward on earth the purposes of God according to His plan of salvation.⁸ All functions are carried out by lay membership participation, which includes women.

THE CHAIN OF COMMAND

The Ultimate Authority

The Lord Jesus Christ, having trained His disciples on the job,

⁴Doctrine and Covenants, 27:12-14; LeGrand Richards, A Marvelous Work and a Wonder, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1950), pp. 132-139.

⁵Doctrine and Covenants, 84:19-21; 107:8, 18-19; Richards, op. cit., pp. 138-139.

⁶Doctrine and Covenants, 115:3-4.

⁷Richards, op. cit., p. 135.

⁸John A. Widtsoe, Priesthood and Church Government in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1954), p. 176.

told them, "He that believes on me, the works that I am doing he shall do also, and greater works than these shall he do because I am going to my Father,"⁹ and thus handed over His work to human beings rather than to angels.

Mormons have never questioned Who was their ultimate authority, nor have they consciously supplanted His task on earth with self-made goals to fulfill selfish desires. Christ is their Commander-in-Chief, and their Church is organized on the same basis He established 2,000 years ago. "We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, viz. apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc."¹⁰

The Prophet (or President)

Directing the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Church of Jesus Christ is a prophet, carrying the title of President, through whom the Lord speaks to man.¹¹ According to Mormon doctrine, only one person on the earth at any one time can hold "these Keys of the Kingdom of God,"¹² and that person is the only authorized agent of the Lord to receive revelations and commandments for the guidance of the Church.¹³ He is the chief official in all branches of Church government---legislative,

⁹ John 14:12.

¹⁰ Doyle L. and Randall L. Green, Meet the Mormons, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1972), p. 55.

¹¹ Doctrine and Covenants, 107:91-92.

¹² Doctrine and Covenants, 81:2; 90:1-8; 112:15; Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 131.

¹³ Doctrine and Covenants, 28:1-7; 43:1-8.

executive, and judicial.

The Prophet is assisted by two or more counselors. Their duty is to advise, counsel, and assist the President in running the Church. Upon approval by the Church membership, these three men constitute the "First Presidency" of the Church.¹⁴

The Twelve Apostles

Next in authority to the First Presidency, is the Council of the Twelve Apostles, comprised of twelve High Priests. These men are considered Prophets, Seers, and Revelators, and this quorum has a Presidency which is determined by seniority of ordination.

Each president since the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith has been chosen for his calling by the Council of the Twelve, under the inspiration of God and sustained by a vote of a general assembly of the Church. Working under the direction of the First Presidency, these men are called by "revelation" and sanctioned by Church membership.¹⁵

First Council of Seventy

This Council consists of seven presidents who preside over the quorums of Seventy in the Church. It labors under the direction of the Twelve Apostles, and its members are selected by the First Presidency, with the sustaining vote of the Church membership. If the First Presidency and Twelve Apostles were simultaneously disorganized, The Council of Seventy would become the presiding authority until

¹⁴Doctrine and Covenants, 107:22.

¹⁵Doctrine and Covenants, 107:23-24, 33; Richards, op. cit., p. 141; Whitsoe, op. cit., p. 183; Milton R. Hunter, Brigham Young the Colonizer, (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News Press, 1941), p. 119.

full reorganization could be effected.¹⁶

Presiding Bishopric and Patriarch

A three-man Presiding Bishopric and a Patriarch make up other "general authorities" of the Church. The Presiding Bishopric heads the Aaronic Priesthood, administers its business affairs, and directs the temporal affairs of the Church which include financial and statistical reports and tithes. Appointment is vested solely in the First Presidency with confirmation by vote of the membership.¹⁷

An official Patriarch of the Church, with general jurisdiction throughout the entire organization, gives spiritual blessings to Church members, blessing which include their Biblical lineage. This office is handed down from father to son.¹⁸

THE PRIESTHOOD

To Mormons, the Priesthood is the power of God given to man to act for Him upon the earth. It is an everlasting principle and existed with God from eternity and will exist to eternity, without beginning of days or end of years.¹⁹ In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, every worthy male member twelve years of age and older is eligible to hold and serve in some calling in the Priesthood. Priesthood bearers today number approximately 750,000,²⁰ and are under obligation to deliver the message of the Gospel to the world.

¹⁶Richards, op. cit., p. 161; Widtsoe, op. cit., pp. 272-276; Doctrine and Covenants, 124:138-139.

¹⁷Richards, op. cit., p. 160-161.

¹⁸Doctrine and Covenants, 107:39-57; Widtsoe, op. cit., pp. 126, 268-72.

¹⁹Alma P. Burton, Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1965), p. 38.

²⁰Church News, Vol. 42, No. 15, April 8, 1972, p. 9.

Two Priesthoods

Two Priesthoods are mentioned in the scriptures: the Melchizedek or higher and the Aaronic or lesser. The Melchizedek Priesthood embraces the Aaronic and holds the highest authority and the Keys of the Kingdom of God in all ages of the world to the present time. Through the Melchizedek Priesthood, God reveals to his children all knowledge, doctrine, the plan of salvation, His purposes, and every important matter, both now and forevermore.²¹

This higher Priesthood came down to Joseph Smith in regular succession, giving him full authority to act in the name of God concerning things of this earth. Accordingly, as the Church has grown and time has passed, the First Presidency, the Twelve Apostles, the Patriarch, High Priests, Seventies and Elders have all received the Melchizedek Priesthood.

Offices in the Aaronic Priesthood includes Bishops, Priests, Teachers, and Deacons.

To insure that the Priesthood authority is not abused and those having this authority conduct the affairs of the Church and themselves in a God-like manner, the following counsel is given to all members of the Priesthood:

No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned.

By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy and without guile-- Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and than showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him when thou has reprov'd, last he esteem

²¹Burton, op. cit., p. 40.

thee to be his enemy. . . Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distill upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.²²

Quorums

The Priesthood is organized into quorums. Each Priesthood quorum consists of a specified group of individuals holding the same Priesthood, organized for more efficient advancement of their work. Progression in the Priesthood is from Deacon, to Teacher, to Priest, to Elder. From Elder, a man may be called to be a Seventy or a High Priest.

Deacons. They are primarily assistants in order to learn the duties and authority of the higher Priesthood offices. They pass the sacrament, gather fast offerings, care for the Church buildings, watch over the Church and are special aids to the Teachers. Twelve deacons comprise a quorum.²³

Teachers. These "watchmen" of the Church strive to strengthen it by eliminating iniquity, lying, backbiting, hardness of heart, and evil speaking. They warn, expound, teach and invite all to come unto Christ. They prepare the sacrament, act as ushers, collect fast offerings, care for Church buildings, and act as messengers for the Bishop. Twenty-four Teachers make a quorum.²⁴

²²Doctrine and Covenants, 121:41-46.

²³Doctrine and Covenants, 107:85; 84:30 and 111; 20:53-59; Widtsoe, op. cit., pp. 167-168; Richards, op. cit., pp. 159-160.

²⁴Doctrine and Covenants, 107:86; 20:53-60; Widtsoe, op. cit., pp. 167-170; Richards, op. cit., pp. 158-159.

Priests. The Bishop (pastor) of the ward leads this group. Duties of each priest is to teach, preach, expound the scriptures, baptize, administer the sacrament and visit Church members at home to exhort them to diligence. Forty-eight Priests form a quorum.²⁵

Elders. This man is a standing minister to the Church and is appointed to administer spiritual things. He may confirm "by the laying on of hands," those who have been baptized; ordain other Elders, Priests, Teachers, and Deacons; annoint and bless the sick; bless and name (christen) children, and preach the gospel. Ninety-six members constitute a quorum.²⁶

Seventies. The Order of the Seventy is a special calling of Elders. These men are traveling ministers, particularly ordained to promulgate the gospel among all the nations of the earth. A quorum consists of seventy members.²⁷

High Priests. Duties of High Priests include: to qualify themselves to teach and expound doctrine, to prepare others to magnify their callings, and to prepare to be standing presidents or servants. They may be any number of high priests in a quorum.²⁸

Every male member of the Church who has been ordained to the Priesthood and lives according to the gospel principles may be called at any time to serve in the governing body of the Church. Through this

²⁵Doctrine and Covenants, 107:89; 20:39-79; Richards, op. cit., pp. 156-158; Widtsoe, op. cit., pp. 168 and 171.

²⁶Doctrine and Covenants, 107:87-88; 20:46-52; Richards, op. cit., pp. 156-158; Widtsoe, op. cit., pp. 112-115.

²⁷Doctrine and Covenants, 107:25-26, 34, 93-98; Richards, op. cit., pp. 149-151; Widtsoe, op. cit., pp. 115-121.

²⁸Doctrine and Covenants, 107:10-12; 121:34; 68:19; Richards, op. cit., pp. 145-156, Widtsoe, op. cit., pp. 121-126.

process each member has the opportunity to serve in numerous capacities to insure continued growth.

MORMON VITALITY---THE INDIVIDUAL

The greatness of Mormonism may be manifested in many ways, but a vital source of its greatness is the individual. It was individuals who believed enough in the emerging ideals of their new faith to separate themselves from familiar ties and familiar environments and go find the soil where they could demonstrate the blessings that freedom in their faith could bestow upon a society. It was individuals who earned and defended their freedom there.

The massive growth of Mormonism has not squelched the pride and confidence individual Mormons have in their faith. Why? Certainly, part of the answer lies in the geographical organizations of the Church. Another part lies in the great many opportunities for individual growth, development and sharing that are given in Mormon auxiliary organizations, publications, missionary programs, and within the framework of the Mormon home.

Geographical Subdivisions

In order to meet individual spiritual and temporal needs, the Church membership is divided into geographical areas: missions, stakes,²⁹ wards and branches. The goal of these divisions is to develop a compact organization, with ready access to every member.

Thus a Church member is distributed either to a branch (if the local Latter-day Saint group is 200 members or less), or to a ward

²⁹The word stake is a figure of speech referring to the concept that stakes are being driven into the ground to support the gospel, which, like a tent is to cover the earth.

(if their group is 200 to 1,000 members). A varying number of wards make up a stake, which may have 1,000 to 10,000 people. A mission is the geographic area that encompasses the stakes, wards and branches. Over 7,000 wards and branches and 580 stakes are presently established in the Church.

It must be borne in mind that each of these divisions is directed by men who bear the responsibility of their Priesthood. A detailed explanation of stake, ward and branch leadership authority is given in Plate 1. All in all, the geographical subdivisions of the Mormon Church are strategically designed to meet every individual member's need.

Auxiliary Organizations

To help each Church member develop his own potentiality and move ahead to more challenging and enriching experiences, several auxiliary organizations have been established.

The oldest, established in Nauvoo, Illinois, March 17, 1842, for women of all ages, is the Relief Society. Its purpose is to develop better wives and mothers, build and maintain better homes, indulge in a program of theological and cultural training, and minister to the needs of the sick and the poor.³⁰ Projects such as quilting, sewing, cooking and other arts and crafts that fill creative needs are conducted for wives and mothers at Relief Society. This group's visiting teachers travel in pairs and make monthly daytime visits to members' homes to leave a spiritual message. The Relief Society is considered to be the right arm of the Bishop in determining needs and providing

³⁰Berrett, op. cit., p. 349.

compassionate services for the less fortunate.³¹

The Sunday School teaches the principles of the Gospel and stimulates willing obedience to it, to all members of the Church from the very young (three years old) to the very old.

Young Men's and Young Women's Mutual Improvement Associations are responsible for religious and recreation programs for young people twelve-years-old and above. Activities of these groups are dancing, drama, music, speaking, cultural and religious development, scouting, athletics, and other leisure time activities. To meet recreation and special religious needs of children under twelve, the Primary Association was organized, with similar activiteis.

The Church's Genealogical Society has collected, compiled, established and maintained a genealogical library for the benefit of anyone interested in doing genealogical work. Church members take the responsibility of doing vicarious work for those who have died without a knowledge of the gospel.

A Welfare Program, to help needy members care for themselves when possible and to provide for them when it is not, is indicative of the Mormon keen sense of social responsibility. In order to help the needy, the entire Church membership participates in several welfare projects and programs without reimbursement. The Church operates some 560 farms and ranches, a coal mine, about 30 canneries, a soap factory, a jello factory and clothing and blanket mills. These materials and goods are distributed to those in need under the supervision of the Bishop or Branch President from centrally located

³¹Green, op. cit., p. 106.

storehouses throughout the Church.³²

The Church also believes in work and self-reliance and encourages each family not only to take care of daily needs, but also to put aside food, clothing, and other necessities so that in times of hardship, the family can sustain itself as far as possible.

By now, the Mormon idea to provide for each person, a life of continual growth in knowledge and understanding of the Gospel is obvious. This is accomplished in part through the effort of the Church Department of Education, which provides religious instruction where membership warrants it, for Mormon students in the public high schools and universities.

In addition to courses of study in sacred literature, Church history and the application of religious principles in everyday living, these institutions provide recreational and social activities and opportunities. The Church conducts a business college in Salt Lake City and fully accredited four-year colleges in Hawaii, Idaho, and Utah. Several schools located in foreign countries are Church sponsored. Of these institutions, Brigham Young University, with an enrollment of approximately 25,000 is most noteworthy.

Church Publications

The standard works (scriptures) of the Mormon Church are the King James version of the Bible, The Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants and The Pearl of Great Price.

The Book of Mormon contains a history of the various civilizations in ancient America between 600 B.C. and 420 A.D. Included in the volume is an account of the ministry of Jesus Christ on the American continent

³²Ibid., p. 96.

after His crucifixion and subsequent resurrection and ascension in the Holy Land of the Old World. The Mormons also consider this scripture as a second witness that Jesus is the Christ. It is from this book the nickname, "Mormon," was derived.

The Doctrine and Covenants is a record of modern day revelations given to and through Joseph Smith and other succeeding Presidents of the Church from 1823 to 1847, for the benefit of the Mormon people and the Church. It describes the correct functioning of the Church and the duties of the Priesthood callings.

The Pearl of Great Price contains selections from the revelations, translations and narrations of Joseph Smith. Included are some writings of Moses and Abraham that were translated by Smith from ancient records, extracts from the history of Joseph Smith and the Articles of Faith, a simple straightforward explanation of the fundamental beliefs of Mormons.

Educational publications that provide counsel and instruction are published by the Church at the expense of the members. The Ensign is a monthly periodical aimed at adults; The New Era directs its articles to teenagers; The Friend interests pre-teens; The Relief Society Magazine, whose forerunner was The Woman's Exponent, is published for adult women; and The Church News, a weekly publication, contains current happenings of interest to all.

Missionary Program

Jesus' final commandment--"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, the of the Holy Spirit,"³³--has always been a serious goal for The Church

³³Matthew 28:19.

of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The purpose of its missionary program is to accomplish Christ's task as far as possible, so that all members of the human race may have the opportunity to hear the Gospel.

Primarily a Priesthood function, every member, male or female, may be called to serve on a mission for a two year period, at his own expense or with aid from friends and relatives. The majority of these full-time missionaries are between 19 and 23 years of age. Currently, there are 101 missions throughout the world with over 16,000 full-time missionaries preaching the Gospel.

The Mormon Home

The family organization is the basic unit of the Church. To strengthen family relationships, each home is encouraged to have a "Family Home Evening" weekly. The Church sets aside Monday night for this purpose and provides each family with a Family Home Evening Lesson Manual to help parents in their endeavor. Final responsibility for teaching the Gospel to Mormon children, then lies within the Mormon home.

Thus the structure of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is one which gives ample opportunity for each member to fulfill his responsibility as detailed in the Book of Mormon:

They are to . . . bear one another's burdens. . . To mourn with those who mourn. . . To comfort those in need of comfort, to stand as witnesses for God, at all times, and in all things, and in all places even until death. . . To observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy. . . To thank God every day, have no contention, possess one faith, one baptism, and have their hearts knit together in unity and love. . . To labor with their own hands for their support, particularly those holding the Priesthood, that they may wax strong in spirit and teach with power and authority. . . To meet weekly, and as often as possible to teach others and worship the Lord. . . To impart their substance of their own free will, everyone according to that which he has, to the ones in need and

to every needy, naked soul. . .To walk uprightly before God. . .³⁴

THUS THE MOTIVATED MORMON WOMAN

It has been said that if a map of the spread of Christianity and a map of the areas of the world where women are respected as persons, were drawn and superimposed one on the other, the two maps would virtually coincide. There is no argument that the deepest rights of women are established and protected by the religion of Jesus Christ.³⁵

Bearing in mind this thought, the Mormon woman's motive to function harmoniously in the Church, becomes clear. Her job brings challenge and fulfillment to her life. She contributes her talents and experiences and callings in the transmission of Mormon culture and beliefs to her children, with the hope that they will live lives of lasting profit to themselves, their society, and their faith.

SUMMARY

Lowell Bennion a prominent Mormon summarizes and clarifies the Church organization as follows:

Non-Mormon find it difficult to harmonize the practicality of the Latter-day Saints movement with its "miraculous" beginning in the first vision and with its theological emphasis. Our lay organization gives one answer to this riddle. Men of great practical abilities, like Brigham Young, can rise to leadership in the Church because it is a layman's church.

A lay church produces more cooperation and greater social solidarity. Active members of Latter-day Saints communities know each other. They work together, teach

³⁴The Book of Mormon, (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1955), Mesiah, Chapter 18.

³⁵Addison Leitch, Meet Dr. Luke, (St. Louis, Missouri: United Presbyterian Church, 1954), p. 12.

and bless one another, and express their deeper feelings in sermons, testimony meetings, committee meetings, and visits to the home. On the whole, we learn to love people through knowing and serving them. Here is one foundation of building a Christian society--by getting people to know and to serve one another.

A lay church develops leadership in a large percentage of its members. Men learn by doing. The Mormon Church develops the talents of its boys and girls and men and women through activity. Our methods and results can stand improvement, to be sure, but in principle, the program is in the money with the best educational practice and theory of the day. Mormon theology places great emphasis on the value of souls. Activity is an essential condition of the development of souls.³⁶

In a rhetorical study, the speaker(s) involved must be investigated in every possible way. For a speaker to be effective he must develop and adjust his argument to the ideas and attitudes of the target audience. To gain some insight as to the influence the Mormon Church has on its members, an overview of the religion of the speaker(s) is important because it suggests that they were strongly influenced by these religious principles and activities. This is an important psychological factor when one considers the strong influence of beliefs and attitudes on individual or group behavior.

The organization of the Mormon Church is such that all active members are in some way involved in the many functions the Church performs. At all levels of the organization, the responsibility and proper functioning of the Church programs is of immediate concern of the membership, which develops a sense of worth in each member. In carrying out an assigned responsibility, each member gives of his time and talents to assist in the development of others and in turn experiences self-growth. This organization spreads leadership opportunities

³⁶Lowell L. Bennion, The Religion of the Latter-day Saints, (Salt Lake City: Latter-day Saint Department of Education, 1964) pp. 172-173.

and responsibilities throughout the entire membership, a process which requires an individual to serve both as leader and follower interchangeably. This results in the continuous development of the individual and an improved sense of well being for the present worldwide membership of over three million.

The Church organization can easily be construed as an organization in which the Priesthood hierarchy is the controlling authority. Apparently the non-Mormons did just this in their evaluation of the Mormon Church, during the suffrage struggle. The Priesthood is the controlling authority of the Church but, it appears, is not a hierarchy as such. Mormon doctrine specifies that a woman cannot hold the Priesthood but that a man cannot receive the full blessings of the Priesthood without her. The Mormons believe that the organization is designed of God and because His Kingdom is one of order the Priesthood authority must preside. The woman is necessary in the organization to complete God's plan and without her, man is doomed. Also, the woman's vote of approval is necessary for the officers and programs of the Church to function.

CHAPTER III

MORMON DOCTRINE CONCERNING THE STATUS AND POSITION OF WOMEN

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.¹

The relationship between man and woman has been under debate since the beginning of time. Since then, women have been battling for an identity on an equal with men. In 1837, Quaker abolitionist Angelina Grimke was expounding, "I recognize no rights but human rights--I know nothing of men's rights and women's rights; for in Christ, there is neither male nor female."

"Men and women were created equal," wrote Sarah Moore Grimke in the 1830's as she replied to a circulating pastoral letter that condemned her public lecturing against slavery. "They are both moral and accountable beings, and whatever is right for man to do is right for women to do."²

And simultaneously, from another corner, the Mormons' Prophet Joseph Smith was establishing a Church that gave to women the same freedom of will and action as it gave to men. Today this meager beginning has evolutionized into a group of women who meet weekly for periods of instruction in the social science, literary and religious

¹Galatians 3:28.

²Letha Scanzoni, "The Feminists and the Bible," Christianity Today, February 2, 1973, p. 12.

fields, who help to carry out a program of theological and cultural training among its members, besides devoting themselves to becoming better wives and mothers and maintaining better homes.³

Mormons believe that no group of women in the history of the world have ever had the freedom of will and action accorded to the women of the Mormon Church. When Joseph Smith proclaimed in 1830, that Mormon women would have the religious franchise and that all matters in the Church would be decided with the common consent of the membership, male and female alike, his listeners were astonished.

Women were just emerging from the long, dark tradition of the Crusades, the monasteries and the straightlaced Puritan prejudices against them holding any kind of office, or owning property, or being educated, or participating in public life. What they witnessed in the "precious bond" of equality between man and woman in the Mormon faith, was greater strength in marriages, families, and societies.

In short, equality brought advantage to the Mormon people. What one sex lacked, the other supplemented, each complementing the other. Women labored side by side with their husbands and fathers, accompanying them as they were driven finally to the Utah Territory, building homes, and developing cities--making history.

THE PRECIOUS BOND--ANCIENT HISTORY

It has been previously alluded to in Chapter II, and there is no denying that Christianity has raised women to a level never before known. Paul wrote, ". . . Let each and every one of you love his wife

³Green, op. cit., p. 73.

as he loves himself, and let the wife reverence her husband," to an immoral world--a world that, among other things, had rejected the sacredness of the marriage vows. A. W. Verrall, the great classical scholar, said that "one of the chief diseases of which ancient civilization died was a low view of women."⁴

Amidst the current resurgence of the drive for equal rights for women, it is significant to look at the world Paul preached to:

God's Chosen People--the Jews

The Jews had a very low view of women. Every morning the Jewish man thanked God for not making him "a Gentile, a slave or a woman." In Jewish law a woman was not a person, but a thing. She had no legal rights whatsoever and was absolutely in her husband's possession to do with as he willed.⁵

The law of divorce is summarized in Deuteronomy 24:1.

When a man hath taken a wife and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his sight because he hath found some uncleanness in her, let him write her a bill of divorcement, and send her out of his house.

But although Jewish theory contained the highest ideal of marriage, by the time Christ's Church was established, divorce had become tragically easy. The more liberal Rabbis interpreted the statement from Deuteronomy in the widest possible way. A man could divorce his wife if she spoiled his dinner by putting too much salt on his food, if she talked to another man, if she went into public with her head uncovered, if she was troublesome or quarrelsome. One Rabbi even interpreted the law to mean that if

⁴William Barclay, The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958), p. 199.

⁵Ibid.

a man found a woman whom he considered to be more attractive, he could divorce his wife.⁶

On the other hand, a wife had no rights of divorce at all, unless her husband was a leper, an apostate, or engaged in a disgusting trade. "Broadly speaking, a husband, under Jewish law, could divorce his wife for any cause; a wife could divorce her husband for no cause." In addition, the process of divorce was very easy. All a man had to do was to hand a bill of divorcement, correctly written out by a Rabbi, to his wife, in the presence of two witnesses and the divorce was complete.⁷

The institution of marriage was so greatly threatened at the time of Christ's coming that Jewish girls were refusing to marry at all because the position of the wife was so uncertain.⁸

The Greek World

Prostitution was an essential part of Greek life. According to Demosthenes, "We have courtesans for the sake of pleasure; we have concubines for the sake of daily cohabitation; we have wives for the purpose of having children legitimately, and of having a faithful guardian for all our household affairs."⁹

The respectable Greek woman had a completely secluded existence: no public life, no appearing in the streets alone, no appearing at meals or social occasions. She had her own apartment, and only her husband could visit her there. For her, companionship and fellowship in marriage was completely impossible. A man found his pleasure and his friendship

⁶Ibid., p. 200.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid., p. 201.

⁹Ibid.

outside his marriage.¹⁰

In Greece, there was not even any legal procedure of divorce. It was done "by nothing else than caprice." Thus home and family life were near to being extinct, and fidelity was completely non-existent.¹¹

The Republic of Rome

For the first 500 years of the Roman Republic there had been not one single case of divorce. But in Paul's day, the degeneracy of Rome was tragic. Roman family life was wrecked. Seneca wrote that "women were married to be divorced and divorced to be married."

Seneca says that women dated the years by the names of their husbands; Juvenal tells of one who had had eight husbands in five years; Jerome declares it to be true that in Rome there was a woman who was married to her twenty-third husband and she herself was his twenty-first wife. . . Even Cicero, in his old age, put away his wife Terentia that he might marry a young heiress, whose trustee he was, that he might enter into her estate in order to pay his debts.¹²

Obviously, the marriage bond in Rome was on the way to complete breakdown.

Thus we see Paul's passage in Ephesians was not a statement of the views held by most of the people of his day. He was calling men and women to a new fidelity and a new purity and a new fellowship in married life. As Barclay so well puts it:

It is the simple fact of history that no one in this world. . . owes more to Christ than women. It is impossible to exaggerate the cleansing effect that Christianity had on ordinary everyday home life in the ancient world.¹³

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid., p. 202.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., p. 203.

THE PRECIOUS BOND--AMERICA, 1973

It is interesting that first on the list of causes for the fall of the Roman Empire (in Edward Gibbon's Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire), was "The rapid increase of divorce; the undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the basis of human society."

Gibbon's other causes are a little jolting to one's security, too, when the parallel to America today is so noticeable:

Higher and higher taxes and the spending of public money for free bread and circuses for the populace;

The mad craze for pleasure; sports becoming every year more exciting and more brutal;

The building of gigantic armaments when the real enemy was within, the decadence of the people;

The decay of religion--faith fading into mere form--losing touch with life and becoming impotent to guide the people.¹⁴

It may be hypothesized, then, that Christ's standard of equality between man and woman not only strengthened the marriage but also the family and thus the society. "Lord, begin with me," a prayer uttered in so many Christian circles today, indicates an ever-increasing awareness of each individual's responsibility in creating what the future may be.

The impact of this paragraph has been expressed very well by a Southern gentleman named Will Percy:

It isn't national leaders we need, so much as men of good will in each of the towns of America. . . We must keep our towns the way they are by being correct citizens ourselves. The total of them all will make the kind of a nation--and the kind of a world we want or don't want.¹⁵

¹⁴"Wake Up America!" Guideposts, 16 (May, 1961), p. 5.

¹⁵Hodding Carter, Where Main Street Meets the River, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 78.

The Mother's Presence

Studies by Anna Freud and other investigators have concluded that the mother's presence with the child, especially in the early years of development, is very important. And yet, this heavily documented fact is ignored. The more educated women seem to be least aware of it.

Dr. Nicholi states:

It's incredible to me to see the number of college-educated women who find their role as wife and mother as an intolerable burden. They somehow have the distorted notion that giving of themselves to enrich the life and career of their husbands and to molding the character of their children is constricting and destructive to their own individuality.¹⁶

And the current women's liberation movement--though focused on a number of legitimate grievances--appears geared to deny the responsibility of being a wife and mother. Unless the educated woman has a career of her own that she can pursue WHILE raising a family, she considers her life a failure. "What has become unmistakably clear from my experience," says Dr. Nicholi, "is that no woman can do both at the same time without sacrificing one or the other." Of the nearly six million pre-school children whose mothers work, only about one million do so because of economic necessity. And the percentage of working mothers is increasing continually.¹⁷

Perhaps never before in our history has the integrity of the family unit been more severely jeopardized by forces within and outside of the home than right now!

¹⁶Dr. Armand Nicholi, "The Crisis of Family Disintegration," Command, Winter, 1972, p. 26.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 27.

THE RELATIVITY OF MORMONISM

Despite the disintegrating forces on the family occurring in our society, devout Latter-day Saints anywhere in the world are a happy, industrious, humble and righteous people.¹⁸ They have found a purpose in life in Christ's call, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. . . Come follow me,"¹⁹ and His example offers a philosophy of life that fills the "moral and spiritual void" felt by so many people today.

To Mormons, God's purpose for the human race, "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man,"²⁰ includes an exalted role for woman--a role contained in five major areas: creator, helpmate, homemaker, teacher, and exemplar.²¹ For most devout Mormon young ladies, then, being a wife and a mother is the ideal opportunity for a life of fulfillment.

Helpmate and Creator

Paul wrote in First Corinthians, "Neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord."²² And though some argue that the Genesis statement that reads, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helpmate. . ."²³, means woman was created

¹⁸Green, op. cit., p. 3.

¹⁹John 14:6.

²⁰The Pearl of Great Price, Moses 1:39.

²¹Margery S. Cannon, "What the Scriptures Say about Being a Wife," The Ensign, December, 1972, p. 30.

²²1 Corinthians 11:11.

²³Genesis 2:18.

purely for man's benefit, there is a very substantial argument that the words could just as well be rendered, "a helper like unto himself." (And is not God Himself spoken of in Scripture as our helper?) Thus the second chapter of Genesis shows that God intended companionship between man and woman as equal moral and intelligent beings, alike in their dignity and worth before God.²⁴

President George Albert Smith, in defining the relationship of the wife to her husband said:

In showing this relationship, by symbolic representation, God didn't say that woman was to be taken from a bone in the man's head that she should rule over him, nor from a bone in his feet that she should be trampled under his feet, but from a bone in his side to symbolize that she was to stand by his side, to be his companion, his equal, and his helpmate in all their lives together.²⁵

After the fall of Eve and Adam in the Garden of Eden, they were given a new commandment: to multiply and replenish the earth.²⁶ And so while Eve was Adam's helpmate and labored with him, she also recognized her divine role as a woman to bear children--a creator.²⁷

Homemaker, Teacher, Exemplar--Motherhood

Motherhood is a gift of God, of inestimable importance in the Mormon Church because Mothers channel all their talents into home and character building. Motherhood lies at the foundation of the happy home and is a full time responsibility for one intent on assuring the best possible experience in terms of acceptance, love, significance and

²⁴Scanzoni, op. cit., p. 11.

²⁵Harold B. Lee, "Maintain Your Place as a Woman," The Ensign, February, 1972, p. 50. Harold B. Lee is currently President and Prophet of the Mormon Church.

²⁶Genesis 1:28.

²⁷The Pearl of Great Price, Moses 5:1, 10-11.

security for each family member.

Man as the breadwinner and woman as homemaker, teacher, and example of love in action--each supporting and respecting the other in their tasks--always seems to be the situation that produces the solid, unified family in all circumstances. Herein lies the basis for a doctrine of equality within the Church: Why should God give his sons power and not his daughters, when both are necessary to carry out His plan?

This poem by Jack Appleton exemplifies the esteem Mormon men hold for their women:

A man succeeds and reaps the honors of public applause,
when in truth, a quiet little woman has made it all possible--
has by her tact and encouragement held him at his best; has
had faith in him when his own faith has languished; has cheered
him with the unfailing assurance: 'you can, you must, you
will.'²⁸

Laying Foundations and Building
Temples

One final word must be addressed to those radical women's liberationists who have literally dropped-out of their motherhood roles and energetically spent time and money downgrading a profession (of homemaking) a probable silent majority are proud to make the ultimate goal of their lives.

If a woman knows under God that her vocation is that of wife and mother, feminists should not try to shame her into feeling unfulfilled. But if a woman realized that a career is what best suits her abilities and personality, then there is no argument from Latter-day Saints that she should have the full freedom to make that choice. As Brigham Young said:

²⁸David O. McKay, Treasures of Life, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1962), p. 49. David O. McKay was the ninth President and Prophet of the Mormon Church.

We believe that women are useful not only to sweep houses, wash dishes, make beds and raise babies, but, they should stand behind the counter, study law or physics, or become good bookkeepers and be able to do the business in any accounting house and all this to enlarge their sphere of usefulness for the benefit of society at large. In following these things they but answer the design of their creation.²⁹

Perhaps the problem with women's rights advocates today is not so much that they have been downtrodden by "chauvinistic male oppressors," but that they have a low view of themselves and the role they say "society" has cast them into. In the eyes of Mormons, such liberationists are only advocating freedom from the very function for which God created them, a function that makes them different from men, but not subordinate to them!

Two thousand years ago, the Lord Jesus Christ said,

Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: He is like a man who built an house, and dug deep, and laid the foundation on a rock, and when a flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it; for it was founded upon a rock.³⁰

"Hearers" and "doers" of the teachings of Jesus Christ, Mormons daily and confidently experience the blessing of building their homes upon a rock. Hattie Vose Hall's poem, "Two Temples," adequately summarizes the importance of the woman in the Mormon home and way of life as a solid unshakeable foundation.

²⁹John A. Widtsoe, Priesthood and Church Government, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1954), pp. 87-88. This advice given by Brigham Young to young women was always qualified by a statement that no public activity should interfere in any way with their first duty as wife, mother and homemaker. Motherhood is woman's greatest calling and if for any reason this is impossible, then she should be free to exercise her gifts in any public capacity.

³⁰Luke 6:47-48.

TWO TEMPLES

A Builder builded a temple,
He wrought it with grace and skill;
Pillars and groins and arches
All fashioned to work his will.
Men said, as they saw its beauty,
"It shall never know decay;
Great is thy skill, O Builder!
Thy fame shall endure for aye."

A Mother builded a temple
With loving and infinite care,
Planning each arch with patience,
Laying each stone with prayer,
None praised her unceasing efforts,
None knew of her wondrous plan,
For the temple the Mother builded
Was unseen by the eyes of man.

Gone is the Builder's temple,
Crumpled into the dust;
Low lies each stately pillar,
Food for consuming rust.
But the temple the Mother builded
Will last while the ages roll,
For that beautiful, unseen temple
Was a child's immortal soul.³¹

³¹Hattie Vose Hall, The Best Loved Poems of the American People,
Selected by Hazel Felleman, (Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishing
Company, 1936), p. 392.

CHAPTER IV

MORMONISM AND POLYGAMY

There is not a single constitution of any single state, much less the Constitution of the Federal Government, that hinders a man from having two wives, and I defy all the lawyers of the United States to prove contrary.¹

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history anyone who has attempted to change radically the society in which he lives, has faced criticism and persecution, sometimes to the point of death. Everyone is familiar with the fact that good men are often made to suffer, but before jumping to the conclusion that this is because there are so many evil people in the world, it would be wise to face this fact: the persecuted are sometimes the victims of men who are sincerely acting according to what they believe are the very best reasons.

Good and evil are not always clearly defined: issues are not always "black and white." One has only to raise the questions of racial integration or amnesty or Federal aid to the aged, to discover that in almost any group there will be earnest, honest people arguing on opposite sides.

Although Christianity declares, "Blessed are the peacemakers,"² where the pride and prejudices of men are involved, or where full knowledge

¹Journal of Discourses, Vol. I, (Liverpool, 1852-1886), p. 365.

²Matthew 5:9.

is lacking, conflict is often aroused. When a man feels his way of life is disturbed or his personal interests are threatened, he will rise up in opposition.

It is important to remember that those who persecute are not always sour, wicked men. They represent the vast majority of us who resist, often for reasons that sound quite convincing, the absolutely pure intentions of an absolutely good person.

Mormons have always believed Joseph Smith was such a man-- absolutely good with absolutely pure intentions. But in the middle nineteenth century, a misunderstood Mormon doctrine--polygamy--caused quite a disturbance. And an opposition group, feeling a moral and political threat, made itself known. So while pioneer Latter-day Saints had always known persecution, polygamy became the focus of the attack against their Church, and eventually caused such a stir that Congressional action in 1887, took away the Mormon woman's right to vote.

Since any study of suffrage in Utah becomes intertwined with this "hot issue", the purpose of this chapter is to explain the Doctrine of Polygamy in the Mormon Church, with the hope that once the real motive for it is understood, another wall of misunderstanding between Mormons and Gentiles will crumble down. . .even at this late date.

EVOLUTION OF POLYGAMY

Before a study of polygamy's development is undertaken, it must be established that Mormons believe procreation is the first and highest purpose of the marriage institution. In the isolation of the Utah Territory, the first consideration in a plural marriage system was not for exclusive companionship, pleasure, or temporal happiness (as we shall

see)--but to bring forth a grand offspring and to strengthen the numbers and quality of the Mormon people.³

The Revelation

Although it was not written down until 1843, there is evidence that the doctrine of plural marriage was revealed to Joseph Smith as early as 1831.⁴ He did not readily accept the idea. Such a practice was in opposition to his way of thinking, and to follow this commandment would be one of the greatest trials of his life. So he kept secret this revelation until the Lord rebuked him for not following His instruction. Then Joseph told only a few close friends, in whom he knew he could confide. The matter was viewed with dread and dismay by the men and women who first received and practiced it.

No greater mistake can be made than to think Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, or any of the Church leaders liked this doctrine or introduced it through lustful desires. As Brigham Young later said,

If any man asked me what was my choice when Joseph Smith revealed that doctrine (plurality of wives) provided that it would not diminish my glory, I would have said, "Let me have but one wife. . ." I was not desirous of shrinking from my duty, nor of failing in the least to do as I was commanded, but it was the first time in my life that I had desired the grave and I could hardly get over it for a long time.⁵

The 1852 Presentation

The doctrine of plural marriage was presented to the Church at a conference in August, 1852, and was accepted by a unanimous vote

³Brigham H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Vol. V, (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1965), pp. 296-297.

⁴Doctrine and Covenants, Section 132.

⁵Roberts, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 102.

to be a revelation from God. Mormons believed that as a majority in what they considered their own territory, they had the constitutional right to regulate their affairs and that the United States Supreme Court would uphold this view even if Congress should have a different one. This view was strengthened by the fact that Congress made no effort to eliminate plural marriage until 1862, ten years later.⁶

A Discriminate Practice

The Mormon Church never advocated indiscriminate or general practice of polygamy. It was limited and specifically guarded under what they believed to be divine restraints and regulations. Men who gave evidence of upright, temperate, and virtuous lives, and women who were chaste, noble, and willing to dedicate their lives to the duty of motherhood set the stage for which procreation to multiply a high quality offspring and hence a high quality race could exist.⁷

An Obligatory Practice

Mormons did not believe the practice of polygamy would increase the comfort or add to the ease of those who practiced it. It was not a call to pleasure, but a call to religious duty; not an invitation to self-indulgence, but to self-conquest. Its purpose was not earth happiness, but earth-life discipline, undertaken for the advantage of coming generations.

Thus men of high character, moral integrity and spiritual development had greater opportunity to become progenitors of the race, and women

⁶Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl, Doctrine and Covenants Commentary, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1965), pp. 820-836.

⁷Roberts, op. cit., Vol V, pp. 296-297.

of like character and development had a special opportunity to further consecrate themselves to their high mission of motherhood.⁸

A Justified Practice

Mormons believe that the development of the human personality to the greatest capacity can best be attained when individuals pass through the experience of fatherhood or motherhood, sharing the responsibilities of the home. Under such a plan, the greatest development of the race can be accomplished when every man and woman who is mentally and physically fit will enter into the marriage relationship and become parents. As long as the sexes are approximately equal, a monogamous marriage should prevail, as recorded in The Book of Mormon.⁹

But as the Church progressed, more women than men were joining and the membership became lopsided, in favor of women. This situation existed for a number of years after the Mormons arrived in Utah. Marriage outside the Church was discouraged and under the isolated circumstances, there were not enough men to go around. Rather than deprive many women the opportunity for the honor, privilege, and development which marriage brings, plural marriage was the alternative.

It was not introduced to stop prostitution or to satisfy the lust of early Mormon leaders. Under the Mormon practice of plural marriage these excess women were absorbed into family life and afforded the opportunity to bear children and raise families.

The Reaction and Reactors

Despite the social reasons which could be argued in justification of plural marriage, it was naturally contrary to the traditions of the

⁸Ibid., pp. 294-295.

⁹The Book of Mormon, Jacob 2:27.

people both inside and outside of the Church. This, along with the anticipated increase of fear and bitter opposition toward the Church, was a logical reason for secrecy and delay in the open practice of plural marriage.

When a few of the leading men and women accepted the responsibility of practicing polygamy, following the example and counsel of the Prophet Joseph Smith, it was with full approval of their first wives. All persons involved believed the principle to be of divine origin.¹⁰

The Polygamist. The man involved in polygamy soon found that his function became one of domestic moderator. Mormon women were persons, not a part of a sex group. Any man who had what might be considered a successful plural marriage, had an instinctive well-poised character, a keen sense of human values, and an abiding trust in the divinity of the revelation (of polygamy) with an accompanying trust in God.¹¹

It was always expected and required that the consent and approval of the first wife be obtained by the husband, before taking another wife. As a rule this was done; but when the husband failed to do it, disaster and confusion resulted unless the wife was broader-minded and nobler-hearted than the unwise husband.

Mormons felt that ideal marital relations could be assumed and maintained righteously only if the principles of justice and rigid virtue were upheld by all parties involved. Interestingly, only a few men--three

¹⁰Susa Young Gates, The Life Story of Brigham Young, (London: Jarrolds Publishers, 1930), pp. 33-36. Mrs. Gates was the first of Brigham Young's children to be born in the Lion House in Salt Lake City.

¹¹Ibid., p. 37.

to four per cent--¹² were chosen to assume the burden involved in this marital order.

The Polygamist's Women. The women who accepted the role of a polygamist's wife, were noble in spirit, unselfish and ready to forget and forgive. They reasoned it was better to have a part of a pure and devoted man's love, than no man at all, or the companionship of one that was corrupt, selfish and dirty.¹³

They were intelligent, alert to the truth, wide of vision, and progressive American citizens. Although they possessed age-long traditions of monogamic marriage, fierce maternal jealousies, strong emotions, and sex-selfishness, they are considered to be the heroines of the day. Very few of the plural wives in the Church ever invoked public condemnation of plural marriage. There was very little domestic unhappiness and the number of divorces was so small as to be considered negligible. Much credit for peace and harmony in the home must be given to the generous and saintly character of the first wife, however.

The Consummation

After several unsuccessful attempts were made to outlaw polygamy, the United States Congress passed the Edmunds-Tucker Law, against polygamy or plural marriage as practiced in the Mormon Church, in 1887. After contesting in the courts by constitutional means, every phase of the law and all disputed points were settled, and the Church yielded to Edmunds-Tucker Law by official manifesto in 1890.

This also was in accordance with the twelfth article of the Mormon faith which declares:

¹²Percentage figures vary from 2 per cent to 10 per cent, depending on the source.

¹³Gates, op. cit.

We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers and magistrates, in obeying, honoring and sustaining the law.¹⁴

THE CLASH AMIDST MISUNDERSTANDING

Proponents of the anti-Mormon/anti-polygamy crusade claimed to be guided by patriotism, a desire to protect the monogamous home (the chief cornerstone of the nation), and a desire to see that the laws of the land were upheld. No vindictiveness was intended; they only wanted to re-establish the full sovereignty of the state.

The case of the crusaders may be summed up by a Salt Lake Tribune article on February 12, 1886:

There is no vindictiveness in this crusade, though a great deal has been charged. There is no wish that any Mormon shall be injured in person or property, the skulking charge that a sinister motive is behind the demand that the laws shall be supreme is but the gibberish of knaves and fools, but the determination that this business shall stop is growing more and more fixed daily.¹⁵

Later, this same organ, to further justify its position, said this about Mormon polygamists:

They ought, like sensible people, to remember that there is no desire on the part of any here or elsewhere to harm them one penny's worth in property; there is no wish to persecute them; but there is a fixed determination that they shall obey the laws of the country, and so the machinery of the courts is set in motion against them for the same purpose and in the same spirit that the men of the North a quarter of a century ago were organized into armies and moved against the South. It was not for plunder; it was not for vengeance; it was simply that the laws of the republic should be enforced and that the full sovereignty of the republic should be vindicated and re-established.¹⁶

¹⁴The Pearl of Great Price, The Articles of Faith, Number 12.

¹⁵Salt Lake Tribune, February 12, 1886.

¹⁶Salt Lake Tribune, February 16, 1886.

In rebuttal to this, President Joseph F. Smith, in a letter to the Deseret News, dated March 10, 1886, said:

It is firmly believed by many that plural marriage is the cause of our persecutions, and if abandoned by us, we would have no cause to fear any further persecutions. The present crusade is not a struggle against plural marriage alone, nor in the interest in morality. Quite the reverse. It represents a despotism of the most grinding character, for the destruction of every vestige of local self-government. And it works by falsehood, fraud, trickery, usurpation and tyranny, while its battle cry against "polygamy" is created to deceive and repeated and echoed to mislead. "It is simply a ruse de guerre to hide the brutal villany and outrageous hypocrisy of the whole infamous plot."¹⁷

The Political Implications

Whether or not they allowed themselves to recognize it, could it be the real cause of this anti-Mormon crusade was a fight for political control in Utah? Amidst the clash of tempers and misunderstandings it is difficult to tell.

Here are some facts: even though at this time anti-Mormons held the chief places in the executive and judicial departments of the Territorial government by appointment of the President of the United States, they were not content, for they had no voice in the legislative department, no control of the treasury, no hope of holding any local office and were not leaders in local community thought and power.¹⁸

A look backwards to the Mormon situation in the summer of 1890, when the crusade reached its climax, is cause for wonder about the justice of it all. Church authorities were now fully aware of the general helplessness of the Church against the forces and power of the Federal government. Many women had gone to prison for contempt of court for

¹⁷The Deseret News, March 31, 1886, p. 186. Joseph F. Smith became the sixth President of the Church in 1901.

¹⁸Roberts, op. cit., Vol. VI, pp. 134-135.

refusing to answer questions relative to their marital status. Hundreds of the Church's leading Elders were in prison or in exile to no avail except to prove the sincerity of the people in their acceptance of the plural marriage principle for which they were suffering. The Church's property, both real and personal, valued at about one million dollars, had been taken by the Federal government.

All attempts to gain statehood had failed. All denials of the many scandalous charges against the Church and Mormon community by Church authorities had been ignored. Alien Mormons could not become state citizens solely because they were Mormons. Political control of Salt Lake City was lost to non-Mormons. Mormons faced the alternatives: give up their right to vote, or abandon their Church, insuring its destruction.

Many Mormons were weary of the conflict and desired its cessation by concession to the crusading anti-Mormons' demands. There was also counsel and pressure from powerful non-Mormon friends to abandon this practice which arrayed the entire nation against them.¹⁹

The Manifesto

In the midst of these conditions and threatening Congressional legislation, President Wilford Woodruff²⁰ faced the problem of what to do about the respected policy and practice of plural marriage of the Church.

On September 25, 1890, the Church made an official declaration renouncing the practice of plural marriage. President Woodruff made this entry in his Journal:

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 211-219.

²⁰Wilford Woodruff was the fourth President of the Mormon Church.

I have arrived at a point in the history of my life as the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints where I am under the necessity of acting for the temporal salvation of the Church. The United States government has taken a stand and passed laws to destroy the Latter-day Saints on the subject of polygamy, or patriarchal order of marriage; and after praying to the Lord and feeling inspired, I have issued the following proclamation (The Manifesto) which is sustained by my counselors and the Twelve Apostles.²¹

At the October conference of the Church, "The Manifesto" was submitted for approval or disapproval to the membership. Following its reading, the President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Lorenzo Snow, made the following motion:

I move that, recognizing Wilford Woodruff as the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the only man on earth at the present time who holds the keys of the sealing ordinances, we consider him fully authorized by virtue of his position, to issue the Manifesto which has been read in our hearing, and which is dated September 24, 1890, and that as a Church, in general conference assembled, we accept his declaration concerning plural marriage as authoritative and binding.²²

The vote in support of this motion was nearly unanimous. The Manifesto did not deny the rightfulness nor the divinity of the plural marriage practice, it only forbade its practice. To Mormons it was the result of a revelation from God to Wilford Woodruff, the presiding Prophet.

SUMMARY

In the matter of plural marriage, Mormons neither feel

²¹Woodruff's Journal, September 25, 1890, as quoted in Roberts, Comprehensive History of the Church, Vol. VI, p. 220. The text of "The Woodruff Manifesto" as it is usually called is contained in Appendix B.

²²Roberts, op. cit., Vol. VI, pp. 221-222.

responsible for its introduction, nor for its discontinuance, but rather believe it was by commandment from the Lord. It was in the face of opposition to traditional teaching, great difficulties and dangers that they practiced the law as revealed to them. For some fifty years they defended it in public, debated it, proclaimed it from the pulpit and practiced it in their lives, notwithstanding fines, imprisonment and in some cases exile as a consequence.

Finally, under the pressure of suffering brought upon Mormons through United States power and laws, the practice of polygamy was discontinued by declaration of the Church. Was justice done? Did the will of God or the will of man prevail?

It is quite possible, considering the humanness of everyone involved, the misunderstanding of the polygamous doctrine, and the inability to really know any individual or group's motives, that we shall never know the answers to these questions. However, scripture says, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to this purpose."²³ Believing God can bring glory to any circumstance or blunder man makes, if He is allowed to, and recognizing the strength of the Mormon Church in the world today, perhaps it can be confidently said, "It has all worked out for the best."

²³Romans 8:28.

CHAPTER V

THE SPEECH CONSTITUENTS

'Tis better to have voted and been disfranchised
than never to have voted at all.¹

THE WOMEN SPEAKERS

Generally speaking, the Mormon women were of middle class, New England background and decent. Some were from England and Canada and a few were from most other states in the Union. Most of the early converts to the Mormon Church were from an area along part of the American frontier which lay north of St. Louis to the Canadian border. The settlers in this area were largely from New England stock. The first generation of Mormon women were not of the frontier type. The ability to prosper and succeed under the frontier environment was learned and developed as the Mormons were mobbed and driven from place to place, finally settling in the Utah Territory in 1847. Mormons were thought to be liberal or radical thinkers and the vast emptiness of the west offered them security, safety and needed exile. Freedom of religious thought was of paramount importance to them and the frontier environment was the circumstances in which the Mormon women existed by necessity if they were to uphold their religious

¹Emmeline B. Wells, (ed.), Woman's Exponent (Salt Lake City), Vol. 17, No. 18, February 15, 1889, p. 137. Opening phrase of a speech by Emily S. Richards at the January 1889 convention of the National Woman Suffrage Association.

beliefs and convictions.

Most of the early Mormon women came from family backgrounds of religious unrest and dissatisfaction and they were eagerly looking for a new religion to fill their needs before they came upon Mormonism. This indicates a strong religious inclination or desire which when fulfilled would result in a total conviction and belief in the new found religion, whatever it might be. This proved to be the case of the first generation of Mormon women, who were destined to become the suffrage leaders in the Utah Territory.

The Church offers many opportunities for expression by all. This concept was significant in the development of the early women of the Church. Calls to position or jobs are often based on the criteria, "not what you are, but what you may become."² This fundamental faith in the potential of the individual, when coupled with a desire to serve appears to be another distinguishing characteristic of the Mormon Church that helped to develop the women of Mormondom.

A picture of the Mormon women during the trek west is eloquently expressed by Eliza R. Snow, one of the women involved in the westward move and later a leader in the suffrage movement.

Many of our sisters walked all day, rain or shine and at night prepared suppers for their families, with no sheltering tents; and then made their beds in and under wagons that contained their earthly all. How frequently, with intense sympathy and admiration, I watched the mother, when, forgetful of her own fatigue and destitution, she took unwearied pains to fix up, in the most palatable form, the allotted portion of food, and as she dealt it out was cheering the hearts of her homeless children, while, as I truly believe, her own was lifted

²William E. Berrett, The Restored Church (Salt Lake City: The Deseret Book Co., 1969), p. 108.

to God in fervent prayer that their lives might be preserved.³

A statement by Brigham Young made early in the trek west is important in setting the attitude of the Mormon women who later populated the Utah Territory and became the leaders and speakers in the suffrage movement after their arrival in Utah. It is on these women that this study is focused.

Attention, the camps of Israel. I propose to move forward on our journey. Let all who wish follow me; but I want none to come unless they will obey the commandments and statutes of the Lord. Cease, therefore, your contentions and back-biting, nor must there be swearing or profanity in our camps. Whoever finds anything must seek diligently to return it to the owner. The Sabbath day must be hallowed. In all our camp, prayers should be offered up both morning and evening. If you do these things, faith will abide in your hearts; and the angels of God will go with you even as they went with the children of Israel when Moses led them from the land of Egypt.⁴

The unity and cooperation exhibited by the Mormons in making their long trek west appears to be the by word of Mormonism. This attitude faltered somewhat after it was decided that the present Salt Lake Valley was to be the stopping point. At this time, the valley floor was a dry and treeless plain. Grey sagebrush stretched in every direction and the hot sun scorched the grass and baked the ground.

To the women, this valley was a picture of utter desolation. Tears came to the eyes of many of these brave women who found only a

³Ibid., p. 108.

⁴Ibid., p. 220.

barren waste at the end of their long long journey. Brigham Young's wife, Clara Decker Young, is reported to have said on this occasion:

I have come 1,200 miles to reach this valley and walked much of the way, but I am willing to walk a thousand miles farther rather than remain here.⁵

In founding the city the heroism of the pioneer women played an important part. Nine women entered the valley with the first group on July 24, 1847. By the close of the year women were the majority of a population which numbered over two thousand.

Doctor Charles William Elliott, then president of Harvard University, said of these Mormon pioneer women, in March, 1892:

Did it ever occur to you what is the most heroic part of planting a colony of people which moves into a wilderness to establish a civilized community? You think perhaps, it is the soldier, the armed man or the laboring man. Not so, it is the women who are the most heroic part of any new colony. Their labors are less because their strength is less. Their anxieties are greater, their dangers greater. the risks they run are heavier. We read that story in the history of the Pilgrims and Puritan Colonies of Massachusetts. The women died faster than the men; they suffered more. Perhaps their reward was greater, too. They bore children to the colony. Let us bear in our hearts veneration for the women of any Christian folk going out in the wilderness to plant a new community.⁶

The Mormon pioneer women were such Christian folk.

THE SUFFRAGE CONFLICT

The Utah Territory did not become a part of the United States

⁵Ibid., p. 263.

⁶Ibid., p. 267.

until February 1852. No governmental officers had ever lived in the Territory, nor had the administration of any law been attempted in the Territory. Out of this, by necessity the Mormons established their own law and government. On the first Sunday in the valley by the Mormons, the law of the Lord was declared the law of the land.

Throughout the conflicts between the Mormons and the non-Mormons and the early growth of the Church in the Utah Territory, the Mormon Church exercised a definite control over the economic and social life of its members. One Church claimed reason for this was self-preservation in overcoming the hardships and power of the desert. Another, was as a defensive maneuver against those who sought to destroy Mormonism. Both are indications of the strong influence the Church had on its members, particularly, its women members.

The question of equal suffrage began to surface in the early 1880's. Speeches that were presented prior to this time defended polygamy, arguing its truthfulness and religious base. Suffrage became an appendage to the polygamy issue as it expanded. In this, those against the Mormons thought to kill two birds with one stone. As the crusades continued the loss of suffrage became more and more imminent. Upon realizing this, the Mormon women began to argue for their continued right to suffrage as citizens of the United States.

The women of the Utah Territory were given the right to vote by the Territory Legislature in February in 1870.⁷ In September of 1880, an attempt was made to take suffrage away from the women of the

⁷See Appendix A for the text of this act.

Territory by declaring that the law conferring the franchise upon woman was null and void. These anti's preemptorily ordered that the names, Emmeline B. Wells, Maria M. Blythe and a Mrs. A. G. Paddock and in general all other women be erased from the registration list. The Supreme Court, after a ten year silence, issued a writ to enforce this demand. Throughout the country, campaigns were conducted with extensive discussions and debates as to the merits and shortcomings of woman suffrage. According to the judge, as he declared, "We deny the validity of the act giving women the right to vote,"⁸ Mormon women had never cast a lawful ballot.

One of the principle objections to the 1870 law which had given Mormon women the right to vote and was now in question, was that it did not require women to pay taxes and a law in 1859 prohibited any male from voting unless he was a tax payer. At this time, however, every woman in Utah who was a holder of any property was required to and did pay taxes. Poll tax was the only tax from which women were exempt. This objection was apparently unfounded and was used to create prejudice against the women.

To the Mormon women, the vote could be seen to foster good institutions and practices, promote industry among the people, elevate society and eventually lift women to a much higher plain than that enjoyed by her in the past. Like always, the Mormon women believed their cause was in the hands of a much higher tribunal than that of the Supreme Court. "Soon aye soon, we shall appeal to that Higher Tribunal

⁸Woman's Exponent, Vol. 9, No. 9, October 1, 1880, p. 68.

and there we shall not long appeal in vain."⁹ Such a High Tribunal would continue to triumph over every obstacle, no matter what the cause that may be placed in the way of woman's advancement and political equality. Man's purposes would be decided by God.¹⁰

To fully express the sentiment of the Mormon women toward these initial attempts to dispose of their right to vote, the following speech extracts are of value and provide some insight into the character of the Mormon women speakers.

It is astonishing to what a degree some of "Our Father's" creatures can becloud their own vision, and still imagine themselves far-seeing individuals. The case of the late contest entered into for the purpose of disfranchising the women of Utah by certain parties, exhibits this moral deformity to an unusual extent.¹¹

Inasmuch as we, the veritable women of Utah, have enjoyed the right of franchise for ten years with good results, we as Americans would not be honoring the heritage given us by the patriotism bequeathed us by our forefathers, who were willing to give their lives to maintain their honor and obtain freedom for their posterity - unless we protest against this attempt to take away our privileges. It is our duty to express our indignation at this unheard of political injustice.¹²

Don't you know, you one horse politicians, that the dishonorable subterfuge to which you are resorting, is palpable to every honorable man and woman who is not eaten up by spite and avarice?

⁹Mormon Women's Protest (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Company., Printers, March 6, 1886), p. 27. From a speech by Ruthindia E. Monch. This pamphlet is a full account of the proceedings of a mass meeting of the Mormon women against the tyranny and indecency of Federal Officials in Utah and against their own disfranchisement.

¹⁰Woman's Exponent, Vol. 9, No. 9, October 1, 1880, p. 68.

¹¹Woman's Exponent, Vol. 9, No. 9, October 1, 1880, p. 70. From a speech by Lula Greene Richards.

¹²Ibid., p. 70. From a speech by Zina D. H. Young.

Bah! The very name of the one chosen for this great and mighty conspiracy means failure.¹³

A general demand for woman suffrage had been going on throughout the United States since the first Woman's Rights Convention was held at Seneca Falls, New York in 1848. In May 1869, a National Woman's Suffrage Association was organized in an attempt to secure the ballot by constitutional amendment, for all women. Later, in the same year, in harmony with this growing movement, Wyoming granted suffrage to its women. Brigham Young, being impressed with this liberal and just action of the Wyoming Legislature, suggested the advisability of granting the same right and privilege to the women of Utah. This suggestion was adopted by unanimous vote of the Utah Legislature in February, 1870.

Undaunted by the Edmunds-Tucker Law of 1887, the women intensified their efforts in the interest of suffrage. Employing the time-honored custom of holding mass meetings, the leading women, who had become excellent speakers and good reasoners, presented the suffrage cause with vigor and conviction. On January 10, 1889, these women organized the Woman's Suffrage Association of Utah. This helped solidify the position of Mormon women at the national level, as the Utah association allied itself with the National-American Woman's Suffrage Association.

The Mormon women did not get involved in the suffrage movement to any great extent until they lost the right to vote by Congressional act in February 1887, as a result of the Edmunds-Tucker Law. This involvement continued with increased vigor until Utah was admitted as the 45th state on January 4, 1896, with woman suffrage as a clause in

¹³Ibid., p. 70. From a speech by Zina Young Williams

the constitution.

THE SPECIFIC SPEECH OCCASION

Groups or movements often do not gain momentum or interest until something is actually lost or is taken away. This appears to be the case with the suffrage movement in Utah, if the subject matter (a shift from polygamy to suffrage) and the frequency of the speeches (more speeches just after the loss of suffrage) is an indication of gained momentum. Another indication of this premise was the organization of the Utah Woman Suffrage Association in January 1889, more than a year after the passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Law, which repealed woman suffrage in Utah.

Speeches take place in social settings. As George Kelly suggests, a person's thinking in terms of his life and universe is based in part on his prior convictions. Further, these convictions are based on, or influenced by, the environment in which that person exists.¹⁴ The analysis of the speaking of the Mormon women give indications that the environment and the life of the Mormon women influenced their thinking and speaking. An understanding of the events leading up to a speech helps to reveal the meaning of the words and phrases as used by the speakers. Chapter I alluded to some extent to the atmosphere and conditions of the times during which these speeches were delivered. A more detailed account is of importance to understand fully the speaking situation.

Customary mass meetings were held in one of the community's

¹⁴George A. Kelly, A Theory of Personality (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1963), pp. 6-8.

large assembly halls or theaters when the Mormon women gathered to speak on equal suffrage. The mass meetings held in Salt Lake City were usually attended by one thousand to two thousand women, mostly of the Mormon faith. The meetings were advertised in advance by a committee appointed for that purpose. Other committees were appointed to provide for decorations and refreshments, both of which were normally provided at these meetings. These meetings were patterned after the meetings of the Mormon Church. A woman elected as president conducted the meetings, which always began and ended with a prayer. Normally, there was some sort of prelude and postlude music along with interludes during the meeting. On special occasions music was furnished by a band. An excellent example of such an occasion, was the day Wyoming achieved statehood with woman suffrage in her constitution.

On this day, in July 1890, the Women's Suffrage Association of Utah held a lawn fete to celebrate this victory. This celebration was in the beautiful gardens of one of the association members. The decorating committee had spared nothing. Flags, banners and streamers were everywhere. Chinese lanterns were hung in every available space. These lanterns, coupled with two railroad train headlights gave an effect of brilliancy.

The speakers stand was tastefully draped and on the back of the stand were pictures of celebrated women of the movement. Throughout the grounds, the reception committee had the chairs and garden seats so arranged that the hundreds of people assembled could be comfortably seated. The scene presented an oriental appearance of grandeur and coloring. The air filled with the perfume of fragrant flowers and the lively band music helped to make the charm of the event complete.

The large intelligent and imposing crowd of ladies and gentlemen

heard the band open the affair at 8:30 PM with a special song to the tune of the Star Spangled Banner, that had been written especially for this occasion. After an opening prayer, a short welcoming address was given by the Association President, Sarah M. Kimball. Following a brief musical interlude by the band and a speech by Mrs. Emily S. Richards, Mrs. Martha Horne Tingey read in an easy and graceful manner, with a voice perfectly modulated, clear and distinct, her speech.¹⁵ The speakers were usually assigned in advance of the meeting, but on occasion, women were called from the audience to express their feelings and views on equal suffrage. As the movement progressed, prominent Mormon men, in sympathy with the movement were asked to speak at these mass meetings and others were allowed to attend.

SUMMARY

The Mormon women were dedicated to their religion and followed its teachings despite the many hardships they encountered because of it. (e.g. frontier life, ridicule, loss of the vote, jail sentences). Even before they embraced Mormonism, it appears that their lives were under the influence of a religious environment. These women were stalwarts in the westward trek and establishment of the Salt Lake Valley. They believed that God had created them equal to man and therefore they should be allowed to vote. Man had placed them in an inferior status. Having once exercised the privilege of suffrage, the Mormon women believed that through the grace of God they would once again obtain political equality. They organized their own suffrage organization and

¹⁵Woman's Exponent, Vol. 19, No. 4, July 15, 1890, p. 28.

soldified their position at the national level by joining with the National-American Suffrage Association. After losin_g the right to vote in 1887, the women of Mormondom were continously and vigorously involved in the suffrage movement, achieving their victory in 1896 when Utah was admitted as a state with a woman suffrage clause in her constitution.

CHAPTER VI

RHETORICAL STRATEGIES

There is enough oratory in the Church to put me in the Presidential chair the first slide.¹

METHODOLOGY

This analysis surveys the period of time between 1870 and 1896. It will concentrate on the constituents of the speaking situation, with emphasis on the strategic use of religious reference and scriptural proofs. Other elements of the speaking situation such as the speakers, the audience and the occasion have been discussed in the previous chapters, in order to explain the environment, attitude and convictions under which these speeches were conceived and delivered. This overview further served to explain the convictions and background of the speakers as a group. As is readily evident, all were similar in nature.

The purpose of a speech, to some extent, is determined by the occasion and circumstances surrounding that speech. The purpose further affects or controls the choice of subject matter to be used in the speech. The obvious purpose of these speeches was to gain equal

¹William E. Berrett, The Restored Church (Salt Lake City: The Deseret Book Co., 1969), p. 179. A remark made by Joseph Smith in May, 1844, when he announced his candidacy for President of the United States.

suffrage for the women of Utah. At this time, the population was predominantly Mormon² and the speakers wisely chose religious themes to promulgate this purpose. Their final success can be measured to some extent by the fact that Utah women did receive the right to vote. The speeches kept people sensitive to the equal suffrage issue, thereby putting pressure on the legislature to enact woman suffrage when the issue was raised. By continuous repetition of the suffrage argument in a religious vein, the people of the Territory were educated to the true feeling of Mormon women, to their conviction and determination to insure that right prevailed.

To gain insight as to how Mormon women related their religion to the suffrage question, all religious references found in Mormon women's suffrage speeches have been cataloged. In some cases conglomerate impressions gained from the speeches were felt to justify cataloging them as a religious allusion even though no specific religious statement was made. After completing the cataloging, these references were grouped into general categories as determined by the content of the speeches. Five major strategies were determined. Obviously, there is some overlapping across the imaginary boundaries of these groupings. When there was some doubt as to the category, the writer exercised his best judgement in conjunction with the speech text, to determine in which category to place the reference.

Fifty-one speeches were analyzed. These speeches were delivered by thirty-seven speakers,³ between October 1880 and October 1895.

²Whitney, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 134-135. According to the official United States Census of 1880 the population of Utah was 143,963, of which 120,283 were Mormons.

³See Appendix C for a list and date of the speakers and the speeches.

The periods just before the passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Law in 1887, and the renouncement of plural marriage by the Mormons in 1890, appear to be the peak periods of woman suffrage rhetoric. Twenty-three such speeches were made at a mass meeting in March 1886 and fourteen were given the year prior to the renouncement of plural marriage.

A total of 220 strategic uses of religious references were recorded. The frequency of religious references in the speeches ranged from zero to nineteen, with an average of just over four references per speech. Only ten of the fifty-one speeches contained no scriptural or religious connotations.

The following categories were developed as the speeches were analyzed, all of which were used in the speech text in a religious vein. The numbers in parentheses is the total number of references that were recorded in each category. Each category will be explained and illustrated with examples from the various speeches as a means of proof of their argument. The categories are listed in order, according to the frequency of use as follows:

1. Faith or trust in God. (63)
2. Woman, mother or motherhood. (58)
3. Liberty and freedom. (31)
4. Creator, created or created equally. (29)
5. Suffrage or franchisement. (20)

STRATEGIES

The Strategy of Expressing Faith or Trust in God

A deep faith in God is evidenced by the large number of references (63) to faith or trust in God throughout all the speeches. This was the most used theme and was used to establish the fact that God would determine the outcome of the conflict as long as the Normons

remained true to their religion. As Zina Young Williams said:

In the status of our now famous Territory, and the framing of such laws as our noble Legislators have made for the governing of the same, can plainly be seen the power of an Allwise and just God who never deserts his own.⁴

Just as God had always protected them in the past, because they (the Mormons) were His people, He would not let them down at this time. Further evidence of this feeling can be found in a speech by Helen Mar Whitney:

We shall see the hand of God in this, as we have in every other move made by our enemies. We can look back through all our mobbings and drivings and can see the hand of God in every move.⁵

The Mormons believed that as long as they kept their faith in God, they would be successful. Their arguments in this respect appear to be in obedience to a belief that God helps those who help themselves. "May heaven reward them according to their works. For our Saviour has said, 'with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again,'" was Martha Horne Tingey's plea.⁶ M. Isabella Horne said, "It will also be written in the archives above, where 'angels are silent notes taking,' and will have to be met by those persons who are waging this bitter crusade against us."⁷ In the vein of trusting God as the Mediator in all things, Mrs. H. C. Brown's appeal to the audience was:

⁴Woman's Exponent, Vol. 9, No. 9, October 1, 1880, p. 70.
From a speech by her.

⁵Ibid., p. 70.

⁶Mormon Women's Protest (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Co., Printers, March 6, 1886), p. 25.

⁷Ibid., p. 8.

And we would say to them and to the world that, rather than forego one principle of our holy religion, rather than yield the right to act upon our own convictions of duty, we would if need be, endure exile or imprisonment, or whatever our Heavenly Father may see fit in His wisdom to require of us, and, like the Saints of former days, suffer rather than accept deliverance, that we may inherit a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.⁸

Dr. Ellen B. Ferguson demonstrated a strong belief and faith in a just God when she said:

There is a tribunal before which we must all appear to account for the deeds done in the body, when even-handed and exact justice will be meted out to all. --- We know what the aim of our enemies is. It is to sweep 'Mormonism' from the face of the earth; but the work is of God and they cannot do it.⁹

It appears the Mormon women believed that in order to prove that equal suffrage was right, it was necessary to prove that God was the Mediator in all things. To this end a theme of faith or trust in God was their most used approach. They expressed a deep seated faith and trust in God as a Mediator and Counselor in their behalf. It was such a faith and trust that provided them their desire and motivation to continue the struggle for equal suffrage in the face of almost insurmountable obstacles. "Let us echo the words of our blessed Savior under more exquisite suffering as an excuse for them, 'they know not what they do.'"¹⁰ The easy path to success would have been to renounce their religion. But this they would not do.

In the meantime we will not yield one point of our sacred religion, no, never. And in the time to

⁸Ibid., p. 12.

⁹Ibid., pp. 16-17.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 21. From a speech by Hannah T. King.

come to be a Latter-day Saint shall be greater than to be a king.¹¹

This writer feels that the Mormon women successfully established their belief and conviction in God as a necessary entity in arguing for equal suffrage. That anyone who expressed and demonstrated such a deep seated faith and trust in the Almighty should be afforded the opportunity to vote in a free country appears to be the motive behind their strategy. To Mormon women equal suffrage was a God given right to someone with genuine and abiding faith.

The Strategy of Honoring Woman, Mother or Motherhood.

The Mormon women cited numerous examples and references to the position of women and mothers in the sight of God, to justify their position that they should be afforded equal suffrage. A total of fifty-eight such references that attempted to prove that God holds women in a high and equal position were recorded. Coupled with a belief that the Mormon's were God's chosen people (faith), a position of sexual equality seems logical.

References to woman or womanhood were used as proof that in the sight of God, woman holds a high and equal position. Mormon women believed that because they were part of God's people such a position was their equal right.

When our Mother Eve was placed in the garden of Eden she was for a helpmate to her husband, not his servant, and the same blessings were conferred, the same promises given to her as to the man: and when she yielded to temptation she was equally guilty and just as severely censured and punished as he, which would not have been just, had she

¹¹Ibid., p. 27. From a speech by Ruthindia E. Monch.

been a less intelligent and responsible being.¹²

Zina D. Young demonstrated her conviction of woman's equal position in this expression:

We will be glad to see on every flag of the Union that Woman Suffrage is especially honored and that woman is honored in her position. Is there any nation on the earth that is raised to dignity and honor without the noble mothers who prayer for them, who think for them, whose milk flows to sustain life, and how great is the calling, how great is the power of a righteous mother. Do we not all praise the mother of George Washington and there are many others that can be mentioned whose names are to be revered, and the mothers who are here today will be held in reverence and esteem as the mothers of the coming generations of the world. (Applause).¹³

The fourth chapter of Judges was used to prove that God has and does use women to promulgate His purposes. It was through Deborah, the Prophetess and judge of Israel, that the Lord spoke to the Children of Israel. Through the agency of a woman, the Lord, as prophesied delivered the enemies of Deborah into her hands.

I will surely go with thee, notwithstanding the journey thou takest shalt not be for thine honor, for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hands of a woman. And, Deborah rose and went up with him. This prophesy was fulfilled by Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, slaying Sisera their enemy while he was asleep in her tent. Thus through a woman's agency did the Lord deliver the enemies of His people into their hands.¹⁴

¹²Woman's Exponent, Vol. 19, No. 4, p. 29, July 15, 1890. From a speech by Martha Horne Tingey.

¹³Woman's Exponent, Vol. 24, No. 9, October 1, 1895, p. 62.

¹⁴Ibid., Vol. 19, No. 4, July 15, 1890, p. 29. From a speech by Martha Horne Tingey.

Miriam, the sister of Moses, was another woman whom God called to perform an important function.

In reproving the people, He says, "For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron and Miriam."¹⁵

The Mormon women viewed themselves as devout followers of the Almighty. Because of this, they believed that they were living on a higher level than those who opposed them in the suffrage conflict.

God forbid that we should descent to their level! We believe in the elevation of woman and live on a higher plane.¹⁶

Let our works speak for us. We are a temperate God-fearing, law-abiding people. We consider virtue and chastity the crowning ornaments of woman's character. Our ladies are educated and refined and their lives are constantly characterized by acts of nobility, fortitude and usefulness.¹⁷

Such a position was God's desire for His people, as indicated in the New Testament.

We also read in the New Testament that many women were fellow-laborers with the Apostles in their ministry, and to whom they referred with much honor and respect. Our Savior was a great friend to woman when He was on the earth, and appeared to her and gave her the first commission after his resurrection, saying, "Go tell my disciples I have risen." Woman never deserted Him in His hour of trial, but was last at the cross and first at the grave, while His Apostles each went their way one of them even denying Him with an oath for fear of the multitude. But the women were faithful and true.¹⁸

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Mormon Women's Protest, op. cit., p. 9. From a speech by M. Isabella Horne on March 6, 1886.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 37-38. From a speech by Mrs. Ellis R. Shipp on March 6, 1886.

¹⁸Woman's Exponent, Vol. 19, No. 4, July 15, 1890, p. 29. From a speech by Martha Horne Tinney.

The strong convictions of the Mormon women and the strategic use of religious references to woman or mother can best be summed up by the closing statement of Martha Horne Tingey in 1890.

I have endeavored to show that woman's sphere is not necessarily confined to the home circle but that her Creator designed her to stand as a fellow-helper to man in all the affairs of life. And when she is permitted to take her proper place socially and politically, she will remember the higher platform on which she stands, and act as a magnet to draw society and politics up to her standard of morality, purity and honor.¹⁹

The Mormon belief that the Savior held women in a position of high esteem, honor and respect was amply demonstrated through the use of scriptural reference and examples. Because of this sanctified position and God's will, their status was to be one of equality in all things. Because they were women of God, the right to vote was rightfully theirs. This strategy was used to prove to anyone who believed in God, that opposition to equal suffrage for women was wrong.

The Strategy of Expressing Liberty and Freedom.

It is said we live in a free country, for which our fathers fought and bled, where is enjoyed free speech, a free press and a right to worship God according to the dictates of our own consciences. Not so; rumor has falsely spoken. Utah is the exception.²⁰

That the Mormon women made reference to liberty and freedom in arguing for equal suffrage came as no surprise. Thirty-one such references were recorded. The Twelfth Article of Faith of the Mormon religion and its history support a position of obedience to law and

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Mormon Women's Protest, op. cit., p. 40. From a speech by Dr. Elvira S. Barney on March 6, 1886.

order, through which freedom and liberty are conceived.

We believe in being subject to kings, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.²¹

We as a people do not believe in taking the law in our own hands; it is against the teachings of our Prophet and Seer and our present authorities. The Lord has marked out a course of action for this people. It is written in the book of Doctrine and Covenants that when our enemies persecute and oppress us, we should petition the judges; if they will not hear us, we should petition the governor, and if he will not hear us, we should petition the president.²²

Further evidence of such a belief can be seen in the historic trek of the "Mormon Battalion."²³

The women promulgated this strategy in an effort to prove that liberty and freedom was their equal right, suffrage included.

First, through their creation:

The inspiration of liberty is born with every true daughter as well as every true son of God, and woman in her sphere has sacrificed as much to maintain it as man.²⁴

We stand on God's footstool free men and women, and will cleave to the principles of the Constitution which gives to all equal rights, no matter of what

²¹Green, op.cit., p. 76.

²²Mormon Women's Protest, op. cit., pp. 8-9. From a speech by M. Isabella Horne on March 6, 1886.

²³During the westward migration, in June, 1846, President Polk requested of the Mormons, 500 men to leave the main body and march by a different route to the west, in the cause of the United States Army in connection with the Mexican War. This left 500 wagons without men as teamsters. Dubbed the longest infantry march in the history of the world, the men of the "Mormon Battalion" left Ft. Leavenworth in August in 1846 and march southwest through Santa Fe, El Paso and Tucson, arriving in San Diego in January of 1847, a march of 2000 miles.

²⁴Mormon Women's Protest, op. cit., p. 61. From a speech by Marilla M. Daniels on March 6, 1886.

creed or nationality.²⁵

Second, because they were citizens of a free America:

I object to the cruel withholding of suffrage from women, in a land consecrated by blood to universal liberty. In a special sense I object to the arbitrary edict by which thousands of intelligent voters were deprived of a sacred right, simply because they were women.²⁶

Shall we then, mother, wives and daughters of citizens of this great republic, sit quietly down, like slaves, and see our rights taken from us, our characters maligned and insults heaped upon us, all because of religion, the free exercise of which is guaranteed to us by the glorious Constitution of our country? Me thinks I hear from every nook and corner of this spacious building the ringing answer, No! a thousand times no! So long as the God of heaven gives us breath and power of speech we will maintain our rights as citizens of the United States, and protest against women being subjected to such indignities as have been offered to the women of our community by Federal officials, who should be our protectors against everything of such a nature.²⁷

A strong Mormon belief in freedom and liberty is herein evidenced as a religious principle. The Mormon Church freely granted liberty and freedom to its women because it was thought these were Gods intentions. Women speakers strove to capitalize on this theme as proof that their cause was just. Dr. Romania B. Pratt expressed this belief as an example that Mormon women did have freedom and liberty when she said:

There is no where in this world, say as much as they can against the Mormons, where women have as much liberty, and have it as freely granted as here in Utah.²⁸

²⁵Ibid., p. 60.

²⁶Woman's Exponent, Vol. 17, No. 18, February 15, 1889, p. 138. From a speech by Emily S. Richards.

²⁷Mormon Women's Protest, op. cit., pp. 24-5. From a speech by Martha Horne Tingey on March 6, 1886.

²⁸Woman's Exponent, Vol. 17, No. 21, April 1, 1889, p. 162.

It appears that Mormon women, through repetition, renewed awareness and patriotism, were trying to reestablish their constitutional right. Believing that the constitution was inspired of God, it was only because of men that equality for women in all things was not realized. On March 6, 1886, Hannah T. King expressed this belief:

I cannot refrain from asking here: Are we in America, that glorious, world-renowned country, proudly denominated 'the land of the free and the home of the brave,' that formerly raised its voice to the world, and declared it should be the home for the destitute and downtrodden of every nation under heaven, and that every form of religion should be allowed and protected under the broad and fostering folds of its glorious flag and its heaven inspired Constitution.²⁹

We believe the Constitution of the United States was framed by inspiration from God, and there is no tenet of our faith that comes in conflict with it.³⁰

Thus, Mormon women strategically expressed their position of equality by religious emphasis on the themes of liberty and freedom, themes palatable to anyone who believed in America, regardless of religious convictions. Equality was already provided for in the laws of the land and all that was necessary for equal suffrage to come about was to abide by the laws as written.

The Strategy of Expressing
Equal Creation.

Helen Mar Whitney declared that, "It was among the grand designs of the Gods that woman should be equal with men."³¹ This is a strong belief of the Mormon Church and the women speakers used this theme

²⁹Mormon Women's Protest, op. cit., p. 20.

³⁰Ibid., p. 47. From a speech by Julia Cruse Howe.

³¹Ibid., p. 50.

a total of thirty times. It appears that this strategy was used to prove undeniably that God created woman to be equal to man and that any other arrangement was not the design or will of God.

...we will not try to create for man a rival, a superior, or a head, but we will try to make woman what our beneficent Creator designed that she should be, the companion, the sister and the helpmeet of man.³²

All men and women are created free and equal. All are morally responsible for their own wrongs. The difference in their natures is not a difference in value, but in the kind of merit. He has qualities which she has not, she possesses traits and genius he does not, they differ from each other and yet, in their worth to the world, and to God, they are equal with each other.³³

In an effort to prove that God had created woman equal to man, Martha Horne Tingey began her speech as follows:

I desire to prove to the satisfaction of my hearers, that it is not the Great Creator, our Heavenly Father, who has placed woman in the position of an inferior being, but it is the abuse of the power that he has committed to her brother, man, that has kept her back, and placed her on such an unequal footing. To do this, I will call the attention of this intelligent company to a few incidents in Bible history, which will tend to convince the unprejudiced mind that God, with His superior intelligence is no respecter of persons, that He created and placed His daughters side by side with His sons, and both are equally responsible intelligent and useful in their respective spheres.³⁴

The 27th chapter of Numbers serves as another excellent example of the justice of God. When Zelophehad, one of the heads of

³²Woman's Exponent, Vol. 18, No. 23, May 1, 1889, p. 184. From a speech by Emily S. Richards at a meeting of the Woman Suffrage Association of Utah.

³³Woman's Exponent, Vol. 17, No. 24, May 15, 1889, p. 190. From a speech by Martha P. Hughes.

³⁴Ibid., Vol. 19, No. 4, July 15, 1890, p. 29.

the families of Israel died, leaving no sons, his five daughters approached Moses wanting to know why the name of their father should be done away with because he had no sons and why they should not be entitled their fathers possessions.

Moses was not certain upon the subject of women's rights and privileges, for we read, "And Moses brought the cause before the Lord. And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, the daughters of Zelophehad speak right. Thou shalt surely give them a possession of an inheritance among their father's brethren and thou shalt cause the inheritance of their father to pass unto them. And it shall be unto the Children of Israel a statute of judgement, as the Lord commanded Moses."³⁵

Herein is seen a scriptural example in which God commanded equality, a strong support for those who believe in the power of the Almighty, which the Mormon women do.

There is some evidence that the Mormon men were in sympathy with the suffrage movement and believed that God had created woman equal to man. Emily S. Richards made this clear when she remarked:

And let me say right here, that we have not had to contend against the male opposition common in other places, for the majority of men in Utah believe that woman was designed by the Creator to be man's companion in all things, whether in the Church or in the State, in time and in eternity, and to share dominion with him over all created things.³⁶

M. Isabella Horne believed that man had no right to be the

³⁵ Woman's Exponent, Vol. 19, No. 4, July 15, 1890, p. 29.
From a speech by Martha Horne Tingey.

³⁶ Ibid., Vol. 17, No. 18, February 15, 1889, p. 137.

master as she expressed:

God created us equal, we stood side by side when mankind was created and man has no right to say, "I am the master."³⁷

The Mormon women believed that God had created them as equals to men and adequately explained their position through the use of scriptures and religious references. A strong belief of such a position is evident throughout all the speeches. By using this strategy, it is felt that the Mormon women were attempting to put those against equal suffrage in a position of non-belief in the Bible or for that matter in God. This they hoped would turn the tide in their favor, upon a realization by the anti's that such a position was against the will and plan of God.

The Strategy of Expressing Suffrage
As A God Given Privilege.

Mormon women commonly referred to suffrage as a God given blessing, sacred right and privilege. Twenty such references were recorded throughout the speeches surveyed. Hannah T. King referred to the franchise as a great blessing.³⁸ Minerva M. Snow declared that suffrage was a God given privilege.³⁹ Zina D.H. Young looked to the United States to again confer upon women the God given right to suffrage.⁴⁰ Dr. Ellen B. Ferguson said this about the sanctity of the ballot:

The women of Utah were enfranchised and have held

³⁷Ibid., Vol. 24, No. 11 and 12, November 1 and 15, 1895, p. 77.

³⁸Woman's Exponent, Vol. 9, No. 9, October 1, 1880, p. 69.

³⁹Ibid., p. 70.

⁴⁰Ibid., Vol. 18, No. 23, May 1, 1889, p. 182.

the ballot as a sacred trust ever since, and I defy any of our bitterest enemies to bring one single, solitary proof that any woman in Utah has cast an unrighteous ballot or voted for those whose lives or characters were stained with infamy or dishonor. We look for purity and integrity in our public officers and as far as we know them we have voted only for such men.⁴¹

Coming directly to the point, Ida F. Gibbs, opened a speech with this conviction:

I have always been an advocate of woman suffrage, which I consider a God-given right. Taxation and representation should always go together. The rights of women are eternally paramount with those of men.⁴²

This same theme was further promulgated by Emily S. Richards:

Two years ago Congress abrogated the right of women suffrage in Utah, and thousands of us were summarily deprived of our political power. We had committed no offense against the sacred franchise and had violated no law of our country. But we had refused to vote for our opponents, and, therefore, in their estimation we were not worthy to vote at all. The same logic would have disfranchised men, as well as women but their ballots were preserved.⁴³

A correlative theme used by Mormon women was to protest against disfranchisement because of religious belief. Martha Horne Tingey declared, "And we also protest against the disfranchisement of law abiding citizen because of religious belief."⁴⁴ In rebuttal to the United States government's attempt at disfranchisement, Dr. Ellen B. Ferguson argued that the government

is seeking to deprive the women of this Territory of the right of suffrage, not because we have committed crime; not because we have used it unjustly-no-but because we believe that our conscience should dictate

⁴¹Mormon Women's Protest, op. cit., p. 13-14.

⁴²Woman's Exponent, Vol. 18, No. 23, May 1, 1889, p. 182.

⁴³Women's Exponent, Vol. 17, No. 18, February 15, 1889, p. 137.

⁴⁴Mormon Women's Protest, op. cit., p. 25.

our religious faith, and that as we have faith in God and in His revelations, so believe and so we act.⁴⁵

No doubt they (the anti's) are disappointed because we have not used this privilege (the ballot) to free ourselves from the 'chains' that bound us to this Priesthood or 'hierarchy,' as they pleased to call it. We are one with our husbands and fathers, and because we thus exercise this right they would deprive us of it altogether.⁴⁶

The Mormon women treasured the franchise as a priceless boon, one that they would not barter away for gold or silver. That men and women had always voted equally in all ecclesiastical matters was a well known fact and the utmost freedom of speech was the right and privilege of the women in the Mormon Church from the first.

It appears that in persuing this strategy, the Mormon women hoped to persuade those in opposition to equal suffrage, that over and above their rights as citizens, suffrage was a God given blessing that they intended to enjoy and exercise, a blessing for which they were deeply indebted, as God people. Also, Mormon women were attempting to prove sincerity in their belief in the Almighty as a source of blessings and that such blessings should be highly respected and exercised.

It is interesting to note that in arguing for equal suffrage, only twenty such references were recorded. It appears that the Mormon women relied more on the persuasive aspects of faith and trust in God, the high position of woman in the eyes of God and the Mormons,

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 14.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 60. From a speech by Marilla M. Daniels on March 6, 1886.

being created equal and a patriotic theme, than on the theme of a God given right to suffrage. Religion was the paramount influence on these speeches and the speakers neatly presented the suffrage movement in a religious vein.

The Language of the Mormon Women.

The language used by the Mormon women speakers also indicates a religious base and influence. Phrases such as, "feeble rays of light for women shone forth, her devotion to the cause, a host of valiant souls, our souls have been absorbed with the spirit of enlightenment, I am thankful that we have the privilege, mothers who pray for them, can no longer see the straight and narrow way, it (the franchise) has been a great blessing to us," are typical of the language used in the various speeches. Such phrases are used in the everyday speaking of the Mormons. It is also a common practice for the Mormons to address each other as brother and sister.

The Adaptation of Arguments

Most scholars agree that perception is selective. One hears with those values that have been previously determined by his environment. Both general and specific values affect the responses obtained regarding the subject being discussed. The values of the speakers and the audience were much the same, as they were generally from the same background. They had been subjected to the same environmental circumstances and conditions and they all had the same basic religious background and training. With the audience and the speaker having such similar backgrounds, speakers could select the most persuasive subject matter in presenting their arguments. This writer feels that they did make wise choices of the arguments used in relation

to the audiences.

For example, in a speech by Emmeline B. Wells to the National-American Suffrage Association in 1895, a predominantly non-Mormon audience, little or no religious references or overtones were evident. Her argument was based on a plea for universal unity in obtaining equal suffrage. She felt that in union there was strength. She also expressed a positive attitude.

Only the very day I left home to come to the convention, a boy not more than twelve years old came to me for literature and information, telling me he was to debate on woman suffrage with one of his schoolmates, and adding, "I am on the affirmative and I'm going to win." "Of course you will," I replied, "it's the winning side."⁴⁷

Wells closed this speech by declaring two good reasons why the women of Utah should have the ballot, apart from the general reasons why all women should have it, neither were of a religious nature.

First: because the franchise was given to them by the Territorial Legislature and they exercised it seventeen years, never abusing the privilege, nor was any cause assigned for taking the ballot away from them, except as a political measure.

Second: There are undoubtedly more women in Utah who own their own homes and pay taxes (if in a small way) than in any other state with the same number of inhabitants, and Congress has, by its enactments in the past, virtually made many of these women heads of families.⁴⁸

In contrast, in a speech by Martha Horne Tingey to the Woman Suffrage Association of Utah, predominantly Mormon, the speech was filled with nineteen scriptural references in an effort to prove that God had created women equal to men.

⁴⁷Woman's Exponent, Vol. 23, No. 15 and 16, February 1 and 15, 1895, p. 233.

⁴⁸Woman's Exponent, Vol. 23, No. 15 and 16, February 1 and 15, 1895, p. 234

I will call the attention of this intelligent company to a few incidents in Bible history, which will tend to convince the unprejudiced mind that God, with His superior intelligence is no respecter of persons, that He created and placed His daughters side by side with His sons.⁴⁹

Throughout the speech she gave practical examples of scriptural women, indicating their influence and power in the eyes of God.

Further evidence that the speakers used wisdom in selecting their basic arguments and proofs is evident in other speeches. The best example, which received loud applause was delivered during the National-American Woman Suffrage Convention held in Salt Lake City in May, 1895.

In the early days to lay the foundation of this state (Utah) many of the pioneers laid down their lives and all of us laid ourselves on the alter when we started for Utah. (Applause).⁵⁰

In this example is seen a religious background and conviction but not to the point that it would be offensive to someone who was not of the same beliefs. The emphasis is on pioneer patriotism by the Mormon women, a theme palatable to most everyone.

Only those speeches given at the National Convention, convention reports to the Utah Association, pleas for membership and tributes to national suffrage leaders contained no religious references or had no religious overtones. Otherwise, religious references and scriptures are common place as a rhetorical device in the speeches of the Mormon women in arguing for equal suffrage.

⁴⁹Ibid., Vol. 19, No. 4, July 15, 1890, p. 29.

⁵⁰Woman's Exponent, Vol. 24, No. 9, October 1, 1895, p. 62. From a speech by Zina D. Young at the National-American Woman Suffrage Convention in May, 1895.

By a wide margin the evidence strongly favors a deep seated belief and conviction on the part of the Mormon women which greatly influenced their method and manner of arguing in the suffrage movement in Utah. Instead of avoiding the religious issue entirely, or dealing with it from a defensive posture, Mormon women went to the Bible and their religious convictions for constructive argument. In effect, they argued that the Mormon religion decrees, not merely allows, equal suffrage for women.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it.¹

In looking at the history of suffrage in Utah, a rather fluid and changeable picture comes into view. After arrival in Utah in 1847, the women of Mormondom were given the elective franchise. When Utah became a Territory of the United States in 1852, this franchise was taken away. The Mormon women were once again given the right to vote in 1870, when the Utah Territorial Legislature passed a law, giving women the ballot. The campaign against women suffrage started shortly thereafter as the anti-Mormons felt that this was a move by the Mormon Church hierarchy to benefit the Church, not the women. This crusade continued until, by Congressional act in 1887, this right was once again taken from the Mormon women. Polygamy or plural marriage as the Mormons called it, was the root of this conflict. It was only after the Mormon Church renounced the practice of plural marriage in 1890 that Utah gained statehood in January of 1896 with a woman suffrage clause in the state constitution.

It was in the midst of this conflict for equal suffrage that the Mormon women began to speak out as to what they believed was their

¹Irving J. Lee, "Four Ways of Looking at A Speech," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXVIII (April, 1942), p. 148.

God given right, the right to vote. As the crusade progressed, the Mormon women progressed also: they became more involved and better equipped to speak their minds.

All the early Mormon women who were the leaders in the suffrage movement during the time of this study, came from backgrounds of religious turmoil and training. It appears that once they embraced the Mormon faith, it became their way of life and it had a strong influence and bearing on their thoughts, actions and speaking.

They had a strong conviction that God has created them equal and that it was man's actions that made them unequal, not the will of God. They were quick to praise and thank God for their position and blessings. This they often did.

All the speakers appeared to be very familiar with the problem and had had experience in exercising the right of suffrage. This they felt gave credibility to their argument and they often said as much in their speeches. The Church had provided them an opportunity to speak, both religiously and publicly, giving them more experience and ability than those women who had not been afforded this opportunity. Further, the Church organization had given these women of the Mormon Church experience in leadership and organization which helped to develop in them an ability to think and reason on their feet. This was to their advantage because of their initial lack in formal speech training and they were able to develop some ability and expertise through their religious obligations and speaking.

The Mormon women were motivated in their efforts by a central theme or ideology, based upon a strong belief in a living God. They believed that God would see them through any trials and tribulations and

they depended on Him to do this as long as they remained true to His teachings, their religion.

CONCLUSIONS

This study of the rhetoric used by Mormon women to argue suffrage in Utah between 1870 and 1896 was undertaken to determine if the Mormon women used the scriptures and their religious convictions as arguments for this cause. This study has suggested to the writer the following conclusions.

1. It is evident that the women suffrage speaking and thinking of the Mormon women was strongly influenced by their religious convictions and background.
2. The major premise of these Mormon women was that God created them equal to men.
3. References to woman as an equal in the sight of God, the Creator, faith in God and mother or motherhood were the major themes of proof used by the Mormon women.
4. Specific scriptures were used and quoted in the speeches by the Mormon women.
5. The use of scriptures and their religious background was common place in their speaking. These references were used to prove the rightful position of women in the sight of God.
6. Examples of Prophetess and their success and use by God

as mentioned in the Bible were used as proofs to the true position of woman.

7. The language used, indicates a religious base or influence in their manner of speaking.
8. When speaking to predominantly non-Mormon audiences these speakers used religious references sparingly in contrast to frequent usage when speaking to predominantly Mormon audiences.
9. The Mormon women relied heavily on their religion and the scriptures to prove their arguments and to sustain them in their fight for equal suffrage.

Overall, because they did obtain the right to equal suffrage, this writer feels that the Mormon women were effective as persuasive speakers in their attempt to gain equal suffrage in Utah.

Appendix A

An Act giving women the elective franchise
in the Territory of Utah

Section 1. Be it enacted by the Governor and Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah: That every woman of the age of twenty-one years, who has resided in this Territory six months next preceeding any general election, born or naturalized in the United States, or who is the wife, or widow, or the daughter of a naturalized citizen of the United States, shall be entitled to vote at any election in this Territory.

Section 2. All laws, or parts of laws, conflicting with this act are hereby repealed.

Approved February 12th, 1870.

Appendix B

Text of the "Woodruff Manifesto" Renouncing
Plural Marriage in the Mormon ChurchOFFICIAL DECLARATION¹

To Whom it may Concern:

Press dispatches having been sent for political purposes, from Salt Lake City, which have been widely published, to the effect that the Utah Commission, in their recent report to the Secretary of the Interior, allege that plural marriages are still being solemnized and that forty or more such marriages have been contracted in Utah since last June or during the past year, also that in public discourses the leaders of the Church have taught, encouraged and urged the continuance of the practice of polygamy --

I, therefore, as President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, do hereby, in the most solemn manner, declare that these charges are false. We are not teaching polygamy or plural marriage, nor permitting any person to enter into its practice, and I deny that either forty or any other number of plural marriages have during that period been solemnized in our Temples or in any other place in the Territory.

One case has been reported, in which the parties allege that the marriage was performed in the Endowment House, in Salt Lake City

¹Doctrine and Covenants, Following Section 136.

in the Spring of 1889, but I have not been able to learn who performed the ceremony; whatever was done in this manner was without my knowledge. In consequence of this alleged occurrence the Endowment House was, by my instructions, taken down without delay.

Inasmuch as laws have been enacted by Congress forbidding plural marriages, which laws have been pronounced constitutional by the court of last resort, I hereby declare my intention to submit to those laws, and to use my influence with the members of the Church over which I preside to have them do likewise.

There is nothing in my teachings to the Church or in those of my associates, during the time specified, which can be reasonably construed to inculcate or encourage polygamy; and when any Elder of the Church has used language which appeared to convey any such teaching, he has been promptly reproved. And I now publicly declare that my advice to the Latter-day Saints is to refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the law of the land.

Wilford Woodruff

President of the Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints

Appendix C

List of Speakers and the Dates of the Analyzed Speeches

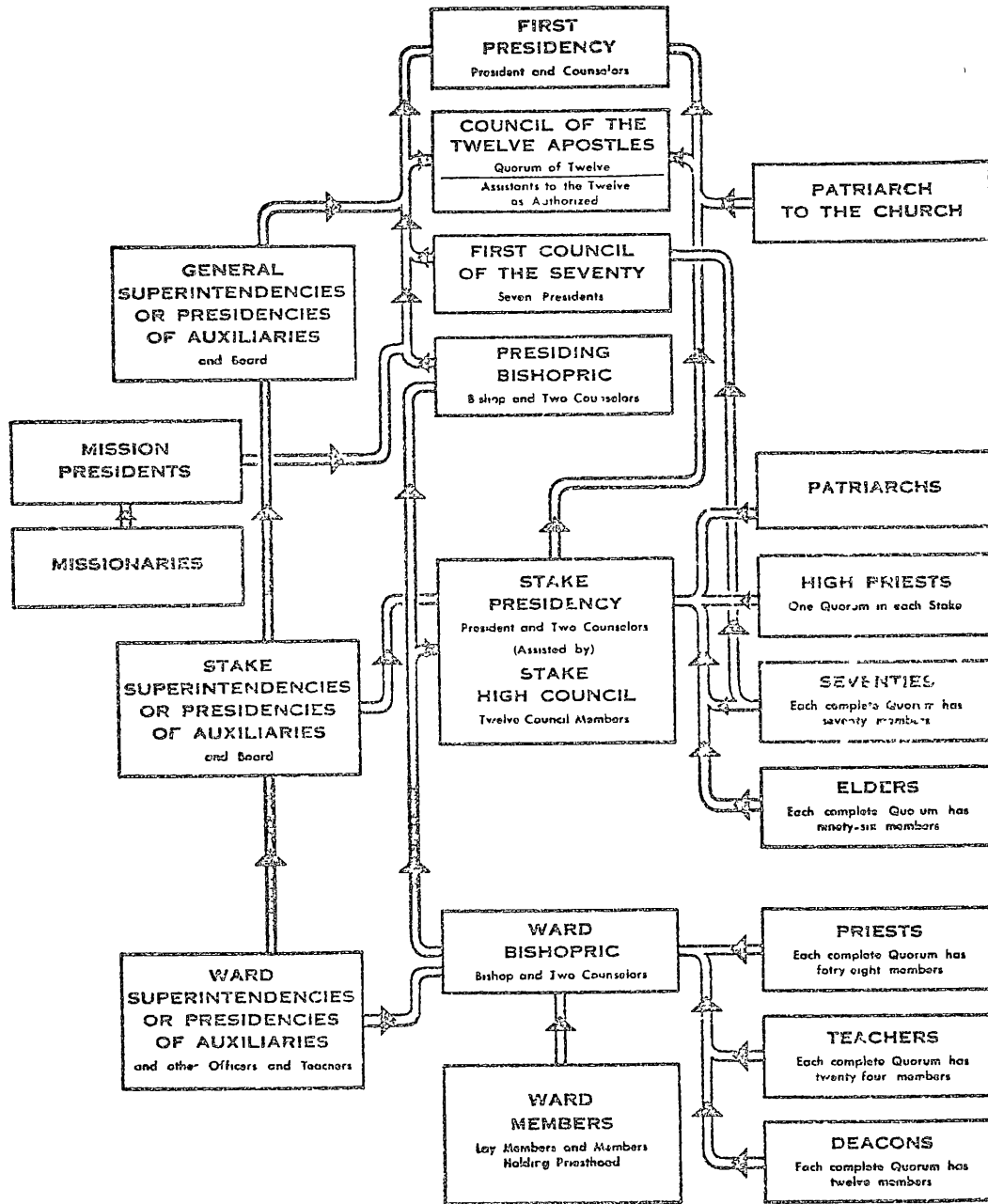
This appendix is an alphabetical listing of the thirty-seven speakers analyzed in this study. The dates following each name is the date of the publication in which the speech was recorded. The speeches were delivered on this date or a few days earlier, depending on the publication date of the various documents.

1. Lydia D. Alder..... February 15, 1889
2. Elvira S. Barney..... March 6, 1886
3. Mrs. H.C. Brown..... March 6, 1886
4. Marilla M. Daniels..... March 6, 1886
5. Dr. Ellen B. Ferguson..... March 6, 1886
6. Mrs. William Ferry..... October 1, 1895
7. Margaret Gaddy..... June 1, 1894
8. Susan Y. Gates..... October 15, 1890
9. Ida F. Gibbs..... May 1, 1889
10. M. Isabella Horne.....October 1, 1880; March 6, 1886;
November 1, 1895; November 15, 1895
11. Elizabeth Howard..... March 6, 1886
12. Julia Cruse Howe..... March 6, 1886
13. Dr. Martha P. Huges..... May 15, 1889
14. Mary John..... March 6, 1886
15. Mrs. M.E. Kimball..... March 6, 1886

16. Prescindia L. Kimball..... March 6, 1886
17. Sarah M. Kimball..... March 15, 1890;
October 1, 1895
18. Hannah T. King..... October 1, 1880;
March 6, 1886
19. Laura Hyde Miner..... March 6, 1886
20. Ruthindia E. Monch..... March 6, 1886
21. Mrs. E. H. Parsons..... November 1, 1895;
November 15, 1895
22. Mary Ann Pratt..... March 6, 1886
23. Dr. Romania B. Pratt..... March 6, 1886;
April 1, 1889
24. Sarah D. Rich..... March 6, 1886
25. Emily S. Richards..... February 15, 1889; April 1, 1889;
May 1, 1889; July 15, 1890
26. Lula Greene Richards..... October 1, 1880
27. Mrs. Ellis R. Shipp..... March 6, 1886
28. Minerva W. Snow..... October 1, 1880
29. Jennie Tanner..... March 6, 1886
30. Mrs. E. S. Taylor..... April 1, 1889
31. Mrs. M. E. Teasdale..... March 6, 1886
32. Martha Horne Tingey..... March 6, 1886;
July 15, 1890
33. Nellie Webber..... May 15, 1889
34. Emmeline B. Wells..... March 6, 1886; February 1, 1895
February 15, 1895
35. Helen Mar Whitney..... October 1, 1880;
March 6, 1886
36. Zina Young Williams..... October 1, 1880; March 6, 1886
May 1, 1889
37. Zina D. H. Young..... October 1, 1880;
October 1, 1895

PLATE 1

BASIC CHURCH ORGANIZATION



Note: Arrows point in Direction of Authority and Jurisdiction

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