

MANY Mormons see little value in the process of civilization. Some of them tend to regard the Church as a culture which *gives to* but does not *take from* its sister cultures in the world, particularly in such essential matters as theological insight and moral understanding. Such things, in their view, come strictly through revelation, and it is the role of the Church to dispense them to the world through missionary work. It is inconceivable that an increased understanding of perfection might come to the Church from the wisdom which slowly accumulates through the civilized development of the human conscience in many cultures.

Certain other Mormons are even more militantly conscious of their disesteem for civilization, which they express by rejecting the world at large as the symbolic Babylon from which the Church, as God's specially anointed society, is to keep itself unspotted. This view tends to take on a doomsday color, for the changes occurring in non-Mormon cultures are often seen as totally corrupt and retrogressive, tainted by sin and worthy of destruction. Everywhere are wars and rumors of wars without end and perversities and whoredoms beyond calculation. Armageddon looms on the horizon, and the fearful settle into the fortress of their righteousness to await the imminent end of the world—something like Jonah, who supposed there was nothing in the city of Nineveh worthy of salvation.

This cynical view of civilization is unfortunate. The Church is not a detached and isolated island; it has a symbiotic, interdependent relationship with numerous other cultures, with whose people its members commingle on a daily basis. Civilization is a social process which flourishes most dramatically precisely when such interaction takes place. A new insight, a new value, a new tool passes from person to person, crossing boundaries and domesticating itself in various cultures, stimulating among its recipients further inventions and discoveries.

Given the fact of proximity and interaction, the Church has inevitably influenced its sister cultures, not merely by proselyting converts from among them but also by the example it gives of Christian living. But one does no dishonor to the divine mission of the Church by admitting that, in its turn, the Church is highly influenced by the world, sometimes even in matters relating to Christian living. Evidence for this assertion may be seen in events preceding the revelation of 1978 which extended the priesthood to Mormon men of all races. That revelation was an immense relief to numerous Mormons, whose united concern and questioning about the inequality of the former policy had moved the prophet to seek a revelation on the matter. But why should Mormons of the 1970s have been so concerned when Mormons of the 1920s were not? The reason is that they had been influenced by the growing racial equality in other cultures. Seeing other Americans, white as well as non-white, endorsing racial

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equality, Mormons gradually became sensitive to its value and became more and more uncomfortable with the former priesthood doctrine. This was civilization at work. The Church, being a conservative society, may change more slowly than some other particular culture and in a differing order and proportion, but it nonetheless changes in rough correspondence to the large, collective changes affecting the totality of the civilized world.

Furthermore, not even the problems of civilization justify Mormons in holding a cynical view of it. Admittedly, some civilized developments, like advances in Olympic skiing techniques or in high fashions of dress, seem trifling and inconsequential. Other developments, like industrialism and environmentalism, are mutually contradictory; although people value the wealth and leisure afforded by the development of industry, they deplore the pollution and environmental disfigurements which accompany it. Another form of civilized development, warfare, is downright destructive. Even certain benign developments create problems: for example, scientific medicine, applied with an admirable humanitarianism over the entire earth, has fostered an ominous growth in population.

Nonetheless, Mormons—along with all other human beings—should desire, work for, and expect the survival of civilization. They should assume that its processes will continue, carrying humanity further in many categories of development. If at present violence, anxiety, and moral uncertainty abound in the world, it is all the more important that we not confuse the substantive achievements of civilization with its disorders and that we confront its problems rationally, trying our best to harmonize contradictory developments, to subordinate lesser values to greater, and to master our destructive energies. Civilization, whatever its disorders, is what humanity was born to. It implies the fruition and fulfillment of the individual person; it illuminates, rounds out, and justifies mortal experience, and it offers human beings a lifetime odyssey into discovery, growth, and satisfaction.

THOSE within the Church most aware of the civilized changes going on in the world are the intellectuals. They are instinctively attracted to the expanding edge of civilization, where the old is constantly transformed into the new in science, art, morality, and dozens of other categories. Thus they become agents of civilization, indispensable catalysts who serve an important function. Many writers have used the term *Mormon intellectual*, yet so far as I am aware no one has bothered to define it in detail. I propose the following characteristics. First, Mormon intellectuals are liberal rather than conservative. More tolerant of the innovative and the unusual than most other Mormons, they associate change with a flourishing, fulfilled life. An even more crucial trait is an alert, active, and questioning intelligence. Curious and adventurous in temperament, they develop their mental gifts by exploring the world around them. They are well read, and they keep themselves versed in national and international issues. They prefer art and entertainment of an aesthetic rather than of a popular quality and are likely

to be as interested in the form and technique of art as in its content and message. They respect reason and base their convictions upon evidence and logic.

Even if they are not scientists, they accept a scientific view of the world and are interested in the social consequences of science. They interpret the scriptures allegorically rather than literally and try to harmonize them with science. Although they are committed Christians, they are likely to question and analyze many Church doctrines which their brothers and sisters in the Church accept without question. They do not discount the Holy Spirit as a source of truth but recognize that the *experience* of the Spirit varies from individual to individual and must itself be subject to the arbitration and evaluation of reason. Accepting that the Holy Spirit provides the elemental revelations upon which Mormon theology is based, they may nonetheless doubt that it concerns itself with the trivia of daily living. Intellectuals tend to be well educated, but advanced formal learning alone is not a sure criterion. Such a mind is often found among persons without extensive formal education, as in the case of a self-cultivated businessman, an artistic housewife, and a rancher with a shelffull of philosophy books.

Particularly useful for understanding the impact of this personality type upon the Church is Father Thomas O'Dea's sociological study *The Mormons*, published in 1957. O'Dea devotes a chapter to the internal conflicts and tensions of the Church, among which the most prominent and threatening is the conflict between tradition and education. Through its esteem for education the Church has, O'Dea points out, paradoxically exposed its members to the militant ideas of secular culture. The Mormon intellectual is at the center of this conflict because he is, by O'Dea's implicit definition, an educator—a university professor or an institute or seminary teacher. "As creator and preserver," O'Dea writes, "the intellectual is esteemed; as critic and questioner, he is suspect."¹ In O'Dea's treatment, the role of critic and questioner far outweighs the role of creator and preserver. O'Dea sees the tension raised by intellectuals as potentially destructive to the Church and he thinks of them as unhappy people caught in a state of spiritual estrangement from an organization that, for emotional reasons, they cannot abandon: "Torn between a loyalty to the Mormon tradition and a commitment to modern thought, affected by both a genuine attachment to their own group and its way of life and the intellectual dispositions of the modern temper, these men find their own Mormonism a great problem to themselves."²

O'Dea accurately points out that Mormon intellectuals exert a pressure for changing the Church in terms of a worldly pattern, and he accurately stresses the disequilibrium and tension which this pressure creates. He is unwilling to predict the outcome of the encounter between the Church and secular culture and does not discount the possibility of radical, destructive change. My own view, however, is that this tension is healthy and productive. Certainly it is possible that the worldly changes proposed by intellectuals could prove damaging; if, for example, imported ideas led to an official abandonment of the doctrine of the Restoration,



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something vital would have departed from Mormonism. But this is not likely. It is more probable that the Church will decide it cannot tolerate the tension raised by its intellectuals and will simply eradicate them through excommunication.

These extremes need not occur. Generally speaking, Mormon intellectuals are neither alienated from the Church nor bent upon its destruction. Implicit among the traits which I attribute to them is a *commitment to, an engagement with*, the Church. They constitute a loyal opposition, a body of critics and questioners who desire not to destroy but to improve the Church. Writing articles, preaching sermons, making comments in Sunday School lessons, and conversing with friends, they spread new ideas and suggest new practices. And as intellectuals persist in propounding changes, the Church slowly becomes prepared to accept many of them. The service intellectuals render the Church may be illustrated by a specific consideration of three contemporary issues.

THE first issue concerns the age of the earth and the origin of life. Although this matter became an issue in the Church not long after the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1859, it remains unsettled today.

The most prominent Mormon position on this issue, which I will call the literalist position, derives from a literal reading of Genesis; it holds God created the earth only a few millennia ago, that he created species in a literal Garden of Eden through distinct acts of creation, and that the first man, Adam, brought death for the first time not only upon humanity but upon all other species as well. The intellectual position is that organic evolution, as understood by modern biology, is God's mode of creation; the earth is

therefore ancient and life forms, including humanity, have evolved from earlier, more primitive life forms. This view arises from the need of thoughtful Mormons to harmonize their rational belief with that of the preponderance of other thoughtful people and from their conviction that the theory of evolution does not contradict the essentials of Christianity.

However, if one wishes to throw a pall of shocked silence upon the members of a typical Mormon Sunday School class, one has only to declare a belief in evolution. A great many in the Church agree with the denunciation of evolution made by Joseph Fielding Smith. Elder Smith describes his book, *Man: His Origin and Destiny*, as a refutation of "the most pernicious doctrine ever entering the mind of man: the theory that man evolved from the lower forms of life. For its source we must go beyond the activities and research of mortal man to the author of evil, who has been an enemy of truth from the beginning before the earth was formed."³

Although official statements of the Church have often seemed to favor the literalist side of this issue, a surprising number of General Authorities have over the years spoken or written in favor of evolution. These include B. H. Roberts, John A. Widstoe, and David O. McKay. The result is that the Church has officially endorsed neither position. Strictly speaking, a good Mormon may believe in either a recent, instantaneous creation or in an ancient, evolutionary creation.


The inconclusive struggle between the two positions has been well documented in a number of recent essays. Richard Sherlock chronicles a furor which arose in the Church educational system in 1911 when four professors at BYU persisted in openly declaring the harmony between the Gospel and evolution. The dismissal of the professors demonstrated that the Church university was not to be the public forum for

such an idea.⁴ Sherlock documents another episode involving the refusal of the General Authorities in 1931 to approve the publication of B. H. Roberts's speculative work, *The Truth, The Way, The Life*, which postulated the existence of pre-Adamic men.⁵ In an excellent essay tracing the Mormon conflict over evolution from its beginnings, Duane E. Jeffery details another dispute, perhaps less spectacular but equally crucial, which arose among the General Authorities upon the publication in 1954 of *Man: His Origin and Destiny*. Although President McKay did not denounce the book in sermon or in publication, he quietly assured anxious inquirers that Joseph Fielding Smith's work did not represent the official position of the Church.⁶

Unfortunately, the Church seems at the present moment to be edging toward an official endorsement of the literalist view of creation. Ironically, the discovery of DNA—the basic molecule of all living matter—and the resultant new technology of biological engineering make organic evolution more certain than ever. However, a close acquaintance with the facts upon which the theory of evolution is based is absent among even many well educated Mormons because in the crowded curriculum of modern universities they get little exposure to the life sciences. Many Mormons take license for believing evolution to be false in the objective candor with which scientists admit that evolution is a theory—a view accepted for all practical purposes as factual, yet admittedly subject to change should new facts emerge. Speakers in General Conference allude to the literalist interpretation of the creation without the slightest recognition that another interpretation exists, and recent lesson manuals propound it with a total confidence. Similarly, the dictionary published in the new LDS edition of the King James Bible defines the word *death* in a literalist way. The definition reads: "Latter-day revelation teaches that there was no death on this earth for any forms of life before the fall of Adam. Indeed, death entered the world as a direct result of the fall." Such a definition, placed in such a sensitive spot, is indeed alarming, for it comes close to being an official disavowal of the theory of evolution.

The vital function of intellectuals for the present is to influence the Church to maintain its traditional policy of non-alignment. The advantages to the Church of such neutrality are great. For one thing, it can thereby continue to shelter a greater variety of personality types. An official stand against evolution not only would alienate many existing members but would obviate the possibility of converting other thoughtful, science-oriented people. Perhaps even more important, the present policy of tolerance allows the Church to exercise an influence upon the course of scientific civilization. At present, Mormon scientists are accepted members of scientific communities and make notable contributions in many areas. A prominent example at BYU is one of the most energetic and colorful paleontologists in the United States, Professor James A. Jensen, affectionately known as Dinosaur Jim. This indefatigable prober into the fossil record of ancient life has unearthed a new species of giant dinosaur and has clarified the nature of the flying reptile, *Archaeopteryx*.

A different kind of contribution to the scientific world



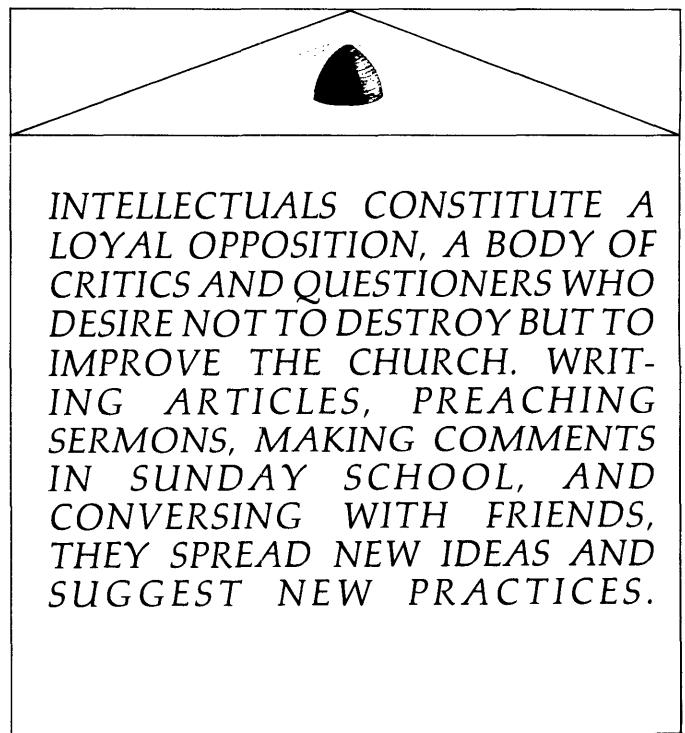
CIVILIZATION, WHATEVER ITS DISORDERS, IS WHAT HUMANITY WAS BORN TO. IT IMPLIES THE FRUITION AND FULFILLMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL PERSON; IT ILLUMINATES, ROUNDS OUT, AND JUSTIFIES MORTAL EXPERIENCE, AND IT OFFERS HUMAN BEINGS A LIFETIME ODYSSEY INTO DISCOVERY, GROWTH, AND SATISFACTION.

is made by three BYU biologists, James Farmer, William Bradshaw, and Brent Johnson, in an essay where they ponder the moral and theological perplexities of biological engineering. Among the problems they note is the test tube baby. They describe the process by which a physician implants in a woman's uterus only one of a number of her previously extracted ova, all of which have been fertilized externally by her husband's sperm. The authors wonder whether the discarded ova, quickened with life, are to be considered human souls. They also ponder the spiritual and ethical problems of the woman who, unable to carry a fetus in her uterus, rents the uterus of a surrogate mother, into whom the fertilized ovum of the first woman is implanted. These authors end their essay on an optimistic note: "Although the new biology may alter the way in which Mormons think about some ethical problems, it will not fundamentally change the need to live by faith in a world that we do not fully comprehend. The Lord may have placed very few constraints on us in our search for knowledge and understanding. It seems rather that he allows us much freedom in this world. As a result, science moves inevitably towards synthesis of living things, as it has already achieved the ability to alter species."⁷ Although these Mormon biologists raise far more questions than they answer, one can only admire their intelligent, courageous effort to accommodate, rather than to retreat from, an expanding scientific civilization. Their essay, slanted towards Mormons, could as easily have been slanted towards non-Mormons. Because they are respected members of a broad scientific community, they are in a position to inject Latter-day Saint values into the world-wide discussion over the problems of biological engineering. Regardless of their private beliefs concerning evolution, their respectability in the scientific world would be lessened if the Church were to officially denounce the theory of evolution.

A second large issue raised by Mormon intellectuals is the liberalization of sex. Mormons retain an immoderate degree of the old Christian assumption that sexual passion is of itself repugnant to God. As a reminder of the conscious commitment of traditional Christianity to mortification of the flesh, consider a letter from St. Jerome to Laeta, a Roman mother who had consecrated her infant daughter to the life of a nun. It is replete with suggestions for shielding the little girl from a knowledge of her own appetites and desires. Thinking ahead to the time of her maturity, Jerome even warns against her taking baths, which may arouse, he fears, too much sensual awareness in a woman consecrated to virginity: "Such an one should blush and feel overcome at the idea of seeing herself undressed. By vigils and fasts she mortifies her body and brings it into subjection. By a cold chastity she seeks to put out the flame of lust and to quench the hot desires of youth. And by a deliberate squalor she makes haste to spoil her natural good looks. Why, then, should she add fuel to a sleeping fire by taking baths?"⁸ St. Jerome was by no means unique. For centuries, traditional Christianity taught that, although sexual exchange between married partners was legitimate and necessary, those Christians who desired

to excel in godliness had to maintain total chastity.

Mormon intellectuals are not likely to have much sympathy with such a repressive attitude, having been influenced by what is appropriately called the sexual revolution. During the past century, there has been in the civilization surrounding Mormondom a remarkable freeing of inhibition and anxiety about sex. The physiological facts of reproduction are widely disseminated, and the human body is more openly displayed. Sexual pleasure has become a widely accepted value, and techniques for arriving at it are abundantly discussed in books and manuals. For many Mormons, the sexual revolution has been a large scale renewal of Sodom and Gomorrah; throughout the world they see a multiplication of X-rated movies, pornographic book stores, uncloseted homosexuality, pre-marital sex, and partner swapping among couples. Such persons, having taken account of the fringe excesses, fail to take account of the fact that sexual liberalization has a legitimate focus in the committed married couple. Intellectuals, on the other hand, are more likely to recognize that fact. For them, the sexual revolution, despite its disorders, is a civilized development toward a more complete fulfillment of the instincts and desires God gave to humanity.



The Church has long taught that sex is sacred rather than inherently evil. Evidence of this appears in *Ensign* articles and in conference sermons which express, along with the usual admonitions against fornication, adultery, homosexuality, and masturbation, the belief that sex is something to be controlled not because God hates it but because it is holy. An enlightened statement of this point of view, one which the Mormon intellectual might readily accept, is Carlfred B. Broderick's essay "Three Philosophies of Sex, Plus One."⁹ Broderick considers as equally erroneous the notion that sex is inherently evil and the notion that sex may be indulged in extra-maritally. The correct view, he says, is that sex

is sacred and is the center of a happy, successful marriage. The rules against extra-marital sex exist simply because such sexual experience militates against a fulfilling marriage. Broderick does not explicitly endorse a vigorous and passionate sexual exchange between married partners, but his language is so positive that one can at least suppose that he is no advocate of restraint and inhibition.

Unfortunately, there are yet many in the Church who do advocate restraint and inhibition between married partners. Many speakers and writers, impressed by the Apostle Paul's analogy between the body and a temple, interpret the sacredness of sex to mean that it should be cautiously and timorously practiced. The logic of the analogy, one can only suppose, goes thus: just as one does not play basketball in the temple, so one does not engage in sex for mere pleasure. A notable expression of this attitude is Steve Gilliland's essay "Chastity: A Principle of Power." Gilliland's concern is with chastity not for the unwed but for the married. He notes that President Kimball has declared that sex between married partners need not be limited strictly to procreation, but Gilliland goes on to extol and scripturally explicate chastity in such detail that one wonders why he bothered mentioning President Kimball's statement. "The chaste couple," Gilliland writes, "is concerned about strengthening each other. Their feelings of responsibility prevent them from doing anything that would weaken or tempt each other. Modesty in speech and dress are as much for the protection of others and one's partner as for one's self."¹⁰

It is the role of Mormon intellectuals to dissuade their brother and sister Mormons from such an excessive, self-punishing notion of chastity, which is nothing other than an unwitting adumbration of the early Christian hostility toward sexual pleasure. There is nothing admirable about asceticism; it is a primitive and uncivilized attitude. Surely they are wrong who rationalize restraint and inhibition through an analogy between the human body and the temple. A healthy accession of pleasure is not a desecration of the human body. Mormons do not think it a desecration of the body to eat and drink for pleasure as well as for nourishment. A free, frank, and abundant sexual expression is both proper and desirable between husbands and wives—not only for procreation and affection, but for the simple pleasure of passion. Lust is not an appropriate word for any mutually fulfilling exchange between a husband and wife. Passion is God's gift to marriage and needs no apology.

A third large issue raised by Mormon intellectuals is the status of women. The crux of the issue is that venerable civilized value, equality. In the freeing of slaves and serfs, in the raising of the standard of living for the working class, in the extension of suffrage to all adults, we see the steady progress of equality in our civilization. Now women are asking for further equality, it being only natural in an advanced society, where simple physical strength does not determine competency. According to



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the Victorian novelist George Meredith, one may judge the level of civilization in a society by the degree of equality which it extends to women.¹¹

By that standard, Mormon culture is lacking. The Church actively discourages women from seeking a professional parity with men by emphasizing a single important role for them as homemakers. It has, in fact, gained a national notoriety for its militant campaign against the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, which it sees as a threat to family life. Furthermore, the Church has forthrightly persisted in its policy of denying the priesthood to women. This policy is defended in an abundant literature, of which Rodney Turner's *Woman and the Priesthood*¹² is an egregious example. With a scarcely veiled condescension, this book asserts that God has ordained man to be over woman in spiritual matters. In more conciliatory tones, the General Authorities have tried to mollify women by emphasizing the dignity and beauty of the homemaker and by admonishing women to cultivate their private relationship with God.

Paradoxically, numerous faithful women hold jobs outside the home, some because they are single or widowed, many others because they wish to supplement their husband's income. Nonetheless, the large majority of Mormon women support the Church in its opposition to women's liberation. If asked, most of them would assert that they have no desire to hold the priesthood. Believing their restricted role to be ordained of God, they accept it with good will.

Their acquiescence may change in the near future. A native Mormon protest movement is clearly underway. Its most spectacular proponent has been Sonia Johnson, whose excommunication for publicly opposing the Church's stand on the ERA has brought national exposure to the status of Mormon women. Less sensational but ultimately more potent for change

within the Church is a growing number of speakers and writers who, without defying the Church, relentlessly keep alive the idea that Mormon women suffer from an unjustifiable inequality. Although this loyal protest has been raised chiefly by women, men too are now participating in it. Sensitive, liberal, and aware of trends in the world, these women and men are intellectuals. However, the constituency for whom they speak includes all Mormon women; these intellectuals detect, even in those women who courageously accept their present status, a subliminal sense of deprivation.

One particular deprivation clarified by Mormon intellectuals is the lack of a pattern of feminine diety. An essay by Linda Wilcox documents the history of the Mormon concept of a Heavenly Mother and calls attention to the recent appearance of a worship directed toward her. "At the present," writes Wilcox, "the nineteenth-century generalized image of a female counterpart to a literal male Father God is receiving increased attention and expansion and is becoming more personalized and individualized."¹³ Wilcox's low-keyed, objective historical study corroborates what many people already know from informal conversations: many Church members, women and men alike, are addressing prayers to the Heavenly Mother and believe themselves to have received a response from her. Though lacking in polemic intent, this essay reminds us that behind this new form of worship, particularly among women, is the need for an enhanced esteem for femininity. Without question, many Mormon women have hitherto been unable to visualize themselves as complete religious persons because the traditional Christian image of diety is so overwhelmingly masculine.

Another deprivation to which intellectuals are calling attention is the denial to women of the priesthood. This denial is conspicuous because, without exception, worthy males are ordained at age twelve and remain in the priesthood all their lives. Their participation in the


priesthood is understood by all to be a high privilege. Women may seek inspiration for the conduct of their private lives and may engage in Church callings, but they do not engage in the administrative work of the Church nor in the performance of most of its rituals. To a growing number of sensitive Mormons, this seems anomalous, for in the world at large women are proving successful in executive and professional positions. It is evident that Mormon women possess the spiritual and administrative competence to function in the priesthood. All that lacks is permission.

This prohibition is all the more difficult to bear as women become aware, through recent historical writing, that they have lost former rights to the exercise of spiritual gifts. Mormons reading the journals of their pioneer grandmothers are likely to be aware that women in the nineteenth century practiced the gifts of the Spirit—attending prayer circles, anointing with oil, healing the sick, and receiving revelation in behalf of others—much more abundantly than do their granddaughters in the twentieth century. The loss of the right to exercise these gifts is poignantly traced in Linda King Newell's essay, "A Gift Given, A Gift Taken." For example, Newell notes 1946 as the termination of the right of women to anoint and administer to sick sisters; the "official death knell" came in the form of a letter from Joseph Fielding Smith who asserted that "it is far better for us to follow the plan the Lord has given us and send for the Elders of the Church to come and administer to the sick and afflicted."¹⁴ The simple historical facts are astonishing, and Newell sets them forth in language which is touched, not by anger or protest, but by delicate grief.

The most consequential question now before the Church is whether women will be permitted to hold the priesthood. It is a question so fraught with misgivings and perturbations that only very recently has it been openly aired. A decade ago, a woman seemed bold if she simply declared her independence from the priesthood in spiritual matters relating strictly to herself. For example, in a 1971 essay, Cheryll Lynn May indicates that the priesthood is only a supplement to her private efforts to approach God: "For me, the central core of the Gospel is the individual personal relationship between God and man. In most cases, priesthood authority acts to promote and enrich this relationship; when it does not, it must, for me, take second place."¹⁵

Indicative of a new frankness in the 1980s is an essay by Anthony A. Hutchinson, "Women and Ordination: Introduction to the Biblical Context." Hutchinson examines the primitive Christian church and fails to find there a precedent forbidding the priesthood to women. "In terms of the New Testament evidence, there is no reason to deny ordination to women; there are, instead, compelling reasons to recommend it."¹⁶ Even more assertive is a personal essay in which Laurel Thatcher Ulrich traces her own evolution as a Mormon intellectual. Beset by the fear that a woman should not exert herself as a writer and thinker, she has nonetheless grown into a constructive religious critic. Of particular interest is her obvious confidence in the propriety of the priesthood for women:

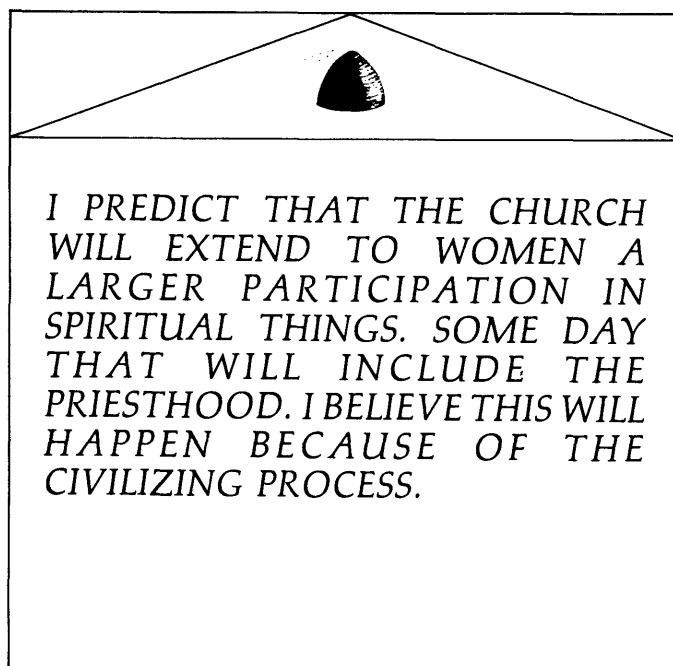
For me, learning to question the present structure of



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the priesthood has been a positive as well as a negative experience. With feelings of anger and betrayal has come a new sense of responsibility; with recognition of discrimination has come renewed conviction of the essential message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I am convinced that an effective challenge to male dominance can only be built upon "principles of righteousness." Trusting the spirit of the priesthood in the Church, Mormon women must recognize the potential for priesthood in themselves.¹⁷

What of the future? I predict that the Church will extend to women a larger participation in spiritual things. Ultimately, that participation will include the priesthood. I believe this will happen because of the civilizing process. Part of that process involves Mormon intellectuals, who have been influenced by the extension of equality to women in the world at large. They discuss, question, challenge, and in general keep the issue of



equality alive. That is how the more important part of the civilizing process can work. As other Mormons are forced to think about the status of women, the great civilized value of equality works in their hearts. Implying the absolute worth and dignity of individuals, equality requires that no person or class of persons be arbitrarily precluded from the rights and privileges that make life worthwhile. Perhaps it will eventually touch the hearts of so many Mormons that the prophet will inquire of God. Perhaps then, when the members of the Church are ready to accept women in the priesthood, they will discover that God also is ready.

MORMON intellectuals do not lead an enviable life. Often they sense keenly the distance between themselves and the rest of the Church. Isolated from one another, they may suffer guilt and doubt; at times they may well wonder whether their evolving values, seemingly unpalatable to other Mormons, are not perverse or insane. For this reason, it is important that they form their own

communities, both for comfort and for enhancing their effectiveness as agents of change. They should gather as friends in discussion groups and readings. They should join professional and cultural organizations. Above all, they should maintain *voices*. Independent presses, liberal journals and magazines, symposiums and conferences are all vital. *Sunstone*, *Dialogue*, *Exponent II* and similar publications are crucial. It does not matter that the analysis and criticism offered through their pages seem to go unnoticed. These publications give a concrete, durable form to expanding ideas, which enter thousands of homes and hundreds of libraries. Printed ideas are potent for change; at unexpected moments they come alive and declare the future.

Above all, intellectuals should not apologize but take pride in their contribution to the Church they love and wish to see flourish. In particular, they may be proud of their part in the process by which the Church is growing into an international religion. A Church that takes seriously its duty to be a religion for all nations, for all classes, temperaments, and mentalities, cannot fail to change. It must further its own perfection by keeping pace with the evolving civilization around it.

Notes

1. Thomas F. O'Dea, *The Mormons* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 224.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 236.
3. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Man: His Origin and Destiny* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954), p. 133.
4. Richard Sherlock, "Campus in Crisis: BYU, 1911," *Sunstone* 4 (January-February 1979): 10-16.
5. Richard Sherlock, "'We Can See No Advantage to a Continuation of the Discussion': The Roberts/Smith/Talmage Affair," *Dialogue* 13 (Fall 1980): 63-78.
6. Duane E. Jeffery, "Seers, Saints and Evolution: The Uncomfortable Interface," *Dialogue* 8 (1973): 41-75.
7. James L. Farmer, William S. Bradshaw, and F. Brent Johnson, "The New Biology and Mormon Theology," *Dialogue* 12 (Winter 1979): 75.
8. St. Jerome, "Letter CVII (To Laeta)," *The Intellectual Tradition of the West*, I, eds. Morton Donner, Kenneth E. Eble, and Robert E. Helbling (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1967), p. 260.
9. Carlfred B. Broderick, "Three Philosophies of Sex, Plus One," *Dialogue* 2 (Autumn 1967): 97-106.
10. Steve Gilliland, "Chastity: A Principle of Power," *Ensign* (June 1980): 18.
11. George Meredith, *An Essay on Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit*, ed. Lane Cooper (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1956), pp. 118-119; first published, 1877.
12. Rodney Turner, *Woman and the Priesthood* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1972).
13. Linda Wilcox, "The Mormon Concept of a Mother in Heaven," *Sunstone* 6 (September-October 1981):15.
14. Linda King Newell, "A Gift Given, A Gift Taken: Washing, Anointing, and Blessing the Sick Among Mormon Women," *Sunstone* 6 (September-October 1981):23.
15. Cheryll Lynn May, *Dialogue* 6 (Summer 1971):52.
16. Anthony A. Hutchinson, "Women and Ordination: Introduction to the Biblical Context," *Dialogue* 14 (Winter 1981):71.
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