

# A Mormon Associations

## A Mosaic of Mormon Culture

The Departments of Anthropology and Archaeology, Art History, English, Geography, and History, and the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies at Brigham Young University will sponsor a Symposium, "A Mosaic of Mormon Culture" to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Symposium is to be held October 2 and 3, 1980, on Brigham Young University Campus under the auspices of Special Courses and Conferences.

Interested persons are invited to propose papers, presentations, or complete sessions. Proposals will be reviewed by a panel, and should be received by March 15, 1980. They may be sent to any of the members of the steering committee, who are: Thomas G. Alexander, Charles Redd Center; James B. Allen, History; C. Mark Hamilton, Art and Architectural History; Richard H. Jackson, Geography; Neal E. Lambert, English; and John L. Sorenson, Anthropology and Archaeology. All are at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602. The symposium will deal with Mormon

culture in its broadest aspects—the beliefs, social forms, and material traits of life and thought. Mormon culture thus defined includes the material objects, intellectual symbols, language, and related manifestations, characteristic of life among members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in any nation, which distinguish them from those who are not LDS. The evidence of this Mormon culture may be exhibited through the landscape, artifacts, literature, behavior, visual arts, performances, folklore, humor, music, internal tradition, graffiti, or other manifestations.

In general, the symposium committee will consider only proposals which aim at interpreting the culture rather than only describing it. Papers and presentations may include but are not limited to: 1. Scholarly analyses, discussions or comparisons; 2. Exhibits or visual presentations; 3. Performances or demonstrations; or 4. Combinations of these. In other words, virtually any manifestation of Mormon culture is within the domain of this symposium. The major constraint is that the proposed contribution be interpretive in nature.

# Reviews

## Hunters in the Snow

David Kranes  
University of Utah Press, 1979  
123 pages, \$12.00



the village is at lower left and straggles back, almost as sparse as its trees, through middle distance to blurring mountain slopes farther away. One row of houses, in dimmed clayey or vegetal tones (say of squash, carrot, yam), trudges uphill in the left midground; in front of the last, an inn with its sign askew on

one hook, some peasants have lit a fire and feed it with what looks like straw. Passing in front of them—no greetings either way—three hunters with about a dozen dogs, counting pups, trudge downhill, home. Tired, buttocks dragging a bit, they look empty-handed, empty-bagged, but for a skinny red fox slung on a lance. The dogs too are lean, low-hung, though one fat pup still frisks. The villagers below, tiny blots of stopped action, fish through the ice of ponds or skate on it. Gray ice, the same gray as the sky: the blank nullity back of everything.

The elder Pieter Brueghel's "Hunters

in the Snow," reproduced as the cover of David Kranes' collection of short stories by the same splendid title. It's a richly pleasing, quietly disturbing painting. The stories, at their best, please and disturb too—with their hunters "in the late blizzard of time" that blurs tracks, blurs home, blurs selves.

I like some less than others. "The Wishbone" (the sort of well-made story that gets an A in a writing workshop), about two sixteen-year-old lovers who decide to be "older," moves me less than "Diving Lesson," which gropes (sometimes awkwardly) after the enigma of father and son. Surprisingly (since I'm not a fantasy fan), I liked some of the non-realistic stories best. Maybe "Peterson's Stones" gets *too* wild with its old Indian whose granddaughter's skin bears the stigmata of industrial America—a cufflink, an amphetamine capsule, teeth of a zipper, a small cathode tube—just as the sedimentary stones bear fossil imprints of subway tokens, Shell credit cards, watchband ribbing; maybe the whole thing's too neatly allegorical, as fantasies sometimes are. So try "The Frame Lover," or try the last one, my own favorite, "The Phantom Mercury of Nevada": "This is not science fiction. This is real! I swear . . . *Real*—and such a mystery!" "Why do people disappear?" No answer to that: but *how* in this story, how Ross and LaVelle vanish from the narrator, is fantastically on target.

In the other mode, I'm left rather flat by what seems mere topicality (the feminine generation gap) in "Marianna" and turned off by the sexual and moral violence (not porn, though) of "Cordials." But then there's "Hunt" with its shrewd recording of an artist's marriage cracking up in a New England winter: "And Hunt wept. *Goddamn Brueghel*, he thought: *goddamn his truth.*"

Kranes does what good storytellers have always done: brings news. How it's going out there. In "Little Sister" he can tell you how it goes for a runaway girl losing herself in New York City—high, hungry, and wan. Or in "Dealer" he can tell you how it goes for a drifter who senses his life "soon would be different" as a casino dealer in Jackpot, Nevada.

Maybe you'd just as soon not know, and maybe just as soon not be teased about what's real and what's fantasy, though lots of storytellers since Cervantes have teased just so. One nice thing about short stories—they require less investment of time than an episode of "Mork and Mindy." And are lots more likely to pay off better. Even the paperback price, though, may look

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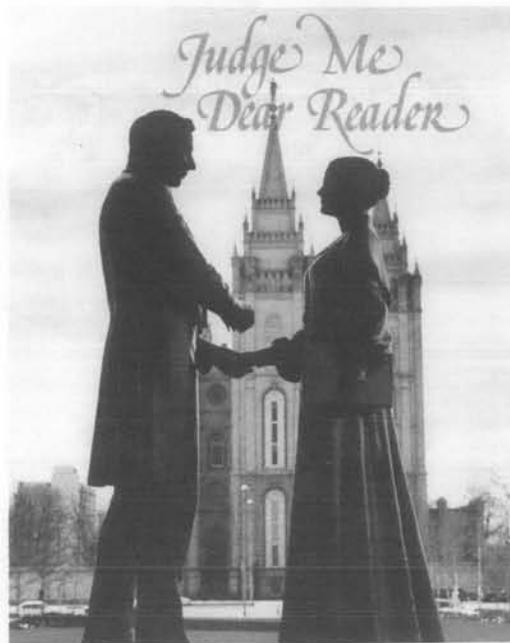
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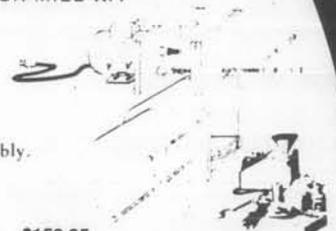
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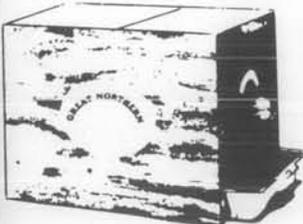
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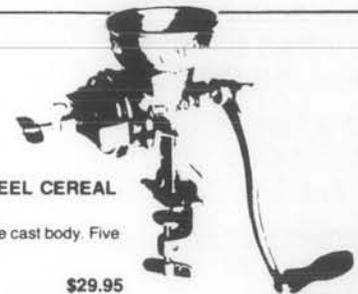
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inflated for only 123 pages. But figure it this way: ten stories for six bucks is sixty cents a story. A bargain by any standard, or at least a fair risk.

Short stories may be fairly obsolete as a popular and commercial genre: fewer paying magazines print them (except maybe pop sentimentality, true confessions, science fiction, porn of varying hardness), the hacks have gone to TV, and Brooks and Warren long ago captured the artists for academic examination—a mixed blessing. But small quarterlies, university presses (like the U. of Utah issuing this book),

shoestring presses, and even an occasional commercial house still support the habit of serious writers and of common readers, those alert, choosy, literate but not always "literary" folk with whom Dr. Johnson and Virginia Woolf delighted to concur. A small bunch, but we like an occasional good story, and we're willing to hunt.

*Bruce W. Jorgensen*

BRUCE W. JORGENSEN earned his Ph.D. from Cornell and is now an assistant professor of English at Brigham Young University. He has published fiction, poetry, and essays.

# Update

## Church and State

Several Utah state legislative leaders admitted recently that they participated in using the state's legislative press to print newsletters and other materials for the LDS Church.

House Speaker James V. Hansen, R-Farmington, who is also President of the Farmington Stake, admitted he signed a check to the printing office for \$132 worth of printing for the stake Primary Association. "I guess I'm just going to have to face it," said the Speaker when asked about the transaction. One of the bishops in Speaker Hansen's stake, J. Leon Sorenson, Farmington 2nd Ward, also admitted church printing projects were run off on the state press.

Rep. Hansen said the printing office had been told to take care of legislative printing first, then other state agency printing, then "to keep them busy," private printing. "But I realize now it is wrong to compete with private printers so an order has gone out banning any kind of private printing," the Republican leader said. All but one of the private printing jobs was for Mormon activities. (*S.L. Tribune*, 13 January 1980)

## Church-College Ties

Utah colleges and universities are too closely tied to the Mormon Church, says a Utah State University forestry professor. Dr. Ronald Lanner told the USU Institutional Council the ties are a violation of the Constitution which guarantees separation of church and state.

Lanner claims the USU bookstore has

allocated over 100 feet to religious materials and only 46 feet to reference materials, 15 to psychology, and five to philosophy.

In addition, he alleged that high-level school administrative decisions are made by Mormon officials. In the past 12 years, three USU presidents and nine vice-presidents have been Mormon.

He asserted that rules were broken to accommodate members of the LDS Church. Leaves are supposedly granted to faculty for the betterment of USU and the advancement of the faculty member. But leaves of three years duration are granted for LDS missions. (AP article, *Deseret News*, 11 November 1979.)

## George Romney

Thirty-two Michigan state lawmakers have demanded the resignation of former Governor George Romney from the Wayne State University Board of Governors for his claim that many Equal Rights Amendment backers are "moral perverts."

Rep. Mary Brown, D-Kalamazoo, told a news conference Romney's statements are an insult to the legislature, Governor William G. Milliken, and to the women of Michigan. The legislature several years ago voted in favor of the ERA. Milliken has been a strong backer of the amendment.

Romney, now a regional representative of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, in an interview in the *Detroit News* said the amendment is "basically the product of

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many individuals who had been making a concerted attack on the family and on morality as taught by the prophets through the ages."

In Utah, Governor Scott M. Matheson characterized Romney's comments as inept and inaccurate. The governor, a long-time supporter of the ERA, referred to the 1896 Utah Constitution which, although worded differently, contains the same "essence and commitment" as today's ERA.

In a January 14, 1980, letter to the *Deseret News* T. Helen Backe recalled attending a banquet several years ago in Salt Lake City where Romney's wife Lenore spoke in support of the ERA before a large congregation of mainly Mormon businesswomen. "Is she a pervert?" asked Ms. Backe.

### Truth Telling

In a lecture at the Salt Lake Public Library on 30 October 1979, David Briscoe, an award-winning news editor for the Associated Press, addressed the topic, "Can the True Church Afford to Tell the Truth?"

Asked Briscoe, a life-long member of the Church, "Can the Mormon Church, which claims to be the only church of God, maintain a climate in which its members continue to learn new truths,

in which reporters and even critics openly deal with questions about the Church and in which the Church itself responds truthfully, honestly, and openly to each new issue?"

"I firmly believe," said Briscoe, "that every action of the Church or its leaders is subject to scrutiny. In fact, as a Mormon and a journalist, I believe it essential that every important act or pronouncement be examined objectively, that no churchly declaration escape either the conscience of the individual challenged to accept it nor the legitimate questions of the journalist obligated to report it. . . . As a journalist, I must approach the Church in the same way I would any other large institution—private or government—that affects the lives of hundreds of thousands, even millions of people."

Briscoe suggested a maxim which he hoped Latter-day Saints might accept: "Questions cannot destroy truth. Questions build truth, whether that truth is revealed or experienced. It was, after all, questions in the mind of Joseph Smith that led to the restoration of the gospel. And, it is questions in the minds of non-Mormon contacts that lead them to conversion. . . . Too many Church leaders feel that questions—whether from

concerned members, apostates or probing newsmen—are threats."

"For whatever reason, the Church is not always open, honest, or truthful. Whether we are talking about the prophet, . . . other General Authorities, the Church public relations arm or the Mormon missionaries who knock at your door, we find all too often a lack of candor which ought not to characterize such a lofty institution."

Briscoe identified several areas in which he felt the Church had been "less than open and even deceptive to a degree": image building through public relations, use of the Church by various political groups, behind-the-scenes manipulation in the anti-pornography and liquor-by-the-drink issues, unwillingness to discuss Black priesthood policy and Church finances, the existence and extent of psychological, social, and moral problems of its members, appearance of unanimity among the General Authorities, purposive distortion of other groups, disclosure of projected changes and their reasons, and Church history.

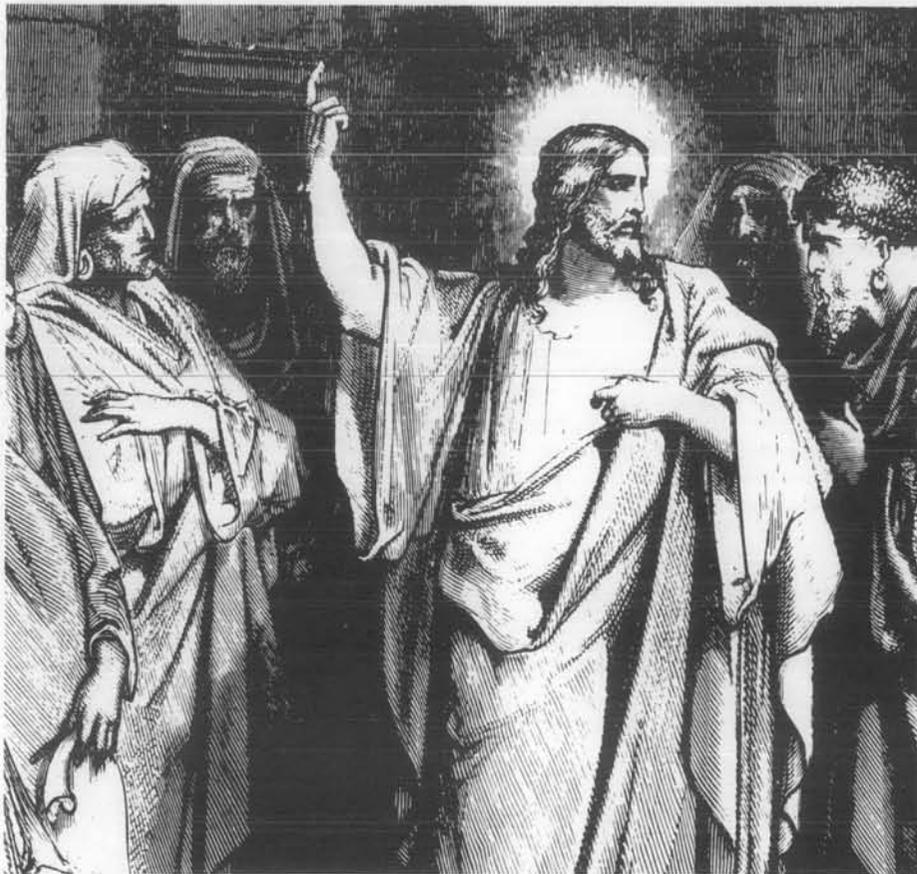
Briscoe commented that there are some good signs indicating frankness on the part of General Authorities. For example, in a speech which received almost no publicity, Bruce R. McConkie told a BYU audience, speaking on the black revelation: "Forget everything that I have said, or what President Brigham Young or George Q. Cannon or whomever has said in days past that is contrary to the present revelation. We spoke with limited understanding and without the light and knowledge that has now come into the world."

Said Briscoe, "When a General Authority admits error, that is a major step forward in the quest for honesty and openness in the Church. Now, if only Elder McConkie had made that speech in General Conference."

He concluded with the observation, "The word of God, whether it comes from scripture or the mouth of the Mormon prophet, or any other Church source, cannot thrive amid deletion, distortion, or deception. As the Church grows, the role of the objective journalist becomes ever more important, the need for honesty and openness ever more critical."

### Two Missionaries Murdered

A 24-year-old unemployed laborer has been arrested and charged with the murders of two elderly female Mormon missionaries whose bodies were found in a shopping center parking lot in North



Charleston, South Carolina, on December 15, 1979. The victims were Elizabeth W. King, 66, of Kaysville, Utah, and Jane Ruth Cannell Teuscher, 65, of Fish Haven, Idaho.

James Arthur Brown, who was free on a \$5,000 bond in connection with an attack on a Berkeley County woman in October, was arrested at his parents' home. The arrest occurred after police pursued several leads, including entries in a diary kept by the missionaries.

#### IRS and BYU

Brigham Young University has been ordered to show cause why it should not obey an Internal Revenue Service summons requiring names of donors of certain gifts received in 1976, 1977, and 1978. Chief Judge Aldon J. Anderson, U.S. District Court for Utah, issued the order requiring the school to show cause before U.S. Magistrate Daniel Alsup. The action follows a summons BYU spurned as illegal.

Request for the summons was based on more than 150 IRS audits showing a value claimed for the gifts at over \$18 million. The IRS contends the correct value to be \$2 million.

BYU President Dallin Oaks has called untrue implications by the IRS that donors took exaggerated deductions and has resisted IRS orders to turn over the names of the donors.

#### Temple Garments

In a letter to Church leaders dated December 15, 1979, the First Presidency has announced the introduction in February of two-piece temple garments. The new style garments will be offered in addition to and will be priced about the same as the regular one-piece variety. No explanation for or description of the new garments was given. Interestingly, the garments worn by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo were two-piece, equivalent to a shirt and pants.

#### Church and State

A Church welfare farm in Bonneville County, Idaho, has lost its property tax exemption. County commissioners concurred unanimously with an earlier ruling by assessor John Wasden and revoked the exempt status of the 480-acre farm near Osgood, northwest of Idaho Falls. The farm will pay and estimated tax of \$2300.

County attorney Robert Fanning said that under Idaho law, church property is taxable when leased. A 1974 lease agreement between the farm's owners, Idaho Falls West and North Stakes, and the farm's operator, North Stake President Lynn Mickelsen, gives

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two-thirds of the farm's crops to Mickelsen.

David M. McConkie, a church attorney, said the Church was aware of the state lease prohibitions but considered Mickelsen to be an employee of the stakes. McConkie argued the county should not render a strict interpretation of the agreement because proceeds from the farm help support the Church's welfare system which benefits the state.

#### **Judge Callister**

Federal District Judge Marion J. Callister, who is hearing a major challenge to the proposed Equal Rights Amendment, has been released from his position as regional representative to the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

The action taken on October 31, 1979, was not made known to the judge until late November and was not announced publically until the end of December. Judge Callister was not informed of why he had been released but felt it was because of his heavy judicial work load and the need to spend more time with his family.

Since the excommunication of Sonia Johnson there has been renewed pressure for his removal from the case due to the Church's official opposition to the ERA. Judge Callister, however, has

stated that he has no obligation to the Church to interpret the law in any manner other than that required under the Constitution.

#### **Freeman Institute**

Mark A. Benson, a regional representative of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has been appointed Vice-president and Director of Development for the Freeman Institute. The appointment was announced by Cleon W. Skousen, founder and president of the Institute and professor of religion at Brigham Young University. The Institute sponsors seminars teaching a conservative interpretation of constitutional principles.

The new vice-president is the son of Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Council of Twelve Apostles.

#### **Wellsville Tabernacle**

Priesthood members of the Wellsville Stake have voted to recommend building a new stake center behind the historic tabernacle which dominates this northern Utah community. A decision on the fate of the 76-year-old meetinghouse has been postponed according to Stake President Donald J. Jeppesen.

The agenda of the priesthood meeting

included review of a report received from the Church physical facilities department. The alternatives were to demolish the tabernacle, construct an addition and remodel the old building, or construct a new facility. The recommendation will be sent to the Church building department in Salt Lake City for approval before a final decision is made.

Debby Goates, chairman of the Concerned Citizens for the Preservation of the Wellsville Tabernacle, said she dislikes the prospect of two churches on the town square. Mrs. Goates, who has presented the tabernacle for nomination to the National Historic Register, is hoping to create a Wellsville National Historic District in which the gothic style tabernacle would be the focal point.

The monumental tabernacle was built in 1902-08 and was dedicated June 28, 1908 by President Joseph F. Smith. Made entirely of native materials, the edifice was designed by architect C. T. Barrett. Major modifications of the tabernacle have included lowering the original 135 foot tall tower, replacing the ornamental tracery in the gothic windows, and painting the brick and stone building white. The imposing scale of the tabernacle remains as does the unusual two-level, central-plan chapel.

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