

NEWS

IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE: SHOULD ETHNIC MORMONS HAVE THEIR OWN WARDS?

by Peggy Fletcher Stack
Tribune religion writer

This story originally appeared in the 6 December 1997 Salt Lake Tribune. Reprinted in its entirety by permission.

LOS ANGELES—Bridget Rivero and Sophia Lopez arise each morning at four and board a city bus in the darkened dawn to arrive promptly at five for their LDS seminary class in a riot-pocked neighborhood of South Central Los Angeles.

It may be a dangerous journey, but these teen-agers would rather attend Spanish-speaking services than go across town to an Anglo congregation.

"God's always with us," Bridget, sixteen, said on a recent Sunday. "We would rather keep to our own [Spanish] stake."

Helen Hernandez, also in the Spanish-speaking Young Women's class, comes to Sunday services all the way from Pasadena, nearly fifty miles away.

"Everything is the same in the English ward, but," she pauses for just the right word, "different."

These young women, who move easily from Spanish to English, give voice to an ongoing debate on how best to handle the thousands of Latinos and other immigrants who are flooding the ranks of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Should they be clustered in wards built around a single language, or quickly integrated into English-speaking wards based on geographic units, which is the pattern in the rest of the Church?

Of 11,200 LDS wards and branches in the United States, 530 are non-English speaking. Since the average ward has about four hundred members, that



The Wilshire Ward, in downtown Los Angeles, has more than fifteen languages spoken in it.

means some 212 thousand Mormons attend services given in their native languages.

According to Brigham Young University researcher Jessie Embry, missionaries from the Salt Lake City-based LDS church first were sent to the Southwest to work with Spanish speakers in 1915, and the first Spanish-speaking branch—a small ward—was established four years later in Mesa, Arizona.

California's first LDS ethnic ward was established in the 1920s. Since then, there have been numerous attempts to integrate non-English speakers by shutting down ethnic wards, but Church leaders have always backed off.

Just last year, Elder Loren Dunn—then the California Area president—announced that the 205 non-English speaking wards in the state needed to be disbanded.

It sent a shock wave through the community. Some local LDS

leaders resisted the move, others complied and many struggled with how to tell their flocks.

But some months later that mandate was reversed by top Church leaders in Utah.

According to several sources, the flip-flop was based on conflicting Church surveys. The first, an informal study of Church records, suggested that ethnic units were not producing as many temple marriages or missionaries as the English-speaking wards.

But a second survey by Church researchers compared the involvement of Spanish-speaking members who attended English wards versus Spanish wards. Those in the Spanish wards (especially the most recent converts) were more successful by every Church measure.

After the second survey, the plan to dismantle the ethnic wards was dropped.

The initial move to disband may have reflected the state's

conservative politics, says Ignacio Garcia, a history professor at LDS church-owned Brigham Young University in Provo.

"It is not surprising that these kinds of things would have happened in California, given the political climate there, the anti-immigrant and antiminority feelings," Garcia says.

But most of all, the episode suggests a profound ambivalence at the highest levels of the Church about how to handle ethnic wards.

"These decisions are most often made by regional leaders [area or stake]," says Garcia, who researches LDS Latinos. "When it gets to the top and they find out it's causing problems—members are disgruntled or Anglo wards don't integrate these members well—there is a tendency to say, 'stop.'"

For a church used to programmatic solutions to every problem, the issue of ethnic

wards continues to be thorny.

A LONG-STANDING DEBATE

LATINOS make up the fastest-growing group of Mormon converts, most of whom live in Latin America. At present, Latinos comprise about 25 percent of the LDS church's ten million members. Some researchers estimate that within twenty years Latinos will make up 80 percent of the membership.

The idea of ethnic wards in the United States was to provide a temporary haven until the people could speak English well enough to enter the mainstream Church. But many never make that move.

Still, Garcia considers the ethnic ward model to be a "real success story for the Church," and he cites several reasons:

- It is an opportunity for members to worship in their own language, in an environment they consider secure and safe;

- Members can assume positions of leadership and they have the elbow room to learn as they go;

- Members can feel they are contributing to the work of the Church in their sphere;

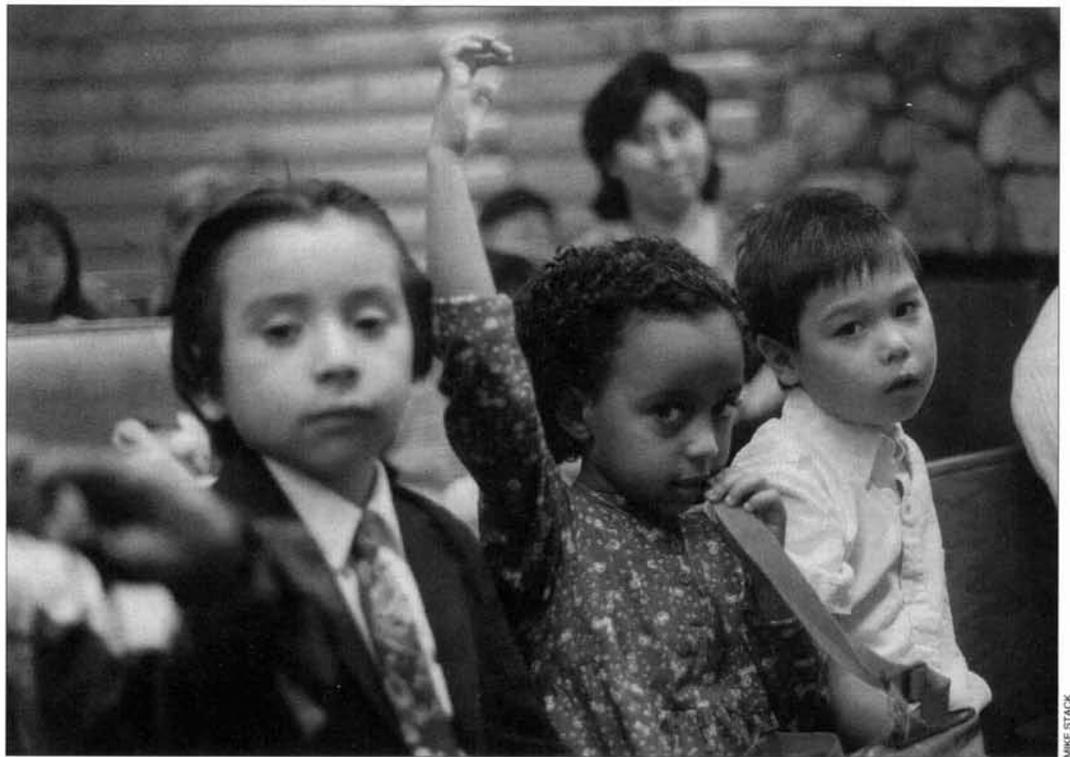
- Members feel good about themselves in relationship to the church.

"Ethnic members are the most loyal members that they have," Garcia says. "You don't see too many doctrinal challenges coming from ethnic wards."

And, he says, the non-English wards have a strong spirituality as they strive to live the Mormon gospel.

"For whatever reason, the Church is growing faster among immigrant groups than traditional ethnic groups," Gracia says.

In the Los Angeles suburb of West Covina, the Spanish-speaking LDS stake—a collection of wards—baptized more than eight hundred people last year. That was the highest number for a stake in the United States, says



"The old idea of nondiversified, English-dominant wards will one day be a thing of the past. Anglo wards will be a luxury of the Wasatch Front, and only part of that."

Stake President Carlos Garcia.

But when an ethnic ward is dissolved and its members told to attend English-speaking churches, some will stop going at all.

"Some people have the strength and the faith to go and make the transition, but in many cases they just go inactive," says Renan Disner, former stake president of the Santa Ana South Stake, a Spanish stake southeast of L. A.

BEYOND LANGUAGE

THERE ARE equally compelling arguments for non-English speakers to learn the language and move to English-speaking wards as soon as possible.

"If they do not integrate into geographic units and remain dedicated to the parents' mother tongue, they are economically disadvantaged," says Howard Anderson, former president of the Los Angeles Stake.

He cites a problem with resource materials for the Primary,

the Church's organization for children ages three to twelve.

"If the materials were in Spanish, the children couldn't read them, but if they were in English, the teachers couldn't read them," Anderson says.

Indeed, generational differences pose the strongest problem for ethnic wards. Evelyn Baires attends the sixth ward of the Huntington Park West Stake, a Spanish ward in South Central L. A. But she encouraged her daughter, Tiffany Baires, thirteen, to learn English.

Now Tiffany cannot speak Spanish well enough to understand the services, but doesn't feel comfortable at an Anglo ward. So she is becoming inactive in the Church, Baires says.

"The teens sometimes feel an identity crisis," Disner says.

They were born in the United States and so do not identify with their parents' countries. And they may speak English well, but they are not considered Anglos.

"So they form their own culture, going back and forth be-

tween English and Spanish," Disner says. To send them to an Anglo ward "is like saying, 'Let's get a knife and cut them off.' That would break communication between parents and children."

The *LDS Church Handbook of Instruction* refers to these wards as "ethnic units," not language units, suggesting that "there are more differences than just the language," says BYU's Ignacio Garcia. "Ethnic wards are not minor-league teams that prepare people to go to major leagues. These wards are for people who have a different culture, different style."

The wards that work, he says, "are those that teach people to be happy with who they are. Those that don't function well tend to produce ambivalent young people."

INTEGRATION STRENGTH

THE WILSHIRE WARD, which covers all of downtown Los Angeles, got its first Latino

bishop four years ago. Its membership is so diverse that more than fifteen languages are spoken, and services are in English.

On any Sunday in the exquisite 1928 Spanish-style building, one can see any number of skin tones and hair colors.

"We have a mixture of people from Africa, Nigeria, all the Central and South American countries, Mexico, the Pacific Islands, Armenia and Russia," says Bishop Tony Vargas.

The community tries to make each new member feel welcome.

"We focus on their testimony, not on their culture," Vargas says. The mixing of cultures "teaches us that God does in fact love everybody, that he has no favorites."

Kent Smith, who is black, is the second counselor in the bishopric. He was impressed by the ward's integration when he joined the Church four years ago.

"Having grown up in an all-black neighborhood, I desired for my children to know the good in all people," Smith said. "I have found this good in the Wilshire Ward."

THE FUTURE

FOR NOW, California's ethnic wards are secure, but the debate continues. As in years past, the 1996 closing caused many Latinos who have been Mormon for decades to lose some confidence in the Church, says Ignacio Garcia.

"You see the tremendous pain

in which they felt often as if they have been manipulated," he says. "They may forgive it, but deep down they are hurt."

It has also left Latino bishops on awkward middle ground.

"They have to make a choice between losing the confidence of their ward or not falling in line with their stake leaders," Garcia says.

Santa Ana's Disner, who wrote many letters to LDS authorities trying to explain the need for ethnic units, now attends an integrated ward.

Ignacio Garcia twice has been a bishop of Spanish-speaking wards. In both, there were many Anglo members either married to a Spanish speaker or having served a Spanish-speaking mission.

"They receive callings and are seen as one with the members," Garcia says. "These people are happy. There is no difference between the poor ethnic member and the [Anglo] member."

He believes that as the Spanish-speaking population increases in the United States, integration ought to be reversed—Anglos moving into Spanish-speaking wards and learning that language.

Even in predominantly white Utah, Latinos make up the fastest-growing minority population.

"This is a changing society. The old idea of nondiversified, English-dominant wards will one day be a thing of the past," Garcia says. "Anglo wards will be a luxury of the Wasatch Front, and only part of that." ☐

UPDATE

CHURCH, BYU TRANSLATING MUSLIM CLASSICS

AT LEAST THREE times in the Doctrine and Covenants, the Saints are enjoined to seek wisdom out of the best books. One passage reads "study and learn, and become acquainted with all good books, and with languages, tongues, and people" (D&C 90:15).

Nevertheless, the *Deseret News* recently noted that the world may well be surprised to learn that the LDS church and BYU are orchestrating an effort to translate nine classic Muslim tomes into English for the first time. These ancient works—some as important in Islamic culture as Plato or Aristotle are in the West—have never before been translated into any western language.

The first of the nine translations to be completed, a book by twelfth-century philosopher Al-Ghazali, was unveiled on Thursday, 12 February 1998 in Washington, D.C., at a dinner where the Church was hosting diplomats of sixteen Islamic nations. Apostle Neal A. Maxwell presented each of the diplomatic embassy attachés with a leather-bound edition of the book which has the original Arabic alongside the English translation. To Elder Maxwell, the "beautiful leather binding is symbolic of how we are bound together as the sons and daughters of God."

BYU has scholars from around the world—most non-LDS—working on this project. One, Parvis Moweridge, a professor at State University of New York in Binghamton, told the *News* these translations have long been a dream of Islamic scholars and that Church leaders deserve praise for their work. "This body," Moweridge said of the Church, "is the most avante garde, the most progressive carriers of the torch of Christianity and American values" through its work to "conserve and cherish the treasures of all humanity."

Managing editor of the series Daniel C. Peterson, a BYU associate professor, said that Islamic contributions to world knowledge have

long been undervalued by western scholars largely because of the westerners' inability to read the works. "Historians of science . . . are unable to evaluate the magnificent Muslim contributions to chemistry, optics, mathematics and astronomy," Peterson told the *News*.

Peterson further said that one example of such contributions is the Arabic numerals and math system now used by most of the world. "Try doing long division sometime with Roman numerals. It can't be done easily."

More truth and light should result from the translations, Elder Maxwell said. "I believe when we see things by God's light, then we see things as they really are, and we see things as they really will be. . . . When we know who we really are, then we know what we are to do and be. Then, in my personal opinion, universal brotherhood can prevail—and universal brotherhood does not depend upon national or foreign policy. It transcends these things."

IDAHO STATE UNIVERSITY WINS CHURCH-RELATED SUIT

IDAHO STATE UNIVERSITY does not violate the U.S. Constitution's separation of church and state by granting college credit for off-campus religion courses, a federal judge ruled on 17 March. U.S. District Judge Edward Lodge ruled that the university could continue to grant school credit to students of the LDS church's Institute program and to students of other faiths who attend off-campus religion programs. Lodge said, "There is no excessive entanglement between any of the defendants in this matter and any religious body or entity."

In January, student Carole Wells was shown the door at the LDS church's Institute of Religion when she appeared for a "Parables of Jesus" class. Wells, of Pocatello, was a plaintiff in a lawsuit aimed at ISU over its granting college credit to students of sectarian religious programs. Idaho State University is the only public institution of

higher education in the U.S. to grant school credit for LDS-sponsored religion courses, according to the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

A school official told Wells that she could enroll in the "Parables of Jesus" class next fall, but that since Wells is a plaintiff in the suit, the school and the LDS institute had the right to deny her admission. "Nonsense," said David Hollander, a Portland, Oregon, American Civil Liberties Union-affiliated attorney representing Wells in the fight. "They're retaliating against her. Idaho is still part of the United States. The Constitution still applies there," Hollander said in the *Tribune*.

Wells, who is not LDS, had had a long-standing complaint with the university even before the college credit issue arose. Wells said a land swap between the university and the Church two years ago had unfairly benefited the Church. The university and the LDS church exchanged parcels of land, and the Church subsequently built its institute on the land acquired in the trade.

While neither of the two sides in the college credit suit would comment specifically about Lodge's ruling, both said they were pleased with the results. "The only thing I can tell you is that the case has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties" one school official told the *Tribune*.

ISU's student body is about 65 percent LDS, and Wells's suit, while directed at all religious classes receiving school credit, was seen to primarily target Mormons. About three hundred of the two thousand students enrolled in the LDS program actually receive college credit each term. Roger Porter, institute director, told the *Tribune* before the suit was settled that "There is no pressure from us. Our program will move forward with or without university credit."



Unlike the first pioneers, modern Mormon trekkers left no significant impact upon the land.

LAND MANAGERS PLEASED WITH TREK'S MINIMAL IMPACTS

IN 1847, Mormon wagons left ruts upon prairies of the American west that remain to this day as a testament of their passing. But similar ruts from modern-day pioneers were exactly what federal land managers feared when the trek's reenactment was under way in 1997. With little pristine prairie land left in the United States, bureaucrats were under mandate to protect the sensitive landscapes. According to

LDS Work in Hong Kong to Continue. Before the last British band played its last farewell hurrah, Elder Kwok Yuen Tai, of the Church's Second Quorum of the Seventy, had received verbal assurances from Tung Chee-hwa, the incoming governor of Hong Kong, that LDS work could continue—including normal operations for the temple. "No written agreement was necessary. His word was good enough for us," Elder Tai told the *Salt Lake Tribune*. But while Church work will continue in Hong Kong, the Church will still not proselyte or conduct official meetings in mainland China.

Disc Jockey Fired for Comments about LDS.

Jacor Communications, a Cincinnati-based company that owns KZHT (94.9 FM) in Salt Lake City, fired Dani Curtis in September 1997 for derisive comments she made over Utah airwaves about a speech President Gordon B. Hinckley had delivered to Native Americans. A Jacor press release apologized to the community and expressed "no-tolerance" for politicizing the family-friendly radio station.

Sesquicentennial Events Include Native American Conference.

To note the role that Native Americans played during the Mormons' trek west in 1847, the Church's Pioneer Sesquicentennial Committee sponsored a conference in Provo in July 1997. Speakers noted similar beliefs among Native Americans and Latter-day Saints, such as respect for the elderly and strong family bonds. Among the participants were Apostle Russell M. Ballard and Apostle Jeffrey R. Holland and Larry EchoHawk, a Pawnee and professor in BYU's law school. The greatest thrill for

many of the attendees, however, was a visit by professional basketball player Karl Malone who spoke on teaching by example. Malone is an African American who also has Native American ancestry. He has long advocated children's issues in Salt Lake City.

Christmas Box Inspires Angels.

Inspired by Richard Paul Evans's bestseller *The Christmas Box*, the Oklahoma County Chapter of the American Red Cross unveiled a four-foot angel sculpture this past Christmas season in remembrance of the victims of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. Similar angel monuments have been erected by families in Idaho, Wyoming, Nevada, and New Jersey to remember their deceased children. Meanwhile, Evans, who has published two additional popular books, has formed Richard Paul Evans Publishing exclusively to publicize his works and has formed The Christmas Box Foundation to raise money for a Salt Lake City children's shelter. Evans also has plans to develop a Utah resort named Arcadia.



Richard Paul Evans

RLDS Issue Call for More Missionaries.

Trying to expand his church's missionary efforts, RLDS Church President W. Grant McMurray in a September 1997 speech to church leaders called for two hundred new missionaries over the next three years. And in noting that the RLDS church has suffered membership losses since granting women the priesthood, McMurray also said he hopes the church will add two hundred new congregations in coming years. McMurray's remarks outlined goals of Transformation 2000, a church-wide project to "rise up and fulfill [the RLDS] destiny."

a recent governmental report, however, the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service are "very pleased" and find no substantial environmental degradation. The agencies concluded that "once the grass grows for a summer, no trace of the wagon train's passage will be visible," reported the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

The reenactment was so successful—environmentally and otherwise—that the LDS church is now undertaking plans to develop a ten-acre parcel near Wyoming's Martin's Cove into a campground to accommodate the crowds to come. The Church has already constructed a visitor center at the site. A Wyoming official was quoted in the *Tribune* as saying more people are expected along the trail in 1998 than visited in 1997.

Last year, some twenty-five wagons, ten handcarts, and about two hundred people traveled the 1,040 miles from Omaha, Nebraska, to Salt Lake City. The reenactment was the first of its kind in terms of scale and authenticity, but plans are underway for a similar 1999 reenactment along the California Trail, which was created by those lured by dreams of gold. The lessons from last year's Mormon trek are being implemented in the California plans: one California nonprofit organization planning the event is currently being led by three wagon masters from last year's event.

UTAH MAN SUES CHURCH OVER PRIVACY BREACH

SAYING HIS reputation and personal life were destroyed when a therapist-patient tape recording was disbursed and listened to, a Highland, Utah, man is filing suit against his bishopric, stake presidency and stake high council, and the LDS church.

Jeffrey Throckmorton began receiving counseling in that state in 1994 for "issues of a personal nature," reported the *Deseret News*. But when his therapist, Nancy Shipley Rubin, accidentally sent a taped conversation to his Utah residence while he was away on business, Throckmorton's wife, Annette, opened the mail and listened to the tape. She then gave the tape to their bishop who, after listening to it, shared it with his counselors, stake president, and other leaders.

The suit says that bishopric counselor James Haskins not only used the tape in his ecclesiastical duties but also when he, being an attorney, represented Annette Throckmorton in divorce proceedings.

"This exposure caused [Throckmorton] enormous suffering, anxiety, pain, embarrassment, confusion, bewilderment, angst, ignominy, humiliation, grief and horror," the *News* quoted the suit as saying. Throckmorton is seeking damages to be determined in trial.

PEOPLE

TRANSFERS



Chieko N. Okazaki

- **E. Gordon Gee**, former president of Ohio State University, took over the reigns of Brown University, in Providence, Rhode Island, in January 1998. Gee was born in Vernal, Utah, and worked for four years as associate law dean and law professor at BYU.

- The popular past Relief Society general presidency of **Elaine L. Jack**, **Aileen Clyde**, and **Chieko N. Okazaki** have made transitions back to the civilian world: Sister Jack is now in Cardston, Alberta, with her husband, who is the temple president;

Sister Okazaki is supervising several public school principals in training through BYU's school of education; Sister Clyde is vice chair of the Utah State Board of Regents, which oversees Utah's nine public institutions of higher education.

AWARDS & HONORS

- **Erlend "Pete" D. Peterson**, BYU dean of admissions and records, was recently honored with knighthood by the king of Norway. The knighting ceremony was performed by Norway's ambassador to the United States and was a tribute to Peterson's efforts in bringing Norwegian students and officials to the BYU campus.

- In a Jerusalem ceremony, two Mormons, Utah's Senator **Orrin Hatch** and Provo businessman **Brian Larson**, were recently given the prestigious Theodor Herzl Award for contributions to Israel. Hatch was cited for his "unwavering commitment to justice" in supporting Israel, while Larson has had many business dealings in Israel, primarily involving the Ben Gurion airport.

- **D. Michael Quinn** was presented on 12 January 1998 with the Herbert Feis Award for his *Same-Sex Dynamics Among 19th-Century Americans: A Mormon Example*. This is the first time the American Historical Society, which presents this annual "best book" award, has honored a book on homosexuality.

- A 1939 BYU alumnus and professor emeritus at the University of California at Los Angeles, **Paul D. Boyer**, is sharing the 1998 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his pioneering work on cell energy production.

DEATHS

- Long-time president of the Days of '47 Inc., **Floyd R. "Flip" Harmon**, died 28 June 1997 at age seventy-two. Harmon had been responsible for planning numerous events each year commemorating Mormon and Utah history, including Salt Lake's Days of '47 Parade as well as the Territorial Ball and Community Family Home Evening. A First Presidency statement read in part, "All these activities have given life and color to Utah. . . . We will miss him greatly."

- A member of TV's famous King Family, **Luise King Rey**, died 4 August 1997 at age eighty-three. Rey and her sisters began their musical careers on the Church-owned KSL radio in the 1930s before moving on to theaters, nightclubs, movies, and television. Rey authored three books about her life and served a mission in Hawaii with her husband, Alvino Rey.

- **Glen L. Taggart**, who served eleven years as president of Utah State University, died 10 August 1997 at age eighty-three. Current USU president George Emmert said, "What USU is today is the result of Glen Taggart's talent and leadership." Taggart, who helped establish USU as a research uni-



Samuel Woolley Taylor

CHURCH COMPENSATES FIRED AUSTRALIAN WORKER

UNDER THE HEADLINE "Sacked church worker loses faith . . . in men," the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that Kerry Anne Hozack, an LDS church employee at the Pacific Area headquarters, was fired after losing her temple recommend because of adultery. Hozack, however, sued the Church for illegal dismissal, and an Australia federal court sided with her, ordering the Church to pay \$7,280 (Australian dollars) in back wages. The compensation is equivalent to six months of Hozack's part-time salary.

An Australian law, the Workplace Relations Act, allows for a religious organization to terminate an employee "in good faith in order to avoid injury to the religious susceptibilities of its adherents." Judge Rodney Madgwick ruled, however, that merely losing one's temple recommend did not constitute a valid reason for an employee to be fired. Madgwick also said that both parties in the suit agreed that Hozack's continuing to work in her former capacity would be impractical. In the United States, courts have upheld the Church's right to terminate an employee for not holding a recommend.

Alan Wakeley, a Church spokesman in Australia, told the *Herald*

that "A minimum requirement for employment is membership in good standing, which means living the church's basic standards of behavior. Ms. Hozack accepted these conditions when she was hired and it surprises us somewhat that she has taken this action [of suing]."

Wakeley condemned the court's ruling, saying it denied the Church the ability to set its own standards. "It discriminates against religious groups by ignoring a church's own religious freedom, which is a basic civil right."

At the time of her involvement with a man other than her husband, Hozack, 37, was in the middle of court proceedings to determine custody of her and her husband's children. Hozack, a Church member for twenty-five years, said "I still go to church and it doesn't change what I believe in." Of her employers, Hozack said, "This is a group of men who have acted on the spur of the moment. They did this because they thought they could get away with it."

In its report, the *Herald* said that the Church's "male members are allowed to have more than one wife."

BYU "POLITICALLY INCORRECT," BUT NO LONGER "STONE-COLD SOBER."

THE *PRINCETON REVIEW*'s 1997 rankings of the ten most "stone-cold sober" schools in the United States came not only as a surprise but indeed as an insult to many at BYU. The Church-owned school was number two on the 1996 rankings, and many at the university were hoping to move up to number one, according to the *Deseret News*. "We still feel that we're just as strong in that category as ever," university spokeswoman Carri Jenkins said. But school officials need not worry yet: BYU was second in the *Review* on another list titled "Scotch and Soda, Hold the Scotch." BYU was also second in three other categories: "Students Most Nostalgic for [Ronald] Reagan," "Future Rotarians and Daughters of the American Revolution," and students least likely to use marijuana. Also, for the third time since 1994, BYU was named the most religious school in the country.

Additionally, *Insight* magazine lauded BYU as one of the ten most "politically incorrect" universities in the country, saying the church school was among those that "are true to themselves and haven't altered their traditions to fit academic fads," according to a *Salt Lake Tribune* report.

MORMONARTS FESTIVAL AND TUACAHN PART WAYS

BECAUSE THE Tuacahn arts complex asked for double the rent in 1998 that it had charged in 1997, the MormonArts Foundation decided not to return to the site near St. George, Utah, for its fourth annual festival. Instead, the festival was held at various venues within St. George over March 25-28.

Last year's festival drew about three hundred Mormon artists from all over the world for displays and workshops on performance and fine arts (see *SUNSTONE*, Oct. 1997). The foundation was charged ten thousand dollars rent last year and could not afford to pay more, according to foundation Executive Director Doug Stewart. Stewart told the *Deseret News* that the festival "provided a quality event that enhances Tuacahn's image. It saddens me."

Tuacahn interim CEO Hyrum Smith said, however, he was forced to end low rates for non-profit groups because low revenues have forced him to cut spending and consider closing the complex. Smith launched a successful fundraising effort during the fall of 1997, which has ensured the facility will remain open throughout spring

versity, was born in Lewiston, Idaho, and raised in Utah's Cache Valley. He also spent ten years of service with the Department of Agriculture, helping develop agricultural experiments in Central and South America.

- **Samuel Woolley Taylor** died 26 September 1997 at age ninety. Grandson of Church President John Taylor and one of thirty-six children of a polygamous apostle, Taylor published hundreds of articles and short stories, including "Flubber" and "The Absent-Minded Professor," and was a Pulitzer Prize nominee. Several books on Mormonism marked Taylor's passion for his heritage.

- **Marian Richards Boyer**, a former General Board member and counselor to former President Barbara Smith in the Relief Society, died on 26 September 1997. She was eighty-four. She and her husband, Hal Boyer, had served as directors of the Hill Cumorah Pageant.

- **Esther Peterson**, age ninety-one, died on 20 December 1997. Peterson, who was raised in Provo, was long an advocate for consumer rights, workers, and women. She served in the administrations of presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Jimmy Carter and was the first Mormon to receive the presidential medal of freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor.

- Emeritus member of the First Quorum of the Seventy **Paul Harold Dunn** died at age seventy-three on 9

January 1998. Dunn, a World War II veteran, professional baseball player, and Church educator, was a leader with a keen sense of humor and enormous generosity; he was especially known for his speeches to youth.

- **Jeffrey Rand Hardyman**, died on 10 January 1997 at age 42. He was on *Sunstone's* National Advisory Board and once underwrote the hotel costs of a *Sunstone Symposium West*.



Esther Peterson

M O R M O N M E D I A I M A G E

"THE MORMONS MOVE TO ATTACK"

RUSSIA MAY STILL let the LDS church in, but it still knows very little about Latter-day Saints, as this English translation of a Russian émigré press news story illustrates, which appeared in Uzglyad, a San Francisco-based Russian language newspaper, under the headline, "The Mormons Move to Attack."

Residents of the American city of Salt Lake City are being subjected to real terror at the hands of the Mormon sect. Using clubs, knives, bottles with flammable liquids and homemade bombs, the Mormons are attempting to convert residents of the city to the "true faith." As fervent opponents of alcohol and tobacco—and some of them are also zealous vegetarians—the Mormons are storming bars and meat markets. They are calling themselves soldiers fighting against the worldly vices.

One of the most widespread methods of intimidation is the so-called "stone sandwich." This is when they place the victim face down on the pavement and kick the back of his head with their boots.

As has been reported by representatives of the local police force, which has had to intervene often of late in conflicts involving sect members, after such torture many people fear going to bars. And several even lose altogether the desire to eat meat or smoke.

1998.

The 1998 festival included Utah Senator and songwriter Orrin Hatch. Hatch delivered a speech at this year's event in which he said Mormon musicians need to assert their Christianity because mainstream Christian musicians do not represent Mormon as Christians.

LDS PLAYWRIGHTS EXPLORE THE WRITING OF MORMON PLAYS

"FIGHTING TO maintain integrity as a playwright and artist as well as maintain a standing in the Church can be straining," Mormon playwright and Brigham Young University assistant theatre professor Eric Samuelsen told the American Theatre Critics Association. The association met in Cedar City, Utah, in July 1997 and hosted a panel of four BYU faculty/playwrights. According to the *Salt Lake Tribune*, Samuelsen said he is drawn to "the edgy and difficult issues in [Mormon] culture" and he has to use creativity to succeed. "If you write characters that the audience cares about, you can deal with complex issues within the context," said Samuelsen, whose recent controversial play *Gadianton* dealt with how Mormons act in a downsizing, Utah Valley corporation where Mormons have to fire other Mormons. He also acknowledges that "Mormons will go to the movies and won't be offended when someone says 'O God,' but if they go to a play they know is written by a Mormon and they hear 'O God,' suddenly they're offended."

BYU English professor Susan Howe related how complaints about plays are often dysfunctionally routed first to Church general authorities and then sometimes down channels to the playwright without the name of the original complainant. All the playwright/panelists, which also included Russian professor Thomas Rogers and theatre professor Tim Slover, admitted that they have had to make changes in

the scripts to avoid offending Mormon audiences and to get their plays produced, and sometimes even to protect their jobs.

Howe summarized the situation: "We don't have a very old culture, but we have one we love. . . . We are a culture that is only 150 years old, still in its adolescent phase, and like all adolescents we hate to be criticized. But to fully understand a culture you must criticize it. You must show its good side as well as its bad."

RECORD PRICE PAID FOR FIRST EDITION BOOK OF MORMON

EXCEEDING EVEN the most fanciful wishes of sellers in a 19 May 1997 auction at Sotheby's in New York, a first edition Book of Mormon sold for a record \$32,200. Auctioneers had expected the book to bring between seven thousand and ten thousand dollars, according to the *Deseret News*. Selby Kiffer, vice president in Sotheby's books and manuscripts division, noted that the price was "by far a world auction record for that book."

Kiffer said the sale culminated a "really spirited bidding competition by four bidders." A rumor quickly spread saying that the anonymous purchaser of the book was Microsoft's Bill Gates. The story traveled from New York to Salt Lake City where it was spread for weeks as gospel truth. However, Microsoft spokesman Greg Shaw denied that Gates, who does collect first edition books, had made the purchase.

Missouri book dealer John Hajcek told the *News* that the previous high price for a first edition Book of Mormon was \$19,550. Dealers estimate that 250 first edition copies are in the hands of known collectors and a like number to be in unknown private collections.

BOOKCRAFT PURCHASED BY YOUNG, UPSTART PUBLISHER

IN A MERGER between two large, privately-held publishers of LDS works—one time-tested and well established, the other in existence for less than a decade—the young Infobases Inc. acquired Bookcraft, Inc., in undisclosed terms, according to a *Deseret News* report.

Infobases began in 1990 and has produced several LDS CD-ROM compilations, including *LDS Collector's Library* and *LDS Family History Suite*. Bookcraft has been one of two principal publishers of LDS-oriented books since 1942, when it began competing with the Church-owned Deseret Book. Bookcraft's many titles by general authorities include *Mormon Doctrine* by Bruce R. McConkie and *The Miracle of Forgiveness* by Spencer W. Kimball. The company has also enjoyed recent success with the *Work and the Glory* series by Gerald N. Lund.

Alan C. Ashton was named chairman of the board of the new company. Ashton founded WordPerfect. According to a news release, "Ashton will take an active role" in determining the future direction of the company. Bradley D. Pelo, president and CEO of Infobases, will also take over in like capacities for Bookcraft.



A first edition Book of Mormon recently broke records by fetching \$32,200.

SOCIOLOGISTS UNVEIL MORMONISM

WANT TO UNDERSTAND how the early Christian church grew? Look at how early Mormonism grew, asserted nationally distinguished sociologist of religion Rodney Stark. Speaking at the combined annual meetings of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR) and the Religious Research Association (RRA) in November in San Diego, California, non-Mormon Stark said that Mormonism is the next world religion and by studying it scholars can better understand the rise of earlier world religions, such as Christianity and Islam. Stark noted that in addition to having a founder who receives direct communication from God, each religion, including Mormonism, began with "a holy family" and an intense primary group of followers. These religions initially spread through networks of families and friends connected with individuals in the primary group.

At the SSSR/RRA meetings, more than ten other sessions and twenty-five scholars also looked at Mormonism. Non-Mormon Henri Gooren of Utrecht University in the Netherlands compared Mormon and Pentecostal spirituality and convert retention in Guatemala. Noting the difference between the skins of a peach and an orange, Perry Cunningham of the LDS church's research and evaluation Division examined how the boundaries between Mormonism and the larger world are thinner today than in nineteenth-century Mormonism. Armand Mauss and Laurie DiPadova participated in a session analyzing leadership and authority relationships within religious organizations. Several presenters looked at homosexuality within Mormonism. The openly gay BYU sociology student Sam

Clayton reported on his university-approved survey of BYU students' attitudes toward homosexuality. Clayton said 42 percent of students feel that even celibate, honor code-abiding gays should not be allowed to attend the university.

BYU faculty who spoke at the conference included Jessie Embry, who reported on the Church's efforts to meet the needs of immigrant Asian Americans, and Ronald Jackson, who deciphered what can be learned from pictures of Jesus Christ in LDS homes.

The Mormon Social Science Association (MSSA) sponsored several sessions, including one that reflected on the trailblazing early work of Harold Christensen. In another MSSA session, Grant Underwood and Vernice Wineera, both with BYU-Hawaii, explored how cultural boundaries were negotiated in the Pacific islands' celebration of the Mormon pioneer sesquicentennial and at the Church-owned Polynesian Cultural Center in Hawaii. Meanwhile, Thomas Murphy discussed "Christianizing Quetzalcoatl, Mexicanizing Mormonism."

MANTI GROUP PUBLISHES NEW BOOK OF MORMON

THE TRUE AND LIVING CHURCH of Jesus Christ of Saints of the Last Days (TLC) has published an edition of the Book of Mormon that uniquely combines the text of the first edition (complete with original spelling and grammar) with the versification of the current LDS edition. TLC's new version also incorporates the book's original paragraph breaks and notes changes in the current LDS version. The TLC edition is available from T&S Publishing, 37 South Main Street, Suite 202, Manti, Utah 84642.

ANXIOUSLY ENGAGED

- *Time* magazine, in its recent special edition on medical advances, featured **Paul Alan Cox**, BYU's former dean of general and honors education and a world-renowned botanist. Cox, who raised money to save a thirty-thousand-acre forest in Western Samoa, studies the medicinal benefits of rain forest plants.
- The *Wall Street Journal* in January 1998 ran an article on Salt Lake City industrialist **Jon M. Huntsman** that praised the self-made billionaire for his leading the way among the very wealthy in privately funding medical research. Over the past two years, Huntsman—a former stake president—has given one hundred million dollars to fund the Huntsman Cancer Institute in partnership with the University of Utah.
- The **LDS church** has donated one hundred thousand dollars to the Utah Youth Village's Families First program. The program offers an intensive, in-home family skills curriculum to those at risk of losing a child to state custody. Families First has aided 130 families over the past four years, and thanks to the Church's gift, Families First will now be able to assist low-income families free of charge.
- The **LDS church** Foundation recently provided \$28,275 to Volunteers of America, Utah. The volunteers group will use the funds for construction of a Women's Detoxification Center. The center will primarily serve homeless women and their dependent children. Up to twenty women will be housed at any given time.
- The **LDS church** has paid one year's rent for the Salt Lake Interfaith Network's new offices. The network is a coalition of churches working to help homeless families get a new start. Member churches take turns housing and feeding the homeless for

a week once every three months. While the Church does not permit overnight use of its facilities, it instead provides food and volunteers in addition to office space.

- Mormon philanthropist **Jon M. Huntsman** gave \$250,000 and the **Church** kicked in another \$225,000 to fund Salt Lake's Community Winter Shelter for Families. In receiving the two donations, Pamela Atkinson, a long-time advocate for the homeless, remembered Virgil Robinson. Robinson froze to death on a Salt Lake street on Thanksgiving Day 1996. Atkinson said the Huntsman and LDS church donations would ensure that no homeless persons would freeze during the '97-'98 winter in Utah. During the past holiday season, Atkinson said, "We will make sure there is room at the inn."
- Church-owned **Deseret Industries** (D.I.), a Utah thrift store chain that often employs recent immigrants to the U.S., has initiated an aggressive English language training program. "We have people from twenty-four countries, representative of fourteen languages," said Douglas Roberts, rehabilitation manager for the D.I., to the *Church News*. Through its program, which trains doctors as well as unskilled laborers, the D.I.'s aim is to equip immigrants for higher paying jobs than the D.I. is able to provide.
- **Seattle-Area Saints** were awarded one of three Ecumenical Service Awards presented by Associated Ministries of Tacoma/Pierce County in recognition of a Church canning project, Church response to storm disasters, Church members' service in a Paint Tacoma/ Pierce County Beautiful campaign, and missionaries' work in a local interfaith center.

THE MORMON UNIVERSE

SUNSTONE CALENDAR

1998 Sunstone Symposium to be held in August. The actual dates for this summer's symposium are not final yet, but it will be in the first half of August. Individuals wanting immediate notice of the dates and/or a copy of the preliminary program should contact Sunstone, 343 N. Third West, Salt Lake City, UT 84103 (801/355-5926; fax 801/355-4043; SunstoneUT@aol.com).

1999 Sunstone Symposium to be held at Salt Palace. 1999 marks the silver anniversary of the founding of the Sunstone Foundation, and the annual symposium will be held at the Salt Palace in Salt Lake City on 14-17 July 1999.

Two Regional Symposiums to Be Held in September. Mark your calendars, and plan to attend one of two symposiums that will be held in September 1998: Northwest Sunstone Symposium in Seattle, or the Washington, D.C., Sunstone Symposium. Contact Sunstone at above address for details.

LDS ORGANIZATIONS AND CONFERENCES

Mormon Historians to Gather in Nation's Capital. The Mormon History Association will hold its annual meeting at the Washington Marriott Hotel on 21-24 May 1998. Topics being discussed include the activities of Reed Smoot and George Q. Cannon in Washington, D.C.; a twenty-year review of Blacks and the priesthood; the changing Mormon perception of Abraham Lincoln; and Joseph Smith's 1844 U.S. presidency campaign. Noted sociologist of religion Rodney Stark will be the Tanner lecturer. Stark is best known to Mormons for his predictions that Mormonism will grow to become the first new world religion to arise since Islam. For details, contact the Mormon History Association, c/o Craig and Suzanne Foster, 2470 N. 1000 W., Layton, UT 84041 (801/773-4620 or 801/779-1348; suzfoster@aol.com).

Affirmation to Meet in Portland. The annual conference of Affirmation: Gay and Lesbian Mormons will be held in Portland, Oregon, over Labor Day weekend, 4-7 September 1998, at the Lloyd Center Doubletree. For information, write the Affirmation Conference (P. O. Box 80654, Portland, OR 97280-1654), call the conference hotline (503/288-2037), or visit the conference website (<http://www.affirmation.org>).

CYBERSAINTS

Break out the Birthday Cake. The *Church News* website (accessed via <http://www.ldschurchnews.com>) has recently celebrated its second anniversary by offering subscribers or browsers a telephone customer service representative to answer any computer questions. It's available Monday through Friday from 7:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Mountain Time at 800/710-7141.

Saints Create a New Nauvoo. A new website—to be named Nauvoo—will soon be posting the work of LDS poets. The site will be accessed at www.nauvoo.com; those interested may submit poetry to the Nauvoo site by e-mail at stepherry@aol.com or by snail mail to Nauvoo Poetry, 1303 N. Riverside Ave. #31, Provo, UT 84604.

Offshoots Branching onto Internet. Some groups claiming Latter Day Saint heritage in one way or another now have pages on the Internet, including:

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Strangites)

<http://www.Mormonism.com/strang.htm>

New Covenant Church of God

<http://home.sn.no/~cwarren>

Restoration Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

<http://www.execpc.com/~talossa/restoration.html>

School of the Prophets/Robert Crossfield

<http://home.sprynet.com/sprynet/gazalore/homepage.htm>

True and Living Church of Jesus Christ of Saints of the Last Days

<http://www.tlcmanti.org>

LDS Research Site Organized. A mailing list for "serious scholars"—i.e., not the sermonizing types—has recently been created. Questions may be posted or information obtained by e-mailing lds-research@xmission.com.

Disabled Empowered on Web. A mailing list called LDISABLED is for LDS members who are disabled or chronically ill in any way (or for the loved ones of such persons). To subscribe, send a message to listserv@home.ease.lsoft.com. Include "subscribe LDISABLED" as well as your first and last name.

Got the Blues? An electronic mailing list supporting Latter-day Saints suffering from depression has been created to discuss emotional distress in an LDS context. The list is available at peace@ldschurch.net; subscribe to the list at majordomo@ldschurch.net.

Y Chat? Why Not? Joshua Elledge, a BYU family studies major, has created YCHAT, a website with eighteen chatrooms designed to be free of questionable material and language. The site will be monitored to ensure that BYU and LDS standards are upheld. It also includes a world-wide archive of news articles on the Church and BYU.

LDS scholar offers tours to Book of Mormon lands



If you're like most LDS members, you love the Book of Mormon. *But how much do you really know about the Book?* Most of us are familiar with the Book's teachings. But few of us know much about the geography, language, archaeology or culture. *Why visit Book of Mormon sites?* Your knowledge, understanding and desire to learn more will increase. I'm Dr. Joseph Allen, author of the bestselling "Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon." Our company, Book of Mormon Tours, has taken more than 200 guided tours to Middle America since 1970. For one low flat rate, everything's included: airfare, deluxe hotels, meals, luxury buses, pre-tour education, experienced directors. Call now for a FREE info packet. **Toll free 1-888-226-5205, extension 460**

SUNSTROKED

A recent internet gleaning, ascribed to Robert Armstrong, M.D., reads as follows:

I work part-time as a teacher of family doctors. The program provides training on psychiatric disorders and emphasizes the importance of emotional support. The new doctors are given plenty of time in clinic to visit with their patients and learn about their challenges. One of our interns who has never lived in Utah and knows nothing about Mormons is still struggling to understand the cultural climate here. Last week he was interviewing a new patient and stumbled on what he thought was a raging psychosis.

DOCTOR: "Well, Mrs. Olsen, we've talked about your high blood pressure and your medications. Are you experiencing any particular stress in your life?"

PATIENT: "Oh, yes! It's the Sunbeams. They're driving me crazy."

DOCTOR (very surprised): "The sun beams?"

PATIENT: "Yes. I've never had trouble with them before, but this group won't sit still. They bounce all over the room, and run out the door and down the hall."

DOCTOR (reaching for a pen): "Have you told anyone about this?"

PATIENT: "Of course. I told the president."

DOCTOR: "Really! What did the president tell you?"

PATIENT: "She said Sunbeams are like that. I'm just going to have to learn to deal with them."

DOCTOR (concerned that he may be missing something): "I know people who are sensitive to sun beams. Do they cause you a rash or anything?"

PATIENT (confused): "A rash? No."

DOCTOR: "What's the biggest problem they're creating?"

PATIENT: "It's the noise. They just won't quit talking."

DOCTOR (astonished): "The sun beams are talking to you?"

PATIENT: "Well, yes. But mostly they talk to each other."

DOCTOR (scribbling furiously in the chart): "I see. Can anyone else hear them talking?"

PATIENT (after a moment of stunned silence): "You're not LDS, are you?"

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER

HEARD ANY GOOD Mormon jokes lately? Here's one we recently found on the Web that folklorists might enjoy analyzing what the retelling or forwarding of it tells about us.

Three people applied for a CIA job: a counselor in a bishopric, an elders quorum president, and a Relief Society president. At the end of the interviews, all three were taken into a room. They were told that their bishop was sitting in the next room. The counselor was given a gun and told to go into the next room and shoot the bishop. He said he could not do that. The elders quorum president was told to take the gun and shoot the bishop. He took the gun, went into the room, but in a minute returned. "Sorry, I just cannot do it," he said. Finally, the Relief Society president was put to the test, and she took the gun into the room. A couple of shots rang out, and then there was the sound of a struggle.

When she returned to the room, the interviewer asked her what all that struggle was about. She replied, "Somebody put blanks in this pistol, so I had to strangle him!"



PAT BAGLEY