



# CORNUCOPIA

## Conversion Story

### THE MAKING OF A "VERY ATYPICAL MORMON"

Sylvia Cabus, a native Californian, is twenty-eight and a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies. She wrote a version of this column for the 5 September 1998 Washington Post as part of a "faith stories" series. It is reprinted with permission. SUNSTONE queried Sylvia Cabus about her experience in writing her story. A few of this "unlikely Mormon's" comments follow the column.

I AM PROBABLY ONE OF THE MOST unlikely people to have become a Mormon. I'm a Filipina American, a committed feminist, politically progressive, and single. I was raised Catholic, and I'm a proud product of the wonderful Catholic school system. I graduated from the University of California at Berkeley, I served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Africa, and I study international relations in graduate school.

I didn't learn about my church through a TV commercial or because a pair of fresh-faced missionaries came knocking at my door. I'm not blond, and I don't have a perm. I've never lived in Utah. I'm terrible at crafts, and I don't cook very well. I don't own a Franklin Planner, and I've never stayed in a Marriott hotel. I've never read *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* or any book by Stephen Covey. I'm a registered Democrat.

All in all, I'm a very atypical Mormon.

However, within this hierarchical, ascetic, and plain-speaking church, I have found my place. As a single woman in her late twenties, I've found what Trappist monk Thomas Merton called "the four walls of my new freedom."

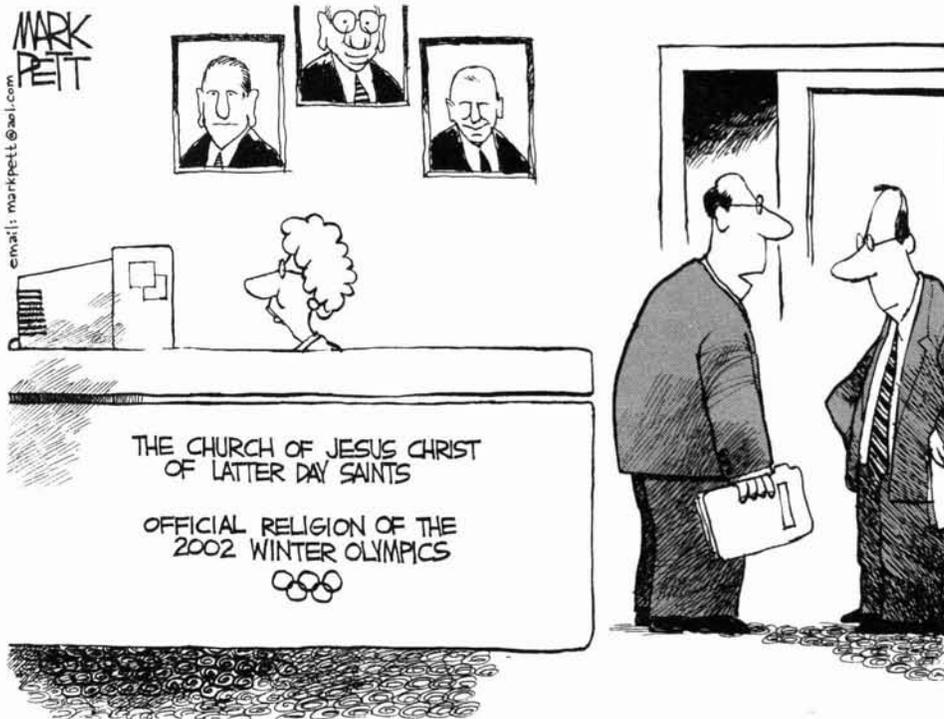
The stereotype of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is that it is made up of people from the Inter-mountain West—large, mostly white families with pioneer ancestors. In reality, though, our church is more geographically expansive and ethnically diverse than some would expect.

It's through an odd combination of coincidence and friendships that I became Mormon. I've been attracted to the Church ever since I could remember. I've always had Mormon friends, and everywhere I've gone, either overseas or in the United States, I've run into Mormons.

In the summer of 1994, when I was doing Peace Corps training in Cameroon, I met a Congolese trainer who was a Latter-day Saint. Unlike other Mormons I'd met, she didn't have a Book of Mormon to share with me. Instead she shared her conviction, her faith, and, as a single African woman in her early thirties, the fullness of life in the Mormon community in Africa. That was enough for me.

At the same time, I really had become uncomfortable being Catholic. It didn't seem "real" or participatory to me because it was easy to be passive and anonymous going to Mass just once a week. I didn't feel I was part of a community. Mormonism offered me both.

Since being baptized as a Mormon early in 1997, I have found myself both resisting and being comforted by the boundaries, by "The four walls of my new freedom."



*"The Olympic Committee said it's the least they could do after tarnishing our image with that bribery scandal."*

There are quite a few things I'm not accustomed to, like giving so much of my time and energy to the Church. And there's a lot I don't understand, such as how women in the Church had more authority and power at the turn of the century than they do now. But studying, praying, questioning, and learning all have contributed to my testimony's growth. And there is lot of joy and challenge in that process. What I find so gratifying is strengthening my relationship with Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother, and Jesus Christ, and trying to live the principles of the Gospel every day. There is a sense of completeness and symmetry in our scriptures, in our services, in our complex organization, and in our temples.

Everything that we strive to do and be as Mormons is infused with an eternal perspective and understanding.

My favorite character in the Book of Mormon is Enos, a man who lived in America in the fifth century B.C. The Book of Enos is a touching account of "the wrestle," the spiritual struggle one man had before being forgiven for his sins. His soul hungered, Enos recounted. My soul hungered, too.

And it's within this Church, with this peculiar people, that I



*Though the odds might have seemed against it, Sylvia Cabus—a Filipina, feminist, politically progressive, single woman—has found a spiritual home among the Mormons.*

have found my strength and my comfort.

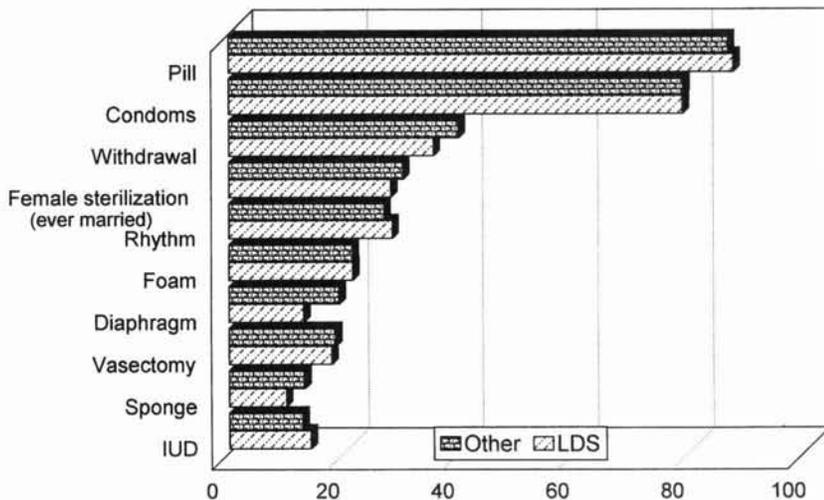
*Author's reflections after publication:*

After submitting my story to the *Washington Post*, and as a

Peculiar People

COMPARISON OF TOP 10 CONTRACEPTIVE METHODS BETWEEN AMERICANS AND LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Among Those Who Have Ever Used a Method % Who Have Used Each Specific Method



THE DECEMBER 1998 ISSUE OF SUNSTONE presented information suggesting that Mormon women are less likely to use birth control than United States women, largely because LDS women are less likely to be sexually active before marriage. This graph presents more specific information on the contraceptive methods that women or their partners have ever used. The top ten methods, ranked in terms of the percentage of women who have ever used that method, are the pill, condoms, withdrawal, female sterilization, rhythm, foam, diaphragm, vasectomy, sponge and IUD. There is very little difference between Mormons and other women in use of specific methods.

fairly recent convert, I didn't want to misrepresent the Church. I faxed the column to the Church public relations office in Washington, D. C., and had a conference call with two of the staff members, Stephen Whyte and Kathryn Newman. I explained to both of them why I wanted to include certain subjects, like Heavenly Mother, and they both thought I'd done a good job. Neither of them suggested any changes in content. Hence, the article had, unofficially at least, the Church's imprimatur. I like to think that Gordon B. Hinckley himself took a look at it on his way to *Larry King Live*.

If I were to re-write my essay for an exclusively Mormon audience, I would spend a lot more time discussing how my feminism and my Mormonism interact, as in my callings as Relief Society teacher and Young Women president and in the temple endowment ceremony. I would acknowledge the two LDS e-mail lists on which I first articulated a lot of my initial thoughts and observations. I would also detail my discomfort with Mormon material culture and what seems to be a Utah-centric bias in an ostensibly global church. A lot in the Church does drive me completely batty—I bristle whenever I'm asked if I need a Spanish translation box, or when people wonder out loud in my presence why a good Mormon girl like me isn't married yet, or when I hear once again what a fine role model I am. And yet, while I swore I would never utter the words "I know the Church is true," in my heart and soul, I do believe it.

—SYLVIA CABUS  
Washington, D. C.

### Twenty Years Ago in Sunstone

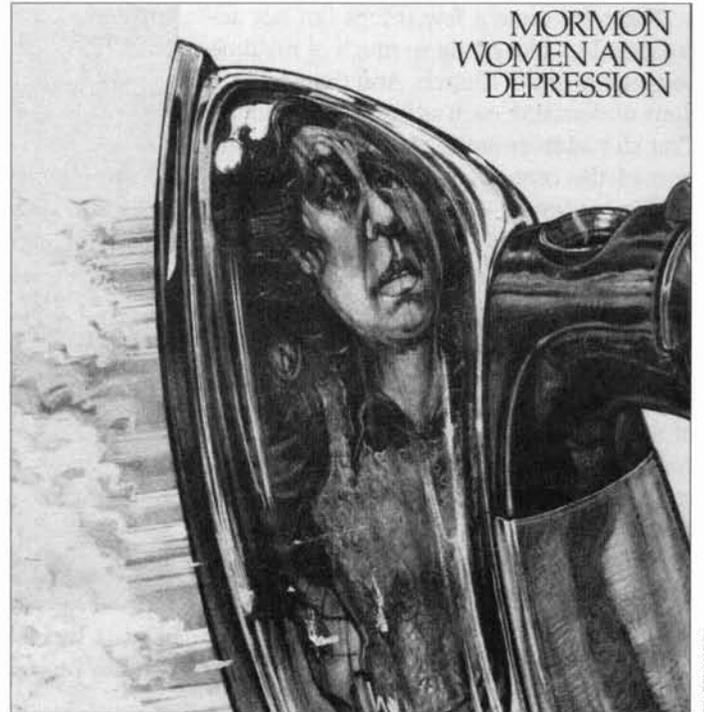
## MOTHER-IN-ZION SYNDROME

THE MARCH/APRIL 1979 ISSUE OF SUNSTONE featured the transcript of Louise Degn's groundbreaking KSL-TV documentary, "Mormon Women and Depression," which legitimated a widespread but closeted darkside of Mormon culture. LDS counselors Carlfred Broderick and R. Jan Stout were two of the talking heads:

BRODERICK—We do have a lot of depression in the Church around the issue of not being able to be the perfect Relief Society woman: not grinding your own wheat and making your own bread and having your own garden and taking casseroles over to all the sick and not also being a perfect mother and an ideal housewife and well-groomed and reading the scriptures every day. And being something less than that makes a lot of people depressed who, if their standards weren't quite so high, might be more self-accepting.

STOUT—I think in Mormonism the women themselves tend to apply a great deal of pressure on each other. I don't see it coming so high from Church pronouncements of leaders. Some of it is there, but it is largely the women themselves who carry around with them excessive expectations of what they should or should not be as Mormons.

Some of them feel they have to reach this kind of idealized, crystallized, beautiful Mormon woman, which I term the Mother-of-Zion syndrome. This is a woman who is really a



*Social pressures to become a Mother-in-Zion "superwoman" can still lead Mormon women toward depression—just as those pressures did twenty years ago or longer.*

myth, a mystique. She doesn't exist at all, in fact. But all Mormon women in almost any ward you wanted to go into would tell you they know a woman who is like that: She's got it all together; her children are well-groomed; she bakes bread every day; she has wonderfully clean things in the house; her husband is happy and whistles off to work; she never complains at any of the Church meetings he goes to; she's supportive and loyal; and not only that: she gets up and reads her scriptures at six in the morning. She's got it all together. And that's a very intimidating thing for the average Mormon woman.

Now, in fact, this woman exists only in the minds of other women. They may try to approximate it. But I've seen too many cases of these super-Mormon women who themselves are depressed or who have private faces, private lives that are quite different from what their ward members see out on the street.

### Mormon Musings

## DO-RE-ME-FA-SO-LA-TI-DO

EVERY CHORISTER IN THE CHURCH KNOWS AND quotes, like a cheerleader, the second half of Doctrine and Covenants 25:12: "yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads." But have you ever noticed they usually pass over the poetic parallelism that begins this passage?: "For my soul delighteth in the song of the heart." Now, I'm not going to

suggest that this scripture solves the Mormon conundrum concerning whether an unrighteous person can produce inspired/inspiring art. One could argue that even the Lord delights in a song sung from the heart, regardless of the singer's righteousness, whereas the song of the righteous is more than merely delightful: it is a prayer. But my point is that Doctrine and Covenants 25:11 may have been the inspiration for one of my favorite books in my library: *Recreational Songs*, copyright 1949, by the Corporation of the President, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Run, do not walk, to your nearest Deseret Industries, and see if you can find it for fifty cents or less. You may even be able to pilfer it from a lost-and-found shelf in the chapel foyer or convince your mom to give you hers. It's probably next to her Relief Society grapes in the coat closet. It's easy to spot: it's bright red buckram-bound and has a treble clef gliding across the cover in the wake of some quarter notes embossed in silver.

Many will remember singing from this book during MIA opening exercises in days of yore. As late as 1974, we sang from it in my ward in Knoxville, Tennessee. Let me whet your appetite with a guided tour through its pages.

The book begins with a prophecy that has already been fulfilled: "Community singing, although fundamentally a recreational function, will most surely degenerate and cease to be if there is not generated with it a genuine musical experience." Here is a listing of some of the song collection categories and selected quotes about them from the book:

- Patriotic Songs: "Everyone should join in the singing of our patriotic songs and should be induced to sing them with sincere patriotic fervor."
- Folk Songs: "Everyone should learn . . . these beautiful songs."
- Negro Spirituals: "The Negro spiritual is the miracle of all songs." To which I sincerely say, amen.



Run, do not walk, to your nearest Deseret Industries and see if you can find a copy of the Church's 1949 *Recreational Songs*.

- Western Songs: "Many of the Western Folk Songs contain little but doggerel verse. We present in this section four of the better ones."
- Master Composers: "Nothing can tone up a community 'Sing' more than the inclusion of a song from the Master Composers."
- Gilbert and Sullivan: "The team of 'Gilbert and Sullivan' knows no counterpart in the field of collaborators."
- Nonsense Songs: "Wholesome fun is the objective to be attained when songs from this section are used in a community 'Sing.'"

Here are some representative songs from *Recreational Songs*:

- "Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes," by none other than Ben Jonson.
- "A Kiss." The first verse: "A kiss is such a curious thing, It's never understood. You eat it not, you drink it not; and yet it is so good."
- "The Low-Backed Car," by Samuel Lover (suspicious last name). A quote: "The lovers come near and far And envy the chicken That Peggy is pickin', As she sits in the low-back'd car." Do not adjust your monitor; you have not entered the Twilight Zone. A funnier, weirder song I've never heard at church.
- "Volga Boat Song." Everyone sing along with me! "Yo, heave, ho, yo, heave, ho."

### A Psalm



## LOVE PSALM 14 OR LEO AND SAGITTARIUS

Oh Lord, let me find possibility everywhere: in the bend of my own elbow, in a body arched as it reaches after thee.

Teach me to value the laughter of others, and preserve me from the pompous and the mirthless.

What is this you have given me? It is a vision of myself, aged and peacefully asleep.

I have folded my hands over my heart, I have blessed my own suffering, and now joy springs up about me, Lord, joy!

For I have entered into conversation with the universe, and discovered the dissonant beauty of large yellow cats.

I have been a hunter and pulled back my bow with pleasure in watching my elbow as it bends,

I have shot my arrow at the heavens, I have abandoned the kill,

and you and the lionesses watch me and are glad to hear me laugh.

—HOLLY WELKER

Translated Correctly

Missionary scriptures (in context)

## "LIVE IN THE SPIRIT"

1 PETER 3:13 – 4:6

KING JAMES VERSION

## CHAPTER 3

13 And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

17 For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

21 The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

## CHAPTER 4

FORASMUCH then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

2 That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

3 For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to *Love* wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:

5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

6 For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

NEW AMERICAN BIBLE

Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1992

## CHAPTER 3

**Christian Suffering.** <sup>13</sup>Now who is going to harm you if you are enthusiastic for what is good? <sup>14</sup>But even if you should suffer because of righteousness, blessed are you. Do not be afraid or terrified with fear of them, <sup>15</sup>but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, <sup>16</sup>but do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who defame your good conduct in Christ may themselves be put to shame. <sup>17</sup>For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that be the will of God than for doing evil.

<sup>18</sup>For Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the sake of the unrighteous, that he might lead you to God. Put to death in the flesh, he was brought to life in the spirit. <sup>19</sup>In it he also went to preach to the spirits in prison, <sup>20</sup>who had once been disobedient while God patiently waited in the days of Noah during the building of the ark, in which a few persons, eight in all, were saved through water. <sup>21</sup>This prefigured baptism, which saves you now. It is not a removal of dirt from the body but an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup>who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him.

## CHAPTER 4

**Christian Restraint.** <sup>1</sup>Therefore, since Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same attitude (for whoever suffers in the flesh has broken with sin), <sup>2</sup>so as not to spend what remains of one's life in the flesh on human desires, but on the will of God. <sup>3</sup>For the time that has passed is sufficient for doing what the Gentiles like to do: living in debauchery, evil desires, drunkenness, orgies, carousing, and wanton idolatry. <sup>4</sup>They are surprised that you do not plunge into the same swamp of profligacy, and they vilify you; <sup>5</sup>but they will give an account to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. <sup>6</sup>For this is why the gospel was preached even to the dead that, though condemned in the flesh in human estimation, they might live in the spirit in the estimation of God.

- "Come Let us be Gay." Just goes to show you that over time, the English language lends itself to terrific ironies.
  - "Short'nin' Bread," "Old Black Joe," and "Old Folks at Home." A few of the songs are painful reminders of the past, especially some of the dialect and phrases such as "Feed dem darkies on short-'nin' bread."
  - "Beautiful Dreamer," by Stephen Foster.
  - "Tit-Willow," by Gilbert and Sullivan. We couldn't sing this song in MIA without snickering.
  - "Vive L'Amour." Cool.
  - "O Me! O My!" A couple of years ago, circa 1994, I tried to wake up the congregation during one of my sacrament meeting talks by suggesting that the chorister lead them in this song, which I quoted: "O me! O my! We'll get there by and by. If anybody likes the speaker, It's I, I, I, I, I." This is a true story. I was unsuccessful.
  - "John Johnson's Army." I bet many of you know this one. "Four black mules and a pack a dern fools, and they landed on the other side of Jordan."
  - Finally, "Comrades in the MIA." As I recall, we sometimes did sing, arms locked in arms, swaying the pews. Or maybe not.
- I'll end with a final timeless note from the book for the instructions of the song leader: "He is the epitome of musical enthusiasm. He organizes people into singing groups at the least provocation." I, for one, rue the passing of those blessed MIA days. And I am not snickering.

—EDGAR C. SNOW JR.

*Journals of Discourse*

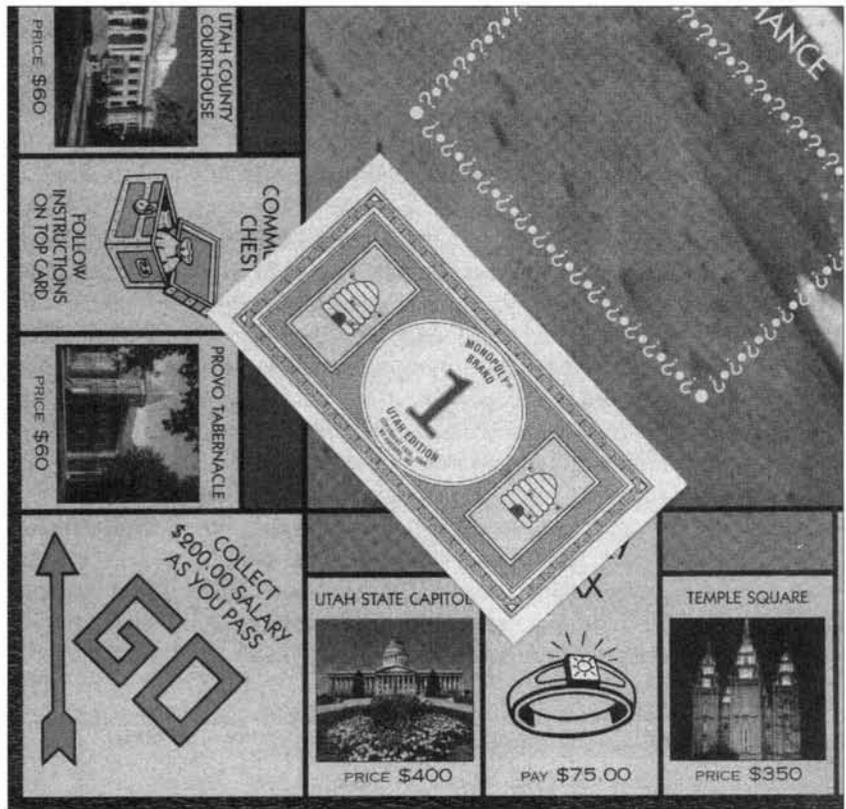
SHOULD PRACTIC-  
ING POLYGAMY BE  
CONSTITUTIONAL?

The First Amendment of U.S. Constitution explicitly states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," and on that basis, Mormons defended their right to practice polygamy. In the landmark case on religious freedom, which was brought by imprisoned, polygamous Apostle George Reynolds, the U.S. Supreme Court, however, reasoned that while

Congress may not forbid belief, which it holds sacrosanct, it can legislate concerning objectionable behavior. And then the Mormons began their long process of stopping the practice of polygamy.

In the April 1998 *Stanford Law Review*, Mormon Elizabeth Harmer-Dionne notes that "many scholars have written about both *Reynolds v. United States* and the belief-action distinction, but few outside the Mormon community can truly appreciate the impact that decision has had on Mormon belief." She recounts how the forced cessation of polygamy not only caused many Mormon practices to be changed but, also, many Mormon beliefs and doctrines that once were central to Mormon theology were dramatically recast and repositioned as

All-Seeing Eye



BABYLON ACQUIRES ZION

Ever since Salt Lake City bagged the 2002 Winter Olympics, people there have been calling the Crossroads of the West a "world-class city." Then came the international capitalistic incursions, including the Hardrock Cafe. With this past Christmas's commercialization, Utah joins the exclusive ranks of capitalistic capitals, including Manhattan, with its own edition of Parker Brothers' Monopoly® (\$29.95), and, finally, you really can get anything in this world for money. A rich man still may not be able to get to heaven, but he can buy the temple (\$350), and a poor one can own the Provo Tabernacle (\$140).

a result. "The purpose of this note is not to defend polygamy, but rather to highlight the very real effect suppression of religious practice has on belief. After decades of persecution, Mormons abandoned their notions of polygamy and Zion and instead turned to a radical program of assimilation. . . . The radical assimilation and accommodation necessitated by the struggle over polygamy has had ramifications far beyond merely forsaking the practice of plural marriage." She then notes how many Mormon scholars chart a fundamental movement away from early Mormon liberalism to religious conservatism and neo-orthodoxy as a result of the forced Great Accommodation.

Harmer-Dionne concludes that *Reynolds's* belief-action dichotomy is a myth: "suppression of religious practice, under the guise of the . . . neutrality principle, actually changes belief and that this comes dangerously close to violating the Free Exercise Clause. This is particularly true for churches that place as much or greater emphasis on action as on faith. For them, to act is to believe."

. . . for a liberal polity such as the United States that purports to value freedom of religion, speech, and conscience, there is a marked philosophical difference between theological developments that result from organic evolution and those that result from massive persecution and forced cessation of social customs and marital practices. The sharp divide between the Church's historical and current conceptions of both Zion and polygamy has unquestionably impacted Mormon theology and belief. Rather than reaching independent theological conclusions, the young Church was forced to accept laws in opposition to its then current beliefs and practices.

Given that changing practices does change beliefs, thus violating the First Amendment, Harmer-Dionne reasons that religiously motivated practices such as polygamy should be allowed, but that the government would not be required "to affirmatively support particular religious practices," it "would not have to recognize polygamy or give it equal status with monogamy. It simply could not criminalize or otherwise attempt to suppress the practice." And there are still limits to what practices could be allowed:

Recognizing the religious rights of some does not require society to sanction religiously motivated conduct that sacrifices the civil rights of others. For example, when the physical safety of abortion doctors and patients conflict with religiously based attempts to stop abortions, protecting the civil rights of the former justifies suppressing the religiously motivated conduct of the latter. The Supreme Court has proved capable of protecting such civil rights. The Court, however, has not shown itself to be as capable of defending religious rights. Meaningful free exercise of religion requires that when the rights and well-being of individuals or society are not at stake, the beliefs of religionists be accommodated.

She concludes by acknowledging that polygamy is not now a concern of today's LDS church, but, if Mormonism had been

permitted a "natural evolution," she wonders "what contemporary Mormonism would have to say regarding polygamy and why it would say so. Because of past governmental interference, this is not an answerable question."

### *Sunstone Top Twelve*

## PRESIDENT HINCKLEY TOPS '98 NEWS STORIES



**K**ENT S. LARSEN RECENTLY ASKED THE SUBSCRIBERS to his Internet Mormon-News list to vote on the most important Mormon news stories in 1998. (For list information, visit <<http://www.panix.com/~klar sen/mormon-news/>>.) And the top twelve winners are:

12. Sunrise Video sued by Paramount Pictures for editing copies of *Titanic*.
11. Texas jury found LDS church liable for \$4 million in abuse case.
10. Apostle Dallin H. Oaks testified at congressional hearing on the Religious Liberty Protection Act of 1998.
9. Temple announced for Kiev, Ukraine.
8. Seventy Marlin K. Jensen called for more political diversity in the Church.
7. Church President Gordon B. Hinckley toured West Africa.
6. LDS church donates \$1.1 million to anti-gay marriage campaigns in Alaska and Hawaii.
5. Missionary Jose Manuel Mackintosh killed in random attack in Russia.
4. Two missionaries kidnapped in Russia.
3. Russia officially recognizes LDS church, thus preventing the need for missionaries to leave country every three months to renew visas.
2. President Hinckley interviewed on Larry King Live.



*Elder Marlin K. Jensen explains why the Church needs Democrats and Republicans.*

*And the number one news story about Mormonism was:*

1. President Hinckley announces the Church will build thirty small temples, making one hundred operating temples by the year 2000.





# MORMON INDEX

- Number of new buildings the Church builds each year: 600
- Estimated value of Mormon meetinghouses and temples in the U.S.: \$12 billion
  - Value of foreign meetinghouses and temples: \$6 billion
- Number of sister missionaries assigned to Temple Square: 175
- Number of languages Temple Square missionaries represent: 28
- Number of languages general conference proceedings are translated into: 35
- Approximate number of cable television and radio stations in the United States and Canada that carry some conference proceedings: 1,200
- Approximate percentage of attendees at Logan, Utah's 1998 Martin Harris pageant who requested that missionaries visit them: 6
- Number of miles one thousand Boy Scouts marched along Joseph Smith's "Trail of Martyrdom" from Nauvoo to Carthage, Illinois: 23
- Percentage of BYU population that are people of Black, Hispanic, Asian, or American Indian background: 11.3
- Percentage of University of Utah population that are of ethnic minority backgrounds: 6.7
- Percentage of UCLA students that are of ethnic minority backgrounds: 51
- Academic ranking of BYU among 228 major American universities: 77
- Number of jars of food preserved by 150 Armenian Saints in a recent welfare project: 1,200
- Number of Saints to attend the tailgate party for "LDS day" at a San Francisco Giants baseball game: 5,000
  - Percentage of Utah population in 1860 that was non-LDS: 12
  - Percentage of Utah population in 1880, after valuable ores were discovered, that was non-LDS: 21
- Number of nondrinking Mormons to drinking non-Mormons on Utah's liquor oversight panel: 4 to 1
  - Percentage of active Mormons who say they drink alcohol: 6
  - Percentage of nominal Mormons who say they drink alcohol: 59
  - Percentage of Americans who say they drink alcohol: 71
- Number of LDS high school students to receive perfect scores on either the SAT or ACT college entrance exams in 1998: 13
- Ratio of Mormons in the House of Representatives who voted to impeach President Clinton to those Mormons who did not: 10:0
- Ratio of Jews in the House who voted to impeach President Clinton to those Jews who did not: 2:22
- Ratio of Baptists in the House who voted to impeach President Clinton to those Baptists who did not: 27:31
- Ratio of Catholics in the House who voted to impeach President Clinton to those Catholics who did not: 49:72
- Number of LDS stakes worldwide as of 18 January 1999: 2,503
- Number of administrative areas the Church has divided the globe into, as of August 1998: 28
- Number of LDS missionaries teaching English in Thailand: 22
- Number of subscribers to the Church's international magazine: 220,000
- Number of languages into which the Church's international magazine is translated: 37
- Finishing place for Southern Virginia College's women's soccer team in a 1998 national championship tournament: 1
- Number of Honduran Saints evacuated from their flood-damaged homes after Hurricane Mitch: 4,000
  - Number of Honduran LDS chapels seriously damaged by the hurricane: 16
  - Number of people clothed by cloth the Church donated to Hurricane Mitch survivors: 112,000

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1 *Church News* 12 Sept. 1998, 4; 2, 3 *Time*, 4 Aug. 1997, 54; 4, 5, 6, 7 *Church News* 3 Oct. 1998, 10; 8, 9 *Church News* 22 Aug. 1998, 11; 10, 11, 12 *Daily Universe* 12 Oct. 1998, 13 BYU press release, 27 Aug. 1998; 14 *Church News*, 29 Aug. 1998, 9; 15 *Church News*, 5 Sep. 1998, 8; 16, 17 *Journal of Mormon History* 24:1 (spring 1998), 91; 18 *Salt Lake Tribune* 8 July 1998, B2; 19, 20, 21 Rodney Stark, "The Basis of Mormon Success: A Theoretical Application," in *Latter-day Saint Social Life: Social Research on the LDS Church and Its Members*, ed. James T. Duke (BYU Religious Studies Center), 50; 22 *Church News* 5 Sept. 1998, 10; 23, 24, 25, 26 *Washington Post* 9 Jan. 1999; 27 Mormon-News Internet service, 1 Jan. 1999; 28 *Salt Lake Tribune* 24 August 1998, C3; 29 *Deseret News* 1 Jan. 1999; 30, 31 *Church News* 3 Oct. 1998; 32 *Church News* 21 Nov. 1998; 33, 34 *Church News* 7 Nov. 1998; 35 "News from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," radio program produced Church public affairs, broadcast by U.S. radio stations during 14-20 Nov. 1998