"OUR UTAH GIRLS":
GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN IN THE TRANSITIONAL MORMON CHURCH

By

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ABSTRACT

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How the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) transitioned from practicing the most unconventional marriage system in the nation to representing a model of family stability has surfaced as one of the most riveting and perplexing questions in the field of American religious history. A common explanation for this remarkable transition centers upon the assumption that church members were eager to be welcomed into and prove their allegiance to the United States after contending with intense persecution and ostracism. However, this dissertation complicates this narrative and explores how acclimation into the mainstream United States was not a swift process for the church's youngest female members.

My dissertation examines how the church's young women contended with and pushed back against the leadership's expectations during this transition. The LDS church leadership and influential membership exercised their expectations and anxieties for the future of Mormonism through attitudes and actions directed toward adolescent female church members. Mormon girls embodied multiple possibilities for the future of the religion in the minds of the church leaders and the wider community. In the most literal sense, they represented the continuation of the religion through their desire to marry and have children. The leadership envisioned that adolescent Mormon women held the ability to push the religion into the twentieth century while still maintaining sacred religious traditions. Young women could impede the leadership's desires by choosing intermarriage, not marrying at all, and failing to want children. To counteract these possibilities, the leadership looked to methods such as the organization of youth groups and the development of prescriptive literature to outline their expectations of how girls should act as proper Mormon women.

An exploration of young women's diaries, letters, school notebooks, memoir, and other life-writings illuminates how young women used a variety of methods and spaces to assert their agency within Mormonism. While some young women developed autonomy within church structures like the auxiliary female groups, others depended on secular higher education and professional opportunities to embrace their agency outside of the church. Their acts of agency were not necessarily directed against the church, but a way for young women to grapple with changes in their church, families, and personal lives.

For David T. Bailey, thank you.

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First and foremost, I must thank my professors at Sarah Lawrence College where I earned my undergraduate and master's degrees. Eileen Cheng, Lyde Cullen Sizer, and Priscilla Murolo revealed the possibilities of studying women's history. As a young woman and feminist in their classrooms, my preconceived ideas of gender, sexuality, race, class, and gender were regularly challenged. I admit that at first, I left seminars and meetings very confused about terms like postcolonialism, postmodernism, and queer theory. However, I kept taking these classes desiring more knowledge and ways to think about these categories of analysis. Because of them, I changed from a student who assumed she knew all about gender history to realizing that there will never be enough time to learn it all. They championed my early interests in pursuing a master's degree and supported me as I started the process of applying to doctoral programs.

Before I started my doctoral education at Michigan State, I received a piece of advice that did not resonate until years later: find a department that felt like a home. In a bittersweet turn of events, I realized the weight of this advice when my beloved advisor David T. Bailey passed away after a very quick illness during the fall of 2015. What ensued in the midst of shock and heartbreak was also the outpouring of support that I received from members of my committee and the faculty, who were all contending with their grief. Kirsten Fermaglich and Lisa Fine, both already active members of committee, took me further under their wings and finished the work of co-directing my dissertation. Emily Conroy-Krutz read a chapter that I had been struggling with for some time. Her advice and support came at a crucial time in helping me keep the process of writing and revising going. The graduate director Michael Stamm (who came onto my committee) helped me figure out how to proceed with the dissertation following David's death. My department chair Walter Hawthorne kept me up to date about David's condition toward the end. His friendly smile and our brief chats in hallways remind of his close friendship with David. David's passing finally allowed me

to get briefly to know Mark Kornbluth, who was chair of the department my first year at MSU, also another dear friend of David's.

My committee members have been continuously supportive of my work and pushed me to think and approach my project in new ways. Amy DeRogatis' expertise in the field of American Religions, gender, and sexuality proved to be crucial for my development as a scholar and instructor. She regularly motivated me to apply for fellowships and conferences that I would never have considered. From the first day she commented on a seminar paper to reading early drafts of my dissertation chapter, her feedback has enabled me to refine my arguments and leave me an altogether more compelling writer. Studying with Lisa Fine was a natural step after earning my M.A. degree in women's history. I entered MSU thinking I knew a lot about women's history and historiography. While I probably did know quite a bit, working with Lisa in her graduate seminar and our one-on-one meetings allowed me to consider aspects of women's historical experience I had not yet thought about studying. For example, her interests in young women's transition as they entered the workplace influenced my research questions. Her support and general concern for my well-being was very welcomed as I finished the dissertation. The opportunity to work with Kirsten Fermaglich has left me a much better scholar and teacher. Kirsten's close reading of and thoughtful feedback of seminar papers and drafts of my dissertation chapters pushed me to more clearly articulate my arguments. I always left our meetings thinking about my work in new and exciting ways. Through working as her teaching assistant one semester to sitting in on her American Jewish History seminar, I find myself recalling successful methods she used when teaching my own classes. Those outside of my committee were also crucial to my completion of the degree. The former director of graduate studies Pero Dagbovie always offered a warm smile, words of encouragement, and advice during one-on-one meetings and when we ran into each other near the department. Helen Veit and Mindy Smith always inquired about my work long after I took seminars with them

and were always happy to answer specific questions I had. Working several times under LaShawn Harris made me a better teacher and scholar. Her simultaneous dedication to teaching and getting her research and writing done served as an important example to me while completing the degree.

In addition to offering moral support during the fall and winter of 2015 and 2016, the department has helped me immensely throughout my time at MSU. Financial assistance that came from summer funding and awards allowed me to immerse myself in the archives in Utah. A dissertation completion fellowship from the graduate school gave me precious time away from other responsibilities so I could focus on finishing the last chapters of my dissertation.

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overlooked, and navigating the process of requesting materials.

A common question I receive from non-Mormon scholars is how I am accepted in the Mormon studies community. I am happy to say that my experience in this academic community has only been one of warmth and feeling welcomed. My following colleagues have aided me with hospitality, crucial feedback at conferences, and general friendship: Christopher Jones, Barbara Jones-Brown, Sharon Harris, JB Haws, Edje Jeter, Robin Jensen, Ben Park, Andrea Radke-Moss, Jonathan Stapley, Rachel Hunt Steenblik, Heather Stone, and Jared Tamez. Lisa Olsen Tait's early and continued enthusiasm and guidance with my project was pivotal toward formulating my research questions and directions throughout the long process. Brooke Brassard, Amanda Hendrix-Komoto, and Saskia Tielens all offered insightful and meaningful discussions at conferences and seminars about (but often went beyond) our shared field of study.

When I first started at MSU, I assumed that I had no more friends to make. I was horribly wrong. One of the wonderful outcomes of my time at MSU has been building friendships based on mutual support and admiration (and shared senses of humor!) with Melissa Hibbard, Rebecca Koerselman, and Jenni Marlow. Not only did these women offer much-needed distraction from the demands of graduate school, but they also read and (constructively!) critiqued my work and always offered an ear to listen during those many moments of doubt. I hope I can say I returned some of the favors to these incredible women. I must single out Melissa Hibbard for being my writing and accountability buddy. If it were not for my digital long distance meetings with her during the summer of 2014, I would still be on page one.

Writing is a lonely endeavor. For me, writing the dissertation would have been impossible without the aid of the following "writing sisters": Lami Fofana, Yi Ting Chua, Linlin Liang, and Carrie Li. Without our weekly meetings, which I joined in 2014, there would simply be no complete dissertation. Their continuously thoughtful and insightful advice made the dissertation and my

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During the process of writing this dissertation, my family has gained and lost some important members. I am sad that my grandfathers Glen Rose and Frank Moore are not here to see me finish this chapter of my life. My grandmother Shirley Rose always offered a welcome place of refuge in her living room where I could momentarily escape the strains of graduate school. James and Donna Glynn have not wavered in their undying support of me since I was a small child. My grandpa's genuinely curious questions about my dissertation and professional path and my grandma's regular letters and emails of support pushed me to recognize and celebrate my capabilities as a young woman. I strive to be the person that makes them so proud.

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Many thanks are owed to my stepfather Michael, who read every chapter of the dissertation in early drafts. His passionate love of history was one of leading factors that led to my interest in the

subject. Growing up under his influence taught me not to merely accept the historical narratives I learned in school and from the news, but to question how and why certain perspectives held precedence over others. Little did we know that these early lessons in research methodology would lead to a professional career!

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To Jonathan, my love, you are the smartest, most giving, and empathetic person I know.

From your ability to remember obscure details from my research to practically building a movie theatre overnight, I am amazed at how much you have to give me and continue to give me. Thank you for building a home, family, and life with me (and Andy and Sophie, who kept me company during long days and nights of writing). I am in awe of you and am so excited to start a new chapter of our lives in August. I love you.

My final words are about David. Anyone who knew him knows that words can do him justice. I will try best to express what he did for me. He was a kindred spirit who I could have hour long conversation with about films from Die Hard to The Searchers. We shared a love of New York City and especially Zabars. I worked with him in the classroom four times, and each time I was amazed to see him in his, arguably, best moments as a professor. His guidance with my research project was invaluable. He kept me on my toes when it came to finding sources. No matter how far I looked in libraries and consulted friends, he always had one perfect and crucial source I had not referenced. Above all else, he was a friend during both personally rewarding and challenging times. He taught me the importance of extending understanding and sympathy when it seemed impossible. Most of all, his apparent and steadfast dedication to his family serves as the most valuable lesson he left me with: love your family and hold them tight. David, it is for you that this work is dedicated. Thank you.

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INTRODUCTION

Born twenty years apart in 1870 and 1890, Amelia Cannon and Mary Bennion, both children of Mormon plural marriage, reached their adolescence and adulthood at a time when their religion, Mormonism, was in the middle of great change.[1] The life experiences of Amelia Cannon and Mary Bennion illustrate how different young women dealt with this period. As the daughter of the influential and well-known church apostle, publisher, and polygamist George Q. Cannon, Amelia grew up in around the church leadership and elite membership in the Mormon Culture Region.[2] As the daughter of Cannon and his third wife Martha Telle Cannon, Amelia understood the intricacies of plural marriage and how it worked from the inside. Despite this, her family's status as polygamists did not factor heavily into her diaries from her teenage and young adult years. She did acknowledge when her father was in hiding to evade arrest during the height of antipolygamy legislation in the late 1880s. Amelia wrote: "His visits are kept secret though and no one outside of the family knows about them."[3] Her omission of further information was likely because her parents did not want her father's whereabouts to spread. When her father was released from prison after six months after his surrender in 1888, life seemed to continue on for the Cannon diary. According to Amelia's later diaries, her father was a regular presence and their interactions usually pertained to courtship and marriage choices. her social life as a young Mormon woman.

Mary Bennion, born in 1890, lived with her family in Taylorsville, Utah where her father

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[1] Nineteenth-century Mormons refer to polygyny, in which a man has more than one wife, as polygamy, the principle, and plural marriage. It is important to note that though polygamy is defined as a person having more than wife or husband at a time, for the nineteenth-century Mormon context, it refers to the act of a man having more than one wife. I will use polygamy and plural marriage interchangeably throughout this dissertation.

[2] The Mormon Culture Region refers to Utah and parts of neighboring states including Wyoming, Idaho, Nevada, Arizona, and Colorado. See D.W. Meinig, "The Mormon Culture Region: Strategies and Patterns in the Geography of the American West" *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 55:2 (1965): 191-220.

[3] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal, (1886-7) quoted in Davis Bitton, "'Heigh, Ho! I'm Seventeen': The Diary of a Teenage Girl," in *Nearly Everything Imaginable: The Everyday Life of Utah's Mormon Pioneers*, edited by Ronald W. Walker and Doris R. Dant (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1999), 335.

owned a ranch. Her days were ordered by her chores at the family home and her school and church responsibilities. Her life was not only different from Amelia Cannon's in that she lived in a rural area apart from the church's center and the church leadership, but also she assumed her father and mother were in a monogamist marriage. Unlike Amelia's first hand experience as a polygamist's daughter, Mary was oblivious to her father's two additional marriages and half-siblings until she was eleven years old. As her father married after the church officially announced the termination of plural marriage, he kept his polygamy from his family. Only his first wife Susan Bennion, Mary's mother, knew. Though twenty years younger than Amelia, Mary did not welcome her father's marriages but was instantly heartbroken at what she perceived as a form of adultery. In her written treatment of her father's polygamy, Mary's monogamist and secular sensibilities shine through. For her, plural marriage was not an act that would elevate her family's status in the afterlife, but an unfortunate "condition" that led to her family's "struggle for happiness."[4]

Despite their differences, Amelia Cannon and Mary Bennion do share similarities. They both remained faithful church members throughout their lives. They fulfilled new expectations of a proper Mormon girlhood and womanhood that emerged after the end of plural marriage by entering monogamist marriages with faithful Mormon men and having children.

This dissertation is concerned with the question of how young Mormon women like Amelia Cannon and Mary Bennion grappled with radical changes in the Church of Latter-day Saints of Jesus

[4] Mary Bennion, Journal (1901-1906), page 50, annotated entry from January 1949 next to original entry from February 19, 1902. Mary Bennion Diaries, Bennion Family Papers, MS 0251, Box 4, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City. All journals written by Mary Bennion referenced in this dissertation are located in the Bennion Family Papers in the Special Collections at the Marriott Library at the University of Utah, Salt Lake City. Mary's first journal (1901-1906) contains page numbers; the others cited here are not paginated.

Unless otherwise indicated, all spelling, grammar, underlining, and strike-outs are original to the cited source. I use "journal" and "diary" interchangeably in this dissertation.

Christ (LDS) from 1869 to 1929.[5] The church endured the long transformation from an outsider religion to becoming a tolerated American religion during this period. Contending with harsh antipolygamy legislation and then the decision to stop plural marriage as a practiced tenet of the religion, Mormons faced profound changes that affected their families and their religious identities. From the arrival of the railroad to the Utah Territory in 1869 to Utah gaining statehood in 1896, church leaders and members moved away from their isolationist stance toward outsiders while still wanting to maintain religious difference from mainstream Protestant Christianity.[6]

What made the Mormons different in their minds from other religious groups were their ideas of family and the afterlife. Mormon theology posits that if church members live a righteous life they will be reunited with their families in the afterlife and gain the highest level of exaltation.[7] This exaltation is contingent upon the men's ability to gain the priesthood, marry, and produce children. Even though young women could not hold the priesthood, their actions were, arguably, more

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[5] I use Mormon, Latter-day Saint, and LDS church member to refer to members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

[6] When I use the terms "mainstream" or "mainstream American" culture, I am referring to what Mormons were thought not to be by non-Mormons: monogamist, gender traditionalist, Protestant Americans. Groups that signified Mormons as outsiders were members of the federal government, religious institutions, the press, reforming institutions, and other organizational bodies.

In his monograph *The Mormon Menace: Violence and Anti-Mormonism in the Post-Bellum South,* Patrick Q. Mason asserts that during the rise of antipolygamy legislation and rhetoric, Mormons differentiated themselves from non-Mormon America by emphasizing "their Mormon peoplehood and spurned—or at least diminished—their affinities with all others." The example of other non-Protestant outsiders, Catholics and Jews, point to how Mormons worked to "otherize" themselves. Whereas Catholics and Jews both "downplayed the distinctive aspects of their peoplehood" in relationship to Protestant dominance such as in the South, Mormons accentuated their difference. See Patrick Q. Mason, *The Mormon Menace: Violence and Anti-Mormonism in the Postbellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011),188-9.

With the end of plural marriage, Mormons did work to stress sameness with non-Mormons. However, they also looked to once underemphasized parts of their theology, such as following the Word of Wisdom (the dietary code that proscribed against coffee, tea, alcohol, and tobacco), research of family history as it related to temple work, and visits to the temple, to assert their distinction. See Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of Latter-day Saints, 1890-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 11.

[7] The afterlife or heaven is divided into three parts: the highest level of exaltation is achieved in the Celestial Kingdom followed by the Terrestrial Kingdom and the Telestial Kingdom. "Outer Darkness" is the Mormon equivalent of Hell. A proper Mormon marriage, known as a temple sealing, is necessary for adult men and women to gain entrance to the Celestial Kingdom. For more information on the Mormon idea of "eternal progression" and family in the afterlife, see Jan Shipps, *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 149.

consequential to them and their family's salvation and the perpetuation of Mormonism. If numerous young women did not marry honorable Mormon men, worthy of the priesthood, and have children then the future of the religion was in grave jeopardy.[8]

To manage this transformation, the church leadership revised interpretations of proper gender roles within the church. The commonly held belief was that if church members subscribed to traditional gender roles in the church, the religion would remain authentic to its founding. Proper gender roles were not just necessary for day-to-day order in the religion, but they were crucial for Latter-day Saints' understanding of theology and the afterlife. However, gender roles also had to adapt to the wider changes in the church. Following the church's call for the end of plural marriage, Mormon men were encouraged to continue to enlarge their roles in the secular public sphere and uphold monogamy to showcase how Mormonism and American identity were compatible. The transition of women's place within Mormonism was intricately connected to revised ideas of women's authority within the church. Whereas Mormon women never held official institutional authority in the church, throughout the nineteenth century they held much informal influence.[9]

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[8] The priesthood can be held by all male members of the church, who are over twelve years old and are in good standing with the church. The priesthood is understood as "the authority to act in God's name." Priesthood holders can lead congregations or wards of the church, perform ordinances like baptism, and give blessings to others .Women cannot be priesthood holders. See "What is the priesthood?" https://www.mormon.org/faq/purpose-of-priesthood Accessed 5 January, 2016.

Latter-day Saint theology contends that the Heavenly Father has a physical body. In turn, Mormons receive physical bodies in their temporal lives that they will continue to have in their eternal lives. Part of the process of gaining access to eternal life is maintaining a pure body by maintaining the church's dietary code and also refraining from premarital sexual activity in addition to other improper behaviors. To be joined with their families in eternity, Mormons must undergo specific rituals in the temple. Church members can only gain entrance to the temple after an interview with a church official to determine if the church member has lived up to required LDS ideals. See Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition,* 315-7.

[9] Jill Mulvay Derr and C. Brooklyn Derr, "Outside the Mormon Hierarchy: Alternate Aspects of Institutional Power," *Dialogue* 15:2 (1982): 22.

The LDS Church is organized around a detailed hierarchy, of which only men can hold office. At the head of the hierarchy is the current church prophet and president followed by his first and second counselor; otherwise known together as the "First Presidency." Following this, the next governing body is that of The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The Quorum of the Seventy known as the "Seventies" make up eight different quorums who work under the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The first presidency and members

Once encouraged by the church leadership to be visibly and vocally involved in political issues like women's suffrage, take leadership roles in church projects, and seek professional training, women's prescribed roles were increasingly limited to the private sphere of marriage, motherhood, and domestically oriented church activities.

Beginning in the early twentieth century, women also began to lose fundamental aspects of their religious identity and outlets to express that identity. Within the realm of religious ritual, they were no longer granted authority by the male leadership to perform the healing ritual of administering consecrated oil to church members.[10] In 1908, land that the male leadership gave toward the construction of a woman's building was abruptly taken away when the different women's auxiliary groups were $6,000 short of their fundraising goals.[11] One of the premier Mormon publications for women *Woman's Exponent* ceased publication in 1914 without much tangible reasoning behind the decision.[12] *The Young Woman's Journal* (YWJ) also ended in 1929 due to financial hardship. The proposed alternative was that the content of the *Improvement Era*, a church publication for youth,

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of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are considered "prophets, seers, and revelators." Women only hold official leadership positions as presidents and counselors in the auxiliary children's and female groups.

Beyond the highest offices, the church is also meticulously organized into smaller local communities. Stakes consist of about five or twelve congregations known as wards. A male president and two counselors are responsible for the running of the stake. Wards, or congregations, can comprise upward of three hundred people. A Bishop leads the ward along with two counselors. Within the more local context, women only serve as presidents of the Relief Society, Young Women's group, and Primary for younger children. All of these positions including those in the higher hierarchy are volunteer positions which church members are called to serve.

For an overview of the church hierarchy and offices, see "How the Church is Organized," https://www.lds.org/topics/church-organization/how-the-church-is-organized?lang=eng accessed January 4, 2016

[10] Jonathan A. Stapley, "'Pouring in Oil': The Development of the Modern Mormon Healing Ritual," BYU Religious Studies Center, https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/our-rites-worship- latter-day-saint-views-ritual-history-scripture-and-practice/pouring-oil Accessed 7 January, 2016,

[11] Derr and Derr, 21.

[12] Vella Neil Evans, "Empowerment and Mormon Women's Publications" in *Women and Authority: Re-Emerging Mormon Feminism*, edited by Maxine Hanks (Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, 1992), 62.

would include pieces of interest to young women. The publication of the *Young Woman's Journal* was the last time that there was a publication dedicated to young women in Mormon society.[13]

At the center of this transformation were the church's adolescent and young adult female members. In the changing schema of church power, young women seemed to fall to the very bottom of the power structure. The early life experiences of the young women discussed in this dissertation exemplifies how female church members had to constantly renegotiate their religious and gender identity throughout the church's embrace of modernity and maintenance of religious distinction. Though these young women's lives were specifically affected by their generational position, their place in church hierarchy, and their own ambitions, they all shared similar experiences of being indirectly or directly caught between two worlds, that of mainstream culture and Mormonism. Through their own coming of age processes, they fashioned their own Mormon girlhoods, influenced by church prescription and their own desires and beliefs.

I argue that as women lost visible forms and positions of power within the public church over this sixty year period, adolescent girls and young women used methods to pushback against church expectations and carve out space for themselves. Young women carved out space in the Mormon world through writing and the courtship process and in auxiliary groups, the missionary field, and the urban center of Salt Lake City. These processes were integral to young women as they transitioned from girlhood to Mormon womanhood. They developed and utilized varying methods of agency as they conformed to and struggled with church expectations.

[13] Evans, 61-62.

Locating Young Women's Agency in Sources

The study of young women's agency evokes questions: how did young women interpret their agency? How did young women utilize agency in a patriarchal culture in which they held limited visible influence? How do researchers find and assess evidence of agency?

Debates about evidence of agency have pervaded studies of religion and gender. Working toward a definition of agency has presented challenges. In her essay "Mormon Women and the Problem of Historical Agency," Catherine Breckus writes that "agency is the ability to take action—to *do* something—and an agent is someone or something that has the power to make something occur." She problematized how scholars attached weighted meanings to their applications of the agency and how in many scenarios agency has become interchangeable with terms like "emancipation, liberation, and resistance." These applications can distort how scholars assign and deny agency to their historical subjects. To dismantle the long held idea that demonstrating agency is equivalent to resisting larger structures and struggling for equality, freedom, and/or transformation, Breckus argues that scholars must recognize some people use agency to reinforce structures that others may find restrictive.[14] Historian Phyllis Mack's study of eighteenth-century Quaker women also provides insight to how religious women viewed their relationship to agency. Mack asserts for some religious women, agency was not about fulfilling one's own wants and desires but "the freedom to do what is right" within the context of that religion.[15] These assessments convey the importance of analyzing religious women and their actions within their own religious realm.

Mormon women's involvement in plural marriage illustrates the necessity of analyzing women in the context of their religion. In the nineteenth century, reformers, politicians, and

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[14] Catherine A. Breckus, "Mormon Women and the Problem of Historical Agency," *Journal of Mormon History* 37:2 (2011): 78.

[15] Phyllis Mack, "Religion, Feminism, and the Problem of Agency: Reflections on Eighteenth- century Quakerism" *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 29:1 (2003): 156.

everyday Americans were continuously confounded when Mormon women defended the practice of plural marriage. While antipolygamy legislators and reformers sought to "liberate" Mormon women from polygamy, many Mormon women interpreted anti-polygamy reform movements, rhetoric, and legislation as an assault against their families. In addition to theology, Mormons used a variety of contemporary reasoning to defend this practice like the belief women held less sexual desire and more control over their sexuality than men that depicted plural marriage as an honorable way for men to express their sexual desire. Despite this steadfast defense, Mormon women also revealed the difficulty of the practice. But many women claimed it was their religious duty to participate in plural marriage. As the nineteenth-century polygamist wife Lucinda Lee Dalton explained it was "Only for the sake of its expected joys in eternity" that she could "endure its trials through time"—the trials connected to plural marriage.[16] Borrowing from Phyllis Mack's framework, women making the decision to participate in plural marriage was an exercise of their agency or "doing what was right" in the context of their religion.

Earlier studies of Mormon women's agency situate these women's expressions of thought and actions into the larger realm of religious belief and activity. Laura Bush's term "faithful transgression" in her 2004 study of Mormon female writers, refers to moments "when a writer's text demonstrates direct or indirect violation of a law or doctrine." She writes that her use of "transgression" refers to a "boundary crossing" rather than a sin. Mormons tend to use the term "transgression" when discussing the story of Adam and Eve. Mormon theology indicates that Eve's act of transgression through eating fruit from the tree of knowledge was pivotal toward the progression and perfection of humans in the temporal and eternal worlds.[17] Borrowing and building upon this idea, I see these moments of young women's transgressions, not as radical as Eve's act,

[16] Lucinda Lee Dalton, Autobiography, page 19 quoted in Julie Dunfey, "'Living the Principle' of Plural Marriage: Mormon Women, Utopia, and Female in the Nineteenth Century" *Feminist Studies* 10:3 (1984); 529.
[17] Laura L. Bush, *Faithful Transgressions in the American West: Six Twentieth-Century Mormon Women's Autobiographical Acts* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2004), 15-7.

but necessary for the balance of their religious and personal identities and a pivotal point in their coming-of-age-process.

The transgressions explored in this dissertation range from trivial, such as young women engaging in gossip, to more problematic, like young women directly defying their father's patriarchal authority, a sacred tenet of the church. These young women did not always challenge church prescription and expectations, but they also did not emulate what was expected of them at all times. Through their various actions, young women simultaneously remained loyal to the church while demonstrating non-conforming behavior. Their actions varied between what "doing what is right" to faithful transgressions.

Discussions of agency within the field of the history of childhood and youth turn to a question of sources. Scholars of childhood and youth must continuously contend with an overarching skepticism that there are not enough sources created by children preserved in the archives. Mary Jo Maynes, a historian of European girlhood, does acknowledge that sources "are at best scattered, often sketchy and inconsistent."[18] Nonetheless, she and other historians have had success in locating and utilizing a variety of materials including diaries, letters, yearbooks and other personal paper created by young women during their adolescence.[19] Using diaries as a historical source has its advantages and disadvantages. Diaries can provide a near unguarded view of a young woman's day to day life, her emotional outlook, and what she found valuable.[20] On the other hand, a diary, no matter how personal, is a controlled and constructed narrative. Different cultural, familial, and larger national circumstances influenced the content of a young woman's diary. Despite the

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[18] Mary Jo Maynes, "Age as a Category of Analysis: History, Agency, and Narratives of Childhood," *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1.1 (2008): 117.
[19] Joan J. Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* (New York: Random House, 1997); Jane Hunter, *How Young Ladies Became Girls: The Victorian Origins of American Girlhood* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002) Anya Jabour, *Scarlett's Sisters: Young Women in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Melissa R. Klapper, *Jewish Girls Coming of Age in America, 1860-1920* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).
[20] Brumberg, xxxvii.

noted disadvantages, diaries offer the closest lens to explore how young women experienced their lives during the actual moments of their adolescence and young adulthood.[21] Exploring young women's diaries can elucidate the ideals and expectations that they set *for* themselves beyond the guidelines set forth by their parents, families, church leadership, and prescriptive literature. As Jane Hunter contends the diary was a "middle way" that functioned as a site for young women to mediate their multiple roles as daughters, church members, and young American women-coming-of-age.[22]

Of course, the existence of writing does not portray agency. It is how these young women approached and utilized writing that demonstrated agency. In ascribing agency to the young women of this study, I have paid attention to both the larger moments of action but also to smaller, seemingly inconsequential actions that pushed back against religious expectations prescribed and perpetuated by their communities, families, and the institutional church. Returning to different writing of Amelia Cannon and Mary Bennion, both self-admitted faithful adherents of Mormonism, demonstrated how they each developed and performed agency in the form of "faithful transgressions." The ways each of these young women wrote could be considered transgressions against the church.

In 1886, the sixteen-year-old Amelia Cannon began writing in her diary after her mother instructed her to start a diary for the objective of writing about serious subjects like her schooling, church activities, and family duties. How Amelia approached writing was a breach of her mother's expectations, as she wrote about subjects outside of the categories her mother urged her to address. One of the activities she wrote regularly about was her attendance at church dances. In 1887, she recorded was that she "imbibed a taste" for waltzing at a dance during the height church leadership's

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[21] Klapper, 9.
[22] Jane H. Hunter, "Inscribing the Self in the Heart of the Family: Diaries and Girlhood in Late-Victorian America," *American Quarterly* 44 (Mar., 1992): 59-60.

disproval of the dance style in 1887.[23] Amelia's own father George Q. Cannon authored many pieces in the *Juvenile Instructor*, a publication he edited for LDS youth, that chastised the dance style and those who engaged in it. Amelia not only broke the expectation that she should not waltz, but she also disobeyed the patriarchal authority of the church on two significant levels. First, she directly disobeyed her father, who was the priesthood holder. Secondly, through defying her father, she was also defying a prominent church leader. While it is not known if her parents considered her round dancing a grave offense, it is likely that Amelia did not view her action as a direct transgression against her father's patriarchal authority or the church but as a sort of guilty pleasure. Though seemingly inconsequential, her decision to engage in a problematic activity illustrates how young women like Amelia did not automatically follow all of the church's edicts but found space for their enjoyment even in the arena of church events like dances.

Mary Bennion started her diary writing in 1901 at eleven years old. A prolific writer, Mary kept her diary well into her adult years and wrote several fictional and non-fiction pieces about her childhood and family. Though a devoted church member, she used her writing as a method of transgression against her father. In her early twenties, she started writing small criticisms of her father and his third wife Mayme and their childrearing. She wrote:

> I hardly think Aunt Mayme's children will care to go beyond high school. They are being trained that is the aim of life to marry young, raise as large a family as nature will allow regardless of the necessary knowledge or money with which to educate children properly; and that one should be satisfied with the mere physical necessities of life. Papa holds these same views with the exception that he loves literature and believes in a liberal education-for boys.[24]

In many ways, this entry serves as a marked departure from earlier entries in which she dutifully recorded information about her work on her father's farm, household duties, church responsibilities,

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[23] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal, quoted in "'Heigh, Ho! I'm Seventeen', 336.
[24] Mary Bennion, Journal (1914-1915), dated February 1915.

schooling, and her family. Though she had turned to writing longer entries during her teenage years about her social and family life, entries like this from 1916 entry were an abrupt change for a girl and young woman who rarely addressed her father in any detail. Placed in the context of her father's secret plural marriages and Mary's resulting heartache, the entry starts to make much more sense.

As Mary was born in 1890, the year that church president Wilford Woodruff announced the cessation of new plural marriages, she grew up as the church membership embraced monogamy. Not all of the members moved away from polygamy, as some secret polygamist marriages were permitted and, even encouraged by the church. Mary's father Heber Bennion was one of the men who clandestinely married two women after 1890. Upon accidental discovery of her father's polygamy at twelve-years-old, Mary never recorded that her father was a polygamist or that it greatly upset her. As she grew older, in addition to claiming her diary as a space to criticize her father as she did in the above-cited entry, Mary Bennion's usage of writing to express her agency grew as she reached her adulthood years. It was not until she began fiction writing that she openly referred to her father as a polygamist. Negative comments in her childhood and young adult diaries only referred to issues on the periphery of his plural marriages. Her father's polygamy and its effect on her family did serve as the focal point in fictional stories she wrote as an adult. In the unpublished manuscript titled "A Utah Idyll," the main character Joan, based on Mary, suffers a panic attack upon hearing about her father's polygamy. Joan's father is characterized as a menacing figure when he overhears his children discussing his plural marriage: "Then, a dark figure appeared in the hall doorway and in a loud threatening voice, her father said, 'Never tell a living soul what you just heard.'"[25] The character's feelings of fear and antipathy almost certainly did represent Mary's feelings at the time that she discovered her father's plural marriages, but it took her many decades to identify him directly as a polygamist. Mary's diary writing as a child and later fictional writing as an adult

[25] Mary Bennion Powell, "A Utah Idyll," typescript, n.d., Bennion Family Collection, Box 5, Fd. 3, Special Collections, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah. pages 6 -8.

must not be viewed as separate projects, but as interconnected representations of how she contented with the confusion of this transitional period.

Mary Bennion's different approaches to writing illustrates how women used the page to display and assert their agency. Memoirs of life-writing created later in one's life furnishes significant insight about how individuals understand the construction of agency in their early lives. Mary Jo Maynes states that "narratives of childhood" that are written when the person is older "can be very telling—not as direct evidence of the experience of childhood, of course, but rather as sources of insights into the impact and meanings of childhood, and of childhood as a phase of the construction of agency and subjection."[26] In these sources, the writer can record profound moments and turning points that also reveal when he or she became aware of and/or demonstrated agency. Though autobiographies and personal histories are narratives of choice—as the writer decides what to include and exclude—the preservation of particular memories can symbolize what the person valued or was taught to value from his or her childhood. Though Mary may not have understood her agency as the same time her character of Joan did, her writing represents how this moment likely unfolded.

For both of these women, writing was essential toward recording their transgressions. These transgressions served as a way for these women to remain religious and assert their own desires and discomforts. None of these youthful transgressions were detrimental to young women's church membership. Mary Bennion's and Amelia Cannon's early transgressions could have been more consequential for both of these women. Though Amelia Cannon's participation in waltzing may be viewed as regular, innocent, youthful misbehavior, it was a method for her to claim some ownership over her participation in church dances, an expected staple of prescribed church courtship practices. Amelia eventually married a respectable young Mormon man in the Salt Lake Temple. Mary

[26] Maynes, 119.

Bennion technically did not uphold her father's patriarchal authority, or the priesthood, a vital tenet of Mormon theology, when she wrote disparaging entries about her father. Of course, her father, though secretly encouraged by a select few members of the upper echelon of the male leadership, strayed from the new church regulations regarding plural marriage after 1890. These transgressions served as a way for these women to come to terms with the transitional Mormon world in which they grew up.

Prescriptive Mormon Literature

As the main aim of this dissertation is to examine young women's lived experiences, I use diaries, published memoirs, personal papers, and life-histories to represent how young women reacted, adapted, or pushed back against the expectation put upon them. Therefore, it would be remiss not to include the voices of the male church leadership and elite female leadership, as their concerns, hopes, and standards shaped the world that the young women grew up and lived in. A clarification of terms is necessary to understand the changing gender dynamics of the church leadership. I use the term "leadership" to refer to a network of prominent and influential individuals in well-known families, the male leadership, and female auxiliary groups. When referring to gender specific groups, I state "official male leadership" or "female leadership."

Throughout the sixty-year period, two separate but interrelated sources contributed to a prescriptive discourse that I call a proper Mormon girlhood: the top-down male church leadership and the elite female membership via the Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association (formerly the Retrenchment Association) and the *Young Woman's Journal* (YWJ). Beyond familial influence, these two voices shaped the way that young women related to their religion and their expected life paths as Mormon women. Though standards for a proper Mormon girlhood did shift over the sixty-year period, the preservation and nourishment of a proper Mormon identity, protection of a chaste sexuality, and future preparation for motherhood and wifehood persevered as chief concerns of the

older generations of Mormons for young women.[27] These concerns were readily expressed through the pages of the YWJ and other Mormon publication like the *Woman's Exponent*, *Juvenile Instructo*r, and *Improvement Era*. Each component of a proper Mormon girlhood was rooted in the older generations concern for the temporal and eternal future of their religion. Therefore, instruction regarding a proper girlhood was steeped in a religious language that constantly reminded young women that their personal and family's eternal salvation was dependent upon their ability to live within the guidelines of a proper Mormon life.

Mormons also published institutional histories of important auxiliary groups. The *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, From November 1869 to June 1910*, published in 1911, offers an invaluable source not only to have a thoroughly detailed history of the organization at local and church levels, but it also provides a lens to understand how the association was regarded in its earliest decades.[28] Written by one of Brigham Young's daughter Susa Young Gates, the book contains sixteen chapters, short biographies of the organization's leading women, and brief histories of each local Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association (YLMIA) in 488 pages. The book provides valuable information about the formation of the association, and it shows that Gates, one of the church's most formidable women, believed that

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[27] Mormon perceptions of "chaste sexuality" were related to "passionlessness." Nancy Cott describes "passionlessness" as a "vital tenet of Victorian sexual ideology" that conveyed the "view that women lacked sexual aggressiveness, that their sexual appetites contributed a very minor part (if any at all) to their motivations, that lustfulness was simply characteristic." Cott asserts that the "ideology of passionlessness was tied to the rise of evangelical religion between the 1790s and 1830s." Nancy F. Cott, "Passionlessness: An Interpretation of Victorian Sexual Ideology, 1790-1850" *Signs* 4.2 (Winter, 1978): 220-1.

Given that Mormonism was founded during this timeframe, it would make sense that many Mormon leaders would prescribe to this ideology. Of course, Mormons adjusted this ideology to fit their own particular needs and beliefs. For example, whereas some women used the ideas of "passionlessness" to control sexual interactions with husbands and to aid in family planning, the Mormon leadership used the concept of passionlessness to promote the idea of plural marriage. Plural marriage solved the issue of men's and women's supposedly different sexual appetites, as additional wives allowed women to share intimacy with husbands and, thus, husbands did not need to stray from his marriage(s) to seek sexual satisfaction. See B. Carmen Hardy and Dan Erickson, "'Regeneration—Now and Evermore!' Mormon Polygamy and the Physical Rehabilitation of Humankind," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 10:1 (Jan. 2001): 50-51.

[28] Susa Young Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association of the Church of Jesus Christ of L.D.S., from November 1869 to June 1910* (Salt Lake City: General Board of Y.L.M.I.A., 1911).

the association was doing important work. It is necessary to note that at times, her tone is florid and celebratory, offering a laudatory history of the association and her father and family's integral role in the genesis of the association. The leading role of Brigham Young and his family cannot be denied, as it was his idea to form the group. Nonetheless, I treat this book as a primary source to partly highlight how the voices of the church's elite, like Gates and many of the women the book follows, could overshadow the voices of the church's young women.

Contributions to the Literature

This dissertation engages with a long asked question in the field of the history of childhood and youth. These questions include: what are the significant differences between experiences of children and adults; how children are expected to act in different cultural contexts? Historians Joseph M. Hawes and N. Ray Hiner differentiate between the study of childhood and children: "We approach the history of children as an inclusive study of ideas, experiences, and behaviors, whereas the history of childhood as a social construction is by definition more limited in perspective. Thus, we see the history of childhood as an indispensable part of the more comprehensive history of children." The danger in conflating the study of both terms reduces the study of children only to what children represented in the minds of adults.[29]

Mormon studies scholars have not neglected to integrate the study of childhood into the historical study of Mormonism. Studies that examine Mormon childhood usually fit into one or a couple of the following categories: biography, nineteenth-century family history including polygamy, and the history of church programs and policy directed at children.[30] Much of this scholarship

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[29] Joseph M. Hawes and N. Ray Hiner, "Reflection on the History of Children and Childhood in the Postmodern Era" in *Major Problems in the History of American Families and Children: Documents and Essay,* edited by Anya Jabour (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), 24.

[30] Rebecca DeSchweinitz, "'Where Nothing Is Long Ago': Childhood and Youth in Mormon History" *Journal of Mormon History* 38:2 (2012): 127.

This historiographical essay provides a comprehensive overview of the intersection of Mormon history and the history of children.

highlight Mormon adults' expectations and anxieties regarding youth. Work by Davis Bitton and Richard Kimball use a generational lens to view how adult Mormons perceived youth. Davis Bitton's "Zion's Rowdies: Growing Up on the Mormon Frontier" (1994) explores how the second generation of Mormon children, born in the 1830s, 40s, and 50s, were considered an exceptional generation who were able to "learn the true gospel of Mormonism from their mother's knees."[31] Richard Kimball's *Sports in Zion: Mormon Recreation, 1890-1940* (2003) examines how rising urbanization in Utah and theological changes resulted in a fear that Mormon children in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century would lose their "frontier values" as this was the first generation of Mormon children in which the majority were raised in an urban setting.[32] Studies on Mormon girl continue to focus on a theme of assumed intergenerational conflict.

Mormon studies scholarship that examines young women and adolescent girls uses church prescriptive literature to analyze older generations' particular fears about young women's place in the religion. Rebecca de Schwienitz, Lisa Tait, and Ethan Yorgason all use the *Young Woman's Journal*, whose first decade in print occurred during the 1890s, arguably the church's most transformative decade.[33] These three scholars trace changes in the fictional content of the publication to pinpoint ways that the older generations directed their fears about the shift from polygamy to monogamy at these young women. Lisa Olsen Tait provides a layered analysis of the editor Susa Young Gates' and the various story writers' motives behind publishing what Tait calls "Post-Manifesto Marriage Fiction," stories that detailed the possible horrors of marrying outside of the religion.[34] This

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[31] Davis Bitton, "Zion's Rowdies: Growing Up on the Mormon Frontier," in *The Ritualization of Mormon History, and Other Essays,* edited by Davis Bitton (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 55.
[32] Richard Kimball, *Sports in Zion: Mormon Recreation, 1890-1940* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 3.
[33]Rebecca De Schweinitz, "Preaching the Gospel of Church and Sex: Mormon Women's Fiction in the *Young Woman's Journal*, 1889-1910" *Dialogue* 33:4 (2000): 27-54; Lisa Olsen Tait, "The *Young Woman's Journal* and Its Stories: Gender and Generations in 1890s Mormondom" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Houston, 2010); Ethan R. Yorgason, *Transformation of the Mormon Culture Region* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003).
[34] Lisa Olsen Tait created the term "Post-Manifest Marriage Fiction" and explores it in her dissertation. See, Tait, "The *Young Woman's Journal* and Its Stories: Gender and Generations in 1890s Mormondom," 149.

urgency related to the increasing fear that young women would cease marrying Mormon men thus leaving the future of Mormonism itself in jeopardy.[35] This work lays important groundwork for understanding how adults' ideals and expectations shaped the world that the young women of this dissertation experienced.

Several scholars have investigated the experiences of Mormon youth via diaries, letters, oral history interviews, memoirs, and life-histories. Many of these studies have focused on male adolescents or looked at young men and women without much analytical attention paid to gender.[36] Davis Bitton's 1999 article "'Heigh Ho! I'm Seventeen:' The Diary of a Teenage Girl" does examine the diary of sixteen-year-old Amelia Cannon, paying special attention to how the source provided insight into the family dynamics of known church leader George Q. Cannon and teenage attitudes toward schooling, house work, paid work, pastimes and leisure, and religion. This article serves mostly as a promise of what can be done with diaries to explore what Bitton refers to as "texture of daily living, activities both ordinary and extraordinary, and, above all, personal, emotional reactions."[37]

One of the leading aims of this dissertation is to more firmly bring adolescent girl and young women's "ordinary" "daily living" and "extraordinary" experiences to the center of this transitional period in Mormon history. Thomas Alexander's 1986 monograph *Mormonism in Transition: A History of Latter-day Saints, 1890-1930* set the tone for studies that examines how the church managed this period of adjustment from the 1890s to 1930. His study explores how the church converted once minimized tenets of the religion—such as the dietary code or tithing—to

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[35] Lisa Olsen Tait, "*The Young Woman's Journal*: Gender and Generations in a Mormon Women's Magazine" *American Periodicals: a Journal of History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 22:1 (2012): 61.
[36] See for example, Davis Bitton, "Six Months In the Life of a Mormon Teenager," *New Era,* May 1977, 45-49; Kenneth W. Godfrey, "Charles S. Whitney's Diary: A Nineteenth-Century Salt Lake City Teenager" *Journal of Mormon History* 27:2 (Fall 2001), 215-251.
[37] Davis Bitton, "'Heigh, Ho! I'm Seventeen,'" 329.

identifiable hallmarks of Mormon religiosity and identity in the early twentieth century.[38] *Mormonism in Transition* provides an invaluable history of how the LDS church adjusted as an institution. Building from Alexander's institutional history, new scholarship has examined this Mormon transition through the lens of race, violence, anti-Mormonism, masculinity, and American political identity.[39] Each work brings a new dimension to understand this transition. However, beyond Patterson and Hoyt's examination of the Mormon prescriptive discourse of changing masculinity, absent from these studies is a nuanced view of how the church relied upon gender to craft new understandings of religious difference during the religion's transformation. Through my examination of young women, my work will elucidate how the church leadership relied upon young women, via the social categories of age, generation, gender, and generation, to represent the future of a successful Mormonism. Furthermore, by looking at young women's experiences, my work will demonstrate how every day female church members related to, pushed away from, and adapted to new gender expectations promoted by the church.

My work draws from girlhood history to accomplish this task. The subfield of girlhood history has emerged out of the intersection of women's and gender history and the history of children and youth. Just over a decade since pioneering historians brought women's history to the forefront of historical studies in the 1970s, several pathbreaking studies that examine the experiences of women through the prism of leisure, work, and sexuality were published. This

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[38] Alexander, 14.

Other prominent works that discuss this transition include Armand L. Mauss, *The Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Shipps, *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition*.

[39] Kathleen Flake, *The Politics of American Religious Identity: The Seating of Senator Reed Smoot, Mormon Apostle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); J. Spencer Fluhman, *A Peculiar People: Anti-Mormonism and the Making of Religion in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Amy Hoyt and Sara M. Patterson, "Mormon Masculinity: Changing Gender Expectations in the Era of Transition from Polygamy to Monogamy, 1890-1920" *Gender and History* 23:1 (2011): 72-91; Mason, *The Mormon Menace: Violence and Anti-Mormonism in the Postbellum South*; W. Paul Reeve, *Religion of a Different Color: Race and the Mormon Struggle for Whiteness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

literature focuses on how the idea of single women caused concern for their families, reformers, and others in positions of social control.

Studies by historians Joanne Meyerowitz (1988), Peggy Pascoe (1993), and Sarah Peiss (1986) examined specific sets of "problem girls," such as prostitutes and unmarried mothers, or "women adrift", women living away from home for the time.[40] The perceived need to protect and/or rescue young women was a common impulse amongst reformers, religious leaders, politicians, and other institutional leaders. Though much of this scholarship did not explicitly consider generational dynamics, they do echo how the expectations of older individuals, usually female reformers, did not always meet the lived reality of the younger women they aimed to help. One area in which there was much tension between reformers and young women were conceptions of free time and leisure. Young women looked to new outlets for entertainment such as dancehalls and amusement parks to enjoy themselves after a long work week and to meet and fraternize with young men and women. Reformers viewed these spaces as problematic locations where young women could be taken advantage of. The same ideas pertained to ideas of suitable housing for young women: living on their own in a boarding house could be detrimental to a young woman's reputations, livelihood, and future. These fears were almost always tied to ideas of young women's sexuality. Anxieties about the misuse of young women's sexuality could imperil the institutions of marriage and established sexual hierarchies also paralleled older Mormons' fears that young women's sexuality would disrupt the

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[40] Joanne J. Meyerowitz, *Women Adrift: Independent Wage Earners in Chicago 1880-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago, Press, 1988); Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).

For other significant works on women in the city see Lisa M. Fine, *The Souls of the Skyscraper: Female Clerical Workers in Chicago, 1870-1930* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990); Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York* 1789-1860. New York: Knopf, 1986); Carolyn Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995).

For significant work on "problem girls", see Regina G. Kunzel, *Fallen Women, Problem Girls: Unmarried Mothers and the Professionalization of Social Work, 1890-1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Mary E. Odem, *Delinquent Daughters: Protecting and Policing Adolescent Female Sexuality in the United States, 1885-1920*; Ruth Rosen, *The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).

future of the religion. Extrapolating from this literature, this dissertation investigates how the Mormon leadership created their own sets of concerns about Mormon "problem" girls as a method to promulgate their expectations of what a proper Mormon girl should act like. Of course, many young Mormon women neither fit within the bifurcated categories of an ideal proper Mormon girl or a problem girl, as their lived experiences were fluid and could fit on the edges of either category.

Joan Jacobs Brumberg and Jane H. Hunter's work, published respectively in 1997 and 2002, turn the conversation to locating and examining young women's experiences. The experiences of boys and young men were set as the normative example in the first studies that explicitly examined the history of childhood and youth.[41] When scholars did reference young women, they were usually short mentions or young women's experiences were presented as anomalous when compared to young men. Brumberg's and Jacobs' studies altered the course of the scholarship and used material from diaries, letters, and other sources created during a young woman's childhood or adolescence.

Four aspects derived from the historical scholarship about girls and young women are integral to this study: defining the period of girlhood, the creation of young women's culture, how religion shaped young women's identities, and young women's sexuality. First, establishing the beginning and end points of adolescence has proved to be a perplexing process for historians. Some historians have chosen to write about young women between particular age delineations whereas others have avoided choosing a firm age range. For this study, I rely upon a fluid timeline of girlhood and adolescence. Essential to my study of young women and girls is treating adolescence and girlhood as social constructs that are shaped by historical period, location, gender, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic factors. For purposes of clarification, when referring to a group of young women at different ages, I write *girls and young women* or *adolescent and young adult women*. Each of

[41] For example, see Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962); John Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).

the women in this study are in the midst of a "coming-of-age-process." In her study of young Southern women in the nineteenth century, Anya Jabour writes that the "coming of age" life cycle for women was a "prolonged and contested set of experiences that spanned a decade or more so of their lives."[42] In my own research, I have paid attention to how the church stressed certain gendered milestones and expectations. For example, a woman's entrance into the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association was treated as a starting point of adolescence for young women. The issue of marriage presents itself as an important demarcation as that is when the church treated young women as adults.

Second, factors like changes in compulsory schooling, new child-labor laws, and new-female centered occupations such as nursing all led to the creation of youth cultures centered around gender in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Iterations of this girls' peer culture materialized in a variety of spaces illustrating young women's increasing role as creators and consumers: literature, fashion, sports and clubs, and schooling.[43] This girl's culture marked a modern turn in that young women were cultivating places that were separate from adults. In this dissertation, I explore how young Mormon women played a central but overlooked role in the church's acclimation process through the melding of accepted mainstream culture and their own religious ideals. From shaping the Retrenchment Association during its first years in the 1870s to seeking higher education in the early twentieth century, young Mormon women contributed to young women's culture in their religion and the mainstream world.

Third, central to the cultivation of group and individual identity is how young women related to their religion. Looking beyond Northeastern Victorian girls and young women as the typical example of American girlhood, scholars have turned to examining young women of different

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[42] Jabour, 5.

[43] For example, see Sally Mitchell, *The New Girl: Girls' Culture in England, 1880-1915* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); Kelly Schrum, *Some Wore Bobby Sox: The Emergence of Teenage Girls' Culture, 1920-1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

racial, ethnic, religious and regional background such as young black and white women in the South from 1920 to 1960, black girls in the Southside of Chicago during the Great Migration, and Jewish adolescent women throughout the United States from 1860 to 1920.[44] Studies that include analysis of religious identity focus on the tension between maintaining tradition while adapting to modernity. Studies such as Melissa Klapper's *Jewish Girls Coming of Age in America, 1860-1920* and Marcia Chatelain's *South Side Girls: Growing up in the Great Migration* show how adolescent female members from a variety of religious traditions had to continuously reconcile their community and family's expectations of them with their own secular interests. Klapper argues that adolescent girls likely felt this conundrum more than other groups as they "both recognized and were recognized for the role they played in maintaining a particular ethnic identity and religious culture while still aiming for integration into American society at large."[45] Young Mormon women were certainly not strangers to this conundrum, as they held the dubious challenge of trying to live up to the nearly impossible expectation that they would simultaneously embrace the positive aspects and eschew the supposedly immoral aspects of modernity.

Fourth, a common feature of idealized girlhood shared across different religions, and cultures was that young women represented both sexual purity and future generations. Using ethnography and prescriptive sources, religious studies scholars in the last fifteen years have written pioneering studies that explore young women and girls, sexuality, and religious expectations.[46] Rooted in contemporary settings, these examinations illustrate how religious communities rely upon

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[44] For example, see Susan K. Cahn, *Sexual Reckonings: Southern Girls in a Troubling Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007); Marcia Chatelein, *South Side Girls: Growing up in the Great Migration* (Chapel Hill: Duke University Press, 2015); Jabour, *Scarlett's Sisters: Young Women in the Old South*; Klapper, *Jewish Girls Coming of Age in America, 1860-1920*.

[45] Klapper, 2-3.

[46] Amy DeRogatis, *Saving Sex: Sexuality and Salvation in American Evangelicalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Ayala Fader, *Mitzvah Girls: Bringing Up the Next Generation of Hasidic Jews in Brooklyn* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Stephanie Wellen Levine, *Mystics, Mavericks, and Merrymakers An Intimate Journey Among Hasidic Girls* (New York: New York University Press, 2003).

intricate rituals for courtship, sexual purity, modesty, and preparation for marriage and motherhood as central parts of a young woman's religious identity, central part of her preparation to play her part in perpetuating the religious tradition. Examining similar rituals and lessons and young women's attitudes toward them during a long period of transition elucidates how ideas about a young women's sexuality became a site where religious anxieties were expressed.

Chapter Breakdown

This dissertation consists of six chapters organized around three themes. Chapters one and two offers a chronological examination that explores how the church created youth programs and publications. Chapter one "From Retrenchment to Improvement, 1869-1890: Creating Intergenerational Conversation and a Girl's Culture in Mormonism" explores how young women played an unprecedented leading role in developing these first retrenchment associations, auxiliary female youth groups. Due to the lack of uniformity in the program's first two decades, young women were able to cultivate roles of power in their local associations and develop a young women's culture specific to Mormonism. "Prescribing and Embodying a Proper Mormon Girlhood, 1890-1929" follows the church after the end of plural marriage, as it attempted to adapt to American modernity while maintaining religious authenticity. During this process, the church reorganized the Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association (formerly the Retrenchment Association) through a top-down approach that emphasized institutional uniformity and deemphasized young women's autonomy. The church took advantage of popular culture to advance their theology through two projects , the *Young Woman's Journal*, the church publication for young women, and the Bee-hive Girls, a scouting program for young women.

Chapters three and four look to how young women used two spaces, the diary and church dance, to claim space for themselves. Writing in diaries to motivate self-discipline and record family history and attending church dances for the purposes of courtship were expected activities for

Latter-day Saint girls and young women. "'Sacred little book': Young Mormon Women and their Diaries" examines how three sets of women, growing up in the 1860s, 1890s, and 1910s, contended with shifts in the church. Larger factors in the church influenced how these young women perceived their personal identity and ambitions in regard to their religion. Though many of these young women started diaries under the direction of parents or church figures, they ultimately used their diary as a space to examine conceptions of their autonomy (or lack of) as it related to church responsibilities, courtship and marriage, and pursuits outside of the church such as higher education. Chapter three "'A Little Diversion': Church Dances and Proper Courtship" analyze how the church leadership used the site of the church dance to promote proper Mormon courtship. At the same time, local leaders often did not follow the dictates of prescriptive literature and the male leadership, which allowed young women the opportunity to subtly transgress. Young women contradicted expectations in several ways such as partaking in immoral dance styles or rebuffing the advances of worthy young men. In the end, regardless of the disconnect between regulations and actual behavior, the dance flourished as a space for young Mormon men and women to meet and eventually enter into a suitable courtship and marriage.

The final two chapters examine young women, outside of their prescribed domestic space: in the mission field and living apart from family on their own in Salt Lake City. "'The Responsibility Resting Upon Me': The Introduction of the First Single Woman Missionaries" picks up in 1898 when two young women Inez Knight and Jennie Brimhall were set apart as the first unmarried female missionaries in Great Britain. This served as a remarkable change for the missionary program, which had only sent out single and married men with a few women accompanying husbands. Whereas the male leadership tentatively regarded the female missionary as an experiment, the female leadership behind the *Young Woman's Journal* and other publications treated it as a turning point for young women. This disconnect between the male and female leadership's vision of the

missionary program for young women led to a missed opportunity for young women to gain more religious knowledge and the same religious rites of passage as young men. The sixth chapter "'Feeling the urgent need of a home': Protecting Mormon Girls and Young Women in the City" turns to young, unmarried women in Salt Lake City in the early twentieth century. Influenced by movements that attempted to solve the issues of women "adrift" and "problem girls," the YLMIA and Relief Society decided to establish housing for these young women. These homes were created to keep young women within the church, but at the same time they also taught these young women that they could live independently if need be. Tensions between the church leadership and young women's lived experiences explored in both chapters illuminate how young women were expected to stay in the domestic sphere with their family until marriage. Nearly all the women who served missions or worked outside the home or attended school did want marriage and motherhood, demonstrating that their experiences away from the domestic sphere did not impede with their living up to church ideals.

Ultimately, my intentions with these chapters are twofold. First, young women were central actors in the church's transformations from the 1860s to the 1920s. They were not only the objects of the leadership's anxiety for the future, but engaged participants in how the church changed. Secondly, to contend with these changes, young women had to carve out space for themselves by pushing back against expectation. However, these displays of agency were mostly not meant to hinder the overall church or its hierarchy. Instead, these women's acts of agency fit in the spectrum of "doing what was right" in terms of their religious beliefs and performing "faithful transgressions" pushing subtly back against expectation while remaining within the realm of a proper Mormon girlhood.

CHAPTER ONE

FROM RETRENCHMENT TO IMPROVEMENT, 1869-1890: CREATING INTERGENERATIONAL CONVERSATION AND A GIRL'S CULTURE IN MORMONISM

Introduction

Born in 1850 in Liverpool, England, Mary Perkes started on the long migration to the Utah Territory in the United States with her mother when she was four years old. Her mother, a recent convert to the church, embarked on this transatlantic journey alone with her two children after Mary's father refused to convert to the new religion. During their voyage across the sea, Mary's mother met and married another convert James Perkes. The new family lived in St. Louis for nine years as they welcomed three new children. The family eventually settled in Hyde Park in the Cache Valley, in the Northeast of the Utah Territory. In her diary, she wrote: "we have been greatly blest since we came."[47]

Based upon her diary that she started in her sixteenth year, we can see that Mary quickly settled into the regular life of a young Latter-day Saint woman in the Utah Territory. She attended church, participated in church activities, and was involved with a dramatic association. Born as a non-Mormon, Mary experienced the hardships of migrations that defined the early experiences of so many of the church's pioneers. However, because her mother converted so early in Mary's life and married another church member, Mary grew up settled in the Mormon worldview.

Church leaders expected that the first children born and reared within Mormonism were to be a superior generation, as they would learn the gospel directly from their parents, the church's founders and first converts.[48] Mary Perkes heard this rhetoric in her local church meetings. In her diary, she wrote: "Bro. Thomas was talking about the privelages that we, the rising generation, enjoy and exalted us to gain all the knowledge and to take care of our bodies that we might live long to

[47] Mary E. Perkes, "My Journal," Typescript. Page 2, n.d. MSS 435. Special Collections & Archives, Utah State University, Logan, Utah.
[48] Davis Bitton, "Zion's Rowdies: Growing Up on the Mormon Frontier," 55.

assist in the building up of this kingdom." The privileges referred to the opportunities for this generation to understand and practice their religion from an early age. Mary admitted her own imperfections. In 1867, after attending a church service in which parents were "urged" to instruct their "children in the principles of the Gosple," Mary wrote that she wished she "could live so as to fully appreciate the blessing that I enjoy." After writing, she read a sermon by "Brother Brigham," likely meaning Brigham Young, Mary wrote "it makes me feel very small, to think how I sometimes give way to bad influences over trifles but I will strive to over come."

Brigham Young believed that some young women required a firmer religious education beyond parental instruction to—as Mary Perkes wrote—"over come" bad influences.[49] It was up to the church to provide the necessary instruction in how to live as proper Mormons. Examining Young's intentions for introducing a retrenchment association reveals that this generational crisis was also viewed in gendered terms. On November 28, 1869, Brigham Young, many of his wives and daughters, and his close friends George A. Smith and Bathsheba Smith gathered in the Lion House, one of his residences in Salt Lake City. As the family members and visitors settled into their usual seats in the parlor, Young began the evening prayers. According to Bathsheba Smith, Young spoke of the issues he found with young women:

> There is a need for the young daughters of Israel to get a living testimony of the truth. Young men obtain this while on missions, but this way is not opened to the girls. More testimonies are obtained on the feet than on the knees. I wish our girls to obtain knowledge of the Gospel for themselves. For this purpose I desire to establish this organization and want my family to lead in the great work. I have always been willing to give my children all the advantages of education and schooling possible to obtain. But I want them to appreciate those advantages and not to squander their opportunities. We are about to organize a Retrenchment Association, which I want you all to join, and I want you to vote to retrench in your dress, in your tables, in your speech, wherein you have been guilty of silly, extravagant speeches and light-mindedness of thought.[50]

[49] Mary Perkes "My Journal," pages 3- 4, March 28, 1867.
[50] Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association*, 6-7.

To Brigham Young, the solution was to challenge his wives, daughters, and their close acquaintances to form a new organization: The Junior and Senior Retrenchment Organization. The introduction of this association in 1869 was rooted in concerns about the crucial role that the rising generation would have in maintaining the religion.

Fears of a generational crisis had plagued the Latter-day Saints ever since they trekked across the plains from Illinois into the Intermountain region in the late 1840s. The church was not unique in worrying about its youngest members. Different religious groups have long worried about the future of their children and whether or not those children would live up to the ideals of that particular community. Simultaneously, communities have been continually concerned about establishing a world that nurtures children and will nurture future children. Particularly at times of transition, children (and the promise of future generations of children) represented both fear and hope for older generations.[51] More recent and impending events such as antipolygamy legislation and the completion of the transcontinental railroad added to this impulse for retrenchment. Mormons viewed the railroad as a mixed blessing. Whereas it expanded converts' ability to travel to Utah, it also brought unwanted immoral and anti-Mormon influence, problematic businesses like saloons, non-Mormon goods, and unwanted people. In practical terms, the Retrenchment Association was introduced to promote religious education amongst young women while also promoting retrenchment from extravagance with material goods. Beyond serving these pragmatic purposes, the new association was organized to assuage anxiety about the influx of questionable non-Mormon influences pouring into the territory.

The widespread embrace of the Retrenchment Association across rural and urban communities in the Mormon Culture Region resulted in both expected and unforeseen

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[51] Robert A. Orsi, *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 77.

consequences. I argue that the Retrenchment Association allowed young women a rare venue within Mormonism to develop and assert agency. Because of the lack of consistency amongst association meetings, in the 1870s, young women held more authority to make their own decisions and create their own space, a space that was still a part of the church. Not only did the Retrenchment Association lead to young women developing forms of individual agency, it also emerged as a space for them to develop a Mormon girl's culture. Though the need for retrenchment might not have applied to all young women, what was most beneficial to these young women was the opportunity to create a space just for themselves to work on their religiosity and aid their church and greater community.

For the most part, young women's involvement in the Retrenchment Association (which later became Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association) worked to reinforce the values that Mormons wanted to impart to their daughters. Thus, the Retrenchment Association allowed young women to cultivate their own place in the church's structure but still contributed to the fortification of the Mormon hierarchical structure.

The official name of the Retrenchment Association changed many times throughout its early years. However, in 1877, a new name emerged that focused on the idea of improvement. The changing of the name to Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association also illustrated how the association was becoming more youth-oriented; by the 1880s, there was no longer a Senior Ladies' Retrenchment group. Henriette Lunt of Cedar City, who was involved with the association in the early days, spoke to the name change as an older woman:

> When the organization was first effected, it was expected that we retrench in everything that was not good for us. As the time went on it was expected that we had accomplished all that

> there was to do, and were now ready for higher law. We were expected to take the lead in higher morals, and to set an example in our communities.[52]

The switch from focusing on retrenchment to improvement also indicated the longevity of the group. As Henriette Lunt stated, retrenchment was a goal that had came to an end for many of the members, but the idea of improvement was one that could be continually worked toward.

An examination of the first few decades of the Retrenchment Association and Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association reveals that it proved to be a success for educating young women and giving them a new found space in their religion.

Why Retrenchment?: History of the Church to 1869

The Latter-day Saint movement is based around the belief that the church started as a revelation from God delivered to Joseph F. Smith, the religion's founder. Latter-day Saints believe that church leaders and church members can receive continual revelation from God. Mormonism's origins lie with spiritual questions that consumed Joseph Smith Jr. during the Second Great Awakening. The Second Great Awakening, which lasted roughly from 1790 to 1840, was characterized by enthusiastic religious revivals, conversions, and new religious traditions.[53] As a fourteen year old in Western New York in 1820, Smith was surrounded by religious revivals that dominated the area that came to be known as the "burned-over district." In the midst of this transformative period, Smith was primarily struck by one question: which church preached the truth? To seek the answer to this question, he decided to pray for guidance in a wooded area, now knows as the "Sacred Grave," near his home. According to Smith's account, while he was praying,

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[52] Henrietta Lunt Jones, "History of the First Retrenchment Organization in Cedar City, 1869-1885." 1932. M257.29 J773h. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.
[53] This area was referred to as the "Burned-over-district." Critics of the religious movement used the term "infected region" or more commonly "burnt" or "Burned-over District" to refer to how the internal "fires of the spirit" burned during religious revivals. Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-Over District; The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1950), chapter one, ebook edition.

God and his son Jesus Christ appeared to him in a vision: "I saw a pillar <of> light exactly over my head above the brightness of the sun, which descended ~~gracefully~~gradually untill it fell upon me." He continued: "When the light rested upon me I saw two personages (whose brightness and glory defy all description) standing above me in the air." Next, he stated:

> No sooner therefore did I get possession of myself so as to be able to speak, than I asked the personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right, (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong) and which I should join. I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong, and the Personage who addressed me said that all their Creeds were an abomination in his sight, that those professors were all corrupt, that "they draw near to me ~~to~~ with their lips but their hearts are far from me, They teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of Godliness but they deny the power thereof." He again forbade me to join with any of them and many other thing[s] did he say unto me which I cannot write at this time. When I came to myself again I found myself lying on <my> back looking up into Heaven.[54]

In the ten years following this "First Vision"—the term Latter-day Saints use to refer to this founding moment—Smith reported other visions. In 1823, the angel named Moroni appeared at Smith's bedside three times repeatedly telling the young man that in a hill nearby was "a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants."[55] Smith visited what is now called the Hill Cumorah, a hill three miles from the Smith House. At the hill, he reported digging up a box containing gold plates and a seer stone to read and translate the plates. Though some ridiculed and doubted Smith's accounts of his visions, his family and acquaintances supported his visions as truth.

Converting more members was essential, as Smith and his followers believed they were spreading the restored gospel. Young women's conversion to and participation with the new

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[54] Joseph Smith Jr., History, circa June 1839-circa 1841 [Draft 2], The Joseph Smith Papers. http://josephsmithpapers.org/paperSummary/history-circa-june-1839-circa-1841-draft-2?p=2#!/paperSummary/history-circa-june-1839-circa-1841-draft-2&p=5 Accessed 6 August, 2015

[55] Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1845, Joseph Smith Papers http://josephsmithpapers.org/paperSummary/lucy-mack-smith-history-1845?p=87 accessed 6 August, 2015.

religious movement proved to be essential to the success of Mormonism in its earliest years. Historian Nancy F. Cott surmises that young women were drawn to new religions because of feeling "unsettled" due to widespread industrialization, changes in labor, and the transformation of courtship.[56]

During this period, Western New York, the main site of the Second Great Awakening, was at the center of economic change in the country as the development of the Eerie Canal resulted in increased trade and movement of consumer goods from the Northeast to the Upper Midwest. Western New York was not the only area to experience these transformations, as many other cities and towns in the Midwest and Northeast saw demographic shifts. With a movement away from a production based economy to a consumer driven one, young women lost their economic centrality in the family household. In her study of young female converts in the Second Great Awakening, historian Nancy Cott writes: "In contrast to the 'settled' lives of married women, unmarried women's circumstances were-in the language of the day -'unsettled.'"[57] Many of these "unsettled" young women had to now find employment outside of the home, such as in textile mills, to support themselves or their families. Factory work usually led to migration away from family and into situations where young women made new relationships that supplanted familial intimacy. Given that many young women were contending with new forces that interfered with their expected life trajectories, the pull of inclusion into a religious community allowed them an identity, purpose, and shared experiences with other converts in their peer group.

Many young women converts to Mormonism also had "unsettled" lives. Though their feeling of being unsettled were not always due to economic trouble, their feelings of unease were mainly due to feeling uprooted. Young women converting to Mormonism faced ostracism from their

[56] Nancy F. Cott, "Young Women in the Second Great Awakening in New England" *Feminist Studies* 3:1/2 (1975): 19.
[57] Cott, "Young Women in the Second Great Awakening in New England," 19.

communities, families, and other acquaintances. Many of the older women involved in the organization of the Retrenchment Association were integral members of early conversion waves and difficult migrations across the seas and/or the plains. Each of these women mentioned experienced effects of the extermination orders directed at Latter-day Saints, the church's forced migrations, and subsequent difficult settlement in the Salt Lake Valley. Bathsheba Smith, who was present in 1869 when Brigham Young announced his plans for a retrenchment association, converted with her family at the age of sixteen. Of her conversion she wrote:

> When I was in my sixteenth year, some Latter-day Saint elders visited our neighborhood. I heard them preach and believed what they taught. I believed the Book of Mormon to be a divine record, and that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God. I knew by the spirit of the Lord which [I] received in answer to prayer, that these things were true. On the 21st of August 1837, I was baptized into the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by Elder Samuel James in Jones' Run, on the farm and near the residence of Augustus Boggess [Burgess], and was confirmed by Elder Francis G. Bishop. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and I knew that He accepted of me as a member in His Kingdom.[58]

Other women such as Emmeline B. Wells, the daughter of a single mother at the time of her conversion, experienced much trauma from the reaction to her conversion. She wrote in her diary that her schoolmates at a boarding school ridiculed her for her religious choice: "As soon as Mormonism began to flourish were they not harassing me on every side." At the school, she was placed in the "hands of a cruel guardian who pretended so much respect for me that he did not wish me to associate with my own mother and sister because they were Saints of the Most High God."[59] Emmeline married young at the age of fifteen and continued to experience strife that was too typical of young women on the frontier when both her newborn baby and husband died. Bathsheba Smith too experienced her own difficulties during migration when her father died.

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[58] Bathsheba Wilson Bigler Smith (1810-1920) Autobiography, MSS 920, L. Tom Perry Special Collection, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

[59] Emmeline B. Wells, Diary, 20 February 1845. Accn1520. Box 1. Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

If these women experienced so much hardship with conversion and migration, why did they stay loyal to the church until the end of their lives. Historian Susan Sontag Bradley writes that the act of converting to Mormonism was "one of empowerment" in a life that did not offer many empowering decisions. She explains: "The choice to convert was consciously made and was an assertion of strength. Conversion was sort of initiation into autonomy not yet comprehended." [60] Women like Bathsheba and Emmeline developed an autonomy that carried them through as faithful converts and later influential female leaders in the church.

Why Push for Retrenchment?

The leadership's push for retrenchment was already felt throughout Utah before the November 1869 meeting led by Brigham Young. Brigham Young's emphasis on retrenchment and maintaining a distance from non-Mormons were rooted in decades' long concern about the vulnerability of the church. In the late 1860s, the religion's past with extermination orders and difficult migrations led to an anxiety about the future preservation of the church. Believing that Jackson County, Missouri was the location of the Garden of Eden, as stated in the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith and his followers migrated from Western New York to establish a city in the area in the 1830s. Along the way, the Mormons settled in Kirkland, Ohio, where they built their first temple and developed some of the church's founding theology. Ultimately, Mormons were pushed out of their various settlements in Ohio and Missouri. The financial failure of the Mormon ran Kirtland State Bank finally pushed Mormons out of Kirtland. In 1838, Missouri Governor Lilburn Boggs issued an extermination order against Mormons, which led to 10,000 church members leaving

[60] Martha Sonntag Bradley, "Seizing Sacred Space': Women's Engagement in Early Mormonism" *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 27:2 (1994): 66.

the state and resettling in Nauvoo, Illinois. The extermination order followed several violent incidents, which resulted in several deaths of Mormons.[61]

After their migrations out of Ohio and Missouri, the Mormons experienced some respite while they built up their city of Nauvoo, Illinois on the Mississippi River. Nauvoo was a successful settlement and the population of the Mormon city rivaled Chicago. During this period, rumors circulated that the church prophet and some church members were actively practicing plural marriage. In 1844, as the mayor of Nauvoo, Smith ordered the destruction of an anti-Mormon newspaper that claimed Smith had secretly married women, who were already married, to men who were not their legal husbands. Brought upon charges of treason, Smith and his younger brother were arrested and placed in a jail in Carthage, Illinois while they awaited trial. On June 27th, 1844, a mob of two hundred men attacked and killed Smith and his brother Hyrum. Smith's death led to Mormons abandoning their city of Nauvoo and brought about a "succession crisis," with different followers claiming to be the next prophet.[62] Brigham Young garnered the most followers and led them to settle in the Salt Lake Basin.

Gathering to Zion in the Territory of Utah

On July 24th 1847, after traveling over 12,000 miles overland with 148 people in his company, seventy-two wagons, and a collection of livestock, the new president and prophet of the church Brigham Young arrived in the Salt Lake Valley. Upon reaching and looking about Salt Lake Valley,

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[61] The conflicts arose from Mormons gaining quick economic and electoral power in the state. Prior to 1838, Mormons had been expelled from Jackson County, Missouri and permitted to inhabit a new county in the state. The Mormon population continued to increase and migrated to counties outside of the one designated for them. The Battle of Crooked River on October 24th resulted in several deaths. During another event, the Haun's Mill Massacre on October 30th, seventeen Mormon were shot and anti-Mormon vigilantes wounded fourteen. The extermination led to the 10,000 Mormons leaving Missouri and eventually resettling in Illinois, where they founded Nauvoo. See William G. Hartley, "Missouri's 1838 Extermination Order and the Mormons' Forced Removal to Illinois," *Mormon Historical Studies* 2:1 (2001): 5-6, 22.

[62] See Matthew Bowman, *The Mormon People: The Making of an American Faith* (New York, Random House: 2012), 90-5.

Young reportedly stated: "This is the place, drive on."[63] Having spent nearly two years in geographic limbo, Salt Lake's first Mormon arrivals were most likely eager to follow Young's direction to settle the land.

Though numerous narratives of the LDS Church's first few years in the Great Salt Lake Basin exist, the words of Susa Young Gates captures her father Brigham Young's pivotal role, as a religious leader, explorer, and colonizer, in the building and success of Salt Lake City and Utah Territory. In the opening pages of her history of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association, she writes:

> For twenty years, the valleys of Utah gave the people an isolated shelter, a somewhat bare subsidence, and peace. Brigham Young well knew that the people could not long be hedged about by mountain-walls, nor barriers of isolation. The onward sweep of civilization would bring in its train many blessings and some pitfalls. The great pioneer had taught the people how to plant and water their sterile valley farms; how to congregate their homes in such form as would them all the advantages of village life. He had established schools, church, and social halls in the midst of clustered houses, while the farming lands radiated from this center into the edges of the hills. He had persuaded the people to devote themselves to the cultivation of the soil…[64]

Church members approached the settling of Salt Lake City and the surrounding area as they did with their other settlements, as a direct revelation from God.[65] Weary from the multiple conflicts that Mormons had with non-Mormons, Brigham Young was intent upon establishing an "isolated shelter" from outside intrusions.[66] The initial vision of building a new settlement where Mormons were free to worship as they pleased included little interaction with non-Mormon outsiders. Mormons could easily perpetuate their isolationism partly due to the "raging desert" that was both difficult to traverse and settle, surrounding the Great Salt Lake Basin.[67] Despite Young and

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[63] Richard H. Jackson, "Mormon Wests: The Creation and Evolution of an American Region," in *Western Places, American Myths: How We Think about the Wes*t, edited by Gary J. Hausladen, (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2003), 139

[64] Susa Young. Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association*, 3.

[65] See Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-Day Saints* (New York: Knopf, 1979), 44-54.

[66] Jackson, 142.

[67] Jackson, 147.

the church's mostly isolationist stance, they still proselytized and welcomed American converts to Mormonism and European immigrant converts, a majority arriving from Scandinavia and Great Britain.[68] Avoiding all interactions with non-Mormons was next to impossible as different groups of migrants regularly traveled through the Utah territory on their way to other points out West. Crossing through the Salt Lake Valley was a regular waypoint for people in the late 1840s hoping to take advantage of California's gold rush. Many of these travelers stayed for a short period of time.

With the 1852 announcement from church leader Orson Pratt confirming that "Latter-day Saints have embraced the doctrine of a plurality of wives, as part of their religious faith," the church invited further animosity from the federal government.[69] Though rumors had been spreading for over a decade about the existence of Mormon polygamy, the 1852 announcement resulted in a surge of sensationalistic novels about the practice, widespread coverage in the media, various campaigns led by reformers to halt the practice, and antipolygamy legislation. At the 1856 Republican convention in Philadelphia, polygamy was compared to slavery: "it is both the right and imperative duty of Congress to prohibit in the Territories those twin relics of barbarism—Polygamy, and Slavery."[70] In 1862, the Morrill Anti-Bigamy Act, declaring bigamy illegal, was enacted. However, antipolygamy legislation remained mostly futile until the 1880s.[71]

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[68] Fawn McKay Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet* (New York: Knopf, 1971), 67.

[69] "Minutes of conference: a special conference of the elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints assembled in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, August 28th, 1852, 10 o'clock, a.m., pursuant to public notice" *Deseret News,* 14 September 1852.

[70] "Republican Platform of 1856," http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=4028 Accessed 6 August, 2015.

[71] The Morrill Anti-Bigamy Act of 1862 was signed into law as a federal enactment of the United States Congress. The same Representative of Vermont Justin Smith Morrill also introduced the Morrill Land-Grant Acts of 1862. Hereafter, both acts will be referred to by their full names for purposes of distinction. "Chapter CXXVI—An Act to Punish and prevent the Practice of Polygamy in the Territories of the United States and other Places, and disproving and annulling certain Acts of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah." Thirty-Seventh Congress, Session II. Ch. 125, 126. 1862. A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774 – 1875, Statutes at Large, 37th Congress, 2nd Session http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=012/llsl012.db&recNum=0532. Accessed December 2, 2015.

By the late 1860s, the Civil War, further antipolygamy legislation, and the further development of the transcontinental railroad through Utah, continually pushed Brigham Young and other Mormons to contend with pervasive outside influences. Though Utah's role in the Civil War was limited compared to other states and territories in the United States, its involvement signified a slight break in the church's isolationist status.[72] At first, Brigham Young claimed an almost uninterested neutrality.[73] However, later in that same year, Young took advantage of an opportunity to assert his and the church's loyalty to the Union when President Lincoln, via a telegram from the U.S. Army adjutant General Lorenzo Young, asked the church president to send a company of one hundred men to protect the Overland Mail route in northern Utah against possible Indian attacks and robbery. Brigham Young seized this opportunity to illustrate the church's loyalty to the North in order to bolster federal support for Utah's application for statehood in Congress. Most importantly, this request served as an official acknowledgment by the United States government that, whether they liked it or not, Brigham Young and the church has a firm grip of power in the territory.[74]

Despite the initial desire to keep the religion isolated within an essentially peaceful environment in Utah, Brigham Young and the church leaders understood that for the Utah Territory, Salt Lake City, and church to maintain cultural dominance and power, the church leadership had to accept the growth of a non-Mormon presence. Brigham Young signed legislative memorials to have the railroad pass through Utah.[75] A calculated method of Brigham Young's to control the movement of non-Mormons in and out of the territory was to take direct involvement with the emergence of the railroad. He rightfully foresaw that the railroad would aid movement within the church's Western settlements and would facilitate easier migration to Utah for the church's international converts.

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[72] E. B. Long, *The Saints and the Union: Utah Territory During the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 271.
[73] John G. Turner, *Brigham Young, Pioneer Prophet* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), 31.
[74] Turner, 322
[75] Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (New York: Knopf, 1985), 348.

The official arrival of the transcontinental railroad in the territory in 1869 most tangibly linked Utah and the church to the United States economy. Brigham Young's daughter Susa Young Gates described the bittersweet changes the railroad brought to Utah in her history of the young women's association:

> And far more to be dreaded than persecution was the spirit of folly and fashion, excitement and extravagance, which seems a necessary but sad accompaniment to all forms of high civilization. With the near approach of the steam horse in the year 1869, came the forerunners of its presence. Books multiplied, but so also did saloons. Goods became cheaper, and the people demanded more money with which to buy. The loom and the wheel gradually disappeared. Sewing machines crept in slowly; and then the women subscribed for the new fashion-magazines from which to glean ideas how to cut their cloth and sew it up again in fanciful shapes.[76]

For better or worse, the railroad elevated Salt Lake City's accessibility to non-Mormon Americans. The dramatic growth of saloons, hotels, and new businesses accompanied the changing demographics. Travel to Salt Lake City only grew throughout the rest of the nineteenth century. The *Deseret News* estimated that the city would welcome tens of thousands of tourists following the railroad's completion. Historian Thomas K. Hafen compared tourist figures for Salt Lake City, and Denver, a city that three times the former city's population, and found that the number of visitors to each were "numerically comparable." As Hafen writes: "Set in a 'beautiful paradise' but populated by a reputedly licentious people, Salt Lake City was a unique attraction for eastern tourists who wanted to view God in nature and people steeped in sin."[77] The railroad had undoubtedly altered the demographic and social fabric of Salt Lake City.

To counter the supposed ill effects of the train and non-Mormon settlement in the area, Brigham Young implemented different church organizations. He announced a church boycott of non-Mormon merchants in 1865 and implemented a campaign against purchasing goods that did

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[76] Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association,* 3.
[77] Thomas K. Hafen, "City of Saints, City of Sinners: The Development of Salt Lake City As a Tourist Attraction 1869-1900" *Western Historical Quarterly* 28:3 (1997): 355.

not follow the church's dietary code.[78] Brigham Young saw the church's women as essential aids in pushing retrenchment. In 1867, he called for the reorganization of the Relief Society, a women's only church auxiliary group.[79] The purpose of the latest iteration of the Relief Society was initially concerned with promoting self-sufficiency amongst the church's women. Young wanted women to form businesses and fashion their own clothes.[80] One last measure Brigham Young introduced that mostly coincided with the Retrenchment Association was his plan to institute the United Order of Enoch. The United Order of Enoch, which built upon earlier United Orders established by Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, required church members to give up private property, work for the collective, and refuse to use any store or business that were not part of the United Order.[81] While this idea thrived in some smaller areas, it was harder to institute in locations with a higher population density.

Who Needs Retrenchment More?: Country Settlements versus City Settlements

The Retrenchment Association was organized—in Brigham Young's words—for "teaching retrenchment among the wives and daughters of Israel," women of all generations. Brigham Young's motivation to organize these movements illuminated how his, his family's, and other church leadership's privileged status affected how they imagined how other church members lived. In his talk to his family, he also said that the "extravagance" in food and dress "has involved our fathers and husbands in debt, and it has made slaves of the mothers and daughters."[82] His push for

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[78] Turner, 352

[79] Joseph Smith founded the Relief Society on March 17, 1842, with his wife Emma Hale Smith as the first president, in Nauvoo. Joseph Smith declared that the purpose of the organization was so that "'Sisters might provoke the brethren of good works in looking to the wants of the poor—searching after objects of charity, and in administering to their wants to assist; by rebuking the morals and strengthening the virtues of the female community, and save the Elders the trouble of rebuking.'" Joseph Smith also said "'The Society is not only to relieve the poor but to save souls,' he told them. Such is the end point of charity, 'the pure love of Christ.'" Joseph smith quoted in Jill Mulvay Derr, Janath Russell Cannon, and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, *Women of Covenant: The Story of Relief Society* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1992), 30, 37.

[80] Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, 86.

[81] Bowman, 114.

[82] Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association, 9.*

refraining from extravagance in dress, food, and household decorations stemmed from paradoxical concerns. As part of his duties as church president and prophet, Young took many trips to outlying communities in the territory. During these sojourns, he had the opportunity to dine in the homes of the church's loyal adherents in which he noted an "a habit of extravagance in our food." Young spoke of how "if a sister invites a her friends to visit her, she must have as quite as many dishes as neighbor spread on a former occasion, she must have one or two more in order to show how much superior her table is to her neighbor's."[83]

Though not all rural Mormons were suffering financially, many did not have the material wealth that their coreligionists who lived in more populated area like Salt Lake City did. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, even though the cities in Utah were growing, about three-quarters of Mormons lived in rural areas.[84] This statistic suggests that a majority of Mormons did not have the same financial or logistical means to obtain materials to indulge in that Brigham Young and the church leadership did.

What was likely lost on Brigham Young and other leaders was that church members who lived far away from Salt Lake City were overjoyed that the church's current president and his family would visit their small towns and dine in their homes. Elizabeth Claridge McCune, a woman who was raised in Nephi over eighty miles south of the church headquarters, remembers how important it was when members of the church leadership visited:

> On one occasion the people were lined up on each side of the street waiting for the carriages to pass. Among them were twenty-five young ladies dressed in white who had strewn evergreens and wild flowers along the path. Bro. Brigham, Bros. Kimball and Well with the entire company got out of their carries, and walked over the flowers road.[85]

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[83] Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association,* 9.
[84] Kathryn M. Daynes, *More Wives Than One: Transformation Of The Mormon Marriage System, 1840-1910* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 9.
[85] Susa Young Gates, "Biographical Sketches: Mrs. Elizabeth Claridge McCune," *Young Woman's Journal* 7:9 (July 1898): 292.

The visits of the church elite to small towns pointed to differences between the residents of the rural settlements and Salt Lake City Mormons. The historian Juanita Brooks, who was born in 1898 in Bunkerville, Nevada just south of the Utah border, recounted two stories she heard from family members that showcased this difference. She wrote:

> I had heard of Brigham Young, of how when he visited St. George and the other settlements of the south, the people lined the roads and put out banners of welcome and had the children strew flowers in his path. This last seemed hardly fitting to me, with flowers as scarce as they were in this part of the country, to throw them down on a dry, hot road for horses to walk over, even if they were Brother Brigham's team.

In another anecdote in her memoir, Brooks described that some of Brigham young's wives visited Bunkerville to organize a retrenchment association. During a meeting led by the women from the city, her grandmother looked around at the local women "all in homespun, course, and faded-looking because they hadn't learned yet how to set the indigo." One of the women from Salt Lake wore a "dress with wide bands of velvet ribbon and lace edging." Brooks' grandmother finally "listened as long as could stand it," and then said, 'Which do you want us to retrench from, Sister Young, the bread or the molasses.'"[86] This story served as a method for Brooks to critique assumptions of elite Mormons. All of these stories affirm that while all likely valued the idea of retrenchment, people from rural areas like Bunkerville and the more elite Mormons had different ideas about the values of simplicity and thrift

The "Experimental" Years of Organizing Retrenchment, 1869 -1880

The widespread implementation of the Retrenchment Association across rural and urban communities in the Mormon Culture Region resulted in many expected and unforeseen consequences. The establishment of the Retrenchment Association occurred at a time when Mormon women held unparalleled informal authority within the religion. Though Brigham Young

[86] Juanita Brooks, *Quicksand and Cactus: A Memoir of the Southern Mormon Frontier* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1992), 111-2.

may have formally inaugurated the Retrenchment Association, women led the day-to-day implementation of the organization. Following Brigham Young's call for the establishment of such an organization, Eliza R. Snow, Margaret T. Smoot, and Mary Isabella Horne, three of the church's most influential women, set forward with their plans to establish local branches.[87] Though some older women who were tapped to hold important positions in the new association initially shied away from the responsibility, they, too, quickly took to their new roles. The Retrenchment Association presented a way for influential women in the church to articulate their vision for the future of girls and women's place in the religion.

With the platform of the association, these women could express their particular perceptions about intergenerational tensions. Each association was comprised of different generations of women, the Junior and Senior Retrenchment Association. The older and younger women would alternate between meeting separately and together. Members of Mormonism's first generation used this as an opportunity to exercise their concerns about how young women acted as Latter-day Saints.

Alongside Eliza R. Snow and Zina D. Young, another plural wife of Brigham Young's, Mary Isabella Horne saw to the organization of the first meetings of the Senior and Junior Retrenchment Associations. To productively facilitate the first retrenchment associations, Brigham Young set apart (designated a specific church calling for an individual) Mary Isabella Horne to serve "the mission of retrenchment among the wives and daughters of Israel."[88] Though Isabella Horne confessed her self-doubt when she replied "she could not undertake it," she did take up the mission.[89] Initially,

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[87] Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association,* 31.
[88] "Set apart" is defined as "To designate for a particular purpose or calling; also, to bestow authority for a specific assignment or responsibility, usually through the laying on of hands by one with priesthood authority; sometimes used interchangeably with 'ordain.'" "Set Apart" http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/topic?name=Set%20apart Accessed 12 May, 2016.
[89] Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association*, 31.

Eliza R. Snow was mostly concerned with young women whereas Mary Isabella Horne took up the job of promoting retrenchment amongst the older women. The first meetings of the original Retrenchment Association in Salt Lake City took place in the Fourteenth Ward Assembly Hall, a central meeting place in the city.[90] The minutes of these meetings indicate some of the perceived assumptions of intergenerational tension that the older women held. Dress and polygamy were two issues that dominated these meetings, as both served as signifiers of Mormon difference in the 1870s. During this tumultuous period, Mormons emphasized characteristics that they believed affirmed their difference and superiority to mainstream Americans.

Plural Marriage

The history of Mormon women and plural marriage offers insights to different generational attitudes within Mormonism toward this controversial practice. The number of Mormons who actually married into plural marriage remained relatively low. Scholars have long accepted researcher Stanley S. Ivins' figure from his 1956 article that only between ten and twenty percent of Mormons lived as members of a polygamous families from 1840 to the early twentieth century.[91] However, Kathryn Daynes complicates this figure in her 2001 monograph about nineteenth century polygamist practices in Manti, Utah. She estimates that between twenty to thirty percent of Mormons lived in polygamist households.[92] Her work brings two interventions to the scholarship about Mormon plural marriage. First, by including children in the calculation of the amount of people who lived in polygamist households, her work highlights the necessity of fully establishing how many lives were directly affected by plural marriage. Secondly, her study asserts that *both* polygamist and monogamist couples revered plural marriage as the ideal form of matrimony. The

[90] Minutes of the Senior and Junior Co-operative Retrenchment Association, 1870-1880. Edyth Romney Typescript Collection. LR 604 17. Box 51, folder 7. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.
[91] Stanley S. Ivins, "Notes on Mormon Polygamy," *Western Humanities Review* 10:3 (Summer 1956): 229-239.
[92] Daynes, 91-115

theological idealization of plural marriage within nineteenth century Mormonism overshadows the actual amount of adherents who were involved in plural marriages.

Though both men and women practiced and were affected by plural marriage, almost all studies to date focus primarily on women's place in the marriage system.[93] Much of the scholarship on Mormon women and plural marriage that has emerged since the 1970s serves as a corrective toward earlier depictions of Mormon women as victims of plural marriage.[94] A common opinion in this scholarship is that the nature of nineteenth century plural marriage provided some Mormon women with a support system between themselves and their sister wives.[95] These networks of support furnished both emotional and practical assistance—such as shared childcare, housework, and finances—and allowed some women greater freedoms to engage in political activism, pursue employment outside of the home, and attend to their numerous church responsibilities. Historians such as B. Carmen Hardy and Julie Dunfey also carefully outline the ways that plural marriage was a trying ordeal for many women. Dunfey writes that notwithstanding of the burdens associated with plural marriage many polygamist women adhered to plural marriage because they saw it as a way to fulfill their responsibility to create a utopian society. Nonetheless, several women found few

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[93] For some studies about men, gender, Mormonism, and plural, see: Hoyt and Patterson, "Mormon Masculinity: Changing Gender Expectations in the Era of Transition from Polygamy to Monogamy, 1890-1920"; Larry Logue, "A Time of Marriage: Monogamy and Polygamy in a Utah Town," *Journal of Mormon History* 11:1 (1984): 3 -26; Richard Kimball, "Muscular Mormonism" *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 25:5 (2008): 549-578.

[94] The first scholarly study dedicated solely to the lives of Mormon women began to appear in the late 1970s with *Mormon Sisters in Early Utah* (1997 [1976]), a collection edited by Claudia Bushman. Several of the essays look beyond women's marital statuses and focus on women's other roles such as midwives, healers, politicians, and teachers. This collection of essays was the result of several Mormon women, including Bushman and historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, holding meetings in Boston to learn more about "their nineteenth century sisters." Collection contributor Carrol Hilton-Shelton took out a bank loan to self-publish the book that was "deemed 'too hot to handle' by the Mormon press." Claudia Bushman, *Mormon Sisters: Women in Early Utah* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1997), xi, 288.

[95] Derr, "'Strength in Our Union': The Making of a Mormon Sisterhood" in *Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective*, edited by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987); Lawrence Foster, *Women, Family, and Utopia: Communal Experiments of the Shakers, the Oneida Community, and the Mormons* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1991); Joan Iversen, "Feminist Implications of Mormon Polygyny" *Feminist Studies* 10:3 (1984);

personal benefits to "living the principle," as some reported privately in letters and writings that it was a sad and lonely endeavor.[96] B. Carmon Hardy's study explores how plural marriage could and often operated as smaller spoke that reinforced the larger patriarchal hierarchy of the church which women had very little authority.[97] Depending on a plural wife's circumstances, her marital situation could be one of empowerment, fulfillment, happiness, destitution, heartbreak, or somewhere in between these extremes.

In the Mormon public discourse on plural marriage, nineteenth-century Mormon women church members overwhelmingly defended the practice. 1870 was a significant year for Mormon women and political activism, as that was the first year they gained the right to vote and organized their first massive protest against antipolygamy legislation.[98] Whereas earlier antipolygamy legislation remained mostly ineffectual, the introduction of the Cullom Bill, a proposed amendment which sought to strengthen and enforce the 1862 Morrill Anti-Bigamy Act, galvanized women into action. On January 13, 1870, three thousand women met in the Salt Lake City Tabernacle to discuss plans to protest the Cullom Bill. The meeting of Mormon women against The Cullom Bill exemplified the fierce determination and organizing that Mormon women used to defend the practice of plural marriage. Phoebe Woodruff, first plural wife of the future fourth president and prophet of the church Wilford Woodruff, spoke out against the proposed bill: "Shall we as wives and mother sit still and see our husbands and sons, whom we know are obeying the highest behest of heaven, suffer for their religion without exerting ourselves to the extent of our power for their deliverance? No! Verily no!!" For Mormon women, defending the practice of plural marriage was not only related to

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[96] Dunfey, 524.
[97] B. Carmen Hardy, *Solemn Covenant: The Mormon Polygamous Passage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 97-99.
[98] For more information on this connection see Lola Van Wagenen, "In Their Own Behalf: The Politization of Mormon Woman and the 1870 Franchise," in *Battle for the Ballot: Essays on Woman's Suffrage in Utah 1870-1896,* ed. Carol Cornwall Madsen. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1987), 65.

safeguarding their families and protecting their husbands but also was deeply intertwined with living and honoring divine revelation. As Phoebe Woodruff stated that "God has revealed unto us the law of the Patriarchal Order of Marriage and commanded us to obey it."[99] Though many women did admit difficulty with the practice, the theological belief was that participating in plural marriage would lead to immense pay off in the afterlife. In addition, Phoebe Woodruff's words exemplify how one woman was seemingly exercising her agency to do "what was right" by obeying God within the context of her religion, even if it contradicted mainstream expectations outside of the church.

This passionate defense of plural marriage also spilled over into meetings of the Junior and Senior Retrenchment Association meetings. The defensive discussion of plural marriage may seem odd amongst a meeting of coreligionists, but both Margaret T. Smoot and Zina D. Young overheard conversations that spoke to the opposite. At a September 1872 meeting, Margaret T. Smoot stated that she overheard "some of us speaking very despairingly, intimating that we lack in faithfulness to the principles of the Church, and especially polygamy." A few months later at a November meeting in 1872, Zina D. Young also spoke to similar concerns when she heard women speaking about the death of plural marriage: "I do not think polygamy is about dead when we see the number of children born in it." She challenged the younger women who "thought polygamy was about dead" by asking them if their religion itself, "was about dead?"

Zina D. Young and Margaret T. Smoot's concerning and dramatic declarations were likely a reaction to exposes written by ex Mormon women who had married into and rejected plural marriage. Though Zina D. Young and Margaret T. Smoot do not name the young women they overheard talking about the end of plural marriage, there are examples of these kind of conversations occurring. In her own expose of marriage to Brigham Young, Anne Eliza Young, the

[99] Phoebe Woodruff quoted in Gustive O. Larson, *The "Americanization" of Utah for Statehood.* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 197), 67.

prophet's ex wife and an excommunicated member of the church, recorded her early life. Born in Nauvoo, Anne Eliza Young was a member of a pioneer family who migrated to Salt Lake City. In her book W*ife no. 19, or the story of a life in bondage: being a complete exposé of Mormonism, and revealing the sorrows, sacrifices and sufferings of women in polygamy,* Anne Eliza recounted that at seventeen years old she had a conversation with her friends about plural marriage. She had recently learned that Brigham Young had told her mother that she should not court a young man she had known for quite some time: "Of course, I didn't like this interference at all." She continued:

> All of the girls of my acquaintance knew of the trouble, and naturally enough, all sympathized with me; and a more rebellious set of morals was never seen. We indulged in the most incendiary talk, and turned the torrent of our wrath against polygamy. One girl suggested that, as the old men always interfered with the girls' "fun," it was more than likely that it was because they wanted them for themselves…

At the end of her conversation, she and her friends "entered into a solemn compact then and there, never, *never* to enter polygamy."[100] Even though she did not follow her own directive when she married Brigham Young at the age of twenty-four, what matters from this conversation is that she and other young women were expressing doubt and frustration about the religious practice before marrying into it. Whereas the example of Ann Eliza Young can be considered extreme, her unease with polygamy was not that exceptional as many other young women expressed difficulty with the marriage system.

Young women's feelings toward polygamy varied between the 1860s and 1880s. Some like sixteen year old Mary Perkes practically approached the possibility of plural marriage. In her journal, she wrote how she and a peer named Ellen, presumably a friend or family member, had an exchange in which they state that they would like to marry the same man because "it would be good for us to

[100] Ann Eliza Young, *Wife No. 19, or the Story of a Life in Bondage. Being a Complete Exposé of Mormonism, and Revealing the Sorrows, Sacrifices and Sufferings of Women in Polygamy* (Hartford: Dustin, Gilman, 1876), 375.

go into it together for we know each others disposition so well."[101] Mary's comments indicate that she was aware of the intricacies of marrying into a plural marriage by considering who would make a congenial sister-wife. Gaining the consent of the first wife was necessary for ensuring a relatively smoother entry for new plural wives entering the family. While Mormon leaders declared that a first wife had to give approval for her husband to marry again, many examples exist of men marrying against his first wife's wishes or without her knowledge.

Mary Ann Hafen learned first hand about how the feelings of a man's first wife could color one's experience as a plural wife. Like Mary Perkes, Hafen, born in Switzerland in 1854, was a child migrant whose family converted to Mormonism. Hafen, who was the grandmother of historian Juanita Brooks, and her family were part of the first settlers of Southern Utah sent by Brigham Young to build the area and cultivate the land. Growing up in a smaller community left young women like Hafen with a smaller pool of single and polygamous men to marry. As a nineteen-year-old girl Hafen was drawn to her Aunt Barbara's husband John Reber. An anecdote from her 1938 memoir *Recollections of a Handcart Pioneer of 1860: A Woman's Life on the Mormon Frontier* indicates how her aunt welcomed her into the family. After John Reber asked to her marry him, Mary Ann wrote: "I was ready to say yes. His wife, Aunt Barbara, helped me make my wedding outfit, a simple dress of blue material with little pink flowers and a white petticoat. I was then nineteen years old."[102] Though her aunt's explicit feelings about the plural marriage are not known, she was, perhaps, approving of the match as it was to a close family member. According to historian Jessie Embry's *Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle*, she found that twenty-five percent of the families she

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[101] Perkes, "My Journal," page 13, August 11, 1867.

Mary E. Perkes speaks of having a half-sister Ellen, who died at three years of age. Based on the reading of this diary, it seems as though this Ellen is a peer close in age. See Perkes, "My Journal," page 1, n.d.

[102] Mary A. Hafen, *Recollections of a Handcart Pioneer of 1860: A Woman's Life on the Mormon Frontier* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 50.

surveyed included men who married sisters.[103] Church authorities and family members encouraged that men marry sisters or other close relatives, as it was assumed it these relationships would make a more cooperative marriage.[104] Mary Ann's marriage to John Reber served as a slight variation of a this LDS marriage pattern.

Neither woman was able to see how the marriage would work, as John Reber died of internal injuries after he was in a horse carriage accident. Though Mary Ann and Aunt Barbara were also in the wagon, they survived. In her memoir Mary Ann wrote, "this was a sad finish to my honeymoon," indicating that she felt positive and looked forward to her future with John Reber and Aunt Barbara.[105] Hafen did not remain single for long and married six months later. The origins of her second marriage were not as positive as the first. She wrote about the tense relationship between her new husband John and his first wife Susette:

> When John asked me to marry him, I hesitated at first. But my parents urged me to consent, saying what a fine man he was and that by waiting I would probably do worse. Susette was opposed to his marrying again, but the authorities advised him to do so anyway, saying that she would be reconciled. I did not like to marry him under those circumstances, but being urged on by him and my parents, I consented.[106]

Both Susette and Mary Ann were coerced into this marital situation, elucidating how some women did not hold any say in the end about their marital futures. Hafen cried on her way to and from Salt Lake to be married. Even though she was thankful for her new husband's comfort, she wrote "Somehow I was not happy."[107] Her unhappiness was doubly due to her getting married too early after losing her first husband and her difficult relationship with Susette. A few months later, Mary Ann felt neglected by John and told him she would leave if she was not treated equally. This

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[103] Jessie L. Embry, *Mormon Polygamous Families: Living the Principle* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, Inc., 2008), 141.
[104] Jessie L. Embry, "Ultimate Taboos: Incest and Mormon Polygamy" *Journal of Mormon History* 18.1 (1992): 101.
[105] Hafen, *Recollections of a Handcart Pioneer of 1860,* 51.
[106] Hafen, *Recollections of a Handcart Pioneer of 1860,* 52.
[107] Hafen, *Recollections of a Handcart Pioneer of 1860,* 55.

assertion of agency was one method for her to claim some space in her marriage and attempt to live comfortably on her terms in her plural marriage. Though she wrote that she lived happily with John, her experience exemplified the difficult status that many women endured as plural wives.

The courting rituals between young, single women and polygamist men also led to much confusion as to which young women were actually polygamist wives. At nineteen years old, Annie Clark found herself being courted by an older professor Joseph Marion Tanner while she attended Brigham Young Academy during the 1882-3 year. Tanner's courtship of Annie involved visiting her family to gain her father's consent. An event particular to Mormon courtship occurred when Tanner and his first wife visited Annie on the account that Annie desired to ascertain how his first wife felt about the match. When meeting his first wife, Annie was careful to honor her status: "When Mr. Tanner proposed that he take me for a walk, I replied, 'No, not for the world would I make Mrs. Tanner feel badly. This is her outing and she is my guest.'" During a shared buggy ride between the women, Annie said to the first Mrs. Tanner: "Without your approval, our interest in each other would go no farther." Though Mrs. Tanner held her own reservations about plural marriage, her inability to conceive drove her to accept plural marriage. She chose Annie as her first- choice as a plural wife for her husband as she admired Annie's "self-respect."[108] Even though Annie felt that she was still a young girl at the age of nineteen, she and Mr. Tanner married quickly as a long plural engagement was viewed as improper

Annie's difficulty with plural marriage occurred immediately after marriage. She returned alone to her family home after her family had already finished their dinner. To avoid suspicion, she refused to affirm that she was a married woman when her sister asked. To evade federal authorities, Annie still used her maiden name in her day-to-day life. This led to much confusion about which young women were single and those who were not.

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[108] Annie Clark Tanner, *A Mormon Mother: An Autobiography* (Salt Lake City: Tanner Trust Fund, University of Utah Library, 1973), 56-7.

> This secrecy made it not an unusual thing for a serious-minded girl to have several offers to enter polygamy. In the first place, girls married young and were obliged to keep their maiden names if they had already married in polygamy….More than one ambitious young son of Israel found himself more or less embarrassed when told by the girl he admired that the invitation to be a plural wife had come too late.[109]

In these ambiguous situations, young women were never expected to name their husbands as all church members were supposed to protect each other from federal intrusion.

These young women's experiences considering plural marriage, courting a plural husband, and marrying into polygamy exemplify the complicated steps required to enter the marriage system. Even though the older women of the Retrenchment Association admitted their own sacrifices with plural marriage, they still stressed the importance of polygamy toward the longevity of the religion. To curb negative thinking about plural marriage, Margaret T. Smoot promoted involvement in the Retrenchment Association. She stated: "Polygamy is the foundation of my religion. To me it is obligatory. I hold it as the highest of anything I profess. I would exhort my sisters to attend these meetings."[110] For many members of the older generations of women who sacrificed so much for plural marriage and regularly defended it as a necessary religious practice, imagining Mormonism without plural marriage was impossible. Defending and advocating plural marriage to young was a method for them to justify their own decisions and minimize their own difficulty with the practice.

Retrenching in Dress

Just as plural marriage set Mormons apart from other religious denominations, older Mormons long believed that adopting a certain style of dress conveyed their difference. Before the introduction of the Retrenchment Association, in the 1850s, Brigham Young attempted to persuade Mormonism's women to adopt a modest "Deseret Costume." The "Deseret Costume" was developed as a variation of bloomers, a billowy type of long shorts that served as an alternate to the

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[109] Tanner, 65

[110] Minutes of the Senior and Junior Co-operative Retrenchment Association, 1870-1880

current fashion of restricting and dragging skirts. The *New York Herald* ran a description of the "Deseret Costume" in the edition of the paper from the 1850s:

> It consists of a loose fitting dress, resembling, in cut, a man's sack coat, being buttoned in front and reaching a few inches below the knees, a pair of pantalets adorning the ankles, and a leghorn hat set jauntily upon the head, being in fact a modification of the Bloomer costume. The ladies are thus relieved of a superabundant load of petticoats and their husbands are freed from paying for more than two-thirds the usual quantity of dry goods — no small item of expense in this country.[111]

The "Deseret Costume" fit within trends in a current fashion reform promoted to ease women's mobility. The costume was never formally or adopted, but the focus on simple dress continued.

Church members also claimed eternal reasons for promoting retrenchment in dress. In a meeting from 1870, Eliza R. Snow spoke with alarm about the lack of dissimilarity between the way Mormons and non-Mormons dressed. Her concern applied to both the temporal and eternal world: "If the angels were to come in our midst, how would they be able to distinguish us from the Gentiles? We dress the same, and too often act the same. We must be in earnest in our generation; it is too late in the day to sleep."[112] In this context, difference in dress was not just an identity marker for day-to-day life but played an integral role in signifying who belonged in the celestial kingdom and who did not. Believing these lessons were a success, two years later Snow enthusiastically reported that "Those of the old and young ladies who have followed his counsel can easily be distinguished from the fashionable outsiders."[113]

From the early days of the association, there are reports of young women writing to other retrenchment associations asking how dresses should be trimmed to modesty standards. Julia M. Horne, the daughter Mary Isabella Horne, was chosen as president of the fourteenth ward

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[111] Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Special Collections, Utah State University, Reel 200, no. 13, 30 September 1855 quoted in Ruth Vickers Clayton, *Clothing and the Temporal Kingdom: Mormon Clothing Practices, 1847 to 1887*. (Ph.D. diss., Purdue, 1989), 150.
[112] Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association,* 35.
[113] Minutes of the Senior and Junior Co-operative Retrenchment Association, 1870-1880

association when she was in her late teenage years. Of embracing retrenchment, she stated: "Since Retrenchment came up I have not trimmed the skirts of my dresses. I consider it a waste of time putting too much superfluous trimming on wearing apperal. When we might be storing our minds with useful knowledge."[114] Young women's willingness to change their habits to meet the expectations of thrift, simplicity, and religious education continuously surprised the older generation of women. In 1874, Isabella Horne related her happiness with the movement: "If there is one thing I like to see more than another it is to see young ladies stepping forward and striving to your duty. To me it is a cheering sight. If you seek for the Spirit of God you will be enabled to speak such things as will be beneficial to one another."[115]

From examining some diaries of young women from the late 1860s and 1870s, it was evident that many young women were well acquainted with the ideas of thrift and simplicity before the establishment of the Retrenchment Association. Though sixteen year old Mary Perkes wrote "I sometimes give way to bad influences over trifles," her diary is full of references about sewing clothes for her family and others with no mention of desiring to obtain or make specific styles of dress.[116] Like Mary Perkes, Alice Ann Reynolds also writing in the late 1860s exhibited understandings of thrift and simplicity. Alice Ann who lived twenty miles north of Salt Lake City, spent most of her time helping her widowed mother and attending to her teaching duties. Her diary offers more information about all of the steps it took a young woman of her background to obtain a new dress for the upcoming winter season. She wrote in November of 1867:

> Sunday 24th. We sewed for we had no dresses down there suitable to wear and so we had to stay at home. And we worked to get our dresses done so that we could have them to put on for it was too cold to wear calico. Uncle George read aloud in the Apothecary in the evening. He read the book of Tobit which was both interesting and amusing. I had never seen

[114] Minutes of the Senior and Junior Co-operative Retrenchment Association, 1870-1880.
[115] Minutes of the Senior and Junior Co-operative Retrenchment Association, 1870-1880.
[116] Perkes "My Journal," page 3, 10, March 17, 1867 & June 14, 1967,

> or heard of it before .
> Monday 25th I finished my dress, Annie cut my Linsey Wolsey (the skirt of which is a gored robe) I went down town just before dark, went to the stores and to Grandma's. Had my dress fit and basted and the sleeves cut out and Willie went home with me. After I got home Aunt Alice partly made the waist and sleeves on the machine.
> Tues 26th Aunt Alice bound the skirt of my dress with braid which she gave me and done what sewing she could for me and I came home with Willie[117]

The process of completing Alice Ann's new dress was a utilitarian purpose. She relied upon the tailoring help of her aunt and grandmother which likely saved her money. Her male relatives aided in the process as well; her uncle be reading aloud for entertainment and her brother likely accompanied her out of reasons for safety. Her mention of Linsey Wolsey skirt referred to a coarse and durable twill fabric that was a cheaper replacement for wool.[118] Alice Ann's new dress was the embodiment of the sort of thrift and simplicity that Brigham Young urged young women to embrace.

Around ten to twelve years younger than Mary Perkes and Alice Ann Richards, Annie Cannon were able to see and experience the material effects after the arrival of the railroad as a teenage girl. Her journal contained more acknowledgements of new fashions and popular culture. However, her discussion of these things were mostly in the contempt of young women she failed to befriend. In an entry from September of 1877, she wrote about a trip to a family friend's farm house with a group of girls:

> There was just the jolliest crowd of girls you ever saw. We reached the farm at about half past twelve and after a little girlish gossip set the table for dinner, at first it seemed as if I was going to have a miserable time. I was not as talkative as was my wont and beside most of the girls were strange to me. I never associate with them and there fore did not know what to talk about; three or four times I made an attempt by my remarks were received with so much indifference that I felt as if I would never speak again. After dinner preparations were made for boating I did not go out on the first load but waited. The girls remained made, themselves, a little bed of shawls on top of a table and supplied themselves with "light

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[117] Alice Ann Richards Smith, Journal, 1867 May-1871 June, Typescript. Page 16, November 24-26, 1867. MS 15523. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.
[118] Linda Baumgarten, *What Clothes Reveal: The Language of Clothing in Colonial and Federal America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 96.

> literature" or "trash" and there they lied and read much to their amusement I suppose, but not much to mine as I was excluded from the party.

After hanging back from the group of girls and wandering around the lake, gathering autumn leaves and picking apples, Annie "tried my hardest to amuse myself." Upon returning to the young women who were now asleep, she "strove to interest" herself in one of the novels they had been reading. Annie reference to their reading material as "light literature" or "trash" must be understood within the context of her relationship to her mother, Emmeline B. Wells, the soon to be editor of the long running *Woman's Exponent*. Emmeline encouraged her daughter to write, published some of Annie's pieces, and had Annie run the publication when she attended to other business. At this time in church history, the church leadership also regarded reading fiction as a waste, as this time could be spent reading church scripture or publications. Some Mormons also conflated literature with the sensational fiction they believed only non-Mormons read.[119] Despite Annie's knowledge of writing and literature, her comments were also likely meant to be condescending due to her feelings of being ignored by the other young women.

After awhile, though, Annie wrote later "The strangeness now began to wear away and I joined freely in the conversation." One of the "principle topics" addressed was "the latest style of hat" and other fashions.[120] Whether or not Annie was personally interested in fashion is hard to discern, as her journal content rarely broached that topic. The likelihood was that Annie engaged in such a conversation to move away from her feelings of ostracism. As the daughter of one of the most well-known and influential women in the church, Annie probably regularly attended YLMIA meetings and heard about the standard of thrift and lack of frivolity she was supposed to uphold. Based upon her diary, she was a serious young woman uninterested in frivolity. Nonetheless, she was still a young

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[119] De Schweinitz, "Preaching the Gospel of Church and Sex: Mormon Women's Fiction in the *Young Woman's Journal*," 28-9.

[120] Annie Wells, "My Journal, No. 2." Typescript, Pages 11-12, September 29, 1877. Annie Wells Cannon Journals 1877-1942. MSS 2307. Box 1, folder 1. L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

woman and felt included when in these conversations with other young women about "light literature" and the latest styles.

Annie was not necessarily becoming more interested in these supposedly "taboo" subjects but was eager to make friends her own age. Church association meetings allowed young women like Annie a place to feel included. Annie's feelings of isolation as a teenager seemed to dissipate when she attended to different church responsibilities and meetings with her mother. As her mother was one of the most influential women of her time in the church, Annie regularly spent time with women like Brigham Young's plural wives Eliza R. Snow and Zina D. Young, whom she called "Aunt Zina." In early July of 1877, Annie attended "a splendid meeting" in which Zina was in attendance. Annie reported that Aunt Zina "talked splendidly" and that "every one said something instructive." She also reported that she was "made third counselor of the society," a position she hoped she "shall always be worth of."[121] Though Annie does not specify whether or not this meeting was a Retrenchment Association or Relief Society meeting, given the fluidity of these groups in the late 1870s, Annie benefitted from the atmosphere of the church's women's groups, as they allowed her a place to feel like she belonged and was needed. Though the diaries of these three young women do not indicate the desires and expectations of all Latter-day Saint adolescent women from the 1860s and 1870s, they do suggest that many young women did not need lessons in retrenchment. Instead, what they actually desired was a place to feel included.

Girls' Culture in the Retrenchment Association

Shared women's culture has always existed as a thriving aspect of Mormonism. The shared experience of conversion, migration, and plural marriage in addition to the religion's theological emphasis on eternal family led to the development of a sisterhood that was unique to the religion as compared to other faith traditions in the nineteenth century. Sisterhood did not just refer to familial

[121] Wells, "My Journal, No. 2.," pages 3-4 and 9, July 5th and August 22, 1877.

relationships but also to emotionally intimate relationships and networks between women.[122] There was no widespread acknowledgment of a young women's culture until the Retrenchment Association was established in 1869. Even then, this iteration of girl's culture was understood through the paradigm of church expectations and standards.

The Retrenchment Associations allowed young women an unprecedented opportunity to take up leadership roles. Compelled by their own interest or a suggestion from local leadership, several young women were responsible for organizing their own ward's associations. In the early hubbub of the organization's first days, Susa Young Gates stressed that young women were both the focus and backbone of the association: "In those early times, there were no Church schools, no clubs and no Women's Councils from which to glean ideas; these Mormon girls were finding their way alone and unaided up the thorny path of progress."[123] The story of Lona Pratt, eighteen year old daughter of the Church Apostle Parley P. Pratt, of Salt Lake City exemplifies the early interest and tenacity of the association's first members. Lona Pratt became enthused about the association after hearing the story of its founding. In May of 1870, Pratt invited other young women from her neighborhood, most of who resided in the Nineteenth Ward, to meet her at the schoolhouse where she taught. After beginning the meeting with a prayer, Pratt explained the need for such a society to the interested young women. Eliza R. Snow soon heard of these meetings and invited the young women to attend the association meetings in the Fourteenth Ward hall.[124] Because there were no set lessons set from the church officials, many young women like Lona Pratt held the unprecedented opportunity to chart their own course with ward associations.

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[122] Derr, "'Strength in Our Union': The Making of a Mormon Sisterhood", 181.
[123] Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association,* 169.
[124] Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association,* 59-60.

Other young women, such as the seventeen year old Henrietta Lunt of Cedar City, Utah was assigned to act as president of her local association. In 1875, female representatives from the Retrenchment Association Board arrived in Cedar City, two hundred and fifty miles south of Salt Lake City, ready to organize a local association. Lunt vividly remembered the moment she was tapped to lead the organization:

> Sometime in 1875 Sister Barney was sent into this part of the Territory to organize the young girls into retrenchment associations. A Relief Society meeting was called. Mother and Aunt Ellen attended and I was in charge of the telegram office while they were away. After the meeting a number of sisters together came to my father's house. Upon seeing so many coming to the house I slipped outside. When I thought the ladies were all in the parlor, I entered the hall to go into the office and was met by Sister Barney. She placed her hand on my shoulder and turning to the sisters in the room, said, "This is our president." I was then seventeen years old. I was told to select six counsellors, a secretary and treasurer. I will never forget the feeling that came over me; the thoughts of such a responsibility, and to be expected to teach the Gospel, which I didn't understand myself; no outlines to guide us; and so far from headquarters.[125]

Inherent in Lunt's feelings of being appointed to such a high position are her connected feelings of duty and apprehension. Whereas Lona Pratt eagerly and unofficially set up a retrenchment association for her ward, Henrietta Lunt was essentially volunteered for the position. The scenario of Henrietta Lunt was the type of young women Brigham Young was concerned with: a dutiful, religious young woman who was capable but still felt unsure of herself to teach the gospel.

The lack of consistency across program activities, lessons, and work in each association sheds light on the specific concerns belonging to the young women and the older women who supervised them. One of the first associations established outside of Salt Lake City, the Box Elder Stake MIA presents an example of how one group made the association an integral part of their church activities and their lives beyond church attendance. The young women of Box Elder Stake also had the added support from the presence and influence of Lorenzo Snow, the current apostle and later

[125] Henrietta Lunt Jones, "History of the First Retrenchment Organization in Cedar City, 1869-1885."

church president. His sister Eliza R. Snow personally explained and helped with the organization of the association on July 25th, 1875:

> As the young ladies gradually developed in many ways, they began to realize that it was necessary to have something besides testimony bearing and extempore programs to stimulate and develop the spiritual and mental powers; so it was decided to have a subject or lectures given at their meetings. Very soon the girls began to lead out socially as well as spiritually and many entertainments were arranged and carried out as a means of gathering money for the treasury. As early as 1877 the association decided to purchase an organ; sufficient money was raised and an organ was bought, which has been in active service for some thirty years and is said to be good still.[126]

The first inclination of many newly organized groups was to read from scripture or church publications and bearing their testimonies. However, these activities were regularly practiced in other church meetings. Every month, wards held a fast and testimony meetings, a meeting for all members to participate bearing their testimony. While these activities were certainly not discouraged in retrenchment association meetings, young women recognized the repetitiveness of these activities and used their association meetings to more intricately tie themselves to their community. Early association activities centered upon providing wholesome entertainment. In the Beaver stake association, organized in 1873, young women arranged dances that started in the early afternoon and ended in the early evening.[127] Many of the dances and theatrical performances organized in associations raised money for a variety of honorable causes.

A recurring stream of discussion throughout the minutes of the Junior and Senior Retrenchment in the early 1870s discussed how women were considered more naturally inclined toward retrenchment and spirituality than young men. At the same time, Eliza R. Snow noted that young women were not encouraged in the same way that young men were to articulate their thoughts on religion. She urged young women to speak up:

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[126] Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association,* 350.
[127] Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association,*160.

> The daughters of Zion want to exemplify, before the world, the most perfect system of order that exists. I think women should set the example of propriety in every department of Life. It is admitted that there are more good women on earth than men. And women being naturally more refined, therefore should set the example of propriety. I have noticed that when a brother would be speaking and make some expression which would excite applause among the brethren, the sister would also unite but in a more gentle manner. To me it is very repulsive. I would like to hear the sisters express their ideas.[128]

Though this can be read as an admonishment to young women to improve their speaking skills, it also served as a criticism of young men's behavior and demonstration of hubris. Extrapolating from her belief that young women were more suited for retrenchment, Eliza R. Snow believed that it was up to the young women to lead by example for the young men. She recounted many instances that affirmed this idea including how a bishop of a ward told her about the "terrible" "course some of the young men are pursuing." Her answer to him was to organize the young men like the young ladies. Throughout the early 1870s, some young men's associations were informally organized in more populated areas such as Salt Lake City and Ogden. In 1875, the church established the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association. The organization of this young men's association corresponded with and was influenced by the growth of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in the 1870s. The YMCA of the late nineteenth century, in response to Muscular Christianity movement and fears of weakening American masculinity, promoted sports and programs to strengthen young men's physical and religious resolve.[129]

The Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association thus emerged from national trends as well as concerns distinct to Mormonism. The positive outcomes from young women's involvement in the MIA impelled the church leadership to revisit their assumptions about young men and women's opportunities for religious education. This decision to establish an organization for young

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[128] Minutes of the Senior and Junior Co-operative Retrenchment Association, 1870-1880.
[129] Clifford Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880-1920* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2001), 18, 64.

men serves as a counter to Brigham Young's assertion some six years earlier when he lamented that young men held more opportunities to gain a religious education than young women. In just six years, the Retrenchment Association proved the opposite to be true, as young women held many opportunities to learn about and strengthen their religion and religious community.

The 1880s: "Order, Regularity, and System"

Referring to the history of the YLMIA in the 1880, Susa Young Gates wrote: "With the opening of the second decade of the General Board's history, a vital force and uplift was felt in every part of work. Order, regularity, and system began to take the place of experimental labor."[130] The 1880s and 1890s also saw many changes alter the overall operation of the newly renamed YLMIA. The 1880s, punctuated by Brigham Young's death in 1877, was full of disruptive challenges for the church including the rise of stringent antipolygamy legislation. The push for order and regularity within the institutional church offered refuge during this tumultuous period.

Before his death, Brigham Young instituted a multilevel reorganization of the church hierarchy including stakes, wards, and auxiliary group. The third President John Taylor oversaw the completion of this task and relied upon Eliza R. Snow to organize general boards for each auxiliary group run by women: the Relief Society, the Primary Association (the association that led children's religious instruction), and the newly named YLMIA. On the evening on June 19th, 1880 after Eliza R. Snow was set apart as the general president of the Relief society board, she attended a dinner at Bathsheba Smith's home. During the dinner Snow turned to Elmina Taylor, who converted to Mormonism in Upstate New York in 1856 and was a leader in her local ward Relief Society, and informed her she was chosen to be president of the YLMIA board. Shocked, Elmina Taylor Smith

[130] Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association,* 90.

first answered: "I cannot act in that capacity."[131] However, she quickly changed her mind and accepted the position. After choosing her counselors for the YLMIA General Board, Elmina S. Taylor decided that she along with her other counselors would visit Young Ladies' associations throughout the Territory. Susa Young Gates estimated that Elmina S. Taylor conducted between "three and four hundred visits during that period, travailing thousand of miles. Mostly by team; and visiting some of the nearby stakes two or three times a year…" To reduce her and the counselors' exhausting travel, Taylor appointed young women to serve as "traveling missionaries" to represent the YLMIA at different stake conferences. Of these young women who were usually called "aids," Susa Young Gates wrote their "importance grew with their service, and they gradually made a fixed and important place for themselves as they helped to make history for the Y.L.M.I.A. Movement."[132] Once again, women were allotted an unprecedented position serving their church.

The reorganization of the YLMIA took place within the backdrop of rising anti-Mormon sentiment that was commonplace in the 1880s. Whereas earlier legislation remained mostly unenforceable, it was not until the 1882 passage of the Edmunds Law that federal authorities began to thoroughly arrest and prosecute polygamous men and women. The most significant piece of the Edmunds Law that enabled arrests and imprisonments was the way in which the law defined polygamous living or "unlawful cohabitation."[133] "Unlawful cohabitation" took on many meanings which ranged from a including a man and woman who "dwelled together, with sexual intercourse" to a man and women who "exchanged acts of kindness and attention over a period of years, although not living together and without sexual intercourse.[134] Such a broad interpretation allowed for federal authorities to make generalizations about who was a polygamist and who was not.

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131 Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association*, 86.
132 Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association*, 87-88, 128.
133 Larson, *The "Americanization" of Utah for Statehood*, 95.
134 Nancy Tate Dredge, "Victims of the Conflict" in *Mormon Sisters: Women in Early Utah*, 141.

By the 1880s, with an increase in arrests and convictions, calls for secrecy among Mormons to protect polygamists were at an all-time high. Women like Annie Clark Tanner were impelled to use their maiden names, live with their families of origin, and keep working if they were employed before their marriage—anything to evade suspicion. As soon as a plural wife became pregnant her circumstances changed, and she had to seek refuge among the extensive "Mormon Underground," a network of homes and hiding places that polygamists could move between. Many notable Mormon men, including Frank Cannon and Lorenzo Snow, gave themselves over to the authorities and were imprisoned.[135]

In 1886, the young ladies from the four Box Elder Stakes associations, under the direction of the third ward association president, cooked and provided dinner for 150 inmates of the Utah Penitentiary for the Thanksgiving holiday of 1886. The event known as the "pen dinner" was originally just planned for the men who were "incarcerated for conscience sake," or plural marriage. However, under the marshal's condition, the young women could only supply "Zion's noble men" with a holiday dinner if they provided dinner for all of the imprisoned men. Instead of shying away from the task, "every girl was willing and eager to do her share, and helped the project to a successful end." Two sisters received compensation from the Brigham City counsel to take the train and deliver and serve the meals to inmates of the penitentiary. Following the meal, all of the inmates, Mormons polygamists and other inmates, signed a letter of appreciation for the dinner.[136] The pen dinner illustrated loyalty to those who practiced polygamy and how some young, Mormon women envisioned that their duties were to aid church members and others in need.

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[135] Ken Driggs, "The Prosecutions Begin: Defining Cohabitation in 1885" *Dialogue: a Journal of Mormon Thought* 21:1 (1988): 123-4

[136] Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association*, 378.

By the 1890s, it soon became clear to Mormon leaders that to gain statehood they would have to transform the Church's policies.[137] On September 25th 1890, after reporting that he received a divine revelation, President Woodruff issued a statement known as the Manifesto, which called for the end of the practice of plural marriage.[138] Several days later on October 6th, 1890, during the LDS semi-annual conference in Salt Lake City, Bishop Whitney read the Manifesto out loud before the presidency, a governing body of the Church hierarchy. All the assembled men, many presumably in plural marriage, voted unanimously in favor of accepting the new decree.[139]

Reactions to the announcement varied. *The Woman's Exponent*, a Mormon women's publication printed an article by Helen M. Whitney, a prominent LDS pioneer, in which she wrote that "the spirit" came to her and convinced her "that this step was right."[140]Although Helen M. Whitney's 1890 piece actively supported President Woodruff's position, she still maintained that the principle of plural marriage represented a "higher type of purity and true civilization." According to Whitney, just because Mormon men and women were supposed to abstain from polygamy in practice did not imply that a "true latter-day saint" would "renounce a truth or a doctrine for which Joseph Smith and many more have laid down their lives to establish."[141] Annie Gardner, a plural wife, who was present when the Manifesto was read out loud was devastated that the law "made me

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[137] Shipps, 114.

[138] Arrington and Bitton, 183.

After the issuing of the Manifesto, there were several groups who broke away from the LDS Church and reorganized into new churches. One of the most well known breakaway groups is the Fundamentalist LDS (FLDS). For more information on this group and twentieth century polygamy see, Martha Sonntag Bradley, *Kidnapped from That Land The Government Raids on the Short Creek Polygamists* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1996); Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy: A History* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, 1989).

[139] "Semi-annual Conference," *Woman's Exponent*, October 15, 1890.

[140] Helen M. Whitney, "The Opinion of an American Woman Whose Forefathers Fought For the Liberty That We are Denied Today," *Woman's Exponent*, November 15, 1890.

[141] Whitney, "The Opinion of an American Woman Whose Forefathers Fought For the Liberty That We are Denied Today," 81.

no longer a wife."[142] Others like Annie Clark Tanner felt immense relief that she no longer had to live in secrecy when the Church finally chose to abandon the practice.[143] Regardless of differing personal views of the Manifesto, the transition from plural marriage was not straightforward. Church members had to grapple with how they would come to define family in their day-today lives and in the afterlife.

Both the church and the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association underwent significant transitions in the 1890s. Just as the church started the long process of accommodating itself to the larger country, the YLMIA became further institutionalized within the LDS hierarchical framework, no longer offering inconsistent and "experimental" lessons and activities. Intersecting at the center of these two processes were young Mormon women. Through the accommodation process of the church and the routinization of the YLMIA, young women became more of a symbol of the possibilities of the religion to both assimilate and differentiate itself.

The transformation of the Retrenchment Association into the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association showcases how young women were essential to the church's "adjustment" process. Historians Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton implement the term "Creative Adjustment" to describe the radical changes—including the official termination of plural marriage—LDS leaders and members had to commit before Utah could claim the status of statehood. They chose the term "adjustment" to emphasize how the church still attempted to maintain religious distinction and Mormon values.[144] The terminology of the names of the young women's group also serves as a way to understand the Latter-day Saints' attitudes toward this period of "adjustment." The idea of retrenchment conjured up ideas of separation from non-Mormon people and trends. Once young

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142 Annie Gardner, interviewed by James Hulett, n.d, 3, Young Collection quoted in Jessie Embry and Lois Kelly, "Polygamous and Monogamous Mormon Women: A Comparison" in *Women in Utah History: Paradigm Or Paradox?* edited by Patricia Lyn Scott and Linda Thatcher (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2005), 8.
143 Tanner, 114.
144 Arrington and Bitton, 243-260.

women had demonstrated a clear sense of thrift and religiosity, the objective of retrenchment was arguably complete. The aim for improvement points to an ongoing (eternal) process. Placed within the context of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Mormonism, improvement can also serve as another method of successful adjustment for the Latter-day Saints. The name and objective change elucidated how young women were no longer expected to isolate themselves from mainstream culture but they should lead as an example to the rest of the world.

Entering the turn of the twentieth century, the next generation of elite women, such as Susa Young Gates took the leadership of the YLMIA and used it as a platform to emphasize how young women should emulate a proper Mormon girlhood. Rather than completely eschewing mainstream American culture, the YLMIA created their own successful versions of popular mainstream platforms, such as print culture and scouting programs, in the new century.

CHAPTER TWO

PRESCRIBING AND EMBODYING A PROPER MORMON GIRLHOOD, 1890-1929

Introduction

The 1890s saw the embrace of uniformity across Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Associations at the ward and stake levels. Two new developments drove this uniformity: the forty year run of the *Young Woman's Journal*, first published in 1889, and the introduction of camps and the church's scouting program for girls, the Bee-Hive Girls, in 1915. Together, these endeavors illuminate how the church leadership wanted young women to relate to their religion during this next transitional phase for the church. With the YLMIA established several decades before the invention of the term *adolescence*, the church already had a mechanism in place to contend with young women who fit in the category of adolescence. Even though they had this mechanism already in place, the church leadership clung to new worries extending from the mainstream United States. Mormons used their own programs to contend with wider problems that could affect the church's children.

From the 1890s to the 1920s, changes within and affecting the church pushed the religion and its people into a new transitional stage. During this stage, it was important that the church's youngest women represent Mormon exceptionalism but also show how they were "normal." The church's advice literature and scouting program, while openly influenced by more mainstream trends, provided young women with methods to understand the theology of their religion and also how to physically embody their religion. Through this process, young women embodied the future of the sacred for their older coreligionists.[1]

An influence on both projects was the new phenomenon of adolescence. Social commentary by experts like G. Stanley Hall, changes in mandatory school laws, and the introduction of juvenile

[1] Orsi, 76.

delinquency courts led to the acceptance of adolescence as an age categorization.[2] Beyond defining a certain age bracket, the "discovery" of this life stage was associated with the anxieties that accompanied the twentieth century and all of its changes.[3] According to G. Stanley Hall, adolescence was a period of "storm and stress" as an individual experiences adolescence as a "new birth" when "higher and more completely human traits are now born."[4] Advice literature and educational programs, like scouting, directed at adolescents focused on how to tame and regulate the adolescent body. Endeavors that were explicitly and implicitly concerned about the adolescence offered distinct programs and instructions for young men and women. The Mormon Church drew upon this literature and programs to offer a two-pronged approach, rooted in rhetorical and active instruction, to teach the church's young women how to embody a proper Mormon girlhood of the new twentieth century.

No other source articulated how older generations of church members believed what a proper Mormon girlhood should be more than the *Young Woman's Journal*. The publication established a much needed niche for young Mormon women, as the other Mormon publication for youth *The Juvenile Instructor* was directed toward young men and passed over subjects pertinent to young women. The YWJ established by Susa Young Gates fit within emerging diversity of literary projects in the United States. A new type of publication the magazine gained popularity due to its varied content, portability, and consistent publishing. Though Mormon-centered, the content in the YWJ was not detached from United States culture, as it featured pieces on widespread phenomena like adolescence.[5] By the 1920s, references and articles about adolescence were regular staples throughout the periodical.

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[2] Kent Baxter, *The Modern Age: Turn-of-the-Century American Culture and the Invention of Adolescence* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2008), 44 -72.
[3] Baxter, 3.
[4] G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology Sex, Crime, Religion and Education, Vol. II* (New York: D. Appleton & Co, 1904), 73.
[5] Tait, "The *Young Woman's Journal* and Its Stories: Gender and Generations in 1890s Mormondom," 48-51.

The church's scouting program for adolescent girls, the Bee-Hive Girls, also materialized out of a nationwide trend. The Bee-Hive Girls grew out of a movement that was heralded as a solution to cure the ills of adolescence in young men and women. Popularized through the establishment of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides in Great Britain, the scouting movement soon took on many different iterations in the United States as religious and/or ethnic groups modified this out-of-doors movement to their particular needs.[6] Still hesitant to fully embrace mainstream programs but open to borrowing what "worked," Mormons eventually incorporated the Boy Scouts program for young men. The church also investigated working with both the Girl Scouts and the Campfire Girls. Leaders of the YLMIA believed that the Girl Scout program did not stress women's domestic life enough to fit the model of a proper Mormon girlhood. The church leadership found the church to be more aligned with the Campfire Girls' emphasis on women's domestic roles, but due to unforeseen circumstances to explored later in this chapter, the church started their own girl-scouting program named the Bee-Hive Girls. The church scouting program for girls allowed these young women to become active in a variety of acts from patriotic like learning the "Star-Spangled Banner" to the sacred acts that occurred within the temple. By integrating various types of secular and sacred acts, the Bee-Hive Girls presented a model of how adolescent Mormon women should act during this new transitional moment for the church.

Central to the purposes of both the *Young Woman's Journal* and the Beehive Girls was featuring the importance of the body in Mormon theology. Latter-day Saints believed and still do,

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[6] For a history of the different versions of the Girl Guide, Girl Scout, and Campfire Girls movements, see Kristine Alexander, "The Girl Guide Movement and Imperial Internationalism during the 1920s and 1930s," *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 2:1 (Winter 2009): 37-63; Susan A. Miller, *Growing Girls The Natural Origins of Girls' Organizations in America* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2007); Elizabeth Israels Perry, "From Achievement to Happiness: Girl Scouting in Middle Tennessee, 1910s- 1960s," *Journal of Women's History* 5:2 (Fall 1993): 75-94; Tammy M. Proctor, *Scouting for Girls A Century of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2009); Mary Aikin Rothschild, "To Scout or to Guide? The Girl Scout-Boy Scout Controversy, 1912-1941," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 6:3 (Autumn 1981): 115-121; Laureen Tedesco, "Progressive Era Girl Scouts and the Immigrant: Scouting for Girls (1920) as a Handbook for American Girlhood," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 31: 4 (Winter 2006): 346-368.

that God, their Heavenly Father, has a physical body. Thus, adherents subscribe to the idea that their bodies are a model of God and are these results of the procreation between their Heavenly Father and their Heavenly Mother.[7] Religious historian Colleen McDonnell explains that within Mormonism: "God gives his children bodies (tabernacles) so they can be tested and perform those rituals (ordinances) that will enable them to achieve salvation. Possessing a body is a privilege and a blessing."[8] The YWJ took advantage of expert literature spurred on by the new adolescent movement to discuss how young women should take care of themselves to maintain the health of the body. The Bee-hive Girls offered numerous ways to physically and spiritually keep the body health. Through this emphasis on the body and health and adolescence, Mormon leaders found a way to inculcate young women about the importance of the body in theology.

Girls and the Invention of Adolescence

G. Stanley Hall's massive treatise, fully titled *Adolescence; Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education*, helped establish adolescence as a new age period in one's lifespan. Hall, the first president of American Psychological Association, was a leader in the new field of psychology.[9] Historian Sara Moslener situates Hall's writing within the context of developing religious rhetoric about sexual purity. Even though Hall himself was not religious, he knew he had to make his work attractive to religious groups like Evangelical Christians. Crafting the notion of the adolescent, Hall established significant links between religious conversion and sexual awakening. Sara Moslener writes: "Hall was careful in his writing to use words that evoked a transformative experience, similar to the popular revivalist tent meetings of the Second Great

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[7] The discourse surrounding Heavenly Mother in LDS theology has been one of silence and controversy. See Linda P. Wilcox, "The Mormon Concept of Mother in Heaven," in *Women and Authority: Re-Emerging Mormon Feminism*, 3-22.

[8] Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 216.

[9] Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, "G. Stanley Hall's Adolescence: Brilliance and Nonsense," *History of Psychology* 9:3 (2006): 186.

Awakening, by describing adolescence as a new birth.[10] In asserting that sexual and spiritual awareness developed at the same time, Hall appealed to religious groups like Mormons, who considered sexual chastity a necessary hallmark of their faith and membership.

Hall viewed young women's sexuality as the means to the end goal of (married) motherhood. In *Adolescence*, he argued that "woman's body and soul are made for maternity."[11] He alarmingly informed his readers that current educational practices detracted young women from pursuing motherhood. He wrote: "In an ideal society, with ideal men in it, woman's education should focus on motherhood and wifehood."[12] Though he did not advocate for unmarried motherhood, he believed that a true woman was more "mother than wife." He continued. "Sexual relations are brief, but love and care of offspring are long. The elimination of maternity is one of the great calamities, if not diseases, of our age."[13] Hall did not vilify expressions of sexuality. Hall called for sexual education for adolescents to clear up the misunderstandings that stemmed from ignorance.

The bulk of Hall's book touched upon concern for young men. However, he insisted that his conclusions could be applied evenly to both young men and women. Scholar Kent Baxter writes that for Hall "keeping adolescence genderless helped" "emphasize the universality of the developmental stage.[14] However, adolescence was not genderless, as problems that were particular to boys and girls became apparent.

A multifaceted "girl problem" emerged in the late nineteenth century before adolescence was popularly considered an age categorization. The problem concerned the presence of unmarried young working class women, newly arrived migrants from across the Atlantic or rural areas, in

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[10] Sara Moslener, *Virgin Nation: Sexual Purity and American Adolescence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 6.
[11] Hall, 610.
[12] Hall, 611.
[13] Hall, 626.
[14] Baxter, 62.

industrialized cities at the turn of the twentieth century. Historian Carolyn Strange uses the term "girl problem" to identify this issue in turn of the twentieth century Toronto. She writes:

> Paradoxically, in her own time, the work girl's political and economic marginality in urban life endowed her with enormous cultural relevance, for contemporary observers saw in her struggles the troubling side-effects of industrial capitalism. Her vulnerability to exploitation, her attraction to the material temptations of the city, and her imperiled journey towards marriage were all scrutinized and eventually elevated to the level of public debates.[15]

Simply put, women "adrift" or "astray" represented the undoing of traditional society through young women's purposeful or unintentional failure to abide by standardized gender expectations, most importantly marriage and motherhood. Though this concern over young women was not couched in the language of adolescence, this panic was still caused by the fact that because these women were unmarried, they existed in a liminal, unsettled space. This "girl problem" was also in essence a class issue. At the center of worry were not the daughters of the middle or elite class, but those that were induced to seek employment out of personal and/or familial financial needs. Of particular concern, was how these young women maintained their time between work and rest. At the center of this concern about leisure was the implicit desire to control and maintain young women's purity. The various solutions to this "problem" thought up by reformers, pastors, and other organizations were to offer suitable (supervised) housing and leisure opportunities.

Paradoxical issues particular to the middling and upper classes shaped the "girl problem" in the early twentieth century. Susan Miller asserts that "the small size of the 'modern' family and parents preoccupation with their own affairs" led to broader concerns that young women had little structure and guidance and too much time on their hands. Teachers, childhood experts like G. Stanley Hall, and other authority figures expressed this concern by warning against spending time outside of the domestic sphere. Driving this concern was larger fears of young women's embrace of popular culture on their own terms. "At a more profound level," Miller writes, "adults started to

[15] Strange, 3, 9.

wonder if these new pastimes might contribute to the creation of a new girl--a self-aware individual who was more conscious of her own personal preferences and less willing to subjugate to them to adult demands."[16] Young women who did not submit to adult control were just as problematic as young women who did not have proper supervision. Though the "girl problem" was linked to various and different contemporary societal factors, it was both rooted in the anxiety over how young women were occupying their leisure time. Mormons were not immune to the "girl problem," as church leaders, concerned women, and the YWJ directly addressed this problem by creating a model of young Mormon women should act.

Crafting a Mormon Girlhood

Mainstream prescriptive advice literature held a principal role in crafting the contours of what constituted a proper girlhood. This genre of publication for women, of which over one hundred new magazines had been printed in the United States by the mid-nineteenth century, usually featured short stories, poetry, and pieces of serial fiction and included regular articles on fashion, food preparation, and home life. The Northeast's prominent role in the development of women's advice literature cannot be overstated; both *Godey's Lady's Book* and the *Ladies' Home Journal*, two of the leading women's publications, were published in Philadelphia. The reach of these publications went far beyond the Northeast, as women all over the country read and purchased these periodicals. For example, twenty-year-old Mormon Mary Bennion of Taylorsville, Utah regularly bought the *Ladies' Home Journal*.[17] Mary was an avid reader as she mentioned reading mainstream fiction, church publications like the YWJ, and also the *Ladies' Home Journal.* Her reading of a cross-section of secular and Mormon publications reveals that some young, Mormon women looked to both sources to inform their understanding of young womanhood. Additionally, Mary's mother did not try to

[16] Miller, 1.
[17] Bennion, Journal (1909-1910), May 14, 1909; October 4, 1909; January 11, 1910; June 21, 1910.

stop her from reading non-Mormon publications but encouraged it, also suggesting women of her mother's and Mary's generations had been reading them for some time.

Publications like the *Ladies' Home Journal* contributed to the model of a proper American girlhood through different stories and advice pieces. One particular *Ladies' Home Journal* column directed at young women called "Side Talks with Girls," which began in 1890 and supposedly received 158,000 questions for advice, encouraged a model of proper girlhood that was also advocated by nineteenth-century advice writers and social commentators.[18] The column echoed the worries of middle-class parents concerned that urbanization, industrialization, and changing ideas of leisure undermined Victorian morality they wanted to install in their daughters. Widowed at the age of twenty, the columnist Isabel Mallone, who used the pen name Ruth Ashmore, wrote the column as a way to support herself while in her twenties and thirties. The main aim of the column was to provide young women guidance about how to remain respectable in the rapidly changing modern world. Mallon wrote disapprovingly of flirting, cosmetics, coeducation, and spending too much time with boys. At almost every turn, Mallon advocated for caution and moderation in regards to issues such as appearance, dress, and behavior.[19] In one column from 1890, Mallon wrote about a young woman: "if only she will stay at home, she will find work and womanly work waiting for her pretty white hands."[20] For advice writers like Mallon, it was better for young women to completely avoid the temptations of the new modern world rather than to risk engaging with it.

The YWJ offered similar content but with a Mormon emphasis. Historian Lisa Olsen Tait described how the YWJ's editor Susa Young Gates' positioned herself "as a representative of one specific generation." Gates' and her colleagues' writing took on a "sense of urgency" that "sought

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[18] Hunter, *How Young Ladies Became Girls: The Victorian Origins of American Girlhood*, 294.
[19] Hunter, *How Young Ladies Became Girls: The Victorian Origins of American Girlhood*, 142, 295, 370-1,
[20] Ruth Ashmore, "Side Talks with Girls," *Ladies Home Journal*, March 1890 quoted in Hunter, *How Young Ladies Became Girls: The Victorian Origins of American Girlhood* 370-1.

to preserve the intimate but hierarchical relationship between mothers and daughters that they saw as the essential dynamic of female socialization." This female socialization was essential to "guiding their daughters to become true Mormon women at a time when everything was changing and the stakes were high."[21] The YWJ served as the primary voice of the church leaders and influential Mormon women to instruct young Mormon how to embody the role of the perfect Mormon girl.

Explanations and expectations of what a Mormon girlhood was filled the different sections of the *Young Woman's Journal*. From the first days of the YWJ in 1889 and 1890, the significance of a proper Mormon (eternal) marriage and motherhood was stressed above all other important roles to young women. An article from the June 1890 edition of the YWJ encapsulates the values put forth for young women. The article was a printed version of a talk given by L.S. Dalton, a well-known suffragist and polygamist wife, in 1885 to the young women of the Beaver, Utah YLMIA entitled "Love, Courtship, and Marriage." L.S. Dalton, who stated that she was an authority on the topic of love because of her married status, asserts, "the highest type of human love is Godlike." Of marriage she writes: "true marriage between equals, is a high and holy estate, heaven-ordained for wise and glorious purposes, and they who enter its sacred precincts with pure hearts and clean hands through the acceptable door have drawn many steps nearer to the majesty of the eternal Father."[22] For Latter-day saints, marriage was a necessary spiritual step to gain salvation and become God-like. Attaining the "high and holy state" of Mormon eternal marriage was not a simple and easy achievement, as young men and women had to demonstrate their worthiness. An integral aspect of proving their worth was carrying out a chaste courtship between two church members.

Much of the 1885 talk "Love, Courtship, and Marriage" was dedicated to what an acceptable Mormon courtship was and what it was not. The first step toward attaining a "true marriage"

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[21] Tait, "The *Young Woman's Journal*: Gender and Generations in a Mormon Women's Magazine," 61.
[22] L.S. Dalton, "Love, Courtship and Marriage," *The Young Woman's Journal* 1 :9 (June, 1890): 313-4.

according to Dalton is for a young woman to love "God and His will, your duty and your integrity better than you love the best of men." Once a young woman knew she properly loved God than it was appropriate for a young woman to pursue a courtship with a suitable young man. According to Dalton, courtship should not be just a series of visits and acquaintances between a young woman and her suitor but should be "the occasion of making real acquaintance with each other's views and opinion on all the important questions of life." Though Dalton writes that courtship "is to a woman the sweet consciousness that she is precious to someone," she still cautions that such happiness can also blind her to her suitor's faults and lead to grave disappointments.[23]

Dalton's explanation of an appropriate Mormon courtship places much responsibility on the young woman to determine if her mate will make an appropriate eternal companion. Once a young woman finally does meet the suitable mate and he asks her to marry him, she must ask if he comprehends the responsibility of marriage. Dalton also advised young women to question a potential mate's worthiness by asking if he has ever broken the seventh commandment of adultery, adheres to the word of wisdom, pays tithing, and looks to prayer as a way to communicate with his Heavenly Father. As soon as he answers these questions in a manner that affirms he is an appropriate partner, the young woman should ask the young man to pray with her. "When they rise from their knees and look into each other's eyes, each will know beyond a doubt whether it be right to part then forever or whether they are destined to go side by side into eternity." Then it was permissible for the young couple to engage in "the pure kiss which crowns" the ideal courtship.[24]

Though Dalton does not directly mention plural or monogamous marriage, she seems to have written it for young woman who are considering monogamy with a young man. This talk was given in 1885, five years before the Manifesto was passed, publicly ending church-sanctioned

[23] Dalton, 314, 318.
[24] Dalton, 316-7.

polygamy. Written and delivered in between the passage of antipolygamy legislation, Dalton was no doubt influenced by the notion that plural marriage would no longer be condoned and would become an act of Mormonism's past. Regardless of the type of marriage that Mormons were engaging in—polygamy or monogamy—young women's proper conduct was key to upholding marriage as a sacred act.

Following the immediate aftermath of the manifesto, the *Young Woman's Journal* published some pieces about the problematic outcomes of this decision. Susa Young Gates, who wrote many of these warning editorials, emboldened her readers to take note of how the Manifesto could affect their future lives. She wrote:

> Oh, exclaims one of my bright young readers, I thought this manifesto made the men feel bad. I didn't think I had anything to do with the matter! You didn't? Well, just wait ten years, and see if this manifesto hasn't as much significance for you, sitting at home with your empty dreams, as it has for the young married man, who has had his choice from a surplus of girls as good and good-looking as you are, and who now has, at least, the comforts of home, with one wife and a growing family of children.[25]

Gates sought to convince young women and their parents that this was a grave situation and could become even worse. She implored young women to think ahead ten years when some women could become old maids. Speaking to the future experiences of these single women, Gates rhapsodized that these women would proclaim "what right had the government to demand that I should never have while on earth the privilege of living the highest law of God!"[26] At the end of the article, Gates warns young women not to let "one word of foolish, silly rejoicing passes your lips for what has been done." She urged for women to only speak of plural marriage only "in the most solemn and sacred spirit." This directive echoes just twenty years earlier when Eliza R. Snow and Margaret T. Snoot stated they overheard young women talking disparagingly about plural marriage. Even though

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[25] "The Editor's Department," *Young Woman's Journal* 2:6 (March, 1981): 284.
[26] *Young Woman's Journal* 2:6 (March, 1981): 284.

plural marriage was becoming a practice of the past, to Gates any negativity about the practice was negativity about the whole religion.

The end of plural marriage also led to fictional stories that focused on the role of marriage in the YWJ. Historian Lisa Tait has appropriately titled one strain of these stories "post-manifesto marriage fiction": stories featuring a young Mormon women marrying outside of the faith, a decision that led to disastrous consequences in her personal and familial life.[27] Another theme of fiction stories was celebrating the legacy of plural marriage. Because the journal began publishing just a few months before the Manifesto was passed, many women who wrote for and edited the journal were either plural wives or the children of polygamists. Through the process of publishing positive stories about plural marriage in the few years after the Manifesto, historian Rebecca de Schwienitz writes that these women could depict plural marriage as an "honorable legacy for the church and for women."[28] As church members embraced statehood in 1896, the YWJ still maintained its focus on perpetuating a proper Mormon girlhood while it gradually ceased to feature plural marriage as a primary subject.

Though the end of church-sanctioned plural marriage galvanized this widespread concern about young women's decorum and possibly marrying outside of the religion, expectations of young women's behavior did not radically change. What did change was that the church leadership wanted the young women to understand what was at stake if they chose to disrupt the church's expectations of them.

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[27] Tait, "The *Young Woman's Journal* and Its Stories: Gender and Generations in 1890s Mormondom," 149.
[28] De Schweinitz, "Preaching the Gospel of Church and Sex: Mormon Women's Fiction in the *Young Woman's Journal*, 1889-1910," 39.

The Mormon Discourse on Adolescence

The content of YWJ in the early twentieth century featured parts of a new "authoritative discourse" on adolescence, exemplified by the work of G. Stanley Hall and other specialists like psychiatrists, physicians, teachers, school administrators, sociologists, and religious leaders.[29] Starting in the mid 1900s and gaining more coverage in the mid 1910s, a discussion on health and the body dominated the conversations on adolescence in the YWJ.

Though it was a few years before the YWJ started employing the word adolescence, by the early 1900s the publication invoked current debates about youth. A 1902 article entitled "GIRLHOOD: Its Spiritual, Mental, and Spiritual Possibility" specifically references the work of G. Stanley Hall:

> Spiritually, at this period of a girl's life, the deepest foundation for faith and for all spiritual experiences can successfully be laid. Dr. G Stanley Hall tells us that at this formative period the whole foundation of future religion or skepticism is laid. Fortunate are the girls of the Latter-day Saints in their Mutual Improvement Associations which provide the definite instruction and the clear insight into spiritual things, too often neglected in the ordinary home life.[30]

References to G. Stanley Hall's work on adolescence illuminates how church members were taking advantage of more mainstream literature and social theory to inform their own opinions about this valuable period for young women. Adolescence was not just rife with possible temptation and foolish behavior, but it was also a time in which a young woman wholly accepted and appreciated religion.

The YWJ outlined how adolescence was connected to the future of the religion. This line from a 1921 article from the YWJ explicates the integral role female puberty plays in Mormon theology:

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[29] Kathleen Alaimo, "The Authority of Experts: The Crisis of Female Adolescence in France and England, 1880 – 1920" in *Satanic Mills: Placing Girls in European History, 1750-1960,* edited by Mary Jo Maynes, Birgitte Søland, and Christina Benninghaus (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005), 151

[30] "GIRLHOOD: Its Physical, Mental, and Spiritual Possibilities." *Young Woman's Journal* 13:3 (March, 1902): 143.

"This is the period when the body prepares to become immortal through reproduction."[31] Young Mormon women's adolescence was not only fragile because of the biological development but also because it stood as the dire moment for the girl's salvation and for the church as a whole. Mormons could actively use Hall's idea that "Adolescence" serves "as a battleground between sexual and religious desire," to advise parents, teachers, and family members to impart valuable knowledge about proper and improper sexuality to young women during this vulnerable time.[32]

Taking a page from G. Stanley Hall, who believed that sex should not be shrouded in mystery, Susa Young Gates preferred a direct approach when discussing sex. An article "Our Standard of Purity" written as a forum with the contributions of different women like Gates and Alice Reynolds, the current present of the Utah Stake YLMIA, examined the roles of the home, school, food, and dress. Gates urged straightforward biological information combined with the religious outcomes of improper behavior. Gates wrote: "Encourage the girls with life's sacredness and beauty. They should be taught the mysteries of life when they begin to question them—and taught their sacredness and holiness. They are not vulgar."[33] But Gates' instructions toward teaching about biology did not stop there as she urged teachers to "Make the girls really afraid of sin—it is one of the best protections that can be given." Straightforward knowledge combined with threats of negative eternal outcomes drove the discourse on young women, adolescence, health, and sexuality.

The discussions around health, sexuality, and adolescence focused on several subjects: sleep and exercise, the process of puberty, and the subjects of courtship, marriage, and motherhood as related to their theological duties. The discourse on health and adolescence both relied upon the opinions of Mormon leaders and experts but also included many of the leading thinkers on

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[31] Frank A. Arnold, "A Distinguished Visitor to Utah" *Young Woman's Journal* 32:3 (March, 1921): 129.
[32] Moslener, 6.
[33] "Our Standard of Purity," *Young Woman's Journal* 18:8 (August, 1907): 375.

adolescence including G. Stanley Hall and Luther Gulick, the founder of the Campfire Girls movement.

The YWJ vacillated between discussing puberty in specifics terms and abstract ways. Discussions of puberty and menstruation urged that young women should be treated with sympathy but also receive no special attention unless necessary. In a summary of advice from Dr. Caroline Hedger of Chicago, who was a well-known advocate for public health measures, urged parents to be upfront with their children about the changes they will experience during puberty: "We do not need to tell them all we know, but we must not shut the door to confidence. We should not call the menstrual period a sick time. A girl should feel perfectly well when menstruating."[34] Also related to health of the time, the 1919 YWJ reported that Luther Gulick, who was then deceased, "said that during that period" of adolescence "girls should have an average of nine sleep or rest out of every twenty-four."[35]

Other explanations of puberty during girlhood drew upon the authoritarian voices of experts like G. Stanley Hall. The 1925 YWJ quoted G. Stanley Hall:

> Puberty for a girl is floating down a broadening river into the open sea. Landmarks recede; the water depends and changes in its nature; the currents are more complex; and the phenomena of tides make new conditions and new dangers. The bark is frail, liable to be tossed by storms of feeling, at the mercy of wind and wave, and if without chard and compass, and simple rules of navigation, aimless drifting in the darkness of ignorance, amidst both rocks and shoals, may make of the weak or unadvised, wrecks or castaways.[36]

Hall's language which Sara Moslener aptly describes as "the sentimentality of a Victorian poet," regularly emphasized women's importance as future mothers. Hall saw women's utmost duty as protecting their future reproduction, and his main emphasis in the terms of young women was focusing on sexual hygiene.[37] Also written in sentimental language, the YWJ writer referred to

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[34] Arnold, "A Distinguished Visitor to Utah," 129.
[35] "Safeguard Health," *Young Woman's Journal* 30:10 (October, 1919): 612.
[36] "The Beauty of Adolescence," *Young Woman's Journal* 36: 11 (November, 1925): 720
[37] Moselener, 21.

puberty as "the life force that manifests itself at fourteen or thereabout" and brings a "glow of health and vigor, announcing the coming of womanhood, is a source of beauty; it is nature's crowning work, and to her it is most sacred.[38] The term "her" could apply to both Mother Nature and the young women, both creations of the Heavenly Father. Drawing from Mormon theology, the writers urged parents to offer "proper guidance in diet, morals and ethics, and careful supervision in athletics; understanding, guidance, and supervision, we repeat, for the sake of the generation yet to come."[39]

Also driving the YWJ's conversation about puberty was young women's sexual awakening during this period. The writers throughout the YWJ implored for parental openness with information about sexuality but, of course, not to encourage improper behavior. The 1925 article described, "noticeable mental developments" during this period "change in attitude toward the opposite sex" and "an awakening of the procreative impulse, sometimes stronger than judgment." Also drawing the concern of older women was "over-sexed girl." The "over-sexed girl" was not necessarily a young woman who purposefully displayed sexuality but an eighth grade or high school girl who has the effect of driving "every boy crazy who comes in within ten feet of her." Solutions for curing the "over-sexedness" of the girl included "a regime of much sleep on a level hard bed and light covering," "hard exercise, no cheek by jowl dancing, decent movies, and well selected readings."[40] The article did not make any mention of the need for young men to control themselves, reaffirming the idea that it was young women's responsibility to act as the moral arbiter for both young men and women.

One of the last, but certainly not least, concerns of the YWJ was assuring proper courtship between Mormons. Two different articles from 1924 and 1925 elucidated how early mid-twentieth

[38] "The Beauty of Adolescence," 720.
[39] "The Beauty of Adolescence," 720.
[40] Arnold, "A Distinguished Visitor to Utah," 129.

Mormons viewed the correct process of finding a suitable mate. A 1924 article starts that while the "group instinct is strong" for young adolescents, after awhile, "soon one friend who is preferred above all others, and one day we find that each is the only one in the world, and we become engaged"[41] An article from 1925 described how the high school in Ogden was the first high school in the nation to offer a eugenics course. While speaking to the perceived value of such a course, the writer also said: " We rather think they will fall in love in the good old fashioned way and that the race will have to be born anew before we put brains into lovemaking."[42] Both articles pointed to the significance of how a carefully curated Mormon home and church experience would push young Mormon men and women to meet each other through friendship and acquaintances from church activities. These articles rearticulated the points originally stated by Lucinda Dalton from 1885 that young men and women should become acquainted through getting to know one another and their values, likes, and dislikes in a proper environment.[43] Though the YWJ still emphasized the message that proper, "old-fashioned" courtship and romance would bring the most happiness, the way the message was disseminated had changed. The YWJ used the latest mainstream expert advice that fit within the church's worldview to encourage the upholding of Mormon womanhood, marriage, and family. By taking advantage of this a discourse that included experts in the 1900s-1920s, the church was able to become part of the mainstream on their terms and spread advice that represented their long-standing values.

The Out-of-Doors Trend in Mormonism

The rise of children's outdoor activities surfaced as one of the most enduring outcomes of anxiety regarding modernity. Two of the most well-known renderings of this movement are scouting programs and the establishment of summer camps. Began as a place for middle-class and upper-

41 Bertha S. Stevenson, "The Right Thing at the Right Time," *Young Woman's Journal* 35: 5 (May, 1924): 271.
42 Frank A. Arnold, "Bookish Corner for Girls," Young Woman's Journal 36: 10 (October, 1925): 617.
43 Dalton, 313-318.

class Protestant Boys in the 1880s, by the mid-twentieth century, different ethnic, religious, and cultural groups started their own camps.[44] As Leslie Paris writes in her monograph *Children's Nature: The Rise of the American Summer Camp*, "widely disparate groups of adults came to share the belief that rural spaces were healthier and safer for children than cities were…" These "disparate groups" also established and promoted "individual camps" that "remained strikingly segregated spaces, designed to reflect or 'uplift' particular constituencies."[45] Mormons also embraced this trend and started opening their own camps in the 1910s. Mormons were worried about effects of the city and how the latest generation of Mormon children was losing touch with an inherent understanding of Mormon and frontier values that was apparent in the older generations. To combat this problem, the church attempted to combine the latest out-of-door trends with a Mormon emphasis to create new programs.

A 1913 article in the YWJ spoke to this growing concern about young women:

> It is quite generally recognized that conditions surrounding our girls have greatly changed within the past few years. In Salt Lake City comparatively few of them remain in the homes. This was brought strongly to our attention a short time ago when we found it necessary to have the assistance of several girls during the day time. It was with great difficulty that we found within an entire ward scarcely more than a dozen girls. Scores of them are now engaged in offices, department, and factors and others are in school.[46]

The YLMIA wasted no time in attempting to contend with this issue and started to construct summer camps. In the early 1910s, Liberty Glen Camp opened as the first camp affiliated with the Young Ladies' MIA. A fellow Mormon who lived on farmland around ten miles from downtown Salt Lake City donated land for the camp. Even though the camp was "within twenty minutes' walk of the street car line", the YWJ article asserted that "the place presents every feature of one remotely situated from civilization. The camp consisted of a "large sleeping house" that stood

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[44] Leslie Paris, *Children's Nature The Rise of the American Summer Camp* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 3.
[45] Paris, 7.
[46] "Liberty Glen Camp," *Young Woman's Journal* 24:1 (January, 1913): 31.

"twenty by forty feet." Girls slept on cots with straw mattresses. During the six week run of the camp's first season, more than one hundred girls stayed at the Liberty Glen Home, with around twenty staying each week. The young women worked together to cook for each other, do kitchen and dining room chores, and attend to overall cleaning duties and upkeep of the house.[47]

Seeing the positive reaction the Liberty Glen Camp, the YLMIA wasted no time in opening up nine more camps. The story of the Brighton Camp illuminates how the YLMIA approached the development of camps as a religious process. A committee of women from four Salt Lake Stakes first met in 1918 to decide the possibility of a new camp. As reported in the history of the camp, the committee members immediately felt drawn to this quintessential location: "With their dream in their hearts, the committee members scrambled over the rough terrain of Brighton, and finally found their sunny, flower-filled, pine-fringed dell overlooking the valley below, and recognized it immediately. They echoed Brigham Young's earlier, 'This is the place!' with conviction." Sister J. Anderson of the Pioneer Stake reflected that the natural surroundings of "the hedge of pines and aspens with wild alpine flowers growing among the trees and in the crevices of the rocks, made us feel that that we were truly in 'God's Garden.'" Connecting the committee members' first glimpse of the future location of the Brighton home with Brigham Young's "This is the Place" declaration iterated the religious underpinnings of the YLMIA's motivations for developing summer homes. The homes could not just be built in any natural setting, as the camp's organizers were looking for an atmosphere that stirred their emotions.[48]

Many of the young women who first attended the camp shared the organizer's immediate love of the location and its beauty. The recollection of Mary Teerlink, a sixteen year old who attended the camp in the first days of its opening, reveals that even though the camp was only thirty

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[47] "Liberty Glen Camp," *Young Woman's Journal,* 31-4.
[48] "A History of the Brighton LDS camp," M257.4 H673 1990. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

miles away for some of these "city" girls, the trek to the camp and its environment made it feel like a world away from their day to day life. Teerlink remembered that on "a warm summer day," nine girls met in downtown Salt Lake where trucks provided by the Fire Department picked them up and took them up to the camp. The trucks were necessary to transport the girls as none of their families owned cars. The drive up to Brighton was long and likely felt treacherous as it climbed thirty miles up the mountain. To cool down the bus's radiator, the bus driver had to periodically stop the bus to insert cold water into the radiator from the Brighton Creek during the steep climb. Upon her arrival, Teerlink was taken aback by the sight of the newly built lodge:

> At noon we arrived in Brighton. What a beautiful place. I had never been there before. To see all of the beautiful pines, flowers and mountains, it was wonderful. As we came into view of the Girls Home, oh how beautiful. So huge, all made of new logs, what a commanding sight it was. It was just a shell but enough to thrill me very much." During her first stay, Mary and her friends slept on shared mattresses on the floor "in one long row.

They filled their days with a morning get together, hikes to nearby lakes, cooking for each other, and a final night prayer. There were a few rules but they existed to "make sure that all girls were accounted for and everything was all right."[49]

Whereas the early days of the camps was not defined by scheduled activities and stringent rules, one commonality that was maintained was the restrictions against and limitations on male visitors. For example, in 1925, the rules for the Ogden Camp stated that each stake should be responsible that chaperones "are reliable women and capable of taking care of girls…Each company is responsible for proper conduct of the camp. A definite time or times should be set for receiving visits, especially gentlemen, and this decisions must be strictly adhered to."[50] At Camp Atoka near Logan, boys were only allowed to visit the camp for sacrament meeting, but that did not stop some young men from surreptitiously visiting their girlfriends. One woman remembered: "The

[49] "A History of the Brighton LDS camp."
[50] "M.I.A. Summer Home Season," *Young Woman's Journal* 36:7 (July, 1925), 486.

Valley girls were close to home and some boyfriend couldn't resist the urge to drive up, wade across the river in the early evening, and give love whistles from the bushes to lure the older girls down for a visit by the river. This of course was taboo."[51]

Unsupervised interactions between young Mormon men and women were not condoned but the sort of innocent flirtation described at Camp Lakota, which would lead to a Mormon temple marriage, was the desire of those who planned recreation for the MIA. In 1912, Heber J. Grant stated in regard to the Young Men's MIA: "Do away with our associations and you reduce the young ladies' opportunities to capture good husbands. As a social center in which public and private amusements may be carried on, and proper conduct inculcated and made popular, our organizations are useful and beneficial."[52] These associations and their activities served as pivotal spaces where young men and women could get to know each other in a Mormon-centered setting. The purpose of setting up camps was to bring young women out of the city and to find new ways to teach them the important aspects of Mormon theology. This was also the purpose of the Bee-Hive Girls, the church's scouting program for young women.

The church's establishment of the Bee-Hive Girls in 1915 is instructive of the tension between balancing mainstream ideas and Mormon ideals in the early twentieth century. The church also started officially associating with the Boy Scouts in 1913. Also during the summer of 1913, the Ensign Stake YLMIA incorporated some Camp Fire Girl activities and the Box Elder YLMIA used some aspects of the Girl Guides' activities.[53]

Sir Robert Baden-Powell, a decorated British general of the Second Boar War, lit the spark for scouting programs with his book *Scouting for Boys* (1908). After the establishment of the first Boy Scouts program in England, the Girl Guides program was soon established in that country. The idea

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[51] Carol T. Hines, *Camp Atoka: A History, 1912-1980*, (Carol T. Hines: 1987), 11.
[52] Heber J. Grant, "The Place of the Y.M.M.I.A. in the Church," *Improvement Era* 15:8 (Aug. 1912): 873, 875-76
[53] Charlotte Stewart, "Bee-Hive Girls and Campfire Girls," *Young Woman's Journal* 29: 8 (August 1918): 202.

to develop an American Girl Guides program was brought to the United States in 1912 by Juliette Gordon Low. After the Southern socialite was widowed by her British husband, Low became acquainted with Baden-Powell and involved with the guiding program. Historian Susan A. Miller explains that Low's return to the United States "allowed" her to "transform the Guides into an organization more suited to her own vision of American girlhood."[54]

The scouting movement for young women was not limited to Juliette Gordon Low's scouting program. Luther and Charlotte Gulick who had long been involved in youth movements—Luther Gulick served as superintendent of the physical education department of the International YMCA Training School—had developed another group for young women called the Campfire Girls. The organization's name stemmed from their belief that women belonged and thrived in the domestic realm, the hearth of the home. Susan A. Mitchell writes that for founders Luther and Charlotte Gulick, "modern culture, rather than protecting girls, had inadvertently shielded them from a healthy unfolding of their domestic nature. Camp Fire would solve this problem with the revival of a profound respect for the campfire itself, symbol of a more primitive times when fire's power had been domesticated in the service of the home."[55]

The distinctions between the groups became obvious when the American Girl Guides wished to change their name to the Girl Scouts, a name more representative of their "pioneer heritage." The Chief Boy Scout Executive in the United States James E. West expressed outrage at the name change as he believed that associating the term girls with scouts "sissified" and "trivialized" the group for young men and would decrease the membership.[56] This, of course, was not the case as memberships for each group skyrocketed in the United States. American Boy Scout executives also held other reasons for disassociating themselves from the new American Girl Scouts,

[54] Miller, 25
[55] Miller, 5.
[56] Rothschild, 116-8.

as they were invested in working with the Campfire Girls. James West thought that the Campfire Girls was a more appropriate group to associate with the Boy Scouts, and Gulick expressed doubts that Juliette Gordon Low, a long time widow, would establish a group oriented to domesticity. Even after Gulick and West reached out to Robert Baden-Powell over their concerns, Baden-Powell remained loyal to Low's role in leading the Girl Scouts.[57]

By 1914, the leadership of the YLMIA directly displayed their preference for the Campfire Girls program over the Girl Scouts model. In a 1914 YWJ piece, Polly A. Reynolds made the reasons behind the preference for the Campfire Girls apparent. Reynolds wrote that the Girl Scouts program "forgot the great essential fact in the history and progress of the race that woman's sphere centers in and about the home." "In all it offered," the Girl Scout movement "took the girl from the home." Reynolds pointed to the Gulick's program's symbol of the campfire to illustrate how the program promoted domestic ideals:

> In the early history of the race when the division of labor took place, the woman stayed at home around the fire while the man went out to seek adventure battling with nature. The campfire was then the center of the home. Even in this age of hat air, steam gas and electricity the hearth is still the symbol and center of family life and relationship.[58]

To see if the Campfire Girls program would work for the church's young some women, the Granite Stake of Salt Lake City integrated some Campfire Girls activities into their summer activities. In 1914, the YWJ reported this experiment in Granite Stake of Salt Lake City "has been the most successful summer work."[59] The successful adaptation of the Campfire girls activities impelled the YLMIA leadership to realize that a scouting program could be an essential part of young women's development. However, in the fall of 1914, the YLMIA announced their plans to institutionalize a scouting program, the Bee-Hive Girls, a specifically Mormon scouting program.

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[57] Miller, 28.
[58] Polly A. Reynolds, The Camp Fire Girls, *Young Woman's Journal* 25:5 (May, 1914): 289-290.
[59] "Officer's Notes," *Young Woman's Journal* 25:12 (December, 1914): 766

Why did the YLMIA decide to not officially join with the Campfire Girls, a group whose principles ideally fit with those of the Latter-day Saints? According to one source, the YLMIA presented a modified plan to the Campfire Girls that was ultimately rejected by the organization.[60] Another reason put forth by the YLMIA was that the Campfire Girls program would require too much from the members of the stake and general boards to oversee the new campfire activities in addition to the church duties they also held.[61] In a 1918 YWJ article about the Campfire Girls, Charlotte Stewart, the Salt Lake City recreation manager, asserted that the decision not to officially associate with the Campfire Girls did not lead to bitter feelings between the groups. Stewart reported that during a recent trip to New York: "a member of the Bee-Hive committee spent a whole with Dr. Gulick at the Camp Fire Office." Dr. Gulick was "not jealous that" both groups "had not traveled in the same trail, but happy that they were both blazing the same kind of trail…because they both represented organization that were striving in the same cause to spiritualize, broaden, qualify, and make more efficient, to meet life's crises, the young womanhood of America."[62]

The YLMIA crafted their own program that was innately representative of Mormon and frontier values. The first and most obvious change was the name, which held historical, cultural and religious ties for the Latter-day Saints. Under the officer's notes in a 1914 YWJ, the name change was addressed: "We feel that this title is appropriate as it bears a direct application to our Church and western home."[63] The adoption of the symbol likely seemed very natural to the residents of Utah, as it was a symbol inseparable from the Mormon Church. Brigham Young came up with the name to refer to the hard work and communal atmosphere of the first Mormon settlers. A 1881 *Deseret News Article* stated: "The hive and honey bees form our communal coat of arms…. It is a significant

[60] Kimball, *Sports in Zion: Mormon Recreation, 1890-1940*, 146.
[61] Charlotte Stewart, "Bee-Hive Girls and Camp Fire Girls," *Young Woman's Journal* 19:4 (April, 1918): 202.
[62] Stewart, 202-3.
[63] "Officers' Notes," 765.

representation of the industry, harmony, order and frugality of the people, and of the sweet results of their toil, union and intelligent cooperation."[64]

Embodying their Religion

Within the first pages of the inaugural Bee-Hive Girl guidebook, the purpose of the Bee-Hive Girls to teach young women how to physically perform and live their religion was made clear. "For several years past," the guidebook stated, "the idea has been growing that we need to make our work more concrete, to give our members an opportunity to work with their hands, to show results from the training they received." The YLMIA leaders never intended the new scouting program to supplant the association, as they saw it as an organic extension of the association's mission of "endeavoring to place before those things which are most essential to the building of a perfect womanhood."[65] The next stage of perfecting future womanhood was to literally teach these young woman how to use their bodies as Mormon women.

The new program had three levels that the young women could ascend through: Bee-Hive girl, Builder of the Hive, and Keeper of the Bees. Physical activity was stressed throughout the seven fields of religion, home, health, domestic arts, out of doors, business, and public service. Some of these actions were Mormon specific such as reading the Book of Mormon or more general such as helping their mother with housework. Like the other scouting programs, the Bee-Hive Girls program offered awards for the completion of tasks as the young women ascended through the program. The young women received seals, after completing tasks or "cells" to attach to the pages of their guidebooks. The guidebook offered a comprehensive explanation for how the cells related to each other:

> As a hive is made up of cells filled with different kinds of honey, pollen, eggs, larvae, so are our bodies made up of cells filled with the different elements taken into them, so is

[64] *Deseret News*, 18 October, 1881.
[65] *Hand Book for the Bee-Hive Girls of the Y.L.M.I.A.* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association, 1915), 3.

> womanhood built and perfected by the different things we gather through our experiences in various fields. The Bee-Hive Girl will fill two kinds of cells: Foundation cells, those required to be filled by each member before she can advance to a higher rank; Structural cells, those which she will select and fill from seven fields.[66]

The language was carefully employed to describe this process and simultaneously drew upon Mormon theology and culture. References to the body of course referred to the perfecting and honoring body in the temporal life for the eternal life. The use of this language reminded young women of how they not only related to each other but also to their religion as they completed the cells to earn their seals.

One of the most obvious lessons that the Bee-Hive Girls incorporated to discuss the perfecting and honoring the body was following the word of wisdom. The word of wisdom was a revelation received by Joseph F. Smith proscribing church members from drinking hot drinks (caffeinated beverages like tea and coffee) and alcohol, avoiding tobacco, and following a diet of vegetables and little meat. Beginning in the early twentieth century, church officials reemphasized the word of wisdom as essential to Mormon doctrine. This was evident in the first Bee-Hive Girls guide book. A lesson under the foundational cells, activities necessary for young women to move to the next level, directed young women to "Study the revelation containing the Word of Wisdom (sec. 89, Doc. & Cov.) Explain it's meaning… Obey it for at least two months."[67] The dictate to follow it only for two months elucidates how the dietary code was not yet a required tenet for all Latter-day Saints. By 1921, following the word of wisdom was required for admittance into the temple and

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[66] Hand Book for the Bee-Hive Girls of the Y.L.M.I.A. (1915), 4-5.
The chosen name was regularly attributed to a book titled *Life of the Bees* by Maurice Maeterlinck, a European poet and essayist that captured in vivid detail the relationship of the bee to the larger-bee-hive. The 1919 guidebook for the Bee-Hive Girls reminded readers that in the book, Maeterlinck refers to "The Spirit of the Hive," as "an invisible something which moves each bee to do its work." *Hand Book for the Bee-Hive Girls of the Y.L.M.I.A.* (Salt Lake City: The General Board of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association, 1919), 9. See also, Maurice Maeterlinck, *The Life of the Bee* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1901).
[67] *Hand Book for the Bee-Hive Girls of the Y.L.M.I.A.* (1915), 10

participation in temple ceremonies.[68] The reemphasis on following the word of wisdom was just one way the church worked to teach its members about the sacrality of the body.

A Bee-Hive Girl task that taught young women about the sacrality of their body and how it related to the afterlife was participating in Baptisms for the Dead. Baptism for the Dead involved a practicing Latter-day Saint acting as a proxy for a deceased person who did not have the chance to hear the gospel of the church during their lifetime. Once an individual's name was baptized, the person had the choice to accept or deny the gospel in the afterlife. If accepted, the individual would be reunited with their Latter-day Saint family members for all eternity. Completing one's genealogy is essential to their church membership, as that research allows them to compile a comprehensive list of those who can be baptized.[69] The act and ceremony of Baptism for the Dead connected two parts of Mormon theology: the decision to accept the Gospel of Mormonism and connecting the living with the dead, connecting the present to the eternal. The 1919 guidebook codified the sacred temple practice of Baptism for the Dead as a task that a young woman could count toward her cells. The directives for this cell read: "Twenty times be baptized for the dead" and "Go though the temple for the dead at least three times."[70]

This would not be the first time these young women would encounter the act of baptism. At the age of eight years old, all Latter-day Saint children born under the covenant of Temple marriage

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[68] Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, 315-7.

[69] Alexander*, Mormonism in Transition,* 315.

The Mormon practice of baptism for the dead has incited outrage for the proxy baptisms of Jewish Holocaust victims in the mid-1990s. Following years of negotiations between Holocaust survivors organizations and the church, the church has agreed to only baptize Jewish Holocaust survivors who were ancestors of living church members or if the church had consent of all living family members. Nonetheless, in 2004 and 2006 some Holocaust survivors groups stated that the church still continued this practice. For more information, see Mark Oppenheimer, "A Twist on Posthumous Baptisms Leaves Jews Miffed at Mormon Rite," *New York Times,* March 2, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/03/us/jews-take-issue-with-posthumous-mormon-baptisms-beliefs.html?_r=0 Accessed 18 May, 2016: Richard N. Ostling and Joan K. Ostling, *Mormon America: The Power and the Promise* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999), 193.

[70] *Hand Book for the Bee-Hive Girls of the Y.L.M.I.A.* (1919), 31.

took part in the sacred ordinance of baptism. This baptism does not take place within the temple, instead it is performed in meetinghouses where weekly Sunday church meetings are held. According to "Baptism, Its Efficacy and Symbolism" in the 1916 YWJ, baptism served as a "fitting manifestation of humility" as "the individual thus softened and mellowed" "below all things even as did Savior before him." In addition to teaching humility, baptism is "an indication of obedience." The necessity of obedience was repeated throughout the lesson, and it reminded young women "Obedience to the will of the Father should not be irksome."[71]

Whereas one's baptism into the faith was a shared rite of passage between Latter-day Saints, entrance into the temple and participation in temple rituals were not open to all. An anecdote from Juanita Brooks' girlhood memoir details how her family took an opportunity to visit family and to see the Temple in St. George, Utah. Mormon temples, the sacred building for the church, are only open to church members who have been baptized and are in good standing with the church at a certain age in early adulthood. The temples are used for sacred ritual and practices including marriage ceremonies, endowments, and baptism for the dead. Because she was a young girl, Brooks could only visit the outside of the temple.

In her autobiography she wrote:

> I was so overwhelmed by the temple that I was almost afraid to go near. I felt that if I looked close, I might see angels hovering near the spire. But I did touch the wall at last, and I did climb up the steps to the eastern door where Aunt Rosina said the Savior would enter when He came.[72]

Brooks' childhood story about the temple illustrates how the sacred building was one of mystery for children of the church. Many young women like Juanita knew that the temple was a sacred space where necessary rituals to Mormonism were performed, but it was not a regularly discussed topic in

[71] "Baptism, its Efficacy and Symbolism," *Young Woman's Journal* 27:10 (October, 1916): 638.
[72] Brooks, *Quicksand and Cactus*, 96-7.

church meetings. Young women regularly learned about the sacredness of the temple but not specifics about what occurred in it.

Though the temple remained a mystery to many children, there is evidence of some children entering the temple for not widely-practiced rituals. Two of these ceremonies were child-to-parent adoptive sealing rituals and baptism for health. Child-to-parent adoptive sealing rituals allowed unrelated individuals to be sealed to other Mormons to create an eternal family. For a variety of reasons linked to the difficult days of the church's migrations and early settlement in Utah, people sought out guarantee of family in any way they can. Others sought out new familial connections if other members of their temporal family did not accept the gospel or their family members had apostatized form the church.[73] In 1877 before he died, Brigham Young wrote to Wilford Woodruff and addressed the age and circumstances under which children were to engage in the adoptive sealings. If a child was born to parents not under the covenant, it was necessary that they be sealed to their parents "no matter if they die before or after they are eight years old or live to man and womanhood."[74] Children, whose parents have apostatized from the church, could be adopted into another family.[75] This variation could also apply to the deceased child under the age of eight whose parents had apostatized. If an adoption sealing was desired under these circumstances, a proxy would perform it. Another reason that children entered the temple was for baptism for health.[76] Baptisms for health had occurred since the early days of the church. Individuals like an eight year girl in 1920 sought a baptism for the improvement of health. The eight year old girl, who had a damaged heart from the measles traveled to the temple and was baptized twice, "the second time for

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[73] Jonathan A. Stapley, "Adoptive Sealing Ritual in Mormonism," *Journal of Mormon History* 37.3 (Summer 2011); 55.
[74] Stapley, 98.
[75] Stapley, 98.
[76] Jonathan A. Stapley and Kristine L. Wright, "'They Shall be Made Whole': A History of Baptism for Health," *Journal of Mormon History* 34:4 (Fall 2008): 103.

my health."[77] Since the age of first baptism was supposed to occur at eight years old, this young girl likely experienced her first baptism and a baptism for health at the same time.

Given these examples, young Mormon women entering the temple to as serve proxy baptizees was not an exceptional scenario on its own. What was exceptional was that young women were being awarded for performing a sacred task. Even more exceptional was the fashion in which they were rewarded. The awarding of this action worked to sacralize the practice but also normalized the act within the Mormon world. Young women received a cell for baptism for the dead just as they would for another religious act like reading the New Testament.[78] Richard Orsi's term "the corporalization of the sacred" provides a framework to understand how the church adults envisioned this activity and how they expected the children to experience it. Orsi writes that "the corporalization of the sacred" "is the practice of rendering the invisible visible by constituting it as an experience in a body—in one's own body or someone else's body—so that the experiencing body itself becomes the bearer of the presence of for oneself and for the others."[79] In other words, such an act makes the "spiritual" "concrete" for the young women.[80] Participating in such an act served as a lesson in two of the church's main theological tenets for the young women: the primacy of the body in temporal and eternal life and the possibility of the deceased to accept the gospel in the afterlife.

Traveling to the Temple for Baptism for the Dead

Though we only hear the experiences of the young women via their chaperones, they reiterate how temple rituals were necessary toward one's Mormonness. Throughout the 1920s, the *Young Woman's Journal* included pieces written by those chaperoning young women to the temple to

[77] Stapley and Wright, 108.
[78] *Hand Book for the Bee-Hive Girls of the Y.L.M.I.A.* (1919), 31, 33, 49.
[79] Orsi, 74.
[80] Orsi, 75.

perform baptisms for the dead. As they were printed in the YWJ, a periodical to promote LDS theology and Mormon girlhood, the testimonies were overwhelmingly positive toward the experience of the young women. There were not any mentions in the recollections that young women felt strange taking part in this new (to them) ritual. For example, the 1923 Journal referred to a 1922 excursion of Bee-Hive Girls to the temple "an epoch in the history of Emerson Ward Young Ladies' Mutual and will be remembered by thirteen Mutual girls as one of the most enjoyable days spent in the service of mankind." The article continued to say the girls of the Emerson ward "noted that this was one of the most satisfying experiences of their lives and have decided to spend more time in the future in this worthy work."[81]

Some groups traveled long distances and encountered logistical obstacles when visiting the temple. The 1925 Star Valley Stake Bee-Hive girls of Wyoming dealt with housing and travel issues, as they tried to arrange a visit to the Logan temple 110 miles away. After some intricate planning, the stake was able to secure trucks to take the eighty-six girls on the journey. While the they had some difficulty in finding housing for an over night stop, they were elated when the matron of the YLMIA Logan Summer Home made last minute accommodations to house the young women. The home supplied a "delicious cooked supper, and by arranging best—rows on the floor—using rugs, couches, etc., we were housed and well-fed, even, almost, as the miracle of the Loaves and Fishes."[82] Though the generosity that these Bee-Hive Girls met along the way was heartily appreciated and welcomed, nothing compared to their experience in the temple.

The Starr Valley Stake Bee-Keeper Annie P.M. Hepworth related that "the testimony of each Star Valley Bee-Hive girl is that this was the most exquisitely enjoyable even thus far in her entire life." After their full day of work in the temple and a good night's sleep at the Lakota Summer

[81] "M.I.A. Notes: JUNIOR GIRLS, Granite Stake, Junior Girls Excursion to the Temple" *Young Woman's Journal* 24:1 (January 1924): 39.
[82] "Bee-Hive Girls of the Star Valley Stake," *Young Woman's Journal* 38:8 (August, 1927): 535-6.

Home in the Bear Lake Stake, they spent half a day at the lake "enjoying a peace and harmony and happiness such as never experienced by any of us, on any other trip in all our lives." Hepworth stated that beyond her "home circle" her work with the Bee-Hive girls of her stake "is the joy and inspiration of my whole life."[83] Hepworth's story of the whole journey illustrates how assisting young women was an important aspect of her own religious adherence. Other trips described by chaperones depicted the overall journey as a holy experience for the young women and themselves. Elsie Hoffman Buchanan, a chaperone for a trip to the Salt Lake Temple, wrote that "A sweet heavenly spirit was present in the short, impressive service. It was during this time that some of us heard angelic voices singing in the Temple of the Most High. The girls who heard the singing say that they cannot describe the wonderful feelings they enjoyed at the time."[84] Performing these baptisms for the dead were not just for the religious education of young women but they also served as a reaffirmation for the young women who were chaperones that these acts were of utmost importance.

Beyond teaching young women about the importance of the temple in its relationship to their religious observance, it also fulfilled the work of providing the deceased with the possibility of hearing the gospel in death. Some groups like those from the 1926 Junction Ward and Sutherland Ward were able to be baptized for 160 names each whereas other groups like the Blackfoot Stake were baptized for an upward of 1,650 names.[85] These numbers revealed that young women were essential to both the temporal continuation of the religion through future marriage and children but also to the spreading of the message in the afterlife. Young women's bodies were central to their personal and familial religiosity and to all potential church members.

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[83] "Bee-Hive Girls of the Star Valley Stake," 535-6.
[84] "Temple Outing," *Young Woman's Journal* 39.4 (April 1928): 249.
[85] "Bee-Hive Girls" *Young Woman's Journal* 28:9 (September 1927) 591-2; "Temple Excursion, Blackfoot Stake," YWJ 28:12 (December 1927): 797; "Bee-Hive Girls," YWJ 30:12 (December 1929): 698.

In 1928, the YWJ ran a story on the front page of the October edition whose title asked the question: "Is Religion Still Being Taught in the M.I.A?" The article pointed to how "M.I.A. Girls and boys who go in large numbers to the temple and are baptized for the dead" have a stronger understanding and appreciation for the spiritual significance of the "principle of universal salvation."[86] Through the bodily act of repeated baptism in the names of others, young women took part in a ritual they believed expanded beyond the temporal world. By including participating in baptism for the dead in the list of activities young women could pursue to move up through the ranks of the Bee-Hive girls, they were also learning about their religion worked beyond the temporal life, making real and tangible connections between their present lives, the lives of their ancestors, and other members. The belief in these tangible connections drove the theology of Mormonism.

Participating in a sacred act in the temple also reaffirmed the importance of the temple marriage to these young women. Though not all Bee-Hive girls did perform baptisms for the dead, that activity was part of a larger curriculum that emphasized the preexistence and the afterlife, health and the body, marriage and motherhood, and other parts of Mormon theology including the temple and the rituals performed inside of it. In 1925, the YWJ printed testimonies from young women who reviewed their progress as Bee-Hive Girls. These published comments are primarily intended to advertise the success of the Bee-Hive Girls' promotion of church values. It is unlikely that the YWJ would publish any testimonies that expressed any unease with religious rituals and lessons.

Hazel Fillmore of Provo testified that she learned about "natures' wonders" such as "the wonderful flowers and their meanings." She also remarked "In the field of Religion I have learned a great deal about my Church, especially some things about how it differs from other religions. This I feel is a great thing to know. Also about pre-existence, the value of being married in the Temple and many other things which strengthened my faith." In the same series Bertha Vogel also of Provo

[86] "Is Religion Still Being Taught in the M.I.A?," *Young Woman's Journal* 29:10 (October 1928): 664-5

stated that for her learning about health taught her to live a "clean and pure life, and the become worth of the name of the daughters of Zion." References to the temple and Zion indicate how these young were learning to instill the essential and unique tenets of their religion into their day-to-day life and worship. Bertha's references to living a "clean and pure" life alludes to the standards of the temple that she aims to live up to in order to have a proper temple endowment ceremony and marriage, thus solidifying her future as a Mormon woman.[87] The mention of preexistence also indicates that young women were not only being told that they should marry in the temple but were learning about the intricate theological steps specific to Mormonism to gain status in the celestial kingdom.

Not all young women looked fondly upon their temple experiences. Ann Eliza Young entered the temple when she was sixteen years old to receive her endowments. She wrote that while suffering from a prolonged illness, a Mormon leader suggested she go through the ceremony, as it would "surely be fully restored to health."[88] Looking forward to the ceremony that she was taught to hold sacred, she expected

> something elevating to the spirit, and ennobling the mind. How I was disappointed, everyone who entered the Endowment-House with feelings similar to my own will understand. In place of the awe I expected to find the rites endowed with, they were ridiculous and farcical in the extreme.[89]

When Heber Kimball asked if she had "found peace and help" after the endowments, Ann Eliza told him she "felt worse, if possible, than ever." The Mormon apostle then told her she did not take her "Endowments in the right spirit."[90] Before and during temple ceremonies, church members were forbidden from discussing the intricacies of the temple rituals or they could face excommunication.

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[87] "Bee-Hive Girls," *Young Woman's Journal* 26:6 (June 1925), 380-1.
[88] Young, *Wife No. 19, or the Story of a Life in Bondage, 333*.
[89] Young, *Wife No. 19, or the Story of a Life in Bondage, 338*.
[90] Young, *Wife No. 19, or the Story of a Life in Bondage, 354*.

Given that Ann Eliza was ready to abandon the religion, she did not worry about writing in detail about the ceremony.

Juanita Brooks, who remained a faithful member of the church, also shared her unease with the ceremonies. By the time Juanita was contemplating her temple marriage, her fiancé Ernest was suffering from undiagnosed late-stage cancer. His doctor urged the couple to marry in the temple before further testing was pursued. She wrote:

> We went to the temple on October 10, 1919, went through the whole ceremony, and we were sealed to each other at the end…I was not well-impressed with the ceremony—later I would talk it over with my mother, who was shocked and saddened by the fact that parts of it seemed medieval and repulsive to me. Ern was plain miserable; he walked around most of the time because he couldn't stand still.[91]

A variety of factors including her fiance's illness could have clouded her experience in the temple, her conversation with her mother illustrates that she felt unprepared for the ritual. In confessing her feelings to her mother, she was probably searching for some affirmation or reassurances of her feelings. Though she does not go into much detail about this exchange, her mother' shock and sadness indicates that she and Juanita did not talk at length about the ceremony or the temple before she entered it. These two recollections of the temple published in published memoirs elucidate that despite what they were being taught, not all young women walked away from the temple feeling strengthened in faith. These anecdotes suggests that some of the young women who participated in Baptisms for the Dead as part of the Bee-Hive Girls may have felt uncomfortable and ill at ease during the ceremony. The Bee-Hive participation in Baptism for the Dead worked to teach young women about their religion as it related to the temporal world and afterlife, but it did not guarantee that these young women understood the ceremony. For some, participating in the ritual did provide early exposure to the sacred, mysterious building and what happened inside. However, because not all women had this experiences, for many it was still a place of curiosity.

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[91] Brooks, *Quicksand and Cactus*, 234.

Conclusion: the Lecture and the Laboratory

The 1928 article that asked "Is Religion Still Being Taught in the M.I.A?" was written in response to hearing that "some of our officers are a little fearful" that "the teaching religion is being denied this organization." Of concern was that the MIA was devoting to much time "to secular studies and play." The writer of the article responded that the purpose of the MIA was to teach religion through "its application to life":

> In great institutions of learning there are two divisions—the lecture and the laboratory. In the first, theories and facts are taught; students talk about principles and systems. In the second, these principles are tested out or applied; the laboratory is the place for research, experimentation and proof. In the new movement evolved by the Church, the Sunday Schools and the Seminaries may be compared to the lecture room while the M.I.A. Is the great laboratory—and who shall say that the laboratory is not equally important with the lecture room? The great Plan of Salvation must first be learned and then lived.[92]

The article's use of the terms lecture and laboratory can be applied to how the YLMIA leaders used the YWJ and Bee-Hive Girls together to promote religious knowledge. By infusing discussions of theology with selective parts of secular, expert literature, the YWJ framed Mormon theology in a way that was appetizing to the youth of the early twentieth century. The 1928 article referred to the Sunday Schools and Seminaries of the church serving as the church's lecture room. The YWJ where teaching of religion took place should also be included in this category. By using particular aspects of "secular play," such as the Out-of-Doors Movement, the YLMIA drew upon current educational trends to impart lessons about the Word of Wisdom and Baptism for the Dead, rituals that affirmed the sacrality of the body in Mormon theology. The YLMIA leaders' hope was that young would connect intellectual understandings of Mormonism with how to physically live their religion.

Looking at the development of the church's programming for young women from the first meeting to plan the Retrenchment Association in 1869 to establishing the Bee-Hive Girls reveals

[92] "Is Religion Still Being Taught in the M.I.A?," 664.

how at different times the older generations of the church shared concern for young women. Of course, these concerns changed in relation to the wider concerns of the time. The intention of the first program, the Retrenchment Association, was to literally teach young women how to retrench from aspects of secular culture that were considered detrimental. A leading part of this retrenchment project was creating a Mormon community that thrived on self-sufficiency. The later iterations of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association and its sub-projects, the YWJ and Bee-Hive Girls, found ways to meld part of popular culture to fit the perceived needs of young Mormon women. While the *Young Woman's Journal* and the Bee-Hive Girls worked together to instruct young women about proper Mormonism through word and action, these programs can only tell us about what hopes and worries that the older generation of Mormons held for the church's young women.

The intentions of the older generations did shape the world of the church's youngest women, but their influence cannot be taken for granted. In addition to religious influence, their family of origin, friends and acquaintances, and their desires for their future also shaped their identities and experiences. While nearly all women discussed in this study cited marriage and motherhood as goals they hoped to reach, many young women were not only focused on these specific goals and also aimed to take part in the world of higher education and professional work for women.

CHAPTER THREE

"SACRED LITTLE BOOK": YOUNG MORMON WOMEN AND THEIR DIARIES

Introduction

In 1900, ten-year-old Mary Bennion and a few of her siblings each received "little black bound note-books" from their father for Christmas.[1] He instructed her and her siblings to "write in them every day, all the work we did, and all the meetings we attended and the church duties we did."[2] Mary heeded her father's advice and started writing in January of 1901, filling her diary over that year with quotidian details from milking cows on the family farm to teaching Sunday school. She was less diligent during her second full year of diary-keeping, as her notebook contained gaps of a week or even a month. In February of 1902, twelve-year-old Mary explained: "I thought it would be of little use to write my journal for the last few months because I did the same thing nearly every day."[3] While monotony played a role in her lack of entries, gaps in her writing also reflected disruptive shifts in Mary's family life.[4]

After rereading her diary at the age of fifty-nine, Mary wrote about her father's influence in the inside cover of her first journal:

> As we had been trained from babyhood to blind obedience to his [every word, we automatically, and mechanically, carried out his instructions. . . . We didn't even record the fact that our father was a polygamist, with three wives—our mother the first one; or that we had, throughout the years, acquired eight half brothers and sisters; even though these facts conditioned our lives more than anything else that has ever happened to any of us. Births, deaths, marriages, riches, poverty, sickness, war, depression, all these things put together do

[1] Mary Bennion, Journal (1901–06), flyleaf side 2, n.d.
[2] Bennion, Journal (1901–06), flyleaf side 2, n.d.
[3] Bennion, Journal (1901–06), page 42, February 1, 1902.
[4] Most diaries center on an assumed "dailiness," the notion that the diarist will make regular entries. Of course, long detailed entries did not necessarily imply that the writer had more to say, just as short entries or an absence of entries did not signal a period of monotony in a writer's life. See Harriet Blodgett, *Centuries of Female Days: Englishwomen's Private Diaries* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1988), 21; Elizabeth Hampsten, *Read This Only to Yourself: The Private Writings of Midwestern Women, 1880–1910* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 4.

> not count at all, in our struggle for happiness, when compared to the fact that our father was a polygamist.[5]

Following the discovery of her father's plural marriages at the age of twelve years old, Mary Bennion did not immediately confide that her father was a polygamist in her diary, and her diary remained a record of her chores, educational achievements, church responsibilities, and family activities. As she matured and seemingly gained more confidence, she claimed her diary as a space to express her true feelings about her father and his plural wife and family.

This chapter uses young Mormon women's diaries to examine how young Mormon women developed and expressed their consciousness during this transitional period in their personal lives and in the church. I argue that the historical moment in Mormonism during which women were writing greatly influenced how they perceived their identity and personal ambitions in relationship to the church. There are many commonalities between young Mormon women's diaries from the period between 1869 and the late 1920s: evidence of a strong devotion to Mormonism, loyalty for and love of family, respect and pursuit of education, desire to marry and be a mother, and a near constant eye to self-improvement. Nonetheless, the expression of these sentiments is attached to the historical moment in which they were writing. Young women writing in the 1860s saw ideas of self-improvement tied to their role helping their church community. They were able to use their diaries as a place to reflect on their autonomy within the church. Many of young women growing up around the 1890s demonstrated unease with their futures, indicating that the contemporary shifts within Mormonism were directly influencing their ideas of the future and identity. They expressed this unease through their concerns with courtship and marriage. If they expressed agency, it was almost always connected to whom they would marry. For those writing in the early twentieth century, though their devotion to Mormonism was evident, in many instances it did not supersede their desire for personal fulfillment outside of the church. These women primarily used education as a

[5] Bennion, Journal (1901–06), flyleaf side 2, January 1949.

method to develop autonomy. They did not turn their backs on Mormonism but did not see issues with attaining their personal goals and remaining loyal to the church.

Multiple components of both LDS and mainstream prescriptive literature, church theology, parental urging, and young diarist's own motivation affected how young Mormon women kept their diaries and what they were (and not) writing. What is captured in these diaries is a moment in flux for young Mormon women as they contended with their personal transitions from girlhood to womanhood and as their church acclimated to the broader American standards. Though direct references and detailed discussions of widespread changes like the passage of the manifesto and gaining of Utah statehood were mostly absent from these diaries, the overall content does demonstrate that these shifts in Mormon society altered the ways in which young women related to changing Mormon gender ideals, their families of origin, the revised process of courtship, higher education, and expectations for their futures as Mormon women.

Considering the Mormon Diary as a Source

The young women diarists of this chapter were writing during a wider evolution in diary-keeping. On the broadest level, diaries transitioned from being thought of as a method used by men and women for planning, self-discipline, and order to being identified as a feminine activity, a method for women to self-reflect and write private thoughts. During the twentieth century, the diary increasingly represented a frivolous pastime practiced by preadolescent and teenage girls.[6]

Young Mormon women's writing fit the larger themes of and changes within diary-keeping. Their writing was also influenced by particularities of their religion and culture. Their diaries responded to Mormon theology and reflected trends within Mormonism. When considering young Mormon diaries as a source, several themes materialize: the gendered assumptions of diary-keeping,

[6] Hunter, "Inscribing the Self in the Heart of the Family," 55, 75.

why Mormons wanted young women to write, how young women wrote for themselves, and who they were writing for.

Gendered Assumptions about Diary Writing

Assumptions about the diary-keeping habits of women and men have downplayed the existence of women's diaries. Despite the evidence that many women maintained diaries for personal purposes, men's writing has been overwhelmingly credited with leading the personal journal tradition.[7] While women's literacy rates and, therefore, ability to maintain a journal did lag behind men's until the late eighteenth century, there is ample evidence that more women began to keep diaries in the late 1700s and 1800s.[8] Beginning in the 1770s, publishers introduced daily planners that were organized around a weekly calendar. Versions of this popular planner, also known as a pocket diary, were standardized and sold in leading department stores. Even though these diaries were intended for men, many women relied upon pocket diaries to organize finances, keep record of appointments, and provide a sense of order to their households. By the late 1700s and early 1800s publishers began to create diaries geared toward women, demonstrating that the demand for such a product was growing.[9]

Women's lower literacy has usually been cited as the leading reason for the overrepresentation of men's diaries that are preserved and published. However, scholarship on women's writing has uncovered how aspects of the historical preservation process, interventions of family members, and women's own perceptions of the value of their writings worked to diminish the visibility of women's diaries. Women's unpublished manuscripts, "hidden" away in family attics

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[7] Cinthia Gannett, *Gender and the Journal Diaries and Academic Discourse* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 126; Blodgett, 26-7

Like the spiritual diaries, other forms of more "personal" writing emerged but almost always in relationship to other purposes beyond self-reflection: such as transcendentalist journals of the nineteenth century and the travel diary that followed westward expansion in the United States. See Gannet, 110.

[8] Gannett, 124; Molly A. McCarthy, *The Accidental Diarist: Time, Money, and the History of the Daily Planner in America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 95.

[9] McCarthy, 3, 6, 90, 150.

or uncatalogued but preserved in smaller research facilities, have remained unknown and, therefore, underexplored.[10] In her work on Mormon women's diaries, Maureen Ursenbach Beecher comments: "It should not surprise us, then, that in Davis Bitton's *Guide to Mormon Diaries* the ratio of women's to men's life writings is about one in ten, a discrepancy, I suggest, created as much by our failure to value and preserve women's life writings as by their failure to write."[11]

The difficulty in locating sources also leads to only one or a few volumes of one's personal writing being archived, resulting in the hardship of assembling a complete picture of a young woman's life. Because sources representing "average" youth can be difficult to obtain, the available sources tend to belong to young women who are considered "exceptional," meaning the diarist is a relative of a notable figure or becomes well-known later in her life. Because Latter-day Saints are typically meticulous record-keepers, there are a number of diaries, which were saved and preserved by families and donated to archives, used in the chapter. The writers in this chapter range from the children of well-known Mormons to average young women.

What and Why They were Supposed to be Writing

In the late nineteenth century, parents of middle-class girls encouraged their daughters to maintain diaries for purposes of self-discipline. Parents viewed the diary as a natural extension of young women's responsibilities. It was a place for her to record her duties and plans for self-improvement.[12] Mainstream children's magazines also reflected this use of the diary. In 1879, the

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[10] Gannet, 121; Penelope Franklin, *Private Pages: Diaries of American Women, 1830s–1970s* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1986), xiv; Elizabeth A. Meese, "Archival Materials: The Problem of Literary Reputation," in *Women in Print 1: Opportunities for Women's Studies Re Language and Literature,* edited by Joan E. Hartman and Ellen Messer Davidow (New York: Modern Language Association, 1982), 41.

[11] Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, "'Tryed and Purified As Gold': Mormon Women's 'Lives,'" *BYU Studies* 34: 4 (1995): 20. Ratio reference found in Davis Bitton, *Guide to Mormon Diaries & Autobiographies* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1977).
There are many instances of women's diaries being "censored" or destroyed by family members at the diarist's personal request. Protective family members also destroyed the diaries of female ancestors, ostensibly to safeguard her privacy. Gannet, 122.

[12] Hunter, "Inscribing the Self in the Heart of the Family," 54-5.

Scribner's periodical *St. Nicholas,* one of nearly 250 juvenile publications to emerge between 1840 and 1900, published a piece called "How to Keep a Journal."[13] The article recommended that a young writer should choose a "substantially bound blank-book " to "set down the date at the head of the first page" and "then begin the record of the day, endeavoring as far as possible to mention the events in the correct order of time—morning, afternoon, and evening."

Other advice from *St. Nicholas* became noticeably centered on perceived issues with young women's writing. A few stories in the periodical described young women who used their diaries to write down their daydreams. In one story, the father of a twelve-year-old girl states: "There is a vast difference between jotting and doing." The twelve-year-old girl filled her journal with embellished stories about her life but later destroyed her journal when recognizing the importance of recording veracity over fabrication.[14] The words of this fictional father was not notably different from Mormon parental directives. When Martha Telle Cannon, one of the plural wives of George Q. Cannon, gave her sixteen-year-old daughter Amelia a blank book in 1886, she warned her against writing "foolish" things in it: "Now, Milly, I want you to take particular pains and write well in this. Do no scribbles as you did in your former diaries." It was easier said than done for Amelia to follow her mother's counsel, as she berated herself for writing "plentiful scrawls" and poems on pages that she would later burn.[15] Like other American parents, for Mormon parents the diary was not just a space for young women to record their family and life histories but an impressive written document that showcased self-refinement, not indulgent content.

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[13] Jane Greer, *Girls and Literacy in America: Historical Perspectives to the Present Moment* (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 2003), 180.

[14] Margaret H. Eckerson, "Jottings Versus Doings," *St. Nicholas* 6 (February 1879): 282.

Jane Hunter explores the same articles in the context of mainstream American girls' writing in Hunter, "Inscribing the Self in the Heart of Family," 56-59.

[15] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal (1886–87), quoted in Bitton, "'Heigh, Ho! I'm Seventeen,'" 335.

Mormon Reasons for Young Women to keep Diaries

On the surface, Mormon parents like Martha Telle Cannon and Mormon periodicals did not radically differ from non-Mormon parents and periodicals in their reasons for encouraging young women to write. However, much of the Mormon advice was tied to theological understandings of the afterlife.

Older generations of church members and leaders used a blend of theological motivation and mainstream American culture to encourage writing. For example, in 1867, Mary Perkes was one of many young people who took up the pen in response to Apostle Wilford Woodruff's article "Keep a Journal" that appeared in the January 1, 1867, edition of the *Juvenile Instructor,* a LDS publication for youth. She began her diary with the following entry: "I was reading in the *Juvenile Instructor* that it would be good for this generation to keep a journal."[16] Woodruff's message was direct: It would be "pleasing" for one's children or grandchildren to have a record of their older family member's lives. Relying on Mormon exceptionalism to appeal to church members like Mary Perkes, he wrote: "You are the children of Zion, and your parents have been called of God to build up the Church of Christ and the Kingdom of God upon the earth in the last days, and soon your parents will be dead, and you will have to take their places."[17]

Wilford Woodruff's piece directly engaged with Mormon conceptions of heaven. Mormons used many methods to learn about and connect with their ancestors they believed they would be reunited with in the afterlife. Different Mormon projects from the embrace of genealogy to baptism for the dead, ultimately, served as methods for church members to be reconnect with family members in the afterlife. "Mormon life writing," a category that includes published and unpublished autobiographies, personal history sketches, and diaries, also served as a method for with current and future family. In her scholarship on Mormon women's autobiographical writing, Laura L. Bush

[16] Perkes, "My Journal," (1867-1875), page 1, n.d.
[17] Wilford Woodruff, "Keep a Journal," *Juvenile Instructor* 2 (January 1, 1867): 5–6.

asserts that the tradition of Mormon life writing as a religious obligation is nearly parallel to genealogy and temple work, tasks that church members believe are necessary to their families' attainment of "'exaltation' with God after mortality, the ultimate communal experience."[18]

Even if young Mormon women were not aware of performing certain writing conventions in their diary, many of their diaries shared certain commonalities that can be considered particularly Mormon. First, many diaries begin with a detailed personal and family history. Second, in an attempt to situate their life in the history of the church, many writers initially include some mention of their lineage within Mormonism or the family's conversion story. Finally, emphasizing the patriarchal nature of the Church, young women also mentioned their father's employment, church calling, and/or accomplishments.

Looking at Mary Perkes' diary from the 1860s next to a young woman's from the 1920s exhibits changes and similarities in how these Mormon girls wrote. From the first few pages of sixteen year old Mary Perkes' 1867 journal, the reader learns that her family was one of thousands of immigrants who converted to Mormonism in England and migrated to the United States to be closer to the church. She writes: "My mother embraced the gosple when I was a babe. My father did not believe it and on that account my mother left him." During their voyage across the sea, Mary's mother met and married another convert James Perkes, and the family eventually settled in Utah.[19]

Diverging from Mary Perkes' straightforward first entry, twenty years later the twenty-one-year-old Marian Gardner of Starr Valley, Wyoming immediately addressed how her journal, also a gift from her father, would fit her personal purposes:

> I am going to write in this little book (a gift from papa) to try to satisfy that desire for expression which is sometimes so intense within me, that it hurts. I am going to use this little record for my confidant and to it, I will tell my moods, my hopes, my ideals, my secrets and my highest aspirations. I will tell also of my family and my friends and those I love and of my associations with them. At all times I am going to write as I FEEL.

[18] Laura L. Bush, *Faithful Transgressions in the American West*, 12.
[19] Perkes, "My Journal," (1867-1875), page 1, n.d.

Marian approached her diary in a more personal way than Mary Perkes. But she still adhered to the convention of describing her parents' backgrounds. About her father Clarence Gardner, she wrote: "He is the second son in the eleventh family of Archibald Gardner, sturdy Scotch pioneer and Mary Larsen of Danish birth–much younger than Grandpa and his eleventh wife. Eleven families for one man—imagine it!" In a more serious tone, she continued: "Papa has always been a prominent man in church and Politics and I am quite proud of him."[20] Despite her stated intentions that this book would serve as *her* "confidant," it was still necessary for her to situate her family's status within Mormonism. Though it seems that both women held different attachments to their journals, the repeated conventions point to the inherent Mormonness of the journals.

How Young Mormon Women Wrote for Themselves

Though the diary may have started as the "idea" of parents and church figures, young women molded their diaries to fit their needs. An evident sign of how young Mormon women were claiming the diary as their space was an expectation for privacy. Young women of Mormonism approached their diaries as many other young American women did. The young women discussed so far in this chapter began their diaries under the direction of their parents or prescriptive literature, but at one point in their writing they turned to their diaries as a "safe place" to explore ideas, articulate emotions, and tell secrets.[21]

Even though young women may have expected privacy did not mean that their wishes were respected. "The unviolated diary was rare," writes historian Jane H. Hunter. In her assessment of young women's journal writing in the late nineteenth century, she discusses how young women's writing was rarely protected, as parents sometimes felt it was their right to read their daughter's writing.

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[20] Marian Gardner, Journal, 1923–25, Typescript, page 1, n.d. MSS 114, Special Collections and Archives, Utah State University, Logan.
[21] Franklin, xix.

The fear of parental surveillance was not lost on young Latter-day Saint women. Teenager Lizzie Conrad of Provo, Utah went to extra lengths to conceal her writing. She initially began what would become her journal as a school notebook in February of 1891. The first month is full of quick one-word references that seem to be related to her coursework. By March of 1891, she begins to include a one-line entries such as "Went horse back riding" for March 2nd. She kept track of how many letters she exchanged with her beau Hyrum Muhlestein, a missionary abroad in Switzerland. After October of 1891 she ceased to write in her notebook for over two years. In her first and undated entry from 1894, she wrote "Little Journal I haven't written any in you for a long time. I have neglected you and my mind is getting rusty. Sacred little book you will keep my secrets wont you…" Lizzie Conrad treated her journal as more than a record of her thoughts but a trusted friend: "I feel today that I must confide my feelings to some dear friend who will keep them sacred, and you my little journal are the only one I know who will do this. How glad I am that I can tell you how I feel."[22] Lizzie Conrad probably turned to this old school notebook to avoid drawing attention to the fact she was writing her "secrets." Though some young women like Lizzie Conrad aimed to keep their writing secret, others readily shared their writing with friends. The friends and siblings of diarists sometimes bragged about their snooping by writing notes on a young woman's diary's pages.[23]

This was not an entirely new phenomenon, as historian Carroll Smith-Rosenberg explains that many women who experienced a "sisterly bond" with a friend relied upon the written word to remain close: "women, whether friends or relatives, assumed an emotional centrality in each others' lives. In their diaries and letters they wrote of the joy and contentment they felt in each others'

[22] Lizzie Conrad Muhlestein, Diary (1891-1900), Typescript, page 8, 1894. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher Papers. MSS 2285. Box 1, Folder 16. L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
[23] Jane H. Hunter, "Inscribing the Self in the Heart of the Family," 59-60.

company, their sense of isolation and despair when apart."[24] These feelings of emotional centrality amongst women included the practice of shared diary-keeping in the late-nineteenth century for adolescent women. Shared diary-keeping included young women writing in their diaries at the same time, reading each other's diaries, and/or writing in each other's diaries. Jane Hunter explains that "diaries often became actors in the friendships themselves. Girls who wrote diaries together frequently wrote about each other, producing provocative documents that became the stuff of suspicion and intimacy."[25]

In 1899, the seventeen-year-old Utah Agricultural College student Alberta "Bertie" Lawson matter-of-factly wrote that she read her friend Abby's diary "for an hour or more." Her behavior was not considered an offensive act but a common activity amongst her friends. In a late night entry from that same year, Bertie allowed two of her friends to write in her diary at two in the morning:

> Dear Bertie when you look at this page in after years remember me in my present situation sitting in my night gown and bare feet. Also remember these pleasant moments that we used spend in chapter before the exercise began…I guess I better stop and get to my repose…it will be the three of us going to sleep in one bed. Bertie in the middle and Susie and I on each side. Didn't get much work done tonight for we went visiting. But doesn't matter for there is plenty of time.
>
> My Dear Bertie- Edna has given her views on the subject and now I think I shall have mine. Edna and Bertie have gotten in bed and Bertie broke the bed when she got in and Edna has all the covers on her sides. It is now ten minutes to three, we have put hair polish on our hair and in the early evening we danced the hours away.[26]

The sentimental and light-hearted tone of these entries in Bertie's diary indicates that these women were close friends. Shared diary-keeping served as a medium for young women to build closer friendships and share intimate thoughts they only felt comfortable writing on paper.[27] Furthermore, as Bertie Lawson and her friends were part of the first generations of young women to attend

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[24] Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America" *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 1.1 (1975): 13.
[25] Hunter, "Inscribing the Self in the Heart of Family," 66.
[26] Alberta Larson Jacobs, Diary (1891-1910), page 102, December 9, 1899. 920 J151.Special Collection and Archives, Utah State University, Logan, Utah.
[27] Hunter, "Inscribing the Self in the Heart of the Family," 66-67.

college, they had to find new ways to create close relationships with people of the same age while away from home. Though Bertie and her friends depended on a host of activities to entertain themselves including joining different associations and clubs, the practice of shared diary-keeping allowed young women to build intimate worlds with each other. Even though young women may have started diaries under assumptions of self-discipline, they ultimately claimed their diaries as their own space. This change became much more evident over time as women from the early twentieth century viewed the diary as a much more individualistic project compared to women in the 1860s.

Who They were Writing for

Within the last few decades, some scholars have turned to analyzing how the writer and the reader relate to the diary as a personal, private, and/or public space. Scholars Suzanne L. Bunkers and Cynthia A. Huff address an important question about utilizing diaries as historical resources: "Diaries also raise questions of audience. Who reads diaries? How are the interactions between reader and writer affected by the social and historical positions of both?"[28] Another question that should be addressed is if a diarist had different intended audiences for her writing while she was young, during her adulthood, and after her death.

Diaries never have really fit into the public and private dichotomy. While the terms *personal*, *private*, and *secret* all point to assumptions of intimacy and confidentiality, in the context of diaries these terms have had confusing and conflated meanings that have changed over time. From the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, a young woman's diary's audience was simultaneously shaped the expectation of parents and authority figures and the intentions of the diarist. Within this chapter, I see *private* indicating an understanding between the diarist and her potential readers. Some diarists knew and understood that their parents read their diaries. For example, on the occasion of Mary Bennion's twentieth birthday in 1910, she and her family read passages of the diary she wrote

[28] Suzanne L. Bunkers and Cynthia A. Huff, *Inscribing the Daily: Critical Essays on Women's Diaries* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), 2.

as an eleven-year-old girl. Yet, the diary was still not considered to be a public document. The diary was private within the context of home and family. *Personal* describes to the content of the diary: it refers to content about a person's individual thoughts, goals, accomplishments, and emotional aspect of their lives and those close to them. Similarly to *personal*, *secret* also relates to intentions behind content, what the diarist wants to keep to themselves and out of the hands of others. At times, what is deemed *secret* broaches the network of privacy when they tell or allow another to read their diary or when it is violated.

The writers of the diaries explored in this chapter either seemed to be meant for reading by one's immediate family, friends, and acquaintances or not intended for any sort of readership during the writer's lifetime. However, expectations of readership were not limited to their lifetimes. Because these diaries were written by young Mormon women, it was likely that they were taught and/or believed that future family members would be reading their diaries. While this practice is not unique to Mormonism, the rational behind it is. Their documenting family history should be understood in the context of Mormon theology regarding lineage and pre-and post-mortal lives. They likely believed that these diaries could create bonds between family members, both in the temporal world and in the afterlife.[29] Whether it was a deliberate objective, many adolescent writers likely wrote with the idea that they were preserving a version of themselves for their future children.

"To improve every opportunity to serve God as faithfully as I might", 1860s

1867 was an auspicious year for the Mormon women of Utah. Not only did it mark twenty-years since the first Mormons settled in the Salt Lake Basin, but Young also called for the reorganization of the Relief Society that year with Eliza R. Snow as its leader. In that same year, both Alice Ann Richards and Lula Greene began their diaries on their eighteenth birthdays, and as indicated earlier Mary E. Perkes began her diary in her sixteenth year in response to an article in the

[29] Bush, *Faithful Transgressions in the American West,* 3.

Juvenile Instructor. Though the content of each woman's diary differs widely, they all offer a snapshot of how women responded to the church's unique gender dynamics of the late 1860s.

At this time in church history, Brigham Young urged women to educate themselves and seek professional work. In a 1869 sermon Young stated women were not just useful as wives, mothers, and housekeepers but that women should expand their expertise to the advantage of the community by studying the sciences, accounting, and starting businesses."[30] Though nineteenth-century church members subscribed to conviction that women's primary roles were in the domestic sphere, it was readily accepted and expected that she could fulfill this role in conjunction with her other substantial responsibilities like teaching. These messages were not lost on Alice Ann, Louisa, and Mary.

Their childhoods are also indicative of the early stories of Mormons who migrated to or experienced Utah during the earliest days of settlement. Like Mary E. Perkes' transatlantic journey, Louisa Greene's story is also one of pioneer migration. Louisa "Lula" Greene was born in Kanesville (now Council Bluffs), Iowa in 1849. Greene's childhood and family background epitomized her generation in two significant ways: she was the daughter of converts and was closely related to Brigham Young. Brigham Young ordered that the Saints evacuate Kanesville during a cholera outbreak, and her family arrived in Salt Lake City in 1852 and eventually settled in Cache County in Northern Utah. [31] Alice Ann's early life was marked by relocations around the Utah territory from her birthplace to Salt Lake City than to Provo and finally settling in Farmington in Davis County, Utah in 1860.[32]

Each woman's purpose for her diary revolved around the theme of self-betterment. Mary Perkes' journal started as a response to the idea that her experiences as a member of the rising

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[30] Journal of Discourses, 26 vols (Liverpool and London: LDS Booksellers, 1855-8), 13:61, quoted in Vella N. Evans, "Mormon Women and the Right to Wage Work" *Dialogue* 23:4 (1990): 47.
[31] Lula Greene Richards was the great-grand niece of Brigham Young, as her parents were first cousins and the children of two of Brigham Young's sister. "Lula Greene Richards," http://mormonlit.lib.byu.edu/lit_author.php?a_id=3462 accessed 16 May, 2016.
[32] Alice Ann Richards Smith Journal, 1867 March – 1871 June, page 2. n.d.

generation should be recorded for future church members. Although she expressed some doubt about her religiosity, she persevered and continued to write. Part of Alice Ann's urge to start a diary was to improve her writing, a skill she believed lagged behind that of her peers. The content of Lula's diary varies between detailed entries about her teaching, some personal introspection, and her church activities. As a young woman contemplating her role in the classroom, Lula wrote with disappointment but also hope on what she felt were her failings as a teacher. First reflecting upon her difficulty, she wrote:

> May 6, 1867 How I have neglected my little journal of late. But dear me how busy we have been. This morning Lissa [Melissa] and I began our little school. I have not enjoyed it today as I had hoped I would. I want to be a very good School teacher and do not know how. I feel that I am not competent as yet to do justice in this respect and so am not satisfied with what I do.

Still, she found a way to console herself by reminding herself that she could so better.

> But courage Louisa there is plenty of chance for improvement. "A poor beginning often makes a good end" says one. "Fortune favors the brave" says another. There is hope for the young and healthy. Let doubt and darkness die; For though not wise and wealthy, there is light for me say I.[33]

The reassurances of personal improvement evident in her writing embody the tone and motivation behind these three women's journals.

Despite some references to church recreation, these diaries indicate that these young women's lives were full of work. Alice Ann and Lula's work was educating the children of the Utah Territory. For Alice Ann and Lula, teaching was not merely a method to earn money, but they saw it as directly tied to their religious lives and communities. Alice Ann wrote in the same July 1867 entry that her school-teaching

> has been a blessing to me and I feel very thankful to my Father in Heaven that He has been with me and blest me and I hope and trust and pray that he will continue to guide and

[33] Louisa Greene Richards, "Diary, 1867-1869," May 6, 1867 in Joyce A. Kinkead, *A Schoolmarm all My Life: Personal Narratives from Frontier Utah* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996), 75.

> direct my footsteps in the right path to enable me to do good and love for a high and noble purpose.[34]

Lula Greene wrote that a class of quiet, orderly children gathered for the purpose of receiving useful instruction" is pleasing her but "if we be humble, pleasing to our God also."[35] Both of these young eighteen year old women related to their occupation of teaching as a way to serve their Heavenly Father, indicating that they saw their roles as Mormon women not just within the context of marriage and motherhood but one that was needed within the public sphere of Mormon communities.

Mary E. Perkes' journal centered more upon her life as a girl in her later teenage years. Her journal was full of references to sermons she heard during church, Sunday school lessons, and her own desires for her future. Though the content of Mary's diary may come across as more youthful, her religiosity, like her peers Alice Ann and Lula, infused almost every part of her diary. Also concerned with maintaining proper composure, Mary cautiously wrote about potential romantic relationships. On more than one occasion, she exhibited reluctance toward accepting an invitations to dances and events from young men. She wrote "I pray God to give me wisdom that I may be a wise virgen. I am not what is called 'in love' yet, but I am pussled whether to receive the attention of any one or not I do not want to marry yet but when I do marry I shall try to get a husband that believes in serving God." Mary utilized a variety of methods to carry out self-discipline—including but not limited reading church publication like the *Juvenile Instructor*, contemplating lessons taught in church, and admitting personal "transgressions." Her diary acted as an essential tool to fulfill her objective "to improve every opportunity to serve God As faithfully as I might."[36]

For these three young women, personal ideas of self-discipline and improvement informed the content of their diaries. Their quest for self-betterment was rooted in their desire to be faithful

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[34] Alice Ann Richards Smith Journal, 1867 March – 1871 June, page 2. n.d.
[35] Greene Richards, "Diary, 1867-1869," April 8, 1867, in Kinkaed, 75.
[36] Perkes, "My Journal," page 8 and 11, June 4, 24, 1867.

Latter-day Saint women and to contribute the LDS community. Some young women formed a shared culture through their roles as potential plural wives. In one entry, Mary Perkes recounts how she would like to marry the same man as a friend because they would be well acquainted with each other's personalities.[37] Mary's comments are not shocking when one considers that plural marriage was not only openly practiced by members in the 1860s but also that the church's hierarchy encouraged men and women to engage in plural marriage.

Her comments about plural marriage are also informed by the ending of her mother and birth father's relationship. When her mother converted to Mormonism, she left Mary's father.[38] During their voyage across the sea, Mary's mother met and married another convert James Perkes. Mary expresses no anger with her mother's decision to become a Mormon, leave her biological father behind in England, or any other aspects of this life changing transition. Following their emigration to the States and their eventual settlement in Cache County, Mary Perks, who was born Mary Elizabeth Thurman, eventually took her stepfather's last name as her own. In her journal, she never uses a different surname beside Perkes nor does she comment upon a name change in her journal.[39] However, her family history most likely weighed heavily on her as she contemplated her future as a married woman. The current Mormon culture may have influenced her inclination to marry into polygamy, but she may have also believed that a polygamist marriage would offer a more stable and supportive family system than she experienced as a very young child.

In comparison to Mary Perkes, Alice Ann writes openly about her difficulties as a child but not in detail about marrying into a polygamist family. Alice Ann lost her father when she was not yet

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[37] Perkes, "My Journal," page 13, August 11, 1867.
[38] Perks, "My Journal," page 1.
[39] Mary E. Perkes was listed as "Mary Elizabeth Thurman in the database of pioneers who traveled to Utah between 1847-1868. See Mary Elizabeth Thurman, 1862
"Utah Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel Database, 1847-1868", database, *FamilySearch* https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/QK9B-CJCV accessed 13 May 2016

five years old. Even though she claimed "I was too young to feel his loss at that time," she also wrote

> as I grow old enough to understand the blessing of parents, I could but feel how blessed I would have been had he been spared…But I been blest with the kindest of mother, one that can never do too much for her children. But she has had a hard time of it through life and seen more of hard work and poverty than anything else. Left a widow at 25 she had the care and responsibility of a large family, as well as the labor upon her hands for several years (of others besides her own) We numbered ten and none of us large enough to be scarcely any help to her.[40]

Alice became the fifth wife of Lot Smith, a Mormon frontiersman and former member of the Mormon Battalion. Though she does not explain her reasons for marrying into plural marriage, she likely believed that by marrying polygamously she would have more support than her mother did with the rearing of her children. Unfortunately like her mother she experienced many hardships after she married. Soon after she married, Lot was sent on a mission abroad leaving her alone as a young wife and mother. Following her husband's return from his mission, they set out for Arizona.[41]

Out of the three women, Lula Greene, known as "Utah's First Woman Editor" made the most well-known contribution to the Latter-day Saint community through work as a writer, poet, and editor. Lula first edited the "Smithfield Sunday School Gazette," a handwritten four-page paper for six issues in 1869.[42] After writing some poems for the *Salt Lake Daily Herald*, she was approached by that paper's editor Edward L. Sloane with the idea of editing a journal for women. Greene decided she would only continue with this plan if Brigham Young would appoint her on a special church mission. Young approved of the project, but it was up to Greene to work with the Relief Society to determine how she would be able to produce a magazine every two weeks.[43] To help the

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[40] Richards Smith Journal, 1867 March – 1871 June., page 1, n.d.
[41] Charles S. Peterson, "'A Mighty Man Was Brother Lot': A Portrait of Lot Smith - Mormon Frontiersman," *The Western Historical Quarterly*, 1 (October, 1970): 409.
[42] Sherilyn Cox Bennion, "Lula Greene Richards, Utah's First Woman Editor," *BYU Studies* 21:2 (1981): 3.
[43] Vella Neil Evans, "Empowerment and Mormon Women's Publications" in *Women and Authority: Re-emerging Mormon Feminism*, 52.

process, Sloane allowed Greene to utilize the *Herald* plant to print the first editions of the *Woman's Exponent*.[44] After Greene left the editorship to concentrate on motherhood in 1875, Emmeline B. Wells took over the role at age forty-seven and held the position for almost forty years.[45] Lula's decision demonstrated her dedication to the church, as women were expected to put motherhood above all else. However, she did not completely move away from her writing, as she continued to contribute to the paper after she left the main position. In 1883, she was asked by George Q. Cannon to take charge of a regular feature in the *Juvenile Instructor* called "Our Little Folks."[46] Her continued act of writing for church publications exemplifies her dedication to her church community fostered during her late teenage years and her early adult years while teaching. Serving the role of a dutiful Mormon woman, Greene spent her life balancing between motherhood and marriage and her work with the church—lessons instilled in as a young woman.

Each of these women's diaries serves as a way for young women to reflect and discuss the multiple components of their identities as young LDS women. These women carved out space for themselves within the church through roles aiding the church and/or following church strictures. For these women their connection to the church and desires for their lives did not seem to be at cross-purposes but ingrained with each other. If these three journals share any striking commonality beyond the fact that each diarist was a young Mormon woman in her late teenage years, it is that they credited their strong beliefs in Mormonism to be a driving factor in their aims for self-improvement.

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[44] Sherilyn Cox Bennion, *Equal to the Occasion: Women Editors of the Nineteenth Century West* (Reno: University of Nevada press, 1990), 75.
[45] Carol Cornwall Madsen, *"Remember the Women of Zion": A Study of the Editorial Content of the Woman's Exponent, a Mormon Woman's Journal* (MA Thesis --University of Utah, 1977): 27, 127.
[46] Cox Bennion, "Lula Greene Richards, Utah's First Woman Editor," 10.

"My girlhood's ideal", 1890s

During the 1890s, the loss of plural marriage and gaining of statehood led to concerns about perpetuating an authentic Mormonism. These fears materialized in a revised process of Mormon courtship and the reinterpretation of gender roles and ideals. Both the reframing of young men and women's gender roles greatly influenced young women's lives via new expectations for courtship and marriage. Amy Hoyt and Sara M. Patterson describe how the Church's revisioning of a Mormon masculinity was supposed to represent "an Ideal American citizen":

> Prior to 1890, Mormon masculinity had revolved around two pillars rooted in divine revelation: the priesthood and the practice of polygamy. Even Mormon men with only one wife saw polygamy as central to their identity. The idea that *the group* was carrying on a divinely ordained practice supported the sense that the practice itself made the group eligible for Zion. The new Mormon masculinity that developed from 1890 to 1920 was also rooted in divine revelation, but consisted of four pillars: a changed notion of priesthood; adherence to the Word of Wisdom (a divinely revealed health code that prohibits alcohol and tobacco use); an increased expectation that young LDS men would go on missions (which was understood as the time a Mormon man would stand against the wider culture); and monogamous heterosexuality. On these four pillars, Mormons constructed a new man who, they asserted, was an ideal American citizen."[47]

Within Mormonism, this revised masculinity also served as a method to dictate to young woman the church's standards of an acceptable husband. Three diaries written by Amelia Cannon, Rose Jenkins, and Lizzie Conrad indicate how changing gender expectations and institutional adjustments defined these women's lives. While these three diarists did not speak at length and/or directly about widespread changes beyond their immediate worlds, it is clear that they and their families were affected by the interrelated connections between changes in their religion and on the national stage. These diaries reveal a more personal tone than the women writing in the 1860s. The three young women did not necessarily gain self-assurances about their futures but experienced more unease with what may come in the future. Due to many factors from changes in courtship patterns and

[47] Hoyt and Patterson, 73.

family to prescriptive literature, young women were hearing and absorbing messages that their success in gaining honorable husband was equal with their roles as upstanding church members.

Amelia Telle Cannon, the sixteen-year-old daughter of Apostle George Q. Cannon, wrote in the new "record" her mother gave her in August 1886. She focuses on her education, her part-time job at the *Juvenile Instructor*, and extracurricular activities. Her family members mostly fill the background of her teenage life in her diary. Though references to her father in this diary are short, they are very telling of his time on the "Mormon underground." Amelia wrote: "We always meet together Sunday evenings though for prayers. Then we have music until the guard comes to accompany papa to his retreat, which by the way is fifty miles distant. So papa has a long way to travel to meet with his folks."[48] In 1888, he surrendered to federal authorities and spent six months in prison. Her parents may have urged discretion or silence regarding father's hiding, subsequent arrest, and incarceration. Or her reticence could mean that she was simply a teenage girl who, although obviously concerned about her father, was mostly interested in writing about details that directly pertained to her adolescent world.

By her early twenties Amelia's journal was full of short and longer descriptions of dance parties and get-togethers where she courted various suitors. Her courtship experiences in early 1892 epitomized how Mormonism clung to old ideals when detailing a new model of monogamist marriage. Although she wrote about her father while he was in hiding, Amelia never consciously mentions the end of church sanctioned plural marriage or even her mother's position as a plural wife. As the content of Amelia's later diary indicates, she was not just concerned about becoming married but she was largely consumed with finding the right Mormon marital partner. Her articulated selectiveness and declarations of her popularity meant that she had many male callers visiting her at her home and pursuing opportunities to spend time with her. Amelia was by no

[48] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal (1886–87), quoted in Bitton "Heigh, Ho! I'm Seventeen," 335.

means unrestricted in her choice of interested young men, and she carefully considered the background of the young men she spent time with.

Amelia's stated preferences for a future husband fit many aspects of this new developing Mormon masculinity. Amelia wrote that her "Ideal" must be religious and intellectual, and he "must make a mark in some way."[49] Based upon her diary's pages, it is clear that she usually, though sometimes begrudgingly, seriously considered her parents' thoughts regarding her potential partners. Despite her desired traits in a husband, she was still tempted to spend time with young men who did not have such an impressive record. Halfway through her diary from 1892, Amelia swore off attending any more dance parties during the winter due to late hours, sleepless nights, and headaches.[50] However, this resolution did not last long, as within a few days she attended another dance. Amelia's declaration to withhold herself from attending dance parties can also be interpreted as a decision to take a break from the relentless schedule of Mormon courtship. A decision to disengage from temporarily seeking a husband may seem innocent enough. Though she did not intend to be subversive, within the minds of the church leadership, such a claim could be perceived as threatening to the future marriage and survival of the church. Amelia's decision to stop attending dances, though a short period, was a way for her to push for more space from church expectations being put upon her and other young women to interact with and marry men who demonstrated the components of the new Mormon masculinity.

Church leaders and prescriptive literature asserted that a vital tenet of the new Mormon masculinity was that every eligible young unmarried man should undertake a mission to proselytize for the church. This was a considerable adjustment to the missionary system, which previously sent out men of various ages, several of whom already had wives and children. The emphasis placed on young men serving missions helped create a new marriage ideal for young women after loss of

[49] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal (1891-2), Typrescript, page 32, February 20, 1892.
[50] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal (1891-2), Typrescript, page 22, February 18, 1892.

plural marriage. The most obvious way that "serving a mission" came to define pivotal moments in young women's lives was the great popularity of missionary departures and homecomings as social events. Rose Jenkins and Lizzie Conrad were two young women who maintained romances with the men who would eventually become their husbands. Both Rose and Lizzie were involved with young male missionaries, but the content of their diaries illustrate differing feelings of self-worth in relationship to their romantic partners and religion.

From the pages of her diary, it is clear that the nineteen-year-old Lizzie Conrad held her beau Hyrum Muhlestein, who was serving a mission in Switzerland, in high esteem, but the same cannot be said for her opinions of herself. On her nineteenth birthday in 1894, she wrote an impassioned diary entry about Hyrum's return and her concern for her worthiness:

> 21st of March This is my birthday. I am 19 years old. I ought to be a woman now. Oh what a responsibility…Hyrum is coming home, am I happy or sad? I am glad he is coming home, but sorry I have not been a better girl and proven my self more worthy of him. It seems so odd to think he is really coming home I was such a child when he went away—16—and a very thoughtless girl and Hyrum the boy that he was, sent away to preache the Gospel, he will come home with a great deal of experience and a strong testamony of the truth. I wonder if I will ever be worthy of him.[51]

Lizzie's anxiety over her birthday and Hyrum's return speaks to concerns about marrying a suitable partner. Hyrum fit the bill in many regards: he came from a solid family, and his mission was evidence of his devotion to his religion.

Despite her high regard for Hyrum's mission, she still expressed frustration with his absences. Nearly immediately upon his return from his mission, Hyrum commenced working in Scofield, which was sixty miles south of Provo. Though they were able to see each other during this separation, similar to his mission it led to feelings of frustration and questions of her worthiness. The following was written during his time spent in Scofield between May and November of 1895: "I fairly shudder at the thought of this love growing cold. I must try continually to bring my impulsive

[51] Lizzie Conrad Muhlestein, Diary (1891-1900). Maureen Ursenbach Beecher Papers. MSS 2285. Box 1, Folder 16. L. L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

and cold spirit under submission."[52] This tone of her commentary could be similar to that of many young women with a beau who lived far away, yet to ignore the period during which they were written is to ignore how these transitions held consequences for these young women's futures.

To fully understand Lizzie Conrad's feelings of not deserving Hyrum's attentions, her commentary must be placed within the context of the *Young Woman's Journal*'s "post-Manifesto marriage fiction." The largely unfounded fear of intermarriage was rooted in anxiety surrounding the end of plural marriage and the belief that there were not as many righteous young men as there were young women. This panic pushed Susa Young Gates, the influential daughter of the church prophet Brigham Young and editor of the YWJ, to ask in an 1891 editorial: "where are all these nice and really beautiful young women going to find a husband and a home?"[53] This anxious rhetoric likely led many young women like Lizzie Conrad to wonder how she could be so fortunate to become romantically involved with one of the "few available" righteous, young men.

The ideal of men completing their missionary service appears prominently in the diary of Rose Jenkins, whose social calendar was filled with parties celebrating the departure of a young man or accomplishments of returned missionaries. As a young Mormon woman, Rose Jenkins held herself to the high standard of behavior prescribed in LDS periodicals like the *Young Woman's Journal*. Like Amelia Cannon, Rose Jenkins was born into a polygamist family. Rose's diaries, which cover 1896 to 1899 when she was nineteen to twenty-three years-old remained noticeably muted about her father. Reflecting on her family at one point, she wrote: "Mamma and we children have never been separated. We have not had the blessing of a father's association but have been all in one together."[54]

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[52] Conrad Muhlestein, Diary (1891-1900), pages 8-9, April 30, 1894; page 14, August 29, 1895.
[53] "The Editor's Department," *Young Woman's Journal*, 284.
[54] Rose Jenkins Badger, Journal, 1896–97, July 10, 1896. Carlos Ashby Badger Collection, 1895–1939, MSS 1298, Box 7, fd. 4, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Pages are not numbered.

Though she does not offer details about how this affected her upbringing or visions of her future, she was cautious about accepting romantic overtures as a young woman. While she eventually married her childhood friend Carl Badger, she attempted to avoid his initial romantic overtures. In 1897, when she was twenty-years-old she wrote: "Coming home Carl took a hold of my hand. I tried to draw it away but [he] held it fast, so I said "Please don't Carl." He dropped it and asked if he committed an unfavorable sin. I told him no. Both of us were silent for a few moments after that.[55] Clearly consumed with displaying proper decorum, she maintained the prescribed appropriate guidelines for courtship by keeping her distance from Carl.

The expectations of proper behavior that Rose was following was repeated throughout the *Young Woman's Journal*. The ideals from L. S. Dalton's talk "Love, Courtship, and Marriage" printed in the 1890 seemed to influence Rose's behavior. Despite the importance of truly getting to know a possible mate, Dalton advised that young women should keep her physical distance from her suitor. It was permissible for a young man to give a young woman his arm when walking together in the evening but he should not "attempt to place his around her" and "never touch her face, pat her on the shoulder, nor stroke her hair." The reasons for keeping physical distance were twofold. First, it was widely understood that no "honest well-informed" young man would marry an unmarried woman who had allowed such physical familiarity to happen with a man. Secondly, if a man "manifests a spirit of undue familiarity" toward a young woman, it is an immediate sign that he is not worthy marriage material and more than likely carries "bitter contempt for womanhood."[56] Despite Rose's avoidance of a physical intimacy with Carl, they shared a close bond and similar interests and ideals. Nearly every Sunday, Carl would spend the afternoon at her home reading aloud books such as *Ben Hur*. One Sunday when she was feeling "blue," it was only Carl who was able to lift her mood. She wrote: "He understands my hopes and ambitions. He knows just how to

[55] Jenkins Badger, Journal, 1896–97, July 25, 1896.
[56] Dalton, 315.

incourage me and he shows me how to overcome my faults."[57] Their interactions conformed to suggestions of a proper courtship, as in her talk, Lucinda Dalton recommended that young couples should learn "each other's views and opinions on all the important questions of life."[58]

When Carl left for his mission on June 28, 1897 she wrote, "I never felt so much like crying."[59] However, Rose was then sent into a tailspin when he returned in March 1899 after spending nearly two years in the mission field. Although she does not specify his exact reasons, according to an overview of the Rose and Carl's diaries in the Carlos Ashby Badger Collection, his reasons for returning were rooted in his personal struggle when the mission president, Apostle John W. Taylor encouraged the missionaries to preach plural marriage to potential converts.[60] Carl, the child of plural marriage, probably did not want to encourage the practice that was now illegal. Carl's decision to return also indicates how during this chaotic, transformative time for the church, members were receiving conflicting messages about plural marriage after the practice was officially ended by the church leadership. Though some secretive plural marriages were occurring, the vast majority of Mormons marrying after 1890 were marrying into monogamist marriages. However, indirect and direct influences, like a mission president preaching plural marriage and articles denigrating those who did not honor the sacred history of the practice, painted a complicated legacy for the last children of plural marriage and their descendants.

For Rose, no matter the consequences for her personally, Carl's mission was a non-negotiable requirement. She wrote on April 17, 1899:

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[57] Jenkins Badger Journal, 1896–97, dated as "Mon to Fri Mar 29 to Apr 2."
[58] Dalton, 314.
[59] Jenkins Badger, Journal, 1897-1899, June 28, 1897.
[60]John Taylor, the Church president (served from 1880 to death in 1887), was John W.'s father. At the time of Carl's mission, John W. was within a few years of being removed from the Quorum of the Twelve and excommunicated in 1906 for contracting new post-Manifesto marriages. D. Michael Quinn, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890-1904," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Spring 1985), 4

"Carl Ashby and Rose Jenkins Badger Collection, Mss. 1298, compiled by Harvard S. Heath and Candace Kearl", page 1, February 1994. Carlos Ashby Badger Collection, 1895–1939, MSS 1298, Box 7, fd. 4.

> None, but my Heavenly Father, knows how hard it has been for me to see my girlhood's ideal fall into darkness. . . . I care not what others may say, I shall never believe him wicked. He is willful and headstrong, but nothing worse. He is not all that I thought him, but I trust he will be some day. For the past, I have no regrets so far as my relations with him are concerned. I loved him, he loved me. That tells the story.[61]

Rose Jenkins's words "my girlhood's ideal" in reference to losing Carl as a potential husband, exemplifies how setting ideals for a future husband had become a significant aspect of a young woman's girlhood. She was willing to forgo a marriage with a man she loved and who was well suited to her because it would not be a true Latter-day Saint marriage for time and eternity. As a proper Mormon girl, Rose believed that her religious ideals and responsibilities should come before her personal and romantic happiness. Ultimately, Rose's "girlhood ideal" was fulfilled when Carl completed his mission and married Rose following his return.

Each of these women's experiences with courtship illustrated the different complexities of a culture in transition. Amelia's exhaustion with different courtships point to changes in how Mormons selected mates for potential marriage. Gone were the days when young men would approach young women and learn they already were married. Instead young women's courtship schedules, especially those like Amelia Cannon who was from a prominent Mormon families, filled up quickly. Rose Jenkins' and Lizzie Conrad's experiences gives two examples of how young women reacted to changing ideals in the church. Lizzie, feeling insecure, was mostly fearful about losing Hyrum, her beau who represented the new Mormon masculinity. Lizzie's insecurity is obvious through her diary's content that featured her self-doubt. It seems that she would have been almost willing to do anything to keep Hyrum in her life. Rose Jenkins was more willing to abandon what would make her happy and put church expectations above her future. She knew that if Carl never completed his mission, that he would not be considered "worthy" enough for her despite her love for him. Both of these women were what they thought was right in the realm of church expectation.

[61] Badger, Journal, 1897-1899, April 17, 1899.

For Rose and Lizzie, the worth of the man they wanted to marry in the eyes of the church dictated their future and identities.

"Drain the cup of girlhoods joys": Pursuit of Higher Education, 1890s-1910s

Bridging the gap between young women in the 1890s and those in the 1900s and 1910s was the desire amongst young women to seek higher education. The increase in higher education attendance was related to similar trends within secondary education. The number of high school students quadrupled in the first decades of the twentieth century. Beyond compulsory school laws emerging in many states, new ideas of childhood and the rising value of education pushed many young men and women to pursue a high school degree.[62]

Though the rate of young women attending college remained low in the early twentieth century, it steadily rose and gave rise to a new ideal of education for women. In 1870, twenty-one percent of the college population was female and grew to nearly forty percent in 1910. In 1900, the proportion of women aged eighteen to twenty one in college was 2.8 percent and, by 1920, it was 7.6.[63] Certain colleges opening their doors to women and a further valuation of a higher education influenced a growing rate of female higher education students. The nearly doubling of women who attended institutions of higher education in the United States represented a new ambition rising amongst the country's younger women. This ambition was not lost on the female members of the LDS Church.

Land-grant colleges and universities like Utah Agricultural College (UAC), founded following the passage of the Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1862, offered more women a path to higher education than what was available to their predecessors. Reasons for the establishment of coeducational land-grant colleges were practical and related to progressive ideals of the time. Due to financial

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[62] Schrum, 12-13

[63] Barbara Miller Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 62-3.

constraints, educating women and men at the same institution was a more practical option. Expanding educational opportunities to women via land-grant institutions also fit progressive trends that pushed for women's rights.[64] Historian Andrea Radke-Moss describes Western land-grant culture as an "environment of acceptance and promotion of the widespread practice of state-supported coeducation."[65] Land-grant institutions in the West still suffered from a rampant lack of gender equality that was common in higher education and in the United States at large. Different opinions abounded over what women could and/should learn, how they should live while away at college, and how they would interact with young men. In many scenarios, young women's presence on campus was regulated through living arrangements and curfews that did not apply to male students. Despite these conditions, because of the Mormon practice of coeducation and the Western region, most young women who attended UAC fit naturally into the collegiate atmosphere as undergraduate students.

The attitudes of three young women, Alberta Larson and sisters Mary and Lucile Bennion toward Utah Agricultural College reveal how young Mormon women from the late 1890s to the 1920s helped construct and relate to the ideal of attaining higher education. Because Alberta Larsen was younger than Lizzie Conrad, Amelia Cannon, and Rose Jenkins, her educational experiences paralleled some women born later. The next generation born between the 1890s and early 1900s grew up when young women expressed an increased interest in pursuing education and other milestones beside marriage to define their late teenage and early adult years. Looking at the 1898 diary of fifteen year old Alberta "Bertie" Larson, it is clear her college attendance was an important and joyful experience. In the week before departing Ephraim nearly two hundred miles south of the UAC, Bertie did not let on as to whether her parents and family approved of her decision to attend

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[64] Andrea G. Radke-Moss, *Bright Epoch: Women & Coeducation in the American West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 5-6.
[65] Radke-Moss, *Bright Epoch: Women & Coeducation in the American West*, 5.

college. Women attending college in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century came from different class backgrounds based upon their father's principle form of employment: manufacturing and trades business, professionals like doctors and lawyers, and agricultural workers. If a woman desired to attend college, she was the one who usually had to broach the option with her family.[66] Some parents who could afford to send their daughter to college did not see the objective or wished for her to gain education at home. For the parents who did support their daughter's ambition, it was usually understood that they decided where she would attend. Some parents who worked in agriculture saw education as an opening for their daughters to seek opportunities beyond agricultural life. For a young woman of a rural background like Bertie, the UAC offered a practical education in a somewhat familiar but different and exciting environment. The UAC provided women coursework that fit the contours of a classical education (literature and elocution) special studies for women like cooking and sewing, which fit in the world of domestic arts, and agriculturally based courses like dairying. The curriculum at the UAC ultimately represented what the college leadership at the UAC considered to be a necessary education for women in Bertie's position.[67]

While at UAC, Bertie engaged in many activities in the academic and extracurricular life of the college. Bert's most important extracurricular activities included her involvement with the Sorosis Society, the first professional woman's club established in New York in 1868, and playing the new sport of basketball. [68] Within the context of a college setting, Sorosis was a space where women come together amongst other women to discuss a variety of topics that affected them. Between 1898 and 1900, the topics at the Sorosis meetings at the UAC ranged from "The Importance of Domestic Science" to "Suffrage for Women." Bertie wrote in one April 1899 entry that she found

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[66] Solomon, 62-3.
[67] Cynthia Sturgis "The Professionalization of Farm Women, 1890-1940," *Women in Utah History: Paradigm or Paradox?,* 156-7.
[68] Jane Cunningham Croly, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America* (New York: H.G. Allen & Co, 1898), 18.

the latest Sorosis event "a very interesting meeting."[69] Bertie also played on an intramural women's basketball at the UAC. Her involvement in basketball also signaled bold new attitudes toward women's involvement in sport. Invented in 1891 by Reverend James Naismith as an indoor alternative to football during the winter months, the sport took off across colleges and associations like the YMCA in the late nineteenth century.[70] Young women like Bertie were representative of newer attitudes that encouraged women's athleticism. Throughout the late half of the 1890s and early 1900s, Salt Lake City periodicals featured reprinted stories about positive effects of athleticism. An article reprinted in the 1896 *Deseret Evening News* "The Athletic Woman Reigns" asked the question "which makes the Best wife, the Bicycle Girl, or the Delicate 'Clinging Vine,'" referring to women who were reliant on fathers, brothers, and husbands. "Women are healthier than they used to be. It means that they are learning better how to take care of themselves physically. It means that "Female Complaint" is less fashionable than it was a few years ago."[71] In this case, the athletic woman won out over the delicate and overburdened woman.

Typifying the athletic woman of the later 1800s, Bertie also regularly "wheeled," or rode her bicycle, around the campus and town of Logan with her friends. On Saturday in late April of her second semester in Logan, she described her busy day:

> Rose at five. Went to the College. We played Basketball until after six. Came home. Abby, Edna, Beth, and I went for a wheel ride. I enjoyed it very much. It reminds me of some of my last summer spent at home.
>
> We rode until dark, grew so dark that I couldn't see them, came home. Came in, wrote several letters, studied some then went to bed.[72]

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[69] Radke-Moss, *Bright Epoch: Women & Coeducation in the American West*, 263.
[70] Putney, 71.
[71] *Deseret News*, 6 March, 1896.
[72] Larson Jacobs, Diary (1891-1910), page 66, April 29, 1899.

At the time of Bertie and her friends' "wheeling" in the 1890s, the bicycle was transforming the way that many people were able to move, allowing more freedoms for once-restricted groups. For women, "wheeling" opened up a new world of mobility and freedom. A constant fear amongst older generations was that access to a bicycle indicated that women and men had faster and unsupervised access to each other, thus disrupting accepted modes of decorum and proper, sexual behavior.[73] For Bertie, the "wheel" did give her greater access to the world of college.

Though Bertie's life in Logan was full of "secular" activities and studies, she never moved far from her religious dedication to her church. Living amongst Mormons in Utah easily allowed Bertie to stay connected to her religion through church activities. She regularly attended Sunday School as she did at home and attended events in Logan like the local YLMIA conference. Some of Bertie's entries in the new year of 1899 did suggest that she was spending some time thinking about her religious practice. Her eye to self-improvement is evident on the first day of 1899, when in a one line entry she wrote "I'll turn over a new leaf." A noticeable difference between the month of January 1899 and earlier month is her references to reading religious texts like the Book of Mormon and the Bible before bed. While Bertie did not comment on the content of these sacred texts, she did feel moved to reflect after reading a piece called "The Wages of Sin" in the *Young Woman's Journal*. She wrote that she would "hereafter try and profit by mistakes of others and be a better girl."[74] Though Bertie never states why she aimed for self-improvement aside from it likely being a new year's resolution, her idea of self-improvement is bound up with her religious identity.

At no point did Bertie write that her college education and religious identity were in conflict with one another. Her experience was evidence that young Mormon women could simultaneously be

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[73] Ellen Guber Garvey, "Reframing the Bicycle: Advertising-Supported Magazines and Scorching Women," *American Quarterly* 47:1 (March, 1995): 69.
[74] Larson Jacobs, Diary (1891-1910), page 45, January 1, 1899; page 54, February 19, 1899

of "both worlds"—secular and religious on their own terms. Of course, being in a majority-Mormon dominated area gave her added encouragement to stay religious. Based upon her writing, it was clear that she was aware of the importance of improvement, religious adherence, hard work, and dedication to her studies. Her coursework, extracurricular activities, and the new friendships she developed in school all fit within her identity as a Latter-day Saint girl.

The situation of Mary and Lucile Bennion, her younger sister, illustrates how two young women from the same family and generation had different opportunities available to them. Whereas Mary alternated between attending the Latter-day Saint University closer to home and helping her mother at home before eventually pursuing teaching, Lucile attended the UAC, which was nearly ninety miles north of Taylorsville.[75] Though there is only an account of both women's educational experiences in Mary's words, her entries elucidate that attending a residential college was becoming a desired rite of passage.

As a younger woman, Mary's own attitude toward education seemed tentative, as she grew older and started to separate herself from her family she started to openly value her education. Attending the Latter-day Saint University, Mary Bennion followed the tradition of many of her siblings who attended the college before her. However, unlike Bertie Larsen, Mary Bennion's education took second place to helping her family. In the winter of 1906 when Mary Bennion was attending the LDS University and lodging with her Aunt Augusta in Salt Lake City ten miles north of her family home, she was summoned home to alleviate her mother's duties.[76] Her mother Susan Bennion suffering from a prolonged unknown illness was a constant in the Bennion household.

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[75] The LDS University was originally founded as the Salt Lake Academy in 1886. Initially, it offered high school, teaching training, college, and business courses. The school took the name Latter-day Saint University in 1901. Lynn M. Hilton, *The History of LDS Business College and its Parent Institutions 1886-1993*, (Salt Lake City: LDS Business College, 1995), 3.

[76] Bennion, Journal (1906-1908). April 3, 1906.

Many times as a child, Mary remarked that she or a sibling had to leave school to care for Susan or take over her duties. As a young adult, Mary believed her mother's illnesses were episodic reactions to what Mary perceived as her father's betrayal, his additional marriage and children.[77]

Unlike Bertie Larson whose family appeared to be supportive of her attendance at the UAC, Mary Bennion's father was indifferent to women's education. She was disappointed that her father believed a "liberal education" was only appropriate for his sons and not all of his children. Mary also believed that her father valued his daughters' marriages before education.[78] Mary's issue with her father over education was not just related to his attitudes toward education and gender but were rooted in her belief that her father's plural marriages were a betrayal.

Mary's attitude toward the importance of education was most apparent when it came to her sister's opportunity to continue her studies at the UAC. Mary's most telling diary entries regarding the importance of education occurs when Mary expressed disappointment when she learns her sister became engaged. Of her sister's engagement she wrote: "I cannot say that I wanted Lucile to get married so soon She had never had much of chance at the fun most girls of her class have at college and I had hoped fondly, though perhaps foolishly that she would go to the A.C. at least one year." Mary's aspirations for Lucile were for her to "drain the cup of girlhoods joys to the last sweet drop, so that whatever comes after she may have these memories to keep her from thinking that life is commonplace."[79] Mary's preference for her younger sister to garner an education represented multiple longings. First, Mary was projecting her own desires upon Lucile's opportunities. To Mary, Lucile's time at the UAC represented the type of girlhood that Mary wished that she could have experienced. Secondly, most likely due to her father's plural marriages, Mary developed an antipathy

[77] John Bennion, "Mary Bennion Powell: Polygamy and Silence," *Journal of Mormon History* 24: 2 (Fall 1998),99, 100, 115
[78] Bennion, Journal (1914-1915), dated February 1915.
[79] Bennion, Journal (1914-1916), dated February 1915.

toward marrying before experiencing life. She regularly advised her sister not to follow the path of marrying too young.

Urging her sister to put off her marriage allowed Mary to take a stand against her father. Mary approached her father about encouraging Lucile to continue her education, and, unsurprisingly, he disapproved of this idea. Mary evidently took issue with her father's choices, and she did not idealize her mother's choices or life. In the same journal entry, Mary feared that Lucile's engagement would allow her "to grow old before her time doing drudgery in some ranch away from everybody."[80] At this juncture in her life based upon witnessing her mother's misery and illnesses, young marriage implied inevitable unhappiness. Mary believed that her own mother's life and intelligence had been wasted and did not want that life for her sister or herself.

Mary's solution to the question of whether Lucile could finish her education was rooted in her love for her family. First, Mary offered to teach another year of school to pay for her sister's time at the UAC. Initially, Lucile refused, 'because she thought it was too much of a sacrifice on my part and partly because papa disapproved. It really not be as much of a trial for me to be a "school marm" another year." A few weeks later the solution finalized when their oldest brother Heber joined the plan. Similar to Mary, Heber offered the financial resources for Lucile to complete her education.[81]

This moment marked a family wide transition. No longer did Mary merely list her grievances against her father, but she, along with other family members, more freely articulated their concerns. The following winter, Lucile was once again enrolled at the Agricultural College. When several family members were hit with the flu, Lucile returned home to help and Mary reported that "We

[80] Bennion, Journal (1914-1916), dated February 1915.
[81] Bennion, Journal (1914-1916), dated February 1915.

girls and mama were anxious to have her go back and finish her school while father and Mayme [her father's third wife] spent all their spare time persuading her that that her duty was at home (and that it didn't matter who a girl married just so he was good and she should settle down early in life etc etc)." Attitudes toward Lucile's current life plans emerged as a family wide division. Mary savored the moment when her sister finally returned to school after receiving an invitation to join Sorosis. At first Mary expressed disappointment when Lucile considered not returning: "Think of giving up the chance of being a life member by an organization like that just to help two perfectly strong boys wash dishes." However, Mary's case for returning to school and joining Sorosis finally "penetrated to her [Lucile's] inner consciousness and she consented to go back to Logan but she was so mad she wouldn't even say goodbye."[82] Lucile's reaction suggests that even though Mary was likely acting in her sister's best interests, her own desire to have a membership in such an organization compelled her to push her sister further. Most likely, Mary viewed an invitation to join Sorosis both as a grand honor but also as a way to live vicariously through her sister.

Conclusion

Examining the writings of these young women offers insights into how they experienced their lives in the context these transitional periods for the LDS Church. As Mormon adherents born between the 1850s and 1890s, they were at different points between two worlds: one that honored and practiced polygamy and another that pushed for monogamy. Despite some marked differences during the time they grew up, each woman lived their girlhood years with a commitment to upholding Mormon ideals prevalent at that time.

Despite her early devastation with the discovery of her father's plural marriage, Mary Bennion exemplifies how one young woman was able to balance her own needs, loyalty to her

[82] Bennion, Journal (1914-1916), dated February 1915.

religion, and disappointment with parts of her family. It took Mary Bennion a lot of self-reflection to reach this place in her life, but she used her diary as a tool of agency to her advantage. This development is evident through her decision to marry. Her family history of secretive polygamy and her disillusion with her father seemed like it would have discouraged her from any romantic involvement. Her desire for marriage was likely *because* of her disillusionment with family history. When Mary herself was being courted by Charles Francis Powell, her future husband, when she was twenty-six-years-old, she articulated as her ideal a romantic concept widely held among young American women, not just Mormons: "There is only one soul for one soul in the universe."[83] Her choice to cultivate her own path through various forms of higher education and being assertive about how her siblings should help each other despite their father also emboldened her confidence in her choice of husband.

Though she developed her own romantic path different from her mother and father's marriage, she still embraced and lived up to Mormon gender ideals. By the time she reached her twenties, she was clearly very familiar with the messages outlined in the *Young Woman's Journal*: acquire a suitable Mormon marriage partner, be knowledgeable in housekeeping and domestic science, and bear and rear the next generation of Mormon children.[84] Though Mary Bennion did not immediately fulfill many of these aspirations (she waited to the "later" age of twenty-eight to marry), she likely internalized the ideal that a returned missionary would be a worthy husband. When the son of a family friend returned from his mission, she wrote:

> A man waved at us from the back yard. I had a suspicion that it was Charles as he seemed too tall and narrow to be the bishop; and it was as I thought. When we arrived at the front door there was the long lost missionary to welcome us. . . . Alas he has sadly altered since I saw him at conference. Missionaries do look so deceptively handsome when they first come home, before they . . . [get] sunburned toiling on the farm. And yet it was a relief to know that he "still among us."[85]

[83] Bennion, Journal (1914-1915), dated February 1915.
[84] Hoyt and Patterson, "Mormon Masculinity," 80.
[85] Bennion, Journal (1915-1917), June 30, 1916.

She had first seen him at April 1916 general conference, but her next contact with him was in July when he was sunburned from farm work. She sighed over his earlier "deceptively handsome" appearance, but this comment illustrates her realization that the returned missionary status was glorified stereotype--not necessarily an ideal that all returned missionaries would or could live up to. For Marry, it was his increased faith and commitment that made him a suitable husband.

Despite her happiness with parts of her later life, she still carried much anger and hurt from her father's polygamy. What is most surprising about Mary Bennion was not that she would marry after being so hurt by her father's betrayals but that she retained an undying faith in her religion. At no point in her journals does she question how her religion could have condoned an unusual marriage practice that had "officially" ended only the year she was born.[86] For Mary, plural marriage was an event in the past, her father was a dishonest outlier, and his behavior was anachronistic within the larger story of her family, religion, and life.

As a fifty-nine-year-old woman reflecting on her diary, Mary Bennion wrote that her journal and those of her siblings "might be those of any of thousand[s] of orthodox members of the Mormon Church."[87] The discovery of her father's plural marriage galvanized her to consider her father's behavior critically and to rewrite fictional and non-fiction versions of her childhood. Thus, while her diary may be similar to those of other "orthodox members of the Mormon Church," her diary and those of other young women reveal that an "ordinary" Mormon girlhood was and is not a fixed experience. Instead, these young women lived full and complicated lives deeply influenced by their family, position in history, and role as church members during Mormonism's transition at the turn of the twentieth century.

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[86] John Bennion, "Mary Bennion Powell," 100.
[87] Bennion, Journal (1901-1906), flyleaf cover 2, dated January 1949.

CHAPTER FOUR

"A LITTLE DIVERSION" CHURCH DANCES AND PROPER COURTSHIP

Introduction

In 1887, Amelia T. Cannon, the teenage daughter of the influential Mormon apostle George Q. Cannon and one of his plural wives Martha T. Cannon, participated in a variety of formal and informal recreational activities. As a "typical" American adolescent girl, she showed an interest in a wide range of activities: she attended the theatre in Salt Lake City, took mandolin lessons, read several novels including some by contemporary authors like Louisa May Alcott, and would play games with her siblings. As a "typical" Mormon girl, Cannon openly worried about her religiosity in her diary and regularly wrote about her intentions to be a "better girl." One area in which Amelia wrote indirectly about was the struggles to maintain proper observance of religious ideals while enjoying informally organized and official church dances. She lamented her preferences for waltzes—a close dance style deemed too promiscuous by church authorities—over the more tame style of square dancing: "Until I attended a university party recently, I was content with square dancing; but I imbibed a taste for round dancing. It has remained with me ever since."[1] Amelia's diaries are a record of a young woman with numerous dance commitments, a staple of the Mormon courtship schedule that could be relentless. The practicalities of Mormon courtship after plural marriage provided difficulties for church leaders and young women, as both had to effectively contend with precarious intersection of expected proper behavior and courtship. How young women contended with this balance was the cause of many adult church members' anxiety.

Church leaders embraced church dances as a method to promote marriage and courtship. They recognized that dances served as essential sites for young Mormon men and women to understand proper decorum and socialize with each other in a controlled and supervised setting. The

[1] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal (1986-87), quoted in Bitton "Heigh, Ho! I'm Seventeen," 336.

main objective for church leaders to organize entertainment for church youth was to increase interest in religion and promote chaste courtship that would lead to marriage. The MIA guidebook stated: "While the Church does not pretend to run a matrimonial bureau, it is an established fact that the social field is a mating place for the membership of the Church. Young people will become better acquainted in one evening of social activity than in ten meetings."[2] If the church wanted to assure the salvation of its youngest members and their continued spiritual allegiance to Mormonism, they knew had to appeal to the youth from outside the confines of the Sunday meeting. Church dances serve as a space to explore and question how church prescription and the practice (actual behaviors) of its church members intersected, collided, and/or fell into harmony.

A struggle for church leaders regarding dance was their perceived need to maintain a steady balance between popular culture and Mormon values. This struggle was directly related to adult Mormons' fears over young women's sexuality. A continual tension that materialized in various dance cultures outside Mormondom in the mainstream United States existed between participants who attended the dance and authority figures. Those in positions of authority—usually of an older generation or different class—who worried about the sexual connotations of dance and how it affected young people's, especially women's, morality. Similar fears inhibited LDS church leaders who worried that unsupervised dancing could lead to unwanted sexual behavior among the church's youngest members. In 1928, a handbook for the Mutual Improvement Association, a church organization that directed almost all of the church youth programs, declared when dancing would "stimulate those emotions which are fundamentally related to the dance instinct, social dancing is no longer wholesome."[3] Church leaders worried that dances, unless properly monitored, could lead the youngest adherents away from proper behavior and away from the religion. However, forbidding church dances altogether was never an option that seemed to be seriously entertained by the church

[2] *MIA Handbook* (Salt Lake City: General Board of MIA, 1928), 342.
[3] *MIA Handbook*, 342.

leadership. Church dances presented a conundrum for the leadership, who were caught between censuring improper behavior, and also encouraging a necessary intimacy between young men and women that would lead to a marriage match.

Analyzing both adult and adolescent attitudes toward dance as a physical activity and a church event illuminates tensions that dominated this transitional period of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century for the LDS Church. One of the primary tensions included concerns and questions over the inclusion of popular American culture into church recreation. The older generation's anxiety about proper recreation did not just indicate a generational conflict but it was also evidence of how older Mormons struggled to strike a balance between significant tenets of their religion and parts of popular culture they wanted to incorporate into their own culture. Young women faced a similar challenge as they dealt with their competing allegiances to their religious identities and their desire to engage in mainstream America. Notwithstanding these shared struggles, younger and older generations rarely saw eye to eye on how this tension played out in the world of Mormon dance and courtship.

In this chapter, I argue that church adults were ultimately successful in their end goal of using dances as a method to encourage marriage among Mormons. However, I also assert that the church leadership was not always successful in guaranteeing that church dances would mostly be a space of wholesome recreation. Many of the church leadership's directives regarding dances were regularly thwarted by the influence of outside popular culture, the lack of compliance of some young men and women, and even the failure of some local leadership to enforce the church's restrictions. Despite the potential dangers of dances becoming sites of licentious leisure, young women's potential disinterest in church dances could pose a greater threat. A young woman's lack of interest in church dances could be equated with an ambivalent attitude toward the theological significance of marriage within Mormonism. To counter this potential disinterest, the leadership

knew they had to take up the nearly impossible task of offering recreation that appealed to its youth but still fit within the confines of accepted Mormon morality.

I also argue that church dances were spaces in which young women held some control over courtship. Because the event of the church dance was so ingrained in Utah LDS culture, young women's attendance and participation was not just expected but assumed. Young women used the event of the dance space to exhibit their interest and desire to engage in aspects of popular culture. The latter was interpreted by the church leadership as a possibility for deviancy: a deviancy that could upset the order of the religion. All at once, young women were defying and acquiescing to the church's prescriptions. By ultimately abiding by the church's ideals and restrictions, they were fulfilling the older generation's expectations. However, at the same time, through the older and younger generation's gradual acceptance and adaptation of certain mainstream trends, young women's desires shaped LDS dance culture and courtship.

An integral aspect of the argument in this chapter is to understand how the church leadership's goal to control dance—the physical act and as a church event—served as a larger metaphor for the church to control the bodies of the their youngest adherents. Desire to control the body served as a larger metaphor for the church's impulse to control courtship. Naturally, the LDS Church is not the only religious tradition to raise concern over the bodily activities of its members. Theological understanding of the body within LDS culture reveals why Mormons believed that they had more cause for concern compared to other groups. Colleen McDannell asserts that for Mormons an inherent aspect of the blessing (privilege) of having a body is experiencing one's sexuality "to achieve a joyful, emotional, and spiritual unity" with their partner and also to procreate.[4] However, one's sexuality must only be utilized and expressed under the covenant of heterosexual (and now monogamous) marriage. Through their attempt to restrict the

[4] McDannell, 216.

bodies of youth, the church entered a tenuous balance of needing to dissuade overtly sexual behavior among youth but also encourage a healthy sexual interest in the opposite sex to assure future marriages. The church did not want to entirely diminish the youth's sexual behavior, but, above all else, they wanted the youth to understand that displays of sexuality were only permissible within particular contexts

A History of Mormon Attitudes toward Recreation and Dance

Enjoyable and wholesome recreation was both a central aspect of Mormon theology and a key component to the religion's ability to survive and thrive during times of transition. Examining the church's first and second prophet-presidents Joseph Smith and Brigham Young's attitudes toward recreation allows for a greater understanding of the church's approach to recreation. During Joseph Smith's tenure as the leader of the church from 1829 to 1844, he was not a religious leader solely concerned with sermonizing and study. Instead he often surprised his followers and converts with a propensity for both physical and intellectual pursuits. His diary contains references to physical activities such as wrestling, riding, shooting, and playing with his children.[5] In contrast to Smith's penchant for vigorous physical exercise, Brigham Young's interests in recreation fell more within the realm of performance arts, and he was instrumental in setting up the theatre and other performance arts once Mormons established Salt Lake City.

Brigham Young's often-conflicting views regarding recreation may not make sense without understanding his childhood. Young experienced a deprivation of recreation in his younger years, and his childhood influenced his perplexing and contradictory attitudes toward recreation. On one hand, Young believed that children who did not engage in recreation "were more fit for companions with devils," as a lack of play meant that these children would grow up to detest their work and responsibilities. In accordance with this idea, Young's supposed motto was "Eight hours work, eight

[5] Kimball, *Sports in Zion: Mormon Recreation, 1890-1940*, 23.

hours sleep, eight hours recreation." Recreation was a necessity so men and women could give more directed attention to serious work relating to their religion. On the other hand, Young was careful to explain that recreation could also lead to immoral behavior. While his children engaged in merrymaking, he watched "very closely, and if I hear a word, see a look, or a sneer at divine things or anything derogatory to a good moral character, I feel it in a moment, and I say, 'If you follow that it will not lead to good, it is evil.'"[6] For Brigham Young, recreation was vital to one's religiosity, but only if it occurred within the confines of respectable behavior.

Despite both Smith and Young's acceptance and encouragement of physical recreation, the church's first two leaders exhibited some distaste and ambiguity toward dance. There are many early examples of Mormons being reprimanded—some instances involving excommunication—for attending non-Mormon dancehalls in the 1830s and 1840s. Yet, Mormons could not keep all aspects of non-Mormon popular culture out and still regularly enjoyed dancing at each other's homes. In 1840s Nauvoo, Joseph Smith's house was used as a setting of many dances, which became an issue of contention between Joseph and his first wife Emma. The Smiths seemingly reached a compromise: the dances continued on but with the prophet sitting upstairs with the door closed.[7]

Brigham Young's attitudes toward dance were less stringent than Smith's, but they ebbed and flowed with what was happening with the religion. Following the Joseph Smith's assassination in 1844, Young stated "it is not a time for dancing or frolics but a time of mourning and of humiliation and prayer." Young wanted his coreligionists to rightfully mourn their leader's abrupt death while they contended with the great feat of reorganizing the church. However, several weeks later Young changed his mind and encouraged dancing in the least likely of all places—the newly constructed Nauvoo Temple. He declared that the Saints should "worship God in dance" in the

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[6] Kimball, *Sports in Zion: Mormon Recreation, 1890-1940*, 23-4.
[7] Michael Hicks, *Mormonism and Music: A History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 75-6.

temple.[8] Given the tense and uncertain period of the church following their prophet's death and eventual migration away from Nauvoo, Young probably wanted the Saints to celebrate as much they could before their journey across the continent into their unknown future.

The instability of the religion persisted for many years, as Brigham Young and his followers fled their settlement of Nauvoo in Illinois and began their long migration across the plains. Regardless of these persisting hardships and uncertainties, Young urged his followers to engage in merrymaking in their temporary settlement of Winter Quarters in Nebraska. In January 1847, Young shared his first revelation as the new prophet with the Saints. Part of the revelation included "if thou art merry, praise the Lord with singing, with music, with dancing, and with a prayer of praise and thanksgiving."[9] For Brigham Young, dance, along with singing, music, and prayer, could be an exhibition and testament of the membership's reverence and thankfulness for their Heavenly Father. According to Brigham Young's daughter Susa Young Gates, he even hosted communal dancing parties in his homes and encouraged some of his children to take dance lessons.[10] Young's regulations toward dance help set the tone for the way the activity would blossom in Utah.

Church adherents looked to dance as an entertaining method to fortify their spirits and group identity both in times of great turmoil and relative period of peace and ease. Historian Davis Bitton writes: "they found that getting together and kicking up their heels in time to music was welcome relief from their cares. Crossing the plains and in many settlements of the Great Basin it was a form of amusement that had tremendous advantage that little was required for it to succeed.[11] During the church's early tumultuous migration from Illinois to Utah, Mormons recognized a need

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[8] Hicks, 77.
[9] Kimball, *Sports in Zion: Mormon Recreation, 1890-1940*, 23-4.
[10] Susa Young Gates, "How Brigham Young Brought Up His Fifty-Six Children" *Physical Culture* (February 1925). This document is a photocopy ascertained from Utah State Archives, Salt Lake City. It does not contain page numbers.
[11] Davis Bitton, "'These Licentious Days': Dancing among the Mormons" in *The Ritualization of Mormon History and Other Essays*, 98.

for seriousness in their purpose but also that leisure was integral to the long-term success of their survival. These actions permeated the culture following the church's settlement in Utah and church dance events became a permanent fixture and the Mormon social world in Utah was soon ordered by church dances.

Dances were a community event that could be enjoyed by whole families, younger couples, or individuals on their own. Juanita Brooks described a typical dance in her rural hometown Bunkerville, Nevada in the early 1900s:

> The crowd was all gathered and the dance ready to begin when we got there. The benches had been pushed back around the wall, with the surplus ones stacked on the back of the stage. The lamps were all cleaned and filled, the tin reflectors behind them polished. The girls sat demurely on one side of the room and the boys on the other, while a few couples who were going steady stood together near the door.
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> Ma certainly did enjoy the dances. Besides the music and the activity, there was the chance to visit with other women, to note the new dresses and decide whether they were homemade or had come from Montgomery Ward or Bella Hess. She had noticed who danced with whom, and how, and sometimes discovered a budding romance before the people were conscious of it themselves. She often held a baby while its younger mother shook off her cares in the wide whirlings of a quadrille.[12]

Within the rural context of Bunkerville, Nevada, dances provided a much-needed social outlet for married women like Juanita Brooks' mother, parents of young children, and adolescents on the cusp of their adulthood. Organized dances serve as an example of how both Mormon leaders and adherents placed a high level of importance upon leisure as a necessary aspect of one's life.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, church dances began to serve two interrelated social purposes within Mormondom: a wholesome form of entertainment free of negative outside influences and a space for young Mormon men and women to meet potential spouses. However, if not executed with proper intentions, dance could result in desultory behavior that could lead to

[12] Brooks, *Quicksand and Cactus*, 165

unintended long-term consequence. It was this worry that fueled Brigham Young and many other leaders' anxiety about the evolving dance culture in the United States and its affects in Utah.

Many young American men and woman across socioeconomic, racial, and religious backgrounds engaged in some sort of dancing culture during the nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries. African American domestic workers crowded into dance halls in post-Civil War Atlanta, and used dance as a way to reclaim their bodies after working for wages all week as domestic workers.[13] In the turn-of-the-twentieth-century New York, after working all day, many young working-class women would head out to neighborhood halls or saloons to dance the night away. Over five hundred public dance halls opened in New York City by the 1910s. The emergence of this fast growing dance culture signaled young working class women's increasing involvement in different forms of public leisure alongside men in urban areas.[14] Dance as a form of youth-oriented leisure was not relegated to urban areas. In rural Wisconsin, dances were especially popular in the summer taking place in barns, granaries, and even local saloons usually following some form of communal work.[15] Public dancing held a variety of purposes for individuals and communities in its ability to serve as a tool of empowerment or act as a uniting activity for a specific community.

Concern about the promiscuous nature of dance culture was still evident in rural and urban communities and secular and religious settings. To cope with the perception that the younger generations of religious and/or ethnic communities were moving away from particular social customs and traditions and embracing more mainstream aspects of American popular culture, religious groups like a Wisconsin Danish church community sought control over mainstream forms

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[13] Tera W. Hunter, *To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors After the Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 180.
[14] Peiss, 88-90.
[15] Joan M. Jensen, "'I'd Rather Be Dancing': Wisconsin Women Moving On" *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 22:1 (2001): 6.

of leisure within their communities.[16] In the 1890s and early 1900s, the Danish church community in rural Wisconsin regularly allowed their church hall to be used for different public social events like dancing. However, beginning in 1908 many church members expressed disproval of the public dances in the church assembly hall. Control over dance culture was not just limited to small communities, as different reformers and organizations in larger cities like New York attempted to regulate dance hall behavior. For example, a reform agency named the Committee of Fourteen sent out vice investigators to the city's dancehalls and saloons to search out prostitution. Reformers worried that the dancehall presented an opportune location for men to prey on young women and/or young working class women would get caught up in the epidemic of "white slavery." Dance instructors during the early twentieth centuries attempted choreographed dance styles that required little to no bodily contact between the opposite sexes, standing at least one to four inches apart, no "hoppings," no "contortions of the body," and no "fantastic dips."[17]

For the Mormon church, apprehension over dance illustrated larger concerns about the place of popular culture in their culture as the church transitioned from being perceived as an outsider religion to becoming more ingrained in American society. Questions of how dancing as a physical act and as a community event worked within Mormon culture were greatly influenced by the church's overall stance on recreation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The leaders were chiefly concerned with what historian Richard Kimball refers to as "a belief in restricted recreation—conducted within church parameters" in the nineteenth century.[18] By the twentieth century, church leaders reexamined their approach to recreation, as they grew increasingly concerned about the effects of urbanization and industrialization. A chief worry was that younger generations were not receiving enough physical exercise. As secular society attempted to counteract

[16] Jensen, 10-12.
[17] Peiss, 98, 103.
[18] Kimball, *Sports in Zion: Mormon Recreation, 1890-1940*, 25

this perceived issue with new recreational activities like the Boy and Girl Scouts, Mormon society grew increasingly worried about the spiritual lives of their youngest adherents.[19] At first, the church levied the responsibility of the potential downfall of youth at parents. In 1903 the *Improvement Era,* a church publication*,* claimed the problem with children was "due to the infidelity, indifference, and neglect of parents" who do not live in conformity with the Gospel."[20] For the church leaders, the differences between their childhood and the present generations was striking, and the most noticeable difference was the atmospheres in which the two generations were raised. Whereas around three-quarters of Mormons lived in rural areas from 1860 to 1900, the number of Utahns and other Mormons living in rural areas gradually declined in the early-twentieth century.[21] Salt Lake City's rise as a manufacturing center pushed many rural Mormons, non-Mormon Americans, and immigrants alike to relocate to the city. An assumed result of this demographic shift was that the youngest generation of adherents would grow up without the frontier, Mormon values that they believed were naturally instilled in the older generations.

By the 1920s, the Mormon Church had instituted a recreation ideology with the aim of inculcating children with these Mormon values. Part of this recreation ideology included addressing the "seven urges" that wholesome recreation fulfilled: physical, rhythmic, constructive, environmental, dramatic, linguistic, and social.[22] The most popular form of entertainment dance fulfilled multiple needs: physical, rhythmic, and social. The Mormon leaders' impulse to monitor dance illuminated how the church was still intent upon offering mixed-gender leisure in controlled and supervised settings. This contradicts larger trends in the nation. Historian Beth Bailey attests that in the twentieth century courtship began to occur in public places "removed, by distance and

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[19] Kimball, *Sports in Zion: Mormon Recreation, 1890-1940*, 28-29.
[20] "Editor's Table—Worship in the Home," *Improvement Era* 7 (Dec. 1903) quoted in Kimball, *Sports in Zion: Mormon Recreation, 1890-1940*, 30-1.
[21] Daynes, 9; Kimball, *Sports in Zion: Mormon Recreation, 1890-1940*, 9.
[22] Kimball, *Sports in Zion: Mormon Recreation, 1890-1940*, 47.

anonymity, from the sheltering and controlling contexts of home and local community."[23] As all secular America seemingly embraced this courtship style, Mormons hoped to move against this trend and continued to offer closely monitored mixed-gender events. These concerns also reveal that regardless of the church's more sophisticated recreation ideology, the church was still primarily intent upon offering controlled recreation as it did in the nineteenth century.

The church's three main reservations about dance were closely intertwined with their concerns about how outside leisure would affect the morality and religiosity of adolescents. First, different leaders, editorials in church publications, and official church statements regularly cautioned against engaging in licentious dance styles like the round dance or waltz. Secondly, church dances were supposed to end within a reasonable hour. Finally, to offer a wholesome Mormon form of dance culture, the church aimed to provide a space where Mormons would only be able to socialize with each other and not with non-members or "bad company." Young church members' reactions to and compliance (or lack there of) with these three directives offer a crucial lens to explore how prescription and practice intersected.

The Waltzing Epidemic

Wrestling with the place of round dancing dominated Mormon rhetoric on youth and dance in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Waltzing, or round dancing, emerged as a controversial practice in the early nineteenth century. The dance style consisted of a man and woman facing and holding each other closely while circling on a dance floor. Despite the growing popularity of the dance style, various etiquette authorities, mostly manuals, declared that the dance style was "vulgar" and unfit for public dance halls.[24] Leading clergymen in Catholic, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and

[23] Beth L. Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 3.
[24] Bitton, "'These Licentious Days': Dancing among the Mormons," 102.

Methodist churches openly opposed round dancing in the early nineteenth century.[25] Mormon publications, such as the *Deseret News*, the *Woman's Exponent*, and the *Juvenile Instructor* from the 1870s and 1880s, included articles and editorials that exposed the supposed dangers of round dancing. For example, in 1876, *Woman's Exponent* printed that Brigham Young compared the dance style to "brothel-house dances."[26]

The preferred dance style were cotillions and quadrilles, styles relating to square dancing. Bob Skiva describes these dance styles in the nineteenth century:

> By the midnineteenth century, however, quadrilles were replacing in popularity all but a few favorite country dances. In the latter, each couple progresses up and down a line to dance with every other couple. In cotillions and quadrilles, on the other hand, sets of four couples form a square, and each couple dances only with the others in that set.[27]

For those opposed to close dancing and its supposed consequences, square dancing ostensibly provided enough space between young men and women. The dance style also encouraged switching of partners, which was supposed to minimize close contact. However, some viewed the square dance as a mere step away to the waltz. The American Congress of the Episcopal Church in 1877 contemplated banning square dancing amongst members as those dancing square dances had a "a resistless tendency to round off into the waltz."[28]

Confusion over whether round dancing was actually restricted or allowed in the Mormon church rose as leaders on the local and higher level offered conflicting strictures. One can only assume that when Amelia Cannon wrote in her diary that she had waltzed at a recent "University party" that she was at one of the colleges operated by the LDS Church.[29] The knowledge that

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[25] Ann Louise Wagner, *Adversaries of Dance: From the Puritans to the Present* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 149-150.
[26] Bitton, "'These Licentious Days': Dancing among the Mormons," 103.
[27] Bob Skiva, "Here, Everybody Dances: Social Dancing in Early Minnesota," *Minnesota History* 55 5 (Spring 1997): 220.
[28] *Harper's Magazine*, 59 (Jan. 187S): 302-3, quoted in S. Foster Damn, "The History of Square Dancing" *American Antiquarian Society 62 (*April 1952): 89.
[29] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal, (1886-87) quoted in Bitton "Heigh, Ho! I'm Seventeen," 336.

round dancing was occurring at a church run university is emblematic of the struggles of enforcing standards that both the younger generations and local authority figures were expected to follow. The most perplexing issue appeared to be whether it was permissible to allow a few round dances or none at all. An 1877 *Deseret News* article stated that waltzes "tend, though not always intentionally so, to demoralize our youth," but the article also advised that there should not be "more than one or two" round dances "permitted in an evening."[30] Some bishops allowed a few round dances to coax more young men and women to attend local dances.[31] Local leaders probably allowed round dancing to occur, as they were concerned about Mormon youth holding their own unsupervised dances or attending non-Mormon dance halls. In these instances, allowing some round dances came to be the lesser of two evils compared to lack of supervision at other places used for dancing.

Along with the first publication of the *Young Woman's Journal* in the 1890s came another effort to convince church members to evade round dancing. Articles and editorials, a majority likely penned by Susa Young Gates, stressed that waltzing was not compatible with ideas of a proper Mormon girlhood. The *YWJ* printed several letters from young women in 1896 and 1897, who were writing in response to an earlier editorial about the dangers of round dancing. "Mabel" wrote in August of 1896:

> It is not an easy matter for a girl of eighteen, who loves to dance better than anything else in the world (in the way of amusement I mean) to sit idly by and watch her companions enjoy themselves in the dance, while she, for conscience sake, must keep repeating to her gentleman friends, "No thanks."[32]

"Mabel's" letter revealed a disconnect from prescriptive literature like the YWJ and the actual actions of local church leaders. Another letter from April 1897 by a young woman "Willmia" confessed that her own bishop told her 'it does not do to be too straight-laced; waltzing is a delightful exercise, of

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[30] Davis Bitton, "'These Licentious Days': Dancing Among the Mormons" *Sunstone* 2:1 (1977): 22.
[31] Bitton, *Sunstone*, 20, 24.
[32] "Confidential Talks with Girls," *Young Woman's Journal* 7:8 (August, 1896): 251.

which young people should not be robbed.'"[33] These young women were caught between the official expectations set forth in prescriptive literature and what was actually occurring at ward dances. In response to these letters, the YWJ did not admonish the local leadership for allowing round dancing yet placed the responsibility of avoiding this dance style squarely on the shoulders of the young women. Because of these mostly conflicting attitudes, young women like "Mabel" and "Willmia" naturally felt compelled to question the necessity of banning this dance style.

Not all young women such as "Mabel," "Willmia," and Amelia Cannon longed for round dancing or questioned the need for a ban of the dance style. Born in 1882 in Utah, Mary Stark lived the first few years of her life in Payson City. Her older sister Minnie married at the age of sixteen and relocated with her husband to the "Colonies" in Mexico.[34] Minnie paid for a one-way ticket for sixteen-year-old Mary to visit in 1898. Mary was struck by how her coreligionists in Mexico "lived their religion to the letter." She recounts that even though she felt uneducated about her religion, she fit right in to her sister's household and the surrounding community. Despite her notice of their more stringent adherence to religious standards, Mary's experiences regarding dancing and recreation did not differ too widely from her peers in Utah. She wrote: "I was invited to many parties. The young folks were very kind and I was quite popular. The dances were square dances—no waltzes or round dances, but we had lots of fun."[35] Though Pratt wrote this account of her time in the Colonies when she was an older woman, her mention of how she and the other youth in the Colonies only engaged in barn dancing is very telling of the spread of Mormon culture in the late nineteenth century to the farthest reaches of the church's North American settlements. It also

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[33] "Confidential Talks with Girls," *Young Woman's Journal* 8:4 (April, 1897): 336.
[34] At the height of the American antipolygamy legislation in the 1870s and 1880s, some Mormons began to settle in various areas in Mexico. These colonies existed until the Mexican Revolution. For more information, see B. Carmon Hardy, "Cultural 'Encystment' as a Cause of the Mormon Exodus from Mexico in 1912" *Pacific Historical Review* 34:4 (1965): 439-454.
[35] Mary Stark Pratt, Autobiographical Sketch. MS 14807. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

suggests that certain more stringent communities were quicker to follow the church's restrictions regarding recreation.

Issues regarding the waltz began to slowly dwindle throughout the 1900s and 1910s. While editorials in the YWJ still disapproved of the dance style, the tones of the articles became more desperate. In a 1900 edition of the YWJ, an editorial stated the

> most potent reason why our young people should not indulge in round dancing [is that] it is against counsel! And the moral effects of disobedience are often worse for a human character than the performance of the act which is forbidden…Our leaders have condemned it, and that should be enough for our Mutual Improvement boys and girls.[36]

Instead of merely just focusing on the supposedly immoral and unhealthy aspects of the dance, the writer cited lack of obedience as the primary injustice perpetuated by the church's youth. Other articles from this period offered dissimilar reasoning for objecting to the dance such as a 1902 article from the *Juvenile Instructor,* which stated that waltzes

> are used by young people as an excuse for assuming an attitude that is sometimes shocking, and those who are so frivolous be devoid of a high sense of propriety should be warned by the Bishop in a kindly spirit and in a proper manner in a private way to refrain from any and all unseemly and indelicate attitudes in the ball-room.[37]

The stance of this article differs strikingly from the more authoritarian article in the YWJ two years earlier. The *Juvenile Instructor* article attempted to explain the problematic closed positioning of the waltz instead of sounding resolutely disciplinarian. Not only could this difference indicate a slight increase of acceptance toward waltzing in the two-year period, but it could also highlight the ways in which the church leadership, on the local and general level, attempted to reach out and relate to their youngest adherents. Reportedly, as early as 1900, only the Bear Lake, Utah and Juarez, Mexico wards still restricted round dancing.[38] Whatever the reason for this change in attitude, by 1910 the Mutual Improvement Association ceased to express a wide disapproval of the dance and other

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[36] Bitton, "'These Licentious Days': Dancing Among the Mormons," *Sunstone*, 22.
[37] Bitton, "'These Licentious Days': Dancing Among the Mormons,"*Sunstone*, 25.
[38] Hicks, 86.

organizations within the church seemingly followed suit. Nonetheless, the closed nature of the waltz and other dance styles still troubled some members of the older generation; some local church organizations utilized floorwalkers to guarantee that dancing couples were dancing within accepted parameters.[39]

Why did waltzing cause such an epidemic in the late nineteenth century but seemed to be cautiously accepted by the mid-early-twentieth century? There are many possible answers. First, the church leadership likely realized that to keep the youngest adherents interested in church functions they had to regularly refashion church activities to keep attracting the attendance of youth. Secondly, the next generation of Mormons slowly began to take over the leadership roles, which introduced new and more lenient attitudes toward dance styles. Thirdly, the cautious acceptance of round dancing could also be the result of young women slowly and constantly utilizing the dance style as a way to exercise their identities as young American, albeit Mormon, women and claim a subtle form of power. For these young women, pushing for acceptance of waltzing was a method for them to exercise a form of agency while still abiding by the larger strictures and morals of the church.

"Far Past Midnight"

Limiting the hours of a dance and restricting admission to church members provided the church leadership with a sense of control over the youth. Many editorials and statements in the *Deseret News* and *Juvenile Instructor* declared that dances should end by ten or eleven at night and definitely not extend past midnight. But the reality was typically the opposite.

One of the first concerns of limiting dance hours was the supposed ill effect it had upon young women's health. Leaders from different religious groups worryingly spoke out about how young women's health was affected by engaging in this vigorous physical activity. Concern about health in regard to dance was connected to late-nineteenth century ideas that excessive exercise

[39] Bitton, "'These Licentious Days': Dancing Among the Mormons,"*Sunstone*, 25.

could harm young women.[40] Many young women commented that they suffered physical ailments from dance. In 1867, seventeen-year-old Mary Perkes recorded her thoughts on a church meeting and previous dance: I am not careful of my health from this time will try to be more careful and not thoughtless destroy a bless from God…We had a dance last night it went off lively. I enjoyed myself but I have got a dreadful headache now.[41]"

Perkes' commentary in her diary is just not significant as she reiterates the idea that young women suffered from sickness like a headache after a dance, but she was also contextualizing the dance and her resulting headache with the message she was receiving at her church meeting about protecting her health. In her efforts to live nearer to God, Perkes knew she must learn to restrain herself in all activities including church events to maintain her health, which she believed was a "blessing from God." By correlating her sickness as a direct result of her prior night's activities, Perkes likely subscribed to some form of ideology about dances causing illness.

The apostle George Q. Cannon's 1876 editorial in the *Juvenile Instructor* reflects President Brigham Young's concerns about the consequences about late night dancing: it led to poor health and could lead to immoral behavior between young men and young women. On the first issue, Cannon wrote: "Instead of quitting at a reasonable hour, it has become common for them to be kept up far past midnight, until they are worn out with fatigue and excitement, and unfitted for the duties of the following day."[42] If kept up late, the participants would not benefit from the positive benefits of dance and their responsibilities would suffer. Nearly fifteen years later as his own daughter Amelia Cannon dealt with the busy schedule of a popular young twenty-year-old Mormon

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[40] Scholar Ann Wagner surmises "infrequent, vigorous, exercise taken in overheated, poorly ventilated rooms while wearing ballroom dress" not surprisingly caused some health issues amongst young women. However, instead of women being incapable of physical exercise, she asserts that it was most like their heavy clothing that led to ill health and death. Wagner, 207.

[41] Perkes, "My Journal," page 4, March 28, 1867.

[42] Editorial Thoughts, *Juvenile Instructor* 11 (15 Feb, 1876): 42.

girl at a marriageable age, she regularly complained about the drawbacks of having such a busy dance schedule. At twenty-one years old, Amelia wrote that dancing

> serves me badly. It makes my head ache and jolts my system. I find it difficult to obtain sleep after dancing, my nerves are strung up to such a high tension. I have missed so much sleep of late that it is beginning to tell upon my system. In the old times my bed at nine was a rule and a party was an epoch.

After a particularly exhausting night of dancing until one in the morning, Amelia wrote that she wished she were not "so very popular."[43] Instead of interpreting this comment as self-centered, one should contemplate the expectations that family and the church placed upon young women like Amelia. As the daughter of the well-known and respected church leader, Amelia's disposition and actions at public events were probably noticed and scrutinized by other church members. The examples of Mary Perkes and Amelia Cannon nearly thirty years apart elucidate how some young women agreed with and embodied the claims in Mormon and more widespread rhetoric that young women could be harmed by dance.

The experience of another young woman Cleo Hansen, who was a few decades younger than Amelia Cannon, illuminates the problematic assumption that limiting the hours of a dance also limited the unsupervised interactions between young men and women. In 1917 Fountain Green, Utah, nineteen-year-old Cleo Hansen attended dance after dance in her community. However, her interactions with male suitors were not limited to public outings during acceptable hours, instead she and her female friends often entertained male company in their private family homes late into the morning hours. Throughout her diary, she almost always clarifies that she was in the company of other people during these occasions and not alone with male suitors. On February 12th 1918, after attending a dance with her longtime suitor Jim, a World War I soldier, he accompanied her home and stayed until five in the morning. She writes: "We came home and Bill only stayed a little while. Jim stayed until five…He told me how he loved me and asked me to be true to him until he came

[43] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal (1891-2), page 22, February 18, 1892.

home in May. I love him and we are going to be married."[44] This unsupervised interaction and private moment afforded this couple the opportunity to cement their future plans as husband and wife.

Attempting to limit the hours of church dances for youth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century proved to be a mostly futile cause for the church leadership. Despite the strictures given to local leaders and the youth, late-night dances would continue to be a fixture in the church's social world and for young couples during their courtships. Whereas church officials may have disapproved of young couples like Cleo and Jim keeping late hours, in this particular instance and many others, the church dance fulfilled its purpose of promoting courtship and marriage between young Mormon men and women. Of her marriage to Jim Johnson in 1918, Cleo Hansen recorded in her journal: "I shall look and trust him and strive to make his life happy and our home a place of welcome and sunshine. In so doing I shall be happy and contented because it is the way God meant his children to be."[45] While Mormon leaders struggled with the proper dictates and cultural expectations of a church dance, Cleo Hansen's words provide one example of how the next generation of Mormons were attempting to live the way "God meant his children to be" and the way their church leadership wanted them to live--by preserving the religion through marriage.

No "disreputable or immoral persons"

An 1875 statement written by George Reynolds, a general authority in the church, and signed endorsed by Brigham Young stated that "dancing parties" are not "the most appropriate way for members of the Church to spend their evenings." The statement, printed in the *Deseret News Weekly*, stated church members should attend scientific or religious lectures over dances. Nonetheless, Brigham Young, via Reynolds's pen admitted that dance parties were inevitable especially during the

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[44] Cleo H. Johnson, Diary (1916-1925), pages 42-3, February 12, 1918. MS 5952 1-2. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.
[45] Cleo H. Johnson, Diary (1916-1925), pages 176-178, not dated.

winter season. If the church members must persist in hosting dance parties, Young asked that dances

> adopt rules as to exclude from all objectionable characters on moral grounds; this being especially necessary in view of numbers of individuals who evince an insatiable desire to corrupt the morals of the young people of the community.[46]

Though there was some reported instances of young women being harmed by untoward men at or after dances, the disastrous outcomes of having Mormons and non-Mormons "mix" at dance parties were mostly imagined problems perpetuated by the church leadership.

The perceived issues from allowing non-Mormons at dancing parties were related to intertwined fears. Increased migration, rising urbanization, and developing industrialization pushed many American men and women to confront their own fears and anxieties about modernity in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century. Members of the LDS church were no exception to these fears and anxieties. However, these fears amongst Mormons were also the direct result of specific occurrences in Utah: the arrival of the 1869 intercontinental railroad and the 1890s which included passage of the Manifesto and the gaining of statehood. For Mormons, the introduction of more non-Mormons into Utah and other parts of the Mormon Culture Region led to a more urgent rhetoric directed at church members.

In 1877, an editorial from the November *Deseret News Weekly* outlined expectations for future dance parties. Amongst directives to avoid round dancing and late hours were several regulations about who was permitted to attend a ward dance: no "disreputable or immoral persons" could be in attendance; invitation lists including church members from other wards should be submitted to the bishop before the dance; and people who attended "public balls," those not organized by the church, should not be invited to a ward dance. The article also included detailed rules regarding whether dances should be held to collect money for the church or a charitable situation. It read:

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[46] *Deseret News Weekly*, 22 December 1875.

> it too often happened that the wives and daughters of Latter-day Saints were brought in contact with, and introduced to very undesirable persons, the desire to make these parties a financial success having got the better of the inviting committee's good judgment, so that they had permitted the presence of those whose reputations and associations rendered them very undesirable companions for men and women who were seeking to serve the Lord.

Not all church functions were disallowed from collecting money, as concerts and lectures planned for the financial "benefit of Sunday Schools, Improvement Associations, Missionaries" were encouraged. Members of "the objectionable class" would not be enticed to attend "gatherings of this character." Additionally, the message in the statement was loud and clear: women should be protected from these possibly immoral influences. The editorial asked for the cooperation of both the Young Men's and Young Ladies to help guarantee these functions would be events where only "the good and pure shall associate."[47]

The church reacted to sudden changes that came along with the end of plural marriage and imminent statehood in the 1890s. In 1895, an editorial in the *Deseret News* titled "As to Dances" spoke of an "evil" that "has grown to alarming proportions, particularly in this city" and other larger cities in the Utah Territory. The "evil" manifested itself in the people who held "the guise of respectability" but was operating under "dangerous and insidious influences of a secret nature." People of questionable background socializing with the church's youth at unsupervised dances drew the most urgency. These parties became places where "immoral persons of both sexes frequently are given access to work evil to the extent of their ability and to lead astray the unsophisticated and unguarded." This article highlighted the perceived divide between the urban and the rural. While Taylor and other church leadership probably liked to believe that Mormon youth were at some level ignorant and unaware of immorality, Taylor's comments about the "unsophisticated and unguarded" referred to the increasing numbers of young Mormons arriving in Salt Lake City from the countryside. These innocent youths and young adults could be led away from their religion by

[47] *Deseret News Weekly*, 28 November 1877.

anyone, including but not limited to unsavory men, prostitutes, and/or other Mormons who were under the effects of this "evil."[48]

Anxiety over interactions between non-Mormons and Mormons was, of course, not relegated to Salt Lake City and other cities in Utah. This disquiet was ever prevalent amongst rural communities within the Mormon Culture Region. While growing up in Bunkerville, Nevada in the early 1900s, Juanita Brooks heard a story that her father liked to tell about a non-Mormon who had visited a small town and "became so free with the girls that before long three different fathers came to the Bishop, each claiming that young man should marry his daughter to save her good name." When the young man was summoned to the Bishop's Court,[49] he was "sneering and scornful" and directed the blame at the young women insinuating that they were promiscuous. As the story goes, Erastus Snow, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and a pioneer of Mormon settlements in the Southwest outside of Utah, had to get involved in the matter. Recounting the tale, Brooks wrote:

> "Well, young fellow," Erastus Snow said in his slow, deliberate way, "It looks like if someone else don't kill you, I'll have to."
>
> That was enough. Before morning the young mad had fled the state, and the court had accomplished its purpose."[50]

The reach of this story was likely wide across the Mormon Culture Region evidenced through Juanita's father telling her and repeating it. Additionally given that Erastus Snow died in 1888 it is apparent that the story was at least a few decades old when it initially reached Juanita's ears. Whether or not the story is factual is inconsequential, since the spread and reach of it, however,

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[48] *Deseret News*, 19 January 1895.

[49] A Bishop's court served as a way to solve "community" issues that included errant sexuality. These courts were informal in that they usually had to be held in congregants homes but severe in the way that a bishop's judgment could lead to a church member's excommunication, thus, altering a person's eternal future in Mormon theology. As a young girl, Juanita eavesdropped on a court concerning a premarital pregnancy held in her living room while she was supposed to be asleep. Brooks, *Quicksand and Cactus*, 140-1.

[50] Brooks, *Quicksand and Cactus*, 140-1.

illuminates just how much the Mormon general and local leaders were obsessed about not allowing non-Mormons into their communities.

The lay local leadership in Bunkerville continued to ostracize non-Mormons in the small community. These tensions played out within the context of community dances. As Brooks writes "strangers were always looked upon with suspicion." The suspicion "grew out of our very unity, for unitedness was of the kind that shut all others out." To gain admittance to a dance, a stranger had to be sponsored by a community member and introduced to the floormanager of the dance. If permission to enter the dance was not obtained, "strangers" were quickly asked to leave. Two non-Mormon traveling salesmen, who had been in Bunkerville for a few days, attended a dance and asked two young women, who had bought items from them earlier, to dance. Immediately, the floormanager asked the young men to leave once they had finished dancing with the young ladies. The next day in church, a Danish brother, who was known for at times giving "overzealous" and "ludicrous" testimonies openly reprimanded the two young girls.

> "Brothers and sisters, he said "there is one thing which I would like to call your attention, and that is how our young girls take up with these strange drummers who come here, men of the world who would only lead them astray. It is not right. It is not wise. It is not pleasing in the sight of the Lord." And turning to the row of girls on the back bench, he shook a warning finger. "Beware of them, young women! They are as dangerous as rattles! They are more dangerous, for the rattlesnake does have a rattle on its tail which can shake as a warning to you, but they do not![51]

Controlling who entered and interacted the community was of utmost importance to the lay leadership in Bunkerville.

Despite the rhetoric about non-Mormons in Bunkerville, Juanita's and her family's interactions with a non-Mormon outsider contradicted with the official and local church's cautious advice. In one chapter titled "The Outsider" from her memoir, the Leavitt family found themselves in the unexpected situation of hosting a non-Mormon outsider. After Juanita's father landed a

[51] Brooks, *Quicksand and Cactus*, 113.

contract to run the mail back forth between Bunkerville to Moapa, Nevada several times a week, he encountered different sorts of people traveling to and between Bunkerville. Usually these visitors were expected guests, representatives of the church, or salesmen from church owned businesses. Although her father did encounter non-Mormon travelers, they rarely traveled to Bunkerville with him or stayed for a period of time. When her father did bring home a non-Mormon stranger once when she was a young girl, Juanita was understandably mystified and intrigued. Once Juanita was reassured that the outsider was welcome and in her father's words "very nice," she became enamored with him during his brief two day visit. The family learned he worked for an eastern college and was sent to the Western United States to recruit people with Indian background for the college. Because one of her grandfather's five wives was of Indian background, the outsider visited with that part of the family and made some other contacts as well.[52]

Surprisingly, this particular episode with a non-Mormon outsider revealed how the rules surrounding Bunkerville church dances were fluid and deeply influenced by her parents' considerations. The outsider asked if he could attend the dance along with her parents and some of the children, and, without any stated disapproval, her parents obliged. Juanita went to extra lengths to prepare herself for the dance and was beside herself when he asked her to dance:

> The outsider turned to me. "Would you like to try this one?"
> Would I! I who had not danced at a grown-up dance in my life, would I like to dance with him, the best-dressed and handsomest man there! I stood up, but my heartbeat nearly deafened me. As we started, I looked down, because I didn't know where else to look.
> "Don't watch your feet," he said softly. "Hold your head up. Listen to the music. Get the feel of it, and your feet will take care of themselves."
> I did and it worked.[53]

It is surprising that given the rhetoric surrounding non-Mormon outsiders in Bunkerville that Juanita's parents would allow her first dance at a "grown-up" dance to be with a stranger, let alone an older adult, male, non-Mormon. Nonetheless, in this case, it appeared to not be an issue with her

[52] Brooks, *Quicksand and Cactus*, 165.
[53] Brooks, *Quicksand and Cactus*, 167.

family. This episode with the outsider also demonstrates the ways in which her parents and her own experiences pushed her to form her own opinions and behaviors outside of the confines of church prescriptions and restrictions. In the end what stayed with Juanita more than having attention from an older man was an increased desire to seek higher education and "see some of the world beyond the desert."[54]

In the late nineteenth century, fears regarding non-church members were provoked by widespread changes in the church and Utah. To guard against negative consequences of potential intermingling, the leaders created and nurtured rhetoric about the dangers of non-Mormon outsiders. Over time, this rhetoric was adjusted to incorporate the immediate concerns of the community. Before the end of plural marriage in 1890, church leaders and parents seemed to mostly worry about any sort of interaction between youth and non-Mormons. The advancing of urbanization and migration to the city prompted by the arrival of the transcontinental railroad through Utah also led to concern about the changing nature and growth and Salt Lake City. Clearly, this anti-outsider rhetoric held sway outside of the urban areas as confirmed in the almost folktale-like stories that were told and repeated in Juanita Brooks' childhood community and family. Nonetheless, her personal experience exhibits the way some families did not subscribe to all of the organized church's prescriptions. Her experience could also reveal how larger attitudes toward non-Mormons were slowly beginning to change generation by generation.

A Family Issue: Intergenerational Tensions over Courtship & Dance

Amelia Cannon's diary illuminates how disagreements over proper dance erupted within the domestic center of the family. Because of Cannon's prominent role in the church, this disagreement could also spill out into the public sphere of Mormonism. Cannon was prolific in his role as publisher and owner of the *Juvenile Instructor*, a magazine he started for the church's youth in 1866.

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[54] Juanita Brooks, "Memories of a Mormon Girlhood," *The Journal of American Folklore* 77:305 (1964): 209.

He often used his role as the newspaper's owner to include editorials to voice his own thoughts about the role of the church's youth. George Q. Cannon's overall attitude toward dance was not far from Brigham Young's stance: dance was perfectly appropriate as long as it was practiced within an appropriate atmosphere. Through his editorial position at the *Juvenile Instructor*, he reported directly on Brigham Young's thoughts regarding the church's youth, which included the need for shorter hours and refraining from waltzing. Not only did Cannon repeat the desires of the church's prophet, but he also used his editorial space to offer several of his own corresponding commentaries. In the same editorial, Cannon wrote:

> The body as well as the mind is relaxed and invigorated by engaging in it, and the buoyancy and animation of youth find a natural vent in the harmonious movements of the dance. And, besides it imparts a grace of motion that nothing else can.[55]

Cannon's references to the body are tied to his own and the church's beliefs of the body rooted in Mormon theology. As Mormons believe that their bodies are imperfect models of God's physical bodies, the church leadership never fully restricted dance because believed if used within the correct realm and with the appropriate purpose, dance held the capability of improving the body.

Parts of George Q. Cannon's 1876 editorial were likely related to his own personal experiences as the father of thirty-two children. Though the article was directed toward young men and young women, it became clear that Cannon was worried about the effect of dancing on young women. In speaking about the dangers of allowing non-Mormon strangers and young Mormon girls to interact at church dances, he wrote:

> An infatuation takes possession of them sometimes, and under its influence they are led to take a course that in their sober second thought they are very apt to negate. There are no purer and better girls in the world that are found among the Latter-day Saints; and it should be their pride to continue so. It should also be the ambition of every boy of the Latter-day Saints to preserve his sisters in their purity, and protect them from that vile class we have described.[56]

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[55] Editorial Thoughts, *Juvenile Instructor* (15 Feb. 1876): 42.
[56] Editorial Thoughts, *Juvenile Instructor* (15 Feb. 1876): 42.

Though Cannon was clearly concerned about the status of all of the church's children, there is almost no doubt he was also thinking of his own daughters when he urged the church's young male members to safeguard the youngest female members from immoral outside influences. If young women were to become too intimately involved and sexually familiar with non-church members, they would cease to be the "pure" young women that Cannon referenced.

A later editorial written by George Q. Cannon in an 1884 editorial for the Juvenile *Instructor* directly dealt with the contentious issue of round dancing. Cannon referenced a "young lady" who was speaking with the editor of the paper. The young lady "appeared to think it was very strange that these dances should not be permitted." Though Cannon never directly names the young girl, it is likely the exchange taken from a conversation with one of his daughters or on the way he assumed such a conversation may proceed. In his case against round dancing, he drew upon varied evidence in this supposed conversation with the young woman.

> "But," one may say, 'round dancing is the national dance in some countries, and this being the case there certainly can be no harm in indulging in it."
>
> "This may be true; but because dances are national it does not follow that they are suited for our society. There is a dance indulged in on the Sandwich Islands that is very fascinating and very much liked by those who practice; but still it leads to evil. It is immodest and corruptive. There is in India a form of dancing indulged in by nautch girls which is very exhilarating, and perhaps much admired by some persons; but is of a debasing character and stirs up the worst passions…If our young people are determined to have the enjoyment of the dance regardless of its effects upon their modesty and morals, we may after awhile have the hula hula of the Sandwich islands or the can-can of the French. There must be a stopping place if virtue is to be preserved, and far better to stop a little on this side of the line of propriety than to go so near as to be in danger of overstepping it….Square dances have furnished amusements, and to those who like the pastime they will furnish amusement."[57]

Cannon not only drew upon his extensive theological knowledge to defend his and the church's denunciation of round dancing, but also relied upon the personal knowledge he gained during his time as a missionary in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). Despite his steadfast promulgations against

[57] Editorial Thoughts, *Juvenile Instructor* (15 Feb. 1884): 56.

round dancing, what occurred in Cannon's family according to Amelia Cannon's journal was a different matter altogether.

Looking at two of Amelia's journals, one from her late teen years and another from her early twenties, illuminated how she grew from being a teenager concerned with school, recreational activities, and part-time work at the *Juvenile Instructor* to a young woman with a busy social calendar, concerned with her future and marriage. One extended anecdote during the holiday season of 1887 and 1888 is revealing of how George Q. Cannon and his children approached the issue of round dancing in the family. On December 29th, Amelia wrote that there would be a party held "for the young folks" at the school house:

> It is with great reluctance that I record that we are to have no round dances. Pa spent Xmas at our house and the whole family was here during the evening. We were discussing about the party, when David said, 'well what about some round dances?"
>
> "I would rather there would be none," Pa answered, "for the example would not be a good one." So we are doomed to have none but dreary monotonous square dances."[58]

The recorded exchange by Amelia between George Q. Cannon and his son illuminates that even though Cannon did not want to allow round dances at the local school dance, his children believed that they could persuade him to allow a few within the home. His answer that it would not set a good example also indicates that he knew others would look to his family and his children to embody the principles set forth by church leaders. However, it was likely that he was merely going through the motions of urging them to refrain from it when he knew they might sneak a few in. Historian Davis Bitton attests that Cannon's record of disciplinary action with his children ran between expressing gentle disappointment to sometimes using physical punishment. However, due to his prolonged absences, many of his disciplinary efforts were unsuccessful and fell on deaf ears.[59]

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[58] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal, quoted in Bitton "Heigh, Ho! I'm Seventeen," 336.
[59] Davis Bitton, *George Q. Cannon: A Biography* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co, 1999) ebook edition.

Despite Cannon's urgings, the truth was that round dancing did and was occurring in the Cannon home. Amelia Cannon wrote that the party was the "pleasantest time that I ever had enjoyed at a party." She danced much more than she believed she would and especially enjoyed her time dancing with Willard Croxall, a young man she described as a "good conversationalist," "agreeable," "gallant", and "religious." Amelia Cannon was delightedly surprised when she discovered that he "did not seem at all shocked at round-dancing" and displayed a proficient familiarity with the "forbidden pleasure." In fact, her dancing partner had to "partly teach" her the steps and "pull" her "along the right way." Amelia Cannon declared the dance a "success" because all the attendants "spoke highly of the pleasure which had been derived" from the dance. George Q. Cannon either enjoyed the dance or appreciated its advantages for his family, as told the family that they would continue to host dancing parties throughout the winter each month.[60]

By her early twenties, Amelia's journal exemplifies how dance took center stage in many of the courtships of young men and young women. Amelia's competing courtships with two young men, Harry Chamberlain and Stephen Moyle, illustrate the generational tensions between herself and her father. She was drawn to Harry as he fit the new Latter-day Saint male ideal: he was a mathematics professor at Latter-day Saint College, who studied under the church's top educational leaders. Amelia's acquaintance with Harry Chamberlain likely began two years before she started this particular diary in 1892. On the night before Valentine's Day, Amelia declares that the last time she received a "love token" for this day was from 'the other H.'" two years earlier. "The other H" served as Amelia's code name for Harry in her diary to distinguish him from "H" her sister Hester. The twenty-one year old Amelia's feelings toward Harry were decidedly mixed. On more than one occasion, she used negative words to describe his demeanor and behavior, which included "delinquent," "a veritable damper," "constraining," and "old stick." It seems as though criticizing

[60] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal (1886-87), quoted in Bitton "Heigh, Ho! I'm Seventeen," 337.

him in her diary was a method to contend with the intimidation she felt when she was around him. In one scenario after a particularly boring evening in which she and Hester entertained Harry and another caller, Amelia reflected that she often felt like "an ignoramus in his presence." Amelia concluded in this particular entry that Harry's abstruseness in his speech had a belittling effect on others, most specifically her. She knew that he was not more intelligent than she was, but he actively demonstrated a "learned" and "ponderous" disposition. Notwithstanding her frustrations with him, she was still drawn to him.[61]

Of Harry's many vexing qualities were his repeated misinterpretations regarding her busy schedule. He usually misread her inability to accept an invitation to attend a dance or the theatre as a personal affront when she already had a previous engagement planned. Finally she was able to accept an offer to attend an important dance with him at the college in Provo. Her father apparently interpreted Amelia's outward ambivalence toward Harry as misleading behavior. Her father's feelings were revealed to Amelia when Hester overhead a conversation between their parents:

> Pa is quite displeased with self, so I hear, concerning this very question. He talked with Ma last week saying that he wanted to walk with me, but, as it happened, I was up town. He said that I was doing wrong in receiving attention from "the other H" and that I must not accept his addresses unless I expected to marry him. That I did wrong to accept that invitation to Provo as I had done unless I reciprocated "the other H.'S" affection for me etc. This was the import of the of the recent parental conversation…by the way Pa always takes occasion to praise him to me that he desires a match in that direction).[62]

Why did Amelia not accept her father's opinion and seek an immediate match with Harry? Was she attempting to defy her father's wishes? Or was she simply not interested in marrying him?

Amelia's rebuff of Harry's advances was a tactic for her to wield some degree of power in her courtships and choice for a husband. Throughout her diary, she writes that she does not wish to appear rebellious toward her father by not solely courting Harry, as she wrote that she unprepared to

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[61] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal (1891-2), page 18, February 13, 1892; page 21; February 13, 1982; page 26 - 27; February 15, 1892; page 32, February 20, 1892.
[62] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal (1891-2), page 6; January 11, 1892.

marry him under her father's desired short timeline. In regards to her father's desire that she marry Harry she writes

> Calling upon me to decide such a question, before ever the youth in question had even breath a word of love to me—even marriage…I like yet for awhile to experience the delightful uncertainty as who is my doomed man before being pushed so summarily to a decision which "the other H" has never asked me to make, though of course I understand his intentions—as written evidence (an honorable note to Pa, asking permission "to win the affection of your daughter, Amelia" and a tender epistle to self, asking me not to leave him in suspense concerning the state of my heart in reference to him) conclusively proves.[63]

Amelia articulated a need to be directly involved in her own courtship process and not have it be a matter simply between her father and possible future husband. For George Q. Cannon, Harry's intentions were clearly stated, thus when Harry escorted Amelia to the dance in Provo, Cannon likely assumed the next natural steps would be an engagement then marriage. However, Amelia had every intention of attempting to enjoy the process of singlehood. Though this misunderstanding between father and daughter could be connected to simple generational differences, it is important not to disregard that the two were dealing with starkly different courtship and marital systems. As a leader in the early church, Cannon was expected to set an example and marry many women to uphold the covenant of the priesthood. As a young woman after the end of plural marriage, Amelia had a chance to help set the tone for the way that young Mormon women would accept their new strictly monogamist partners.

One man beside Harry Chamberlain made a regular appearance in her writing. Amelia became reacquainted with Stephen Moyle, a young gentleman who earlier demonstrated a romantic interest in her. Of her attraction to Stephen, Amelia admitted that she was drawn to his fine looks, personality, and, above all else, his declared and obvious interest in her. Despite his attractive qualities, Amelia knew it was against her best interests to become too involved or attached to Stephen because of his questionable background. She explained: "He is wild in his habits, and I am

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[63] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal (1891-2), page 34-4, February 25, 1892.

sorry to say, he lacks education. His brothers are brilliant men…His family are all that could be required… I am sorry to say, he is the black sheep of the family." Yet, Amelia was certain that he could reform his behavior as he did before their first dalliance: "He did quit smoking, and he was quite circumspect when in my society. He actually attended meeting, as he has started to do again now." Even though he had a record of changing his ways for her, Amelia knew better than to fully trust a young man who changed for a young woman. To show that he had changed he would need to fulfill "a good mission or some other work that would be equally sure as a testimony of his worth." What troubled Amelia mostly about her attraction to Steve was that there was "this extra incentive, he thinks a great deal of me."[64] As an honorable young Latter-day Saint woman, she knew she could not continue a serious courtship with a young man just because he declared his love for her.

It is clear that her father's potential input weighed heavily on her mind as she spent time with Stephen Moyle. According to her writing, she never directly talks to her father about the issue because of his prolonged absence traveling on the East coast. One morning she wrote: "I told H in full about Steve's declaration of Sunday evening…After telling her this secret I felt that my mind was relieved. If pa had been at home, the proper thing would have been to have told him." Though she does not reach out to her father for advice concerning Stephen Moyle, she attempts to closely discern the differences between Stephen and Harry in regards to who would be the more appropriate match. When judging Stephen's marital appeal against Harry, Harry seemingly won outright:

> Compared with Harry, Steve is utterly worthless. The latter is wild and uneducated; the former is steady and well-taught Too steady, I sometimes think. I can't enjoy his company as I do Steve's. Harry has too heavy a presence as a usual thing, for me to feel free and natural in his company. But when it comes to considering marriage, these trite things in Steve's favor have no weight whatever, when compared with Harry's good and lasting qualities. S's demerits more than out weigh his merits. I'd like to accept S's attentions for a

[64] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal (1891-2), page 48-9, March 7, 1892.

> while just for variety which I suppose is not just the right thing. I fear their is a spice of coquettery in my nature. I have never had a chance to be a flirt. Would Quiet enjoy being one for a while, so long as I can without doing any injury to self or to others.[65]

Amelia likely knew she would never marry Stephen Moyle and was just using him to provide some excitement in her life. Even though she does write that Harry is the better match, she writes she will no longer consider a marriage proposal from him as he has profoundly upset her by pursuing a romance with another woman. At the same, she begins distancing herself from Stephen Moyle. Her journal abruptly ends in the middle of March with her declaration that it is time to buy another.

The details are not clearly spelled out in a diary, but six months past the close of the her diary Amelia married Harry Chamberlain in September of 1892. The specifics of her decision to become engaged to Harry may never be clearly known. On some level, she was swayed by her father and church's influence to seek a young man who closely resembled the developing ideal of Mormon masculinity in the post-Manifesto Mormon world. The courtship and eventual engagement and marriage of Harry Chamberlain and Amelia Cannon is an exemplary model of how the church was mostly triumphant in their goal of not only avoiding intermarriage but also with encouraging a chaste courtship. Nonetheless, this courtship also elucidates how young women like Amelia Cannon could disrupt the order of the church through pursuing a romance with a less than savory young man.

Conclusion

From the examples used in this chapter, it is clear that practice and prescription were far from being in harmony in regards to how LDS youth should compose themselves at church dances. Young women used this space to push for more autonomy. For example, throughout her late teenage years and early twenties, Amelia attempted to enjoy her singlehood through engaging in popular dance styles like the waltz, attending church organized dances that went on well past

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[65] Amelia T. Cannon, Journal (1891-2), page 50-1, March 9, 1892.

midnight, and becoming chastely acquainted with a variety of young men. But beyond the disconnect between prescription and practice, the church was mostly successful in their larger goal of guaranteeing that Mormons would continue to marry each other and not those outside of the religion; Amelia Cannon, Cleo Hansen, Juanita Brooks, and Mary Stark Pratt all met or regularly interacted with their future husbands at church dances. Young women found relatively innocent ways of enjoying and asserting their youth as they also followed the church's dictates and ultimately married other church members. All of these women's experiences also point to how courtship changed from being a short act during the height of plural marriage, when interactions were mostly completed in secret, to a public and extended process. As all Mormon courtship became more "public," it still remained mostly in the sphere of the Mormon world that leaders strived keep separate from immoral outside influences. Nonetheless, aspect of popular culture did creep in the setting. In the end, it was more important to the church's leadership that Mormons marry other Mormons even if it meant some rules were broken to meet that goal.

CHAPTER FIVE

"THE RESPONSIBILITY RESTING UPON ME": THE INTRODUCTION OF THE FIRST SINGLE WOMAN MISSIONARIES

Introduction

On April 22, 1898, Amanda "Inez" Knight and Lucy Jane "Jennie" Brimhall, two close friends from Provo, Utah arrived in Liverpool, England as the first unmarried female Latter-day Saints designated to serve as missionaries. According to Knight's missionary journal, twenty-two days earlier, Inez and Jennie had left their homes in Provo with six male missionaries and one other woman. The group traveled to Denver, then took two over-night sleeper trains across the country before arriving in Philadelphia, their last point of departure in the States. Ocean travel proved to be mostly monotonous for Knight who called it the "longest 12 days of my life." But nothing proved to be more daunting than when she arrived in Liverpool and was introduced to the other missionaries. She wrote of her first meeting: "Each speaker welcomed the lady missionaries. Bro McMurrin said in his remarks he wanted each of us to understand that we had been called here by the Lord, then for the first time I began to sense the responsibility resting upon me."[1]

In the late 1890s, Brother Joseph W. McMurrin, the missionary president for England, wrote to the church presidency urging them to send female missionaries to his mission site. In the late 1890s, Great Britain was a particularly difficult space for Mormons, as there were many anti-Mormon groups that worked to thwart the missionaries' work by interrupting meetings and passing out anti-Mormon propaganda. Brother McMurrin realized the possibilities of overturning this image when he invited a Mormon woman Elizabeth Claridge McCune, who was visiting Great Britain to conduct family history research, to address a crowd of potential converts. The talk was a success.

[1] Inez Knight Allen, Diary, 1898-1899, pages 5-12, April 2, 1898. Digital Collections Library, L. Tom Perry Special Collection, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

McCune remembered "At the close of the meeting several strangers shook me by the hand and said, 'If more of your women would come out here a great amount of good would be done.'" Another gentleman said, 'I have always had a desire in my heart to see a Mormon woman to hear her speak. Madam, you carry truth in your voice and words.'"[2] The power of her words and presence persuaded many in the audience that Mormon women were not the "slaves" they were depicted to be in anti-Mormon literature but were self-assured representatives of their religion.[3] After Brother McMurrin pled the case for female missionaries, members of the presidency acknowledged that women's presence and work in the mission field could negate particular stereotypes about Mormon women. The decision to introduce single women into the proselytizing mission field was not just to expand the program abroad, but it was also an integral step of the church's Americanization process, the attempt to appear normal but different. The church's decision to send young women abroad demonstrated a confidence that the church had nothing to hide from the United States and the rest of the world. Whereas the decision to send out female missionaries would seemingly help the church's image, the advantages for the actual female missionaries were not as clear.

This chapter draws upon three types of public sources: women's recorded experiences of their mission, the male leadership's opinions as expressed in talks and published writing, and Mormon periodicals edited by women, and places them into conversation with each other. These sources provide a public venue to examine how various subsets of church members reacted to this transformative event. Based upon the evidence recorded by the first female missionaries, I argue that young women were eager for more religious knowledge and responsibility. Regardless of their evident enthusiasm, the mission space remained a complicated space for the small number of young

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[2] Susa Young Gates, "Biographical Sketches, Mrs. Elizabeth Claridge McCune," *Young Women's Journal* 9:8 (1898): 343.

[3] Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Historical Department, "This Grand Opportunity: Elizabeth McCune and the First Sister Missionaries," video. http://history.lds.org/article/sister-missionaries-video?lang=eng Accessed December 5, 2014.

women who did serve. The insertion of young women in the mission field ultimately pointed to discrepancies in the availability of religious milestones for young men and young women to learn about and act as knowledgeable authorities on their religion. The first generation of female Mormon missionaries were in a difficult position, as they were expected to simultaneously embody distinctive aspects of their religion but also demonstrate similarity to other women, exemplifying how they and Mormonism were normal. Despite the challenges these young women faced, they still carved out some space for themselves in the mission field, mostly in the domestic sphere.

There were many benefits that arose from women's work in the mission field. The most welcomed advantage was that women were able to communicate with potential converts that missionary men had trouble reaching: women and children. Young women's appeal to other women and success in the domestic sphere underscored Mormon women's similarity to non-Mormon women. Women's missionizing success in the domestic sphere of the home further also served to solidify women's future, albeit limited, participation in the mission space. Rather than convincing the male leadership that female missionary numbers should increase, women's success with relation to other non-Mormon women reiterated to the male leadership that Mormon women thrived in the domestic space of her own home and church auxiliary work. Young missionary women were not attempting to revolutionize their roles in the mission space, but only to do the work that was expected of them in the new arena of the mission field. Were young female missionaries' decisions not to push for more equal duties with male missionaries, such as the priesthood, evidence that they were not pushing for their own space? The young women did not push for the ability to perform sacred rites such as baptisms and blessings because they knew it could upset their chances to fulfill missions. Some also could have felt content in their role in the domestic sphere.

In many ways the surprising success of young women in the mission field was a missed opportunity for the church leadership and, clearly, the young women. Based upon the enthusiasm

demonstrated by young single women, it was more than clear that they were eager to join their young male coreligionists in the field. Male mission presidents were continually surprised when women did well with converting interested individuals and gaining access where male missionaries had difficulty. Why then did the numbers remain so low? Church leaders assumed women's possible improper behavior in the mission field could lead to more complications than advantages for the purposes of the mission.

In 1901, the August edition of the *Woman's Exponent* printed an article titled "Thoughts on Missionary Work" by Lydia D. Alder, a member of the Relief Society General Board. Alder credited the organization of the Relief Society in March of 1842 as the precipitous moment in which women started to increase their roles. In this piece, she treated the missionary work of young women as the latest point of progress made for women in the Mormon church. Using purposeful, religious terminology, she called the decision to send out young women a "prophecy" that was "fulfilled."[4] Many young women's enthusiasm demonstrated that they felt the same way despite the continual ambiguous and dismissive rhetoric from the church male leadership. Serving a mission became and remained an important goal that many women strived for.

American Missionary Women Abroad

When American Mormon single women entered the mission field, they joined a number of American Protestant women who had been serving for several decades. The recorded history of female American missionaries has mainly focused on Protestantism, as the number of Protestant missionaries far outnumbered the number of Mormon women who served. By 1882, there were nearly seven hundred single female Protestant missionaries who served.[5] In comparison, there were only two hundred Mormon women, mostly married, who served as "unofficial missionaries" before

[4] Lydia D. Alder, "Thoughts on Missionary Work," *Woman's Exponent* 24 (August 1901): 22.
[5] Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), ix.

1898.[6] The numbers of American female Protestant missionary reached their maximum numbers decades immediately before and after the turn of the twentieth century. By the 1920s, the national rates for American Protestant female missionaries were dramatically dropping and surpassed by the number of Mormon female missionaries. Different factors such as theological views of marriage, gender understandings of the mission space, and overall organization of the various church's missionary programs led to a different experience for Protestant and Mormon female missionaries. However, just as factors differentiated the two experiences, many aspects of the missionary experiences overlapped for these women.

The start of American missionary work abroad began with the establishment of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in 1810 by graduates of Williams College. Inspired by their own feelings of religious obligation and readings about British missionaries in India and elsewhere in the East, they were determined to find a way for American Christians to join in the wider Christian missionary movement abroad.[7] By 1819 after taking financial assistance from the British missionary organization, the ABCFM was running its own missionary sites. Protestant women were involved with these international missions since the first mission abroad. Protestant women entered the mission space in two ways: as wives of missionaries and as single missionary women. Newly married missionary wives either had long been interested in pursuing missionary work or had not considered missionary work until their fiancé had chosen the path for himself. Some women such as twenty-three year old Lucy Goosdale was recruited by her cousin to marry a man she did not know to accompany him on his mission. After consideration, Lucy decided to marry the missionary. Why was a wife considered a necessity for a male missionary? Historian Patty Grimshaw writes that in the early nineteenth century, that women were "presented in

[6] Calvin S. Kunz, "A History of Female Missionary Activity in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1898" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1976), 31.
[7] Emily Conroy-Krutz, *Christian Imperialism: Converting the World in the Early American Republic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015): xv.

idealistic form as giving moral and spiritual impetus to the family, not superseding the husband's proper authority, yet complementing his role, and influencing him always in an upright direction." Wives were needed in the missionary sphere as a "helpmeet" to their husbands, providing emotional, spiritual, and intimate support lest the missionary husband be encouraged to engage in any sort of immoral behavior or suffer a loss of confidence in his abilities. This model of womanhood also encouraged women's engagement in charitable and religious activities.[8]

The theological importance of marriage separated the Protestant and Mormon missionary experience for women. While marriage was highly valued within Protestant faith traditions, it was not considered necessary toward a woman's salvation. A woman's salvation was dependent upon her acceptance of Christ and life's work as a good Christian. This is not to suggest that Protestant women did not want to marry, but for some of them marriage was a means to a spiritual end during their time on earth. For example, as Patty Grimshaw suggests some Protestant women were eager to marry new missionaries so they too could go on a mission to fulfill their own spiritual and reforming desires.[9] Whereas, in the Mormon context, a woman's place in the afterlife was interconnected with her marital status. It was not necessarily that she took more care to choose a husband but a Mormon woman's desire for marriage was tied to her desires for salvation.

Since its founding days, the Mormon Church has been a proselytizing religion, eager to convert new members to what they believed was the restored gospel.[10] Joseph Smith appointed his younger brother Samuel Smith to serve the first mission shortly after the church was officially

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[8] Patricia Grimshaw, *Paths of Duty: American Missionary Wives in Nineteenth-Century Hawaii* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), xii, xv, 1-2.
[9] Grimshaw, xxi.
[10] Matthew Bowman explains the "restored" gospel: "Mormons believe that Christ established a church before his crucifixion, placed Peter at its head, and gave the church priesthood authority to perform the sacraments of salvation: baptism, confirmation, the Lord's Supper, and other ordinances. But this authority and this church were lost in the intervening centuries, and Mormons believe that God chose Joseph Smith to restore them and, providentially, the United States of America as the place where they could be restored." Bowman, xvii.

organized in 1830. Following in this tradition, men of any age and status could be called at any time to serve a mission, even during periods of intense difficulty. During one of the early church's most tumultuous periods following the Mormon expulsion from Missouri, Brigham Young and four other members of the Quorum of the Twelve were sent abroad to Great Britain to serve as missionaries. Despite the separation from his family, in a letter home to his wife, he wrote, "I could not bare the thought of going" before he felt his work was done.[11] By the end of the 1880s members established missions throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, Europe, Latin America, the Pacific Islands, and the Middle East.[12] The missionary program remained almost an exclusively male endeavor in the nineteenth century with nearly nine thousand men serving between 1830 and 1894.[13] About two hundred women served alongside their husbands in some capacity before 1898.[14]

Protestant and Mormon women's activities did not differ greatly in the missionary setting. In the early days of ABCFM's first mission in Hawaii in the 1820s, missionary wives' days were full of domestic labor and the difficulties associated with it. The first struggle was that many of missionaries did not have enough food due to the ABCFM's paltry offerings. Additionally, as many of the missionary couples "took in" Hawai'in children, the wives took up the primary duty of attending to them, which required a nuanced understanding of the Island's culture. These domestic duties took away from many of the wives' ability to work in the spiritual side of the mission.[15] One area in which many missionary women thrived was that of educators in missionary schools. In her study of American missionary women in North India in the late nineteenth century, Leslie A.

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[11] Brigham Young to Mary Ann Young, 12 June 1840, Philip Blair Family Papers, Special Collections Department, University of Utah Library, Salt Lake City, Utah, quoted in Ronald K. Esplin, "Brigham Young in England," *Ensign* June 1981, accessed June 21, 2015 https://www.lds.org/ensign/1987/06/brigham-young-in-england?lang=eng

[12] For more on where missionaries served throughout the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, see chapter 11 in Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition,* 212-238.

[13] Rex Thomas Price Jr., "The Mormon Missionary of the Nineteenth Century," (PhD dissertation, The University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1991), 59.

[14] Kunz, 31.

[15] Grimshaw, 42-4.

Flemming asserts that due to cultural difference and insensitivity (on the side of the missionaries) female missionaries did not challenge social norms that they found problematic. Instead, these women met success in the walls of boarding school for Christian girls, whose families had already assimilated to what the missionaries considered proper living.[16]

Mormon women's work in the mission sphere prior to 1865 was complicated by the fact that women did not have particular duties assigned to them. Summarizing women's missionary experiences in Polynesia, Carol Cornwall Madsen writes: "Utilized at first almost exclusively as the domestic and financial supports of their proselytizing husbands, missionary wives did not find a ministerial function in mission service until the latter part of the century."[17] The reasons that the male leadership failed to offer a more stable role for missionary wives was related to both practical and ideological concerns. In practical terms, extenuating circumstances such as the church's tumultuous history and larger national events like the Civil War affected any travel. Before 1869, the male church leadership expressed either ambiguity or outright negativity toward women's place in the mission field.[18]

Reasons for increased participation of LDS missionary work from 1865-1898 included the following: overall growth of the church; increasing positive reception from church leaders toward women involved in missionary activities; rise of travel for genealogy research.[19] A factor that indicated the church's changing attitude toward women's missionary work was that women began to be officially "set apart" in 1865. The first nine women to be "set apart" were wives who were accompanying their husbands on missions to the Sandwich Islands in 1865. Over time, according to Madsen, women were able to more thoroughly immerse themselves into the religious side of the

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[16] Leslie A. Flemming, *Women's Work for Women: Missionaries and Social Change in Asia* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), 36.
[17] Carol Cornwall Madsen, "Mormon Missionary Wives in Nineteenth Century Polynesia," *Journal of Mormon History* 13:1 (1986-87), 62.
[18] Kunz, 31.
[19] Kunz, 31.

mission by interacting with the natives of the island, setting up church auxiliary groups, and starting prayer groups with each other.[20]

Both single Protestant and Mormon female missionaries faced subtle negativity or outright hostility from males in their mission sphere or non-Mormon men. Leslie A. Flemming writes of how official board appointed female missions "often faced opposition from the field from senior male members."[21] In a Northern India missionary setting, women were forbade from public preaching because of local laws against women speaking in public. Inez Knight, the first female single Mormon missionary experienced similar scenarios in slightly different contexts. Her female companion, Jennie Brimhall, returned home earlier than Knight because of ill health. Inez Knight's experience with some elders after Jennie Brimhall's departure highlights how some males in the mission field believed young women was more of a nuisance than a help. Some elders reportedly warned Knight: "Now take care of yourself because it is bad enough to have you here, without having you get sick on our hands."[22] While women were allowed to speak in public in Britain, Knight faced much hostility from people who believed that the Mormon religion was false. Direct and indirect hostility aimed at single female missionaries, Mormon or Protestant, spoke to anxieties about unmarried women away from home, especially at a time when women's roles in the public sphere were in flux.

Stereotypes of Protestant and Mormon female missionaries also abounded. The Protestant lady missionary, whether married or unmarried, garnered negative representations in the wider culture. Historian Dana Roberts writes: "The stereotype of the Woman missionary has ranged from the long-suffering wife…to the spinster in her unstylish dress and wire-rimmed glasses, alone

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[20] Madsen, "Mormon Missionary Wives in Nineteenth Century Polynesia," 76.
[21] Flemming, 37-8.
[22] Susa Young Gates, "Missionary Work," Susa Young Gates Papers, Box 19, fd. 2, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City quoted in Jessie L. Embry, "LDS Sister Missionaries: An Oral History Response, 1910-70" *Journal of Mormon History* 23:1 (Spring 1997): 108.

somewhere for thirty years teaching 'heathen children.'"[23] The image of the "old maid" became conflated with the single female missionaries. Jane Hunter writes that some viewed female missionaries as giving the ultimate sacrifice by going without "family, country, and friends" in addition to "the domestic joys of married homelife" to serve God. However, some non-missionaries, including missionaries' own friends and family, wondered why single women were drawn to the "'queerness' of missionary isolation." Missionary women did worry about appearing like "a mannish woman" or "queer looking," as to not fall into the pervasive old maid stereotype.[24] A reason that may have delayed the LDS church in setting apart its first female missionaries was to avoid further negative depictions of Mormon women. Because negative caricatures of missionary wives and single missionary women as peculiar were common in the print media throughout the nineteenth century, it would make sense that the church would go to extra measures to not contribute to the already negative depictions of Mormon women in popular culture.

Particular stereotypes about single female missionaries pervaded Mormon culture in the twentieth century. Historian Jessie Embry's work on sister missionaries includes several examples of how official church rhetoric and women's own beliefs contributed to the "view that women who went on missions could not find someone to marry" before the mission in their early twenties.[25] One woman who did not serve a mission explained that in the 1960s: "…At that time there was quite a social stigma on being a lady missionary…The attitude was, if you couldn't get married, you went on a mission."[26] This attitude was evident in the 1980s when the current church president Gordon B. Hinkley, while addressing the General Women's Meeting, claimed that "we regard a happy marriage as the greatest mission any young woman can enjoy, and we feel that the opportunities for such will

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[23] Roberts, 93, 97, 107-108.
[24] Jane Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 70.
[25] Jessie L. Embry, "Oral History and Mormon Women Missionaries: The Stories Sound the Same" *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 19:3 (1998): 174-5.
[26] Embry, "LDS Sister Missionaries: An Oral History Response, 1910-70," 101.

be increased if there is some delay in young women going into the mission field."[27] Hinckley's comment affirm that the primary rite of passage for young women was a successful Mormon temple marriage. Though it was likely not intended, Hinckley's words contributed to the growing stereotype of "sister missionaries as somehow unmarriageable."[28] This belief likely caused many unmarried women who wished to serve a mission to avoid it, as they were afraid that they would be marked as unmarriageable, and, therefore, cut off from gaining ultimate salvation.

The main difference between the Protestant and Mormon female missionaries was that Mormon women were a double curiosity. Female representatives of the church had to deal with overwhelming curiosity and negativity about their religion. Both Inez Knight and Jennie Brimhall's missions were doubly difficult, as they had to defend their faith but also had to contend with pervasive misunderstandings about their functions as a woman in the Mormon religion and had to defend their presence in the mission field to their male counterparts.

Origin Stories: Women Speaking for Themselves

In the 1870s, Brigham Young also appointed women to carry out specific tasks that were viewed as strengthening the kingdom of Mormondom. In 1876, Young appointed Emmeline B. Wells, the present head of the Relief Society, to implement and lead the church's grain-saving program, a position she held until World War I. Under her leadership, the grain program led to the production of several thousand bushels of grain, which was donated to victims of natural disasters and famine.[29] Under Young's direction, several women including Romania Brunell Pratt and Ellis Reynolds Shipps completed their obstetrical training in the Easter United States. Upon their return

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[27] Gordon B. Hinckley, "Ten Gifts from the Lord," General Women's Meeting, September, 28, 1985, video, accessed December 8, 2014, https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1985/10/ten-gifts-from-the-lord?lang=eng.
[28] Andrea G. Radke-Moss, "Pragmatism and Progress: An overview of LDS Sister Missionary Service in the Twentieth Century," *Juvenile Instructor Blog,* October 8, 2013, accessed April 20, 2014.
[29] Jill Mulvay Derr, "Woman's Place in Brigham Young's World," *Brigham Young University Studies* 18 (1978): 12.

to the Utah territory, they taught classes in anatomy, physiology, and obstetrics and served as integral midwives in their communities. When a male editor of the *Salt Lake Herald* encouraged twenty-two year old Louisa Greene to begin a newspaper geared toward LDS women, Greene asked Brigham Young to categorize her editorship of the paper as a special church mission.[30] Though women were not commonly referred to as "missionaries" for fulfilling these tasks, they completed integral work that strengthened their church and community.

Later discussions of women's "missionary" work fit within the spectrum of the domestic sphere. An October 1890 article titled "Missionary Work For Girls" directly addressed what type of missionary work women could expect and not expect to be called to complete:

> Now, my dear girls, don't jump at the conclusion that we are going to be sent to proclaim the gospel to the nations of the earth. Such is not your mission, but you have a missionary field of vast importance, where your labors, if rightly directed will be productive of much good. The missionary work to which I refer must begin with yourselves, and to include your associates and fellow-members of the Improvement Association.

Before a young woman could initiate her "missionary work" with the MIA, she had to assess her homelife decorum and ask herself if she was "dutiful" toward her parents, "respectful to the aged," and honored the priesthood. The article continued:

> If you can answer all these questions satisfactorily then you can safely proceed to investigate your conduct toward your Association. Do you attend your meetings regularly? When called upon to speak, do you respond promptly? Do you sustain your president by example and precept? Do you carefully guard your tongue from the evils of slander and backbiting? If you do all of these things, my dear young friend, you are indeed fitted to go forth as a missionary in your Association. And when each member of your Association acting as a missionary in her own behalf, has converted herself to the principles above stated, the Association has certainly made a long stride toward that degree of perfection to which we all hope to attain. To do this we must emulate the example of our Divine Master, whose life was one long sacrifice and whose death was His greatest triumph.

[30] Cox Bennion, *Equal to the Occasion: Women Editors of the Nineteenth Century West,* 75.

The writer of the article was careful to state that young women should not believe their mission is "any less noble and grand that that of your brothers.""[31] Though pieces like this in the YWJ were not likely meant to imply that young men's activities were superior to young women's, the messages still limited young women's work to the domestic sphere at home in the Mormon Culture Region.

Descriptions of young women's missionary work also extended to the purpose of the *Young Woman's Journal*. In November of 1897, Joseph F. Smith addressed the seventeenth ward association meeting at the request of the Young Ladies MIA president Elmina S. Taylor. Smith used the opportunity to address criticisms of the journal's content:

> I understand the young ladies in this ward are very superior intellectually, that some of them, in connection, perhaps, with other ladies in the adjoining wards, who had such excellent opportunities to attend the University, think the Journal is not up to the high literally standard which they would like it to attain to…If you can improve your magazine and do not do it, you are to blame. You remember the Scripture which says: "He that knoweth to do good and doth it not, to it is sin.' I might as daffily say, 'she that knoweth to do better, doeth not, the same shall, be under condemnation.

Smith's words about the necessity for the YWJ were not just to give young women a space for themselves, as he also viewed it as a crucial missionary tool for Mormonism. Smith contextualized this rebuke of young women's failure to improve the YWJ within the larger realm of Mormon missionary work and improving Mormonism's and Mormon women's image abroad. He referred to a personal visit to Germany during which he learned that Germans believed that Mormon women were treated like "slaves and cattle."[32] Despite Mormon women's integral participation in the national suffrage movement, there were pervasive beliefs that Mormon women were anything but independent women. Mainstream newspapers, illustrations, and sensational literature depicted Mormon women as licentious seductresses or helpless victims duped by Mormon men.

Joseph F. Smith knew that the church could not keep insisting that this was not the case but had to let Mormon women speak for themselves. Smith looked to the YWJ as a measure to fix the

[31] "Missionary Work for Girls," *Young Woman's Journal* 2:9 (October 1890): 29 -30.
[32] "Remarks of President Joseph F. Smith," *Young Woman's Journal* 9:2 (February 1898): 85.

problem of Mormon women's public image. Like the earlier piece from 1890, Smith also likened the young women's participation with the YWJ as a mission for young women. He told the young women at the Seventeenth Ward meeting house that they "should solicit and secure sufficient advertisements and contributions to enable them to publish the Journal so successfully that it can be used, not only at home, but abroad, as a missionary to all." He continued:

> Let your brother have the magazine of the young ladies in Zion to the questioners as to the condition of the women in Zion. It will pave the way before him, and will be the means of calling attention to the literary ability possessed by our women. Give your brother not only the Church works but also his own and your own magazine to use in the defense of the principles of the Gospel.[33]

In essence, young women were indeed expected to speak for themselves, but it was up to their male counterparts to deliver their message. Messages like this, while speaking to women's strengths at writing persuasively about the church, still explicitly reinforced that young women physically belonged at home with her family.

It may be surprising that only a few months later after the YWJ printed Joseph F. Young's address, two unmarried women arrived in Great Britain as official missionaries of the LDS church. However, just as Smith was recommending that young male missionaries use the YWJ, Elizabeth Claridge McCune had already been speaking for the women of Zion, leaving a very positive impression.

The story of Elizabeth Claridge McCune's proselytization serves a pivotal precursor to the policy modification. Her experiences were featured in a three-part biographical narrative of her life written by Susa Young Gates in the 1898 YWJ. The first part situates McCune as a member the Frontier generation, the first generation of Mormons raised in Utah. McCune, the daughter of British converts, was nine months old when her family left for Utah in 1852. The family eventually settled in Nephi where their family grew via plural marriage. McCune told Susa Young Gates how

[33] "Remarks of President Joseph F. Smith," 85.

"eagerly" she and the people of Nephi "looked forward to the periodical visits of President Brigham Young and his company!" During one incident when waiting for the carriages of Brigham Young and Kimball to pass, Brother Kimball spoke directly to a young McCune and her female friends:

> When Bro. Kimball passed me he said to the group of girls around me.
> "You five girls, right here will live to be mothers in Israel."
> The prophecy is fulfilled, not one of the five had less than eight or nine children.

McCune did not just carry this prophetic statement of Brother Kimball's with her, but also experienced a transformative moment when her father was called on a mission to settle land below Utah's Dixie during the president's visit to Nephi.[34] Suddenly, McCune's life was upended as she realized her father had to serve this mission. Elizabeth went ahead with her father and brother while her mother and sister remained in Nephi. This experience was difficult as she had to contend with a difficult journey, troublesome relations with Indians, and settling a town, yet it also endowed her with a sense of duty to her religion and the church leadership.

These moments stayed with her and led to a firm religious dedication that continued to blossom during her marriage. She married Alfred W. McCune in 1872 and after living in Nephi and Montana, she and her husband settled in Salt Lake with their family. As a mother and church member, Elizabeth regularly attended Sunday School and church meetings with her children, worked as an ordinance worker in the temple, and also served on the General Board of the YLMIA. Along with her husband and children, she traveled to Europe while she was in her mid-forties in the 1890s. Before her family's departure, she met with President Lorenzo Snow, then President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. In the second part of her biographical piece, Gates wrote:

> I asked her to give me a few items of her missionary experience; she replied, remembering smilingly: 'I was not called upon a mission but before leaving Salt Lake to make a tour of

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[34] Gates, "Biographical Sketches: Mrs. Elizabeth Claridge McCune," *Young Woman's Journal* , 292
Dixie is the nickname for Southern Utah and surrounding areas. It refers to an attempt to grow cotton in the area.

> Europe, I went to President Lorenzo Snow and he blessed me. Among other beautiful promises he said, "Thy mind shall be as clear as an angel's when explaining the principles of the Gospel."

McCune did not just approach this blessing with an eye to spreading the gospel when convenient. It became a full-time undertaking for her and her teenage daughter Fay.

During her time abroad, McCune's family hosted several missionaries in their home, including her son and nephew, and accompanied them while they tracted on the street. Elizabeth and her daughter Fay spent the days singing hymns, holding spiritual meetings with the others, and holding the elders' hats and books while they preached to the crowds. The potential future of women's official missionary work probably did not dawn upon Elizabeth until she addressed a crowd of followers and possible converts by the request of the English mission Brother McMurrin. She won the crowd over when she discussed women's place in her religion:

> I spoke of my extensive travels in America and Europe, and said that nowhere had I found women held in such esteem as the Mormon of Utah. Our husbands are proud of their wives and daughters; they do not consider that they were created solely to wash dishes and tend babies; but they give them every opportunity to take up everything which will educate and develop them. Our religion teaches us that the wife stands shoulder to shoulder with the husband.[35]

It was only a short time after that that the church leadership knew they needed to send women out into the missionary field.

Her proselytizing also served as a method for her daughter to learn and act as a representative of their religion. McCune took her daughter Fay on longer trips to London to proselytize during events like the Queen's Jubilee. By attending these events with her mother, Fay gained new insights about her potential as a representative of her religion to the world outside of the Mormon Culture Region. McCune believed that young women like her daughter held much

[35] Gates, "Biographical Sketches: Mrs. Elizabeth Claridge McCune," 340.

potential to reach converts and should be sent out as stand alone missionaries: "I told my daughter one day that I believed the time was not distant when women would be called on mission."[36]

Characteristically, even though McCune believed that young women should serve individual missions, she did not attempt to claim any credit for the church's decision. However, The *Young Woman's Journal* was eager to credit McCune: "Her work was done so efficiently and effectively that the foundation of this missionary work for women was laid, in measure, through her efforts."[37] McCune was thrilled to learn that the church authorities would send some young women on official proselytizing ventures.[38] Though McCune's self-directed missionary efforts revealed the possibilities for women to effectively spread the gospel and act as positive representatives of their religion, the following questions still dogged the church leadership and membership regarding young women entering the mission field: How effectively would the first official female single missionaries serve? How would they fulfill the church's expectations without a full example on which to model themselves?

The Test Case: Inez Knight and Jennie Brimhall Enter the Mission Field

George Q. Cannon, a member of the General Presidency, first acknowledged the decision to call unmarried young women as missionaries during the Spring General Conference of 1898. The church could not just choose any young woman to carry the legacy of the first unmarried female Missionaries. The first women selected to serve this mission, Inez Knight and Jennie Brimhall, were likely chosen for three particular reasons: they would have male protection, had the financial means to afford the trip, and represented a model of young Mormon womanhood. Jennie Brimhall's bishop J.B. Keeler wrote to church president Wilford Woodruff with the proposal that Brimhall and Knight transform an already planned trip to Europe into a proselytizing mission. The fact that they were

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[36] Susa Young Gates, "Biographical Sketches: Mrs. Elizabeth Claridge McCune," 341.
[37] "What Women are Doing: Girl Missionaries," *Young Woman's Journal* 9:5 (May 1898): 237.
[38] Susa Young Gates, "Biographical Sketches: Mrs. Elizabeth Claridge McCune," 343.

already planning a long-term trip to visit Inez's brother, who was also Jennie's finance, in Europe served as an advantage within the eyes of the church's leaders. During his address to the church, Cannon noted receiving a correspondence from the President of the young women's stake asking whether the young women could serve "in the capacity of missionaries." The stake president explained that they were "capable young ladies; they have kindred in Europe, one a brother and the other an affianced." Cannon finished the story: "We sent word back, 'yes, if they are the kind you describe, set them apart and let them go as missionaries to preach the Gospel, as far as they can, to their own sex and to others who will listen to them.'"[39]

Reactions to this announcement in woman's publications were much more celebratory compared to the restrained and tentative announcement during the spring conference, which consisted of male speakers. The *Young Woman's Journal* claimed that the mission work of Elizabeth McCune, Inez Knight, and Jennie Brimhall "will contribute a vivid chapter of experience for the future historian of woman's progress." Echoing the thought that this was the beginning of a new chapter for young Mormon women, Jennie Brimhall wrote the following to the readers of the YWJ in her first letter printed from her mission: "Love to all the girls; may the Lord bless them. Tell them all to study their theology and get ready for missions. They are much needed in the world."[40] These two statements combined with Elizabeth McCune's earlier testimony that young women would be sent on missions indicates that women were eager to cultivate and utilize their religious educations in a similar capacity to that of their male peers. Despite the overstated desire for women's missionary work, women never openly pressed for missionary work that fell too far out of the domestic sphere of the mission. As George Q. Cannon indicated in his announcement about the first single lady

[39] President George Q. Cannon, Conference Report (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Company, April 1898), 8.
[40] Jennie Brimhall, "Our Girls: From Missionary Fields," *Young Woman's Journal* 9:8 (August 1898): 369.

missionaries, it was expected that young women would have the most success relating to possible female converts and their families.

Between Jennie Brimhall and Inez Knight, Brimhall had the more "uneventful and smooth life" according to a biographical sketch of both women that ran in the *Young Woman's Journal*. Born in Spanish Fork in 1875, Brimhall, the daughter of a Brigham Young Academy (BYA) professor, attended the BYA and took up teaching upon graduation. Inez Knight, who was twenty-two at the time of her departure for her mission in England, had also previously attended BYA, enjoyed studying music, participated in church activities including the YLMIA, and completed genealogical work at the church historian's office.[41]

Inez Knight's YWJ biographical sketch delved into a personal story that elucidated her family's religiosity. During her first thirteen years, Inez lived on a farm, whose far location proved difficult for her to regularly attend school. Her family faced a turning point when she and her sister Minnie were struck ill with an unnamed disease. Minnie passed away but Inez held on. Her father, whom the writer describes as having been "indifferent and careless to the Gospel privileges for years," finally heeded his wife's requests to have elders come and bless Inez. Her father "on his knees for the first time in many years," "plead nightly with the Lord." He plead "with his God that if her life was spared, we would endeavor to with all his power to teach the principles of the Gospel and to lead her in the path of righteousness."[42] The elders expressed their own doubt about Inez's survival, but her parents would not give up. When it was clear that she would live and thrive, her family left their home and moved to Provo. Just as Elizabeth McCune Claridge's childhood experiences encouraged her religious dedication, Inez's experience of seeing her father embrace the religion likely influenced her mission.

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[41] "Biographical Sketches: Jennie Brimhall and Inez Knight," *Young Woman's Journal* 9:6 (June 1898): 248.
[42] "Biographical Sketches: Jennie Brimhall and Inez Knight," 248.

Given the church's rhetoric that women's religious obligations were fulfilled at "home," it is safe to assume that Inez Knight and Brimhall were understandably surprised but thrilled to be appointed to a mission. Despite their qualified backgrounds and excitement at having the opportunity to serve a mission, they still encountered many difficulties as the first single women missionaries. As part of their mission, they wrote letters to Susa Young Gates, which were printed in the YWJ. Inez Knight also kept a detailed account of her mission in a journal. These letters and Inez Knight's journal allow a public yet also personal lens to view how they contended with being the first missionaries.

Knight and Brimhall dealt with two specific discomforts: being the only females in a usually male space and having to represent Mormon womanhood to non-Mormons. While neither commented substantially on these two discomforts, their special status as female missionaries become increasingly apparent once they arrived in Great Britain and started serving in the Cheltenham and Oldham areas of England. In their letters to the YWJ, both remarked upon their unique status. Jennie said: "Not many missionaries are expected to speak the first Sunday they arrive, but we girls were. Saturday night under the enthusiastic direction of Brother Austin several street meetings were held, at which it was announced that real live Mormon women from Utah would be present at the conference Sunday."[43] Inez Knight stated: "Every one in Liverpool seem pleased that lady missionaries are a reality. They are all so kind to me that I fear that is some danger of my being spoiled, if much kindness has not already spoiled me."[44]

Both young women's reaction to being thrust into the spotlight elucidates how young women were both eager and unprepared to undertake this rite of passage. Upon learning that they were expected to speak at their first Sunday meeting, an occasion that was rare for new missionaries, Inez

[43] Jennie Brimhall, "Our Girls: From Missionary Fields," 368.
[44] Inez Knight, "Our Girls: From the Mission Field," *Young Woman's Journal* 9:9 (September 1898): 416.

recalled "a sickly feeling."[45] Brimhall did admit that the "task" of speaking "was almost more than we could perform." However, when it was her turn to speak, she said, "I never felt better in my life after I started to speak, for I was confident that the Lord would help me. He did, for I was able to tell something of the condition of the people in Utah, and to bear my testimony to the joy the Gospel brings. It was the same with Inez."[46]

The day-to-day duties of serving a mission simultaneously comforted and terrified Inez Knight, according to her missionary diary. Teaching religious classes, completing home visits with potential converts, and her work in the Relief Society, the organization for Mormon females, affirmed her perception of success as a missionary. However, the tasks of public speaking in religious meetings and tracting, disseminating religious literature on street corners and to strangers' homes, led to feelings of apprehension and self-doubt for Knight. A part of these negative feelings were related to proselytizing in a setting that was openly hostile to Mormons. Her experiences proselytizing amongst the English public elicited a variety of responses that ranged from passive disinterest to firm disapproval. At least during two instances, she recorded, Inez and the other missionaries witnessed protests and experienced violence directed toward them. In January of 1899, Inez recorded that members of the anti-Mormon league threw gravel at the windows of the building the missionaries were in. A week later, the missionaries dealt with an even more violent situation. Inez wrote:

> later went to the conference house where we saw a mob in front of the building. As we went in they hissed & shouted at us,. & after we were in rocks were thrown thick & fast in the windows until not a glass remained in the house. Ray finally took us girls home, but the mob followed us. & threw rocks & mud & sticks at us all the way to the police station opposite Trinity church & the conference house is on 3 Ducie Rd. near Lawrence Hill station. On our way we met Bros. James & Haddock who went back with us to the police station.[47]

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[45] Inez Knight Allen, Diary, 1898-1899, page 17, April 22, 1898.
[46] Jennie Brimhall, "Our Girls: From Missionary Fields," 368.
[47] Inez Knight Allen, Diary, 1898-1899, page 72, September 8, 1898.

Though Inez was regularly met with negativity while she tracted, this particular moment shook her. She wrote about her difficulties but only in rare cases did she detail her emotional response. In her journal, she admitted that she and the other sister missionary cried because they were shocked to be treated so badly in what Inez called "a civilized nation."

Knight and Brimhall regularly heard a whole host of rumors about how Mormon women were treated in Utah included that they were all penned inside a wall and a woman's throat would be slit if she disobeyed the leadership. In her first letter to the YWJ, Jennie Brimhall signed off abruptly and wrote "I must bid adieu, for Bro. Bradshaw is coming for us to call on a family of English people who believe that Mormon women are not allowed to come out of Utah."[48] Because of the assumptions, sensationalism, and ideas of sex bound up with plural marriage, Mormon women were at the center of most questions and curiosity from non-Mormons. It was clear from the beginning of their mission that Jennie Brimhall and Inez Knight would be playing a highly visible and representative role of Mormon women to the outside public.

But how would Mormon males interact with the young women? Eight months into the mission Inez wrote that "Until now have met new missionaries every day. All are kind to us, and make much comment on our being first lady missionaries." Despite feeling very welcomed as one of the first two single lady missionaries, Inez also experienced much discomfort in this role. For example, during a priesthood meeting in which she was the only female, she wrote "I felt more conspicuous by the elders beginning their remarks by 'My brethren and sister.'"[49] Though Inez Knight's experiences as a missionary reinforced her religious beliefs, the overall experiment of introducing female missionaries led to even more questions of how and when the Mormon missionary program could be equally accommodating to both men and women's involvement.

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[48] Jennie Brimhall, "Our Girls: News From the Missionary Field," *Young Woman's Journal* 9:7 (July 1898): 317.
[49] Inez Knight Allen, Diary, 1898-1899, page 101, November 11, 1898.

One particularly tricky issue was the question of where and how the male and female missionaries should lodge. At one point, gossip, started by strangers, implied that missionary men and women were coming home late together. The mission leadership's proposed solution was that the women "should not lodge where the Elders did. Inez wrote: "Not a very pleasant feeling prevailing"; her mention of an unpleasant feeling could have meant all involved felt negatively about the gossip or she could have just been referring to herself.[50] At times, Knight and Brimhall shared a separate room in the same domicile as the male missionaries or resorted to residing with an amiable non-Mormon family, leading to some feelings of instability and separation from the other missionaries. Anecdotes like this coupled with the story of the young male missionary telling Inez that she better not get sick like Jennie Brimhall kept Inez on the outside of the male missionary sphere.

It was through her role visiting women in their homes that Inez thrived as a missionary. One woman she visited had not been a practicing member for some time. Since ceasing religious practice, the woman and her family had experienced several hardships: her sixteen-year-old son was arrested for stealing, an eighteen-year-old daughter "was ruined" by her seventy-one-year-old male employer, and her husband and a daughter had recently died. Inez wrote: "she was baptized into the church many years ago but drifted away from the truth, and perhaps some of her trouble has come to her as a judgments. But we must all be tried in some way, for the Lord chasteneth whom he loveth, and he has said he would have a tried people." Though Knight did thrive in her visiting role, it was probably one she was already well acquainted with in Utah as a member of the YLMIA and Relief Society. Inez Knight did start to express more confidence in other aspects of her role as a missionary. One day while handing out tracts she said, it was the first day that a person did not refuse a tract or spoke unkindly to her. A year into her mission, she made account of her successes.

[50] Inez Knight Allen, Diary, 1898-1899, page 117, January 6, 1899.

She disseminated 89 tracts, visited eighty-five houses to hand out tracts, she was invited to twenty-one houses, attended 175 meetings, and distributed thirty books of scripture.[51]

All at once, she and Jennie Brimhall were expected to pioneer the way for other female missionaries, contend with a missionary setting that was ill-prepared to attend to the introduction of females, invalidate misconceptions about Mormon women, and exemplify a proper Mormon womanhood in an environment that could range from indifferent to unsafe for Mormons. Even though other young single women were called to missions during the late 1890s, the tentative change in gender policy did not immediately result in a large number of women being set apart. Instead the male leadership and the YWJ continued to present a disjointed opinion on the place of young women in the mission field.

The Disconnect between Expectation and Experience

The male leadership's public support of an official missionary gender policy change varied between growing encouragement and hesitant acceptance. A 1904 report written by Joseph W. McMurrin, the missionary president who had openly supported Elizabeth McCune and advocated for lady missionaries, surveyed different missionary presidents' attitudes toward the lady missionaries they oversaw. In this survey McMurrin organized, he included the statements of four mission presidents: James G. Duffin of the Central States Mission, President James A. McRae of the Colorado Mission, President Nephi Pratt of the Northwestern States Mission, and President John G. McQuarrie of the Eastern States Mission. Each mission president expressed that only women of the highest caliber should be appointed to serve a mission. President Duffin's opinion echoed the sentiment shared by the other missionary presidents: "In the selection of lady missionaries much

[51] Inez Knight Allen, Diary, 1898-1899, page 174-5, n.d.

discretion should be exercised…They few who do go out into the world, will be to the world an index of the character of our mothers, our wives and our daughters."[52]

The greatest concern about young women's presence in the mission field was their potential distraction to young Mormon men serving missions. A substantial facet of the worry about young women distracting young men was the possibility of improper sexual attraction and activity. President Nephi Pratt did not hold back in expressing his beliefs about young women's proper sexuality. He stated:

> No young lady should be sent, who will give way to the levity of conduct. In private and public, she must be sober, modest and discreet. She must neither woo nor permit herself to be wooed, by either the Elders or anybody else. She must put far from her every particle of coquetry.[53]

None of Pratt's concerns were meant to apply to married women, as it was assumed that a newly married couple would not cause any unwanted interference toward the general goals of a mission. This thought must not have applied to Jennie Brimhall and Will Knight, as the fact that Jennie Brimhall would be serving in the same mission field as her fiancé was not only considered an advantage, not a hindrance. There is no evidence that Brimhall or fiancé received warnings against engaging in inappropriate premarital sexual behavior. Knight and Brimhall's male protection in the mission field not only safeguarded them from danger but also from assumptions that they would cause unwanted distractions amongst the other male missionaries. Beyond serving as a sexual distraction, there was also the assumption that young women's presence in the mission field could disrupt the order of the process. James A. McRae, the mission president of Colorado worried that unqualified young women would do irrevocable damage to a whole mission site. Of such a woman,

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[52] Joseph W. McMurrin, "Lady Missionaries," *Young Woman's Journal* 15:12 (December 1904): 540.
[53] McMurrin, "Lady Missionaries," 541.

he wrote, "one who is inclined to act in an unbecoming manner can tear down more than a dozen Elders can build up."[54]

Part of the reluctance in sending out unmarried women were rising concerns about young women's place in urban spaces. The last thing the church wanted was young unmarried female representatives of the church engaging in behavior that could lead them to be mistaken for a sexually promiscuous woman or a prostitute. In her study of turn of the century Davenport, Iowa, Sarah E. Wood explicates how precarious a single, young woman's sexuality could be through her exploration of the term "prostitute." She writes: "A woman's 'manner' and how she 'held herself out to the world' were central to the nineteenth-century understandings of 'prostitute.' It was an identity far more than an action, a reputation more than a vocation."[55] In the legal context of the nineteenth century, neither taking money for sex nor even engaging in the act of sexual intercourse proved that a woman was a prostitute. Instead, how a woman's reputation was received (specifically by those in power, mostly men) determined her status. Given how ideas of reputation could easily change in different situations, it makes sense that parents and family members were worried about allowing young women out on their own. First, there was the concern of what actually could happen to young women. Secondly, there was concern about how these women would be perceived, and, in turn, how their families could be perceived. For the church, which was in the midst of major transitional period, the reputations of their young women symbolized the success of the religion both within the culture and to the outside world.

Mission president Nephi Pratt addressed how the mission site was not a place for young women to enjoy themselves:

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[54] McMurrin, "Lady Missionaries," 540.
[55] Sharon E. Wood, *The Freedom of the Streets Work, Citizenship, and Sexuality in a Gilded Age City* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 21.

> She must not indulge in joking nor funmaking. She must not spend her evenings with the Elders, with a view to sociability, or to go out to theatres or other entertainments, with either them or any other male escort. She is there, with the eyes of the world upon her, and must be willing to smother all her nature's most earnest desires, and live with one thought, and one alone uppermost, that of fulfilling her mission with honor, and never bring reproach upon the work of the Lord.[56]

These restrictions varied from Inez Knight's experience. Though she did not have a courtship with another male missionary, she regularly spent time alone with another male missionary while they proselytized and enjoyed several entertaining activities with the male missionaries. According to her diary, Inez Knight attended at least three dances hosted by or affiliated with the church. At one event on January 6, 1899, Inez wrote that she danced the polka, quadrille, schottische, and even a few of the "infamous" waltzes with the different elders she worked alongside. In typical fashion, the dance started later than intended, and Inez stayed at the dance until 11:30 at night.[57] Inez expressed no guilt for enjoying her time dancing and socializing with the other male missionaries, suggesting that her participation in entertainment was encouraged by her male missionary leaders.

Despite the hesitant rhetoric from the upper echelon of the male rhetoric and that of mission presidents, some men such as Joseph McMurrin continually advocated his support for young women in the mission field. In the 1904 report, he wrote: "Whenever I had the pleasure of listening to one of them bear testimony to the truth of the Gospel, and talk of their Utah Sisters and defend the women of Mormondom, I felt their words were far more convincing than anything that could be said by the men."[58] McMurrin's comments reinforce the idea that women held a proper gendered space within the missionary sphere. Though he does assert that women's words are more persuasive than male missionaries, he does not convey that women were better than men in all aspects of missionizing but they brought particular strengths to the field. Despite the levels of support

[56] McMurrin, "Lady Missionaries," 540.
[57] Inez Knight Allen, Diary, 1898-1899, page 116, January 6, 1899.
[58] McMurrin, "Lady Missionaries," 540.

demonstrated by the different levels of the male leaderships, women's role in the mission sphere was delineated by gender appropriate activities.

The missionary roles of men and women mirrored changing gender roles and expectations within Mormonism. The main theological difference between men and women's missionary experiences revolved around one fact: men held the priesthood and women did not. The priesthood granted a level of ecclesiastical authority and responsibility to men. Holding the priesthood in the mission sphere emphasized the ecclesiastical authority that men held over women, as they were the only ones permitted to perform acts essential to proselytization, such as baptizing converts. However, even though young women were not permitted to perform the baptisms of converts, it did not preclude them from succeeding where men struggled: gaining access to potential converts' homes. Even mission leaders such as James McRae, who expressed concern about unprepared young women "tearing down" the work of the elders, also admitted "I consider women missionaries a valuable aid in the work of spreading the truth. They seem to get access to homes that cannot be opened by elders." Failure to gain access to the private sphere of homes and families could have been detrimental to the growth of the church.

Francis M. Lyman, formerly of the European mission and member of the Quorum of Twelve, delivered a restrained yet still affirmative view of women's place in the mission field. At the 1907 general conference, he claimed: "The ministry in this Church is not confined to the male members; for our sisters are also teachers, and advocates, and expounders of the faith. They have a work in the ministry, besides taking care of their homes and families; but of course they are almost entirely home missionaries."[59] Though the introduction of female missionaries did enlarge the world of young Mormon women, who were able to pursue missionary work, their roles were still understood within the strict bifurcation of domestic and public spheres.

[59] President Francis M. Lyman, *Conference Report* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Company, April 1907), 114.

This bifurcation was most evidently demonstrated through the issue of the priesthood. Inez Knight's missionary diary does not contain any hint that she felt explicitly disadvantaged by not holding the priesthood. What left her feeling more "out of place" was being unnecessarily reminded that she was one of the few women serving a mission in a male dominated realm. As missionaries, Knight and Brimhall seemingly respected and did not question the fact that their male counterparts held the priesthood.

Articles published in the Mormon women's literary area did not treat the absence of priesthood as a detriment to young women, but instead they affirmed it was a way to honor women's specific responsibilities and expertise. In November 1915, a twenty-one-year old missionary Edna Crowther from Mesa, Arizona, who was serving along side nineteen-year-old woman from Salt Lake City, wrote a piece for the *Improvement Era*, called "Do you believe in lady missionaries?" Her purpose for writing this piece was not to merely detail her experiences but to interrogate the question of why young women should fulfill missions. She wrote at length about how the mission served as an important stepping stone for women to fulfill the duties of proper Mormon womanhood. She subscribed to the belief that though young men and women held important duties as missionaries, their work fit into separate spheres:

> It is the elders' duty to preach the gospel, cry repentance to every creature, baptize, lay hands for gift of Holy Ghost, bind on earth that which shall be bound in heaven, and to organize. The sisters', or lady missionaries' duty is to enter homes, declare our glorious message of peace and good will and manifest the fruits of the Spirit which are, as the Apostle Paul said: "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith." We are to visit the sick, comfort the weary, cheer the sad; and to those who have some truth add more to it. Break down the high wall of prejudice by tact and love. We make ourselves servants to our fellow beings, and in so doing become servants of God.[60]

Edna Crowther, and probably many young women her age, believed that Mormon women were not limited by her gender in the mission field but celebrated women's specific missionary strengths as an

[60] Edna Crowther, "Do You Believe in Lady Missionaries?," *Improvement Era* 19 (November, 1915): 48-9.

inherent aspect of women's roles as female servants of God. In her missionary journal, Inez Knight regularly wrote confidently about her work entering homes, work that Crowther explains as women's natural territory. For Mormon women of the early twentieth century, the absence of priesthood did not necessarily seem to cause obvious conflict or it did not deter them from savoring their opportunity to serve.

Standardizing Women's Role in the Mission Field

The growth of the female missionary program was slow but steadily expanding in the early decades of the twentieth century. In 1900, two years after Knight and Brimhall took the call, there were seventeen active female missionaries. The number increased from 27 in 1902 to 44 in 1910, with a majority of these missionaries serving in the United States.[61] In 1917, the YWJ reported that 668 women had served since 1912.[62] This growth in female missionary numbers indicated that an average of 130 women served per year during that five-year period. Missionary numbers of young women were also affected by larger events such as the World Wars. During World War I, sister missionaries counted as 38% of missionary numbers, and during World War Two, women are estimated to have made up 40 % of the current members serving missions.[63] In the 1920s and 1930s,

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[61] Tally S. Payne, "'Our Wise and Prudent Women': Twentieth-Century Trends in Female Missionary Service," in *New Scholarship on Latter-day Saint Women in the Twentieth Century: Articles Selected from the Women's History Initiative Seminars, 2003-2004*, ed. Carol Cornwall Madsen and Cherry B. Silver, (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 2005), 128.

[62] Embry, "LDS Sister Missionaries: An Oral History Response, 1910-70," 109.

[63] Hanks "Sister Missionary and Authority," 139; Tania R. Lyon and Mary A. S. McFarland, "Not Invited, but Welcome: The History and Impact of Church Policy on Sister Missionaries" *Dialogue* 36:3 (2003):, 79; Payne, 128.

Lyon and McFarland discuss the past methodology for figuring out the number of sister missionaries: "Because the church missionary department does not publicly release missionary data by gender, the true numbers and percentage of women in the mission field is very difficult to estimate. In an heroic act of investigative research, historian Jessie Embry searched through the microfilmed missionary lists of LDS Church archives from 1930-1961 and counted the " of female names for a given month (usually January). After 1961, the church published the missionary lists by year instead of by month, and the time involved in name-counting became prohibitive. Vella Neil Evans estimated numbers of women missionaries by counting skirts in archived mission photos." See Lyon and McFarland, 79, note 27. See also, Embry, "LDS Sister Missionaries: An Oral History Response, 1910-70", 115; Neil Evans, "Women's Image in Authoritative Mormon Discourse: A Rhetorical Analysis," (PhD dissertation, University of Utah, 1985), 161-2.

requests for female missionaries remained low, but they had seemingly gained a stable if exclusive role in the larger mission field. There was never an announcement from the general leadership declaring that there was an official and permanent gender policy change. When missionary presidents did put in requests for young women, they were asked to fulfill specific roles such as stenographers or general office workers.[64] Regardless of whether the male leadership was intentionally trying to keep female numbers low, they were determined to standardize the missionary system by codifying guidelines regarding age, behavior, and preparation.

As the first female missionaries, Jennie Brimhall and Inez Knight's day to day activities were unstructured and unregulated: they lived in the same domicile as elders, had time for shopping trips and extensive sightseeing excursions, worked alongside male missionaries without supervision, and did not always have companions. Additionally, there was no predetermined set of time that Knight and Brimhall were expected to serve. When Jennie was called home after a year, Inez was not sure how much longer she would continue to serve. In the end, she completed two years, which surpassed the required today's current length of eighteen months for female Mormon missionaries.

In the first few years after Knight and Brimhall were set apart, church owned schools started to offer missionary training classes for women. Though an intense sense of duty was felt by many of the first sister missionaries, there are many examples of young women who felt that they did not have adequate religious knowledge for a mission. For example, in 1902, Lucy Grant, who was serving alongside another young woman in Denver, wrote a letter to the YWJ: "The time came sooner than I expected and I was not prepared as I should like to have been. My testimony of the Gospel was strong, but my knowledge was meagre."[65] The testimony of the first female missionaries like Grant and their peers likely inspired the development of a comprehensive training program for those embarking upon missions.

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[64] Lyon and McFarland, 78.
[65] Lucy Grant "From the Mission Field," *Young Woman's Journal* 13:3 (March 1902): 130.

In the 1900 edition of the YWJ, a writer, known by the initials G.A.A, referenced a friend who was taking missionary courses geared toward young women at the L.D.S. College. During her training, she was instructed with how to preach the Gospel "so that when the call comes she will be able to fill the position with honor to herself and friends."[66] Though missionary classes did exist at L.D.S. College and Brigham Young Academy, located in highly populated Mormon areas, not all of those embarking on a mission could attend these classes.

As a sign that the church was eager to further institutionalize the missionary program and support a permanent gender policy change more inclusive of females, missionary training classes were offered in other areas in the region between 1900 and 1910. By 1910, when Stella Sudweeks, who was then living in Idaho, was called to a mission, she was able to attend a training session in the nearby town of Oakley, Idaho, over two hundred miles from Salt Lake City.[67] The implementation of training courses from 1898 to 1910 suggests that leaders in the church believed that both male and female missionaries required necessary training.[68] The purpose of the class was also likely related to the further codification of missionary standards regarding age and the suitable behavior with regard to how young men and women should conduct themselves when they worked and interacted with each other. Other new guidelines included that missionaries should follow the word of wisdom, be in intellectual and physical shape, pay tithing, and have the ability to finance a mission, including buying appropriate clothing, tracts, and books.[69]

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[66] G.A.A., "Something About Women," *Young Woman's Journal* 11: 3(March 1900): 124.
[67] Stella Sudweeks Wood, Personal History. MSS SC 1018. Stella Sudweeks Wood papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collection, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
[68] Kelly Lelegren, "Real, Live Mormon Women" Understanding the Role of Early Twentieth-Century LDS Lady Missionaries (master's thesis, Utah State University, 2009), 52.
[69] Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition,* 232.
Beginning in the early twentieth century, church officials reemphasized the word of wisdom as essential to Mormon doctrine and following it became necessary for one to receive a recommend to enter the temple in 1921. Bowman, 169-70.

By the 1910s and 1920s, two expectations defined female missionary work. First, young women's most effective missionary contribution was best performed in a domestic sphere, mostly proselytizing to women. Secondly, the number of women missionaries should be kept to a small number of exceptional young women. Concern over young women's maturity was chief among many calls for young women missionaries. Though age requirements were not solidified until later, a long stated requirement was that young women should be mature and sensible. For example, calls for lady missionaries in 1916 and 1917 specifically wanted young women to complete office work and serve as stenographers.[70] These requests for young women also asked that they be educated, have a requisite knowledge of the gospel, cover the financial aspects of their mission, showed evidence of maturity, and had "experience in auxiliary missions."[71] Requests for women who fit these standards were also distributed throughout the 1920s.[72] Though the starting age of twenty-three for single women missionaries was not set until the 1950s (informally 1930 by some reports), the select few women who did serve were mostly in their early twenties; Inez Knight and Jennie Brimhall were respectively 22 and 23 in April of 1898.[73]

Specifications for maturity also acted as a way to regulate both the behavior of individual missionaries and the interactions between opposite sexes. The 1912-13 missionary experience of Stella Sudweeks as written in her autobiography showcases these newer restrictions. During her service in Kansas and Missouri, there were strict regulations about men and women not being alone together and not staying in the same lodging. Of this she wrote: "Were very careful when we went out for meetings or appointments not to go in even numbers as 2 girls and 2 Elders but two Elders and 3 girls or Vice Versa, just so we did not pair off. They were all fine Elders and fine girls and at

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[70] Embry, "LDS Sister Missionaries: An Oral History Response, 1910-70," 109.
[71] Embry, "LDS Sister Missionaries: An Oral History Response, 1910-70109; Evans, 151.
[72] Embry, "LDS Sister Missionaries: An Oral History Response, 1910-70," 109.
[73] Radke-Moss, "Pragmatism and Progress: An overview of LDS Sister Missionary Service in the Twentieth Century."

home it would be natural to pair off but prohibited among missionaries."[74] Though Stella met her future husband Roy Wood during her mission, they were careful not to break the strict guidelines. Even after she was officially released as a missionary, she was cautious about exhibiting her feelings for Roy publicly. To commemorate the end of her mission, the other missionaries including Wood, who was also recently released, took Stella to see a play, during which Roy and Stella sat next to each other and held hands. Stella wrote: "I was released to go home and he wasn't in this Mission so I guess we were not breaking rules. Breaking rules as Missionaries we were very careful of, as we realized it was easy to do and we must not give any excuse for criticism of our actions."[75] The regulation of interactions between men and women marked a contrast from fourteen years earlier when Will Knight, Inez's brother and Jennie's fiancé, was a positive factor that permitted both young women to be set apart as missionaries.

Courtship and marriage amongst women who served missions led to questions over adulthood. As completing the endowment ceremony inside the temple was necessary to initiate missionary work, many more young men had completed this ceremony compared to young women. Young women usually completed this step because they were engaged, as they had to receive their endowment to be sealed (married) in the temple. Sociologist Armand Mauss describes the function of the temple endowment as "that of a rite of passage, signifying to the whole church that the endowed individual has become a 'spiritual adult' and is a "status carries with it certain assumptions about what responsibilities can reasonably be imposed on the member and what can be expected of him or her."[76] Thus, young men became spiritual adults when they set out on a mission, and young women became spiritual adults when they married, reaffirming where each gender belonged within private and public spheres.

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[74] "News From the Mission," *Liahona the Elders' Journal* 10:5 (July 23, 1912), 75
[75] "News From the Mission," *Liahona*, 75.
[76] Armand L. Mauss, Culture, Charisma, and Change: Reflections on Mormon Temple Worship, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20:4 (1979): 78.

"The Elders were Many and the Sisters were Few"

Jennie Brimhall and Inez Knight's missions were short but transformative moments in their lives as Mormon women. Just as both of their lives represented a model of young Mormon womanhood at the time of their missions, the rest of their life stories exemplified a model of Mormon adult womanhood. Both women married, had children, actively participated in church activities, and involved themselves in the community and national causes.

Following Brimhall's reluctant early release, she returned home with Will Knight and they were married in January 1899. They relocated to Raymond, Alberta, a town that her new father-in-law Jesse Knight was establishing as a Mormon settlement. Throughout her life Jennie Brimhall Knight remained faithful to the church, serving as president of a local YLMIA in Alberta and as first counselor in the General Presidency of the Relief Society upon her family's return to Utah in the 1920s.[77]

Inez Knight served her mission until finally leaving Glasgow, Scotland in May of 1900. She married Robert Eugene Allen in 1902, and they had five sons. Like Jennie Brimhall, Knight continued to serve her church in her position as matron of the Brigham Young Academy for two years, as president of the Utah Stake Relief Society, and as a member of the General Board of the Relief Society. Both Inez Knight Allen and Jennie Brimhall Knight were active in civic and political affairs, including such organization as the Red Cross, the Utah Women's Council of Defense, National Women's Democratic Committee. They both continued to represent Mormon and Utahn women in some national form long after their missions: in 1925 Jennie traveled to Washington DC to take part in the International Council of Women Conference, and Inez represented Utah as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in Cleveland in 1928.[78]

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[77] Diane Mangum. "The First Sister Missionaries," *Ensign*, July 1980 accessed December 8, 2014 https://www.lds.org/ensign/1980/07/the-first-sister-missionaries?lang=eng
[78] Mangum, "The First Sister Missionaries."

While these women's various roles as mothers, wives, church members, and active citizens fit within the model of Mormon womanhood, they also reveal how Mormon women's lives often did not meet the church's rhetorical expectations. Their lives did not always fit squarely in the domestic sphere of home and church auxiliary groups. Their involvement in other activities did not diminish their roles as mothers and wives but pointed to the impossibility of only living their lives within one sphere.

An example of an extracurricular duty that bridged Inez Knight's personal, church, and public life was her involvement in a society called Yesharah, a Hebrew word meaning "straight, right, upright, just, righteous, good or pleasing," in 1929.[79] The founding story of Yesharah, a society for returned female missionaries, highlights both the progress that women had attained in the mission field but also their feelings of secondary status. In 1928, Yesharah was founded not out of the women's desire for their own group but because they were forced out of an earlier group by the men. The male members of the original coeducational group dissolved the club to join another missionary group that was only for men.[80] The first forty members of Yesharah included Inez Knight and other women who had completed missions. The overarching goal of the group was to "foster the sisterhood of the mission field" and offer a support network for former and future missionaries. The club encouraged the enrollment of younger returned female missionaries. Club activities included sending active female missionaries a small gift such as a poem or dollar bill, spending a day in the temple, and hosting an annual breakfast, the first held at Inez Knight Allen's home in 1929. Club members also actively supported departing missionaries by speaking in various

[79] Kylie Nielson Turley, "Yesharah: Society for LDS Sister Missionaries, *"Journal of Mormon History* 34:1 (2008): 170,
[80] Turley, 175, 190.

sacrament meetings across different wards. The popularity of the club grew and increased to 155 members located outside of Provo in Ogden, Salt Lake City, and towns in Idaho by the mid 1930s.[81]

The establishment of the club reiterated Mormon women's dedication to continue young women's involvement in missionary program. Even with the apparent success of the group, a poem read aloud at the 1931 breakfast underscores the ways in which the woman felt marginalized within the larger missionary program:

> The elders were many and the sisters were few
> But it didn't take long to show what we could do
> In preaching and trading, on street and in halls
> We gladly responded and honored our calls
> We don't want to brag but we know this is true
> We accomplished the most though our numbers were few.
> Y women, Y women, now keep up the pace
> With faith in your hearts and a smile on your face.[82]

The poem affirms earlier sentiments from the 1900s that though there were not many female missionaries, what they could accomplish made up for their small numbers. Even after completing their missions, women still struggled to find their place in the wider Mormon world outside of domestic duties.

Conclusion

In the same year that Yesharah was founded, the President of the North-Central States Mission John G. Allred admitted that at first he thought female missionaries "would cause so much trouble." After several years of working with them, he said "I can't speak too highly for the young ladies of our mission….Send us more lady missionaries. We have had no trouble with a single lady missionary in our field."[83] From the eagerness of the young women to male missionary leadership asking for more female missionaries, the main church leadership missed an opportunity to have even

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[81] Turley, 176-7, 181, 183, 189, 190.
[82] Untitled poem, Yesharah Scrapbook, items for 1932-33 quoted in Turley, 174.
[83] Elder John G. Allred, President of the North-Central States Mission, Conference Report (October 1928): 59.

more missionary success and give young women a sense of accomplishment beyond marriage. Despite the regular negative rhetoric from the male leadership that lasted until the 1990s, women have still desired to serve missions. Despite the regular low numbers, many women saw the religious mission as an important path, though not always necessary, that they could take in their religious training and toward their adulthood.

Looking back at her own early missionary work at a Yesharah meeting in 1950, Jennie Brimhall Knight referred to the decision to send her and Inez as the first lady missionaries as the answer to a foreseen "prophecy" that women would be called. In addition to her referencing her mission in spiritual language, Jennie's earlier urging to young Mormon girls "study their theology and get ready for missions" in one of her first letters home iterates the idea that these first generations of Mormon sister missionaries viewed their mission work as beneficial to the church and their religious identities.

Throughout its history, the missionary program has held a murky role in the transition from Mormon girlhood to womanhood, as it has been treated as an inferior path for women when compared to early marriage and motherhood. The varying difference in missionary requirements for men and women, which includes age specification and time commitment, highlights the problematic inequality between young men and young women's opportunities to construct their religious identities. Not until recently in 2012, did the church move forward in evening out the numbers of men and women serving by lowering the age that young women could enter the mission field. The age rate was kept higher for women for many decades in the post-World War Two period to keep the numbers purposefully small.[84] Women were reminded that their most important role and mission was to fulfill the role of Mormon wife and mother and serving a mission was not integral to their

[84] Gordon B. Hinckley, "Some Thoughts on Temples, Retention of Converts, and Missionary Service," October 1997, video, https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1997/10/some-thoughts-on-temples-retention-of-converts-and-missionary-service?lang=eng accessed December 8, 2014

spirituality. This reminder remained constant from the time that Inez Knight and Jennie Brimhall first served to the early twentieth century.

The missionary program for women persevered because young women continued to claim their space in the mission field. If it was not for their persistence and enthusiasm, the mission field would have reverted to be an exclusively male space. Though it was difficult to maintain, the early work of women like Inez Knight and Jennie Brimhall led the way for young Mormon women to aim to pursue a mission.

CHAPTER SIX

"FEELING THE URGENT NEED OF A HOME": PROTECTING MORMON GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN IN THE CITY

Introduction

In 1905, the Relief Society issued an abrupt announcement in the Deseret News *concerning young women and the church's Employment Bureau:*

> We have already made some comments on this matter and we now wish to emphasize them, and to say, further, that the announcement made by the Relief Society concerning the Bureau was not intended as an advertisement to induce young women in the country to come to this city for any purpose. On the contrary, the sisters of the Society believe it to be far better for young women to stay at home, or under the influence of their parents and immediate friends, than to come to this or any other populous city, where they would be liable to exposed to temptation.[1]

The tone of this Relief Society announcement did not fit the usually tame content of the bulletins. To fit the changing needs of the church's demographics and the growing region, the church had established an Employment Bureau to serve as a network for Latter-day Saints seeking workers and those in need of employment in Utah and throughout the Mormon Culture Region and larger American West. Church members from Utah and states such as New Mexico and Montana sent in requests, which were published as a bulletin in the newspaper.[2] The assumption was that all parties seeking labor or employment were of the Latter-day Saint faith.

The Relief Society bulletin was a reaction to fears of a Mormon country girl "adrift." This young woman was similar to other "women adrift," referring to wage-earning women "who lived apart from the homes of families, relatives, and employers" and were more likely to be taken advantage of by men and fall victim to prostitution, out-of-wedlock pregnancy, and general moral and sexual ruin.[3] The sentiment was no different amongst Mormon Americans, but the Mormon country girl "adrift" dealt with specific enemies that were menacing to an authentic Mormon future

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1 *Deseret News*, 9 September 1904.
2 *Deseret Evening News*, 2 June, 1904.
3 Meyerowitz, xvii.

such as nefarious non-Mormon men who came to marry young women out of Mormonism. Mormons were concerned about the other social evils affecting other American women, but these problems were also tinged with additional concerns about how these potential problems could risk a Mormon family's potential eternal salvation. Thus, the women of the Relief Society wanted to make it clear that not only was it preferential for young women to stay with their families but that Salt Lake City had become just like any other largely populated city—dangerous. The Employment Bureau served as a vetting system of sorts to guarantee that Mormons would work in an atmosphere that was conducive to their religious values, but the women of the Relief Society thought that young women needed extra protections to guarantee their safety and morality. In the end, this statement and other methods urging young women to stay home with their families did not stop young women from seeking work in the city.

Anxiety over young women alone in the city brought out similar but also different reactions from the church's male leadership when compared to the women of the auxiliary groups. The male leadership's reaction also echoed that young women should stay at home, and they also offered several reasons why young women should not work. This was a change from earlier church leadership opinion such as when Brigham Young urged women to "enlarge their sphere of usefulness" beyond the domestic sphere to help the church. Largely absent from the both the male leadership and female auxiliary leadership was acknowledgement that many young women had no choice but to work. Even when this fact was recognized, the older church generation of church leaders still pushed young women to stay home, even if it would be detrimental to them and their families depending on additional income.

In this chapter, I argue that the presence of unmarried, young women seeking work in Salt Lake City stirred up several anxieties for the older female adult leaders of the YLMIA and the Relief Society. These anxieties played out in pragmatic ways. Quickly realizing that young, unchaperoned

women would still visit or seek lodging in Salt Lake City, both women's auxiliary groups offered young women a space of refuge in the form of safe, lodging homes. The Relief Society and YLMIA opened different homes for young working women alone in the city. The YLMIA also turned some of their summer camps for the younger girls to places where young working women could take affordable vacations outside of the city.

I also argue that these homes allowed young women to assert their autonomy as young, single, working women in new ways. The homes provided a safe and nurturing space for young women who needed a roof over their head while they worked. Young women also benefitted from other protections such as the establishment of a Traveler's Bureau that ensured young women's safe entrance to the city from the train. For the leaders in the church and auxiliary female associations, these projects served as a method to maintain and strengthen young women's religiosity, which in turn guaranteed the survival of Mormonism during a time of chaotic transformation. Despite official rhetoric that urged young members to stay at home and women to focus on motherhood, the leadership of Relief Society and Young Ladies MIA understood that this period of working was necessary for many of these young women's livelihoods and gave them practical help. The practical help consisted of providing programs and lessons that educated women about making a living wage. These homes in Salt Lake City could and did not exacerbate a working girl problem, as they allowed some young women to flourish in their multifaceted roles as workers and church members.

Women's Place in the Gendered Geography of Salt Lake City

An examination of women's place in Salt Lake City elucidates the particular "gendered geography" that young Mormon women were interacting with and helped create and adapt. As Salt Lake City was and is the most populous city and the religion's spiritual center, at some point many Mormons, whether rural or urban, new converts or generational members, were drawn to and/or

spent some amount of time in the city. The city grew from nearly 20,000 to 100,000 in thirty years.[4] Though the city's gender dynamics were unique due to the church's practice of plural marriage, the size of the city is more representative of what may be considered an "average" city. In her study of turn of the twentieth century Davenport, Iowa, Sharon Wood writes, "Davenport was not Everytown, but it was far more typical of Urban American than emerging giants such as Chicago or New York. In 1880, more Americans lived in urban places of twelve-thousand to seventy-five thousand than in cities with populations of a half million or more."[5] Wood describes how women's entrance into the downtown living space and workforce of Davenport affected the "gendered geography" of the city:

> Gendered Geography was by no means unique to Davenport. By the 1870s and 1880s, however, middle-class women began to demand the same freedom of the streets that men took for granted. Defying the expectations that they would confine themselves to the parks, galleries, and public spaces, set apart for them, women moved visibly into established professions such as medicine and law and created new professions such as nursing and social work. Clerking in stores and office work became increasingly feminized as well, and more and more middle-class women and girls began working and living downtown along the streets where prostitutes plied their trade. These middle-class workers discovered what poor and working-class women had known all along: when women intruded into streets considered men's territory, they compromised their safety and respectability.[6]

Like Davenport, young women were regularly entering the downtown area of Salt Lake City as workers, students, or visitors passing through to visit family or visit the temple. Similar to Davenport, Salt Lake City can be considered more normative of the average American city experience. While it may have been closer in size and population to more average cities, factors stemming from plural marriage did affect the way that women lived in the city. One must consider how some of the outcomes of the unique gendered dynamics in the religion played out in similar fashions to other sex scandals or moral problems like prostitution in other cities. The exceptionalism

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[4] Jeffrey D. Nichols, *Prostitution, Polygamy, and Power: Salt Lake City, 1847-1918* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 179.
[5] Wood, 9.
[6] Wood, 6-7.

of Salt Lake City should not be dismissed but it was not completely divorced from larger trends affecting all cities in the United States, indicating that young Mormon women and girls were experiencing the same phenomena as other American females of their age.

Women were integral players in the development of Salt Lake City and the Utah territory from the beginning as some of the first arriving pioneers and settlers of the land. The distinct circumstances of plural marriage, which left many wives to financially run their own households, allowed Mormon women to foster an understanding of and a desire to have financial autonomy. When Brigham Young reinstituted the Relief Society in 1867, it gave women an opportunity to own their property. Some women did already own property and have titles to their homes, usually given to them by their husbands to protect assets in case of anti polygamy persecution. The relief society allowed women to financially benefit from property they owned together as a kind of business venture. In 1868, members of the fifteenth ward relief society turned down the donation from a male church member of land to build a relief society building.[7] Women also used relief society buildings to serve as sites of stores and the production of materials to be sold. While most of the proceeds from these ventures went to the church via the cooperative movement, women gained more financial autonomy and helped supply Utah's economy. However, women's work with the Relief Society still kept them in a version of the domestic sphere.

Nineteenth-century Mormon women also left their mark on some of the church's most central buildings. Lying at the center of the Mormon city was Temple Square. Temple Square served as the heart with the other city blocks serving as connecting arteries spreading out to the connecting

[7] Salt Lake City Fifteenth Ward, Salt Lake Stake, "Relief Society Minute Books," 16 July 1868 quoted in Jennifer Reeder, ""To Do Something Extraordinary': Mormon Women and the Creation of a Usable Past" (Ph.D. Dissertation, George Mason University, 2013), 171.

ward and stakes that grew throughout the rest of the Salt Lake Valley, the territory, and region.[8] The immediate world just beyond the walls of Temple Square was also integral to the church and its leadership. Just a few yards to the East of Temple Square lie The Lion House and the Beehive House, both served as the residences for Brigham Young and several of his wives. Constructed between 1853 and 1855, the Beehive House functioned as a home for Brigham Young. In 1856, the Lion House was built to provide more room for his growing family. The history of Beehive House illuminates how it served as a form of sanctuary for some of Young's wives and children. Clarissa Young Spencer, Brigham Young's daughter born in 1860, wrote in her book *Brigham Young at Home* that even after her marriage the Beehive House still felt like her "real" home and it was a "place where love and perfect harmony existed."[9]

The atmosphere of harmony felt by Clarissa Young Spencer was no doubt attributed to "co-operative idea of living" among the families.[10] Susa Young Gates also reported that she never remembers her father arguing with his wives or his wives having cross words with each other.[11] Brigham Young stated that if it were possible for him to provide all his wives with a home of their own he would.[12] According to Clarissa, he gave her mother Lucy Decker the title to the Beehive House under the direction that she would "never mortgage or give him the home." He also set up charge accounts for each wife.[13] The feeling of independence and financial solvency no doubt led to larger feelings of cooperation between the wives and their children inside both the Beehive House and Lion House.

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[8] Though the location for the temple was set aside within days of Brigham Young's arrival in 1847 and the groundbreaking occurred in 1853, due to a variety of logistical issues and unforeseen consequences, the temple was not complete until April 6th, 1893 when it was finally dedicated. See Jackson, 140,
[9] Clarissa Young Spencer and Mabel Harmer, *Brigham Young at Home* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1947), 37.
[10] Spencer and Harmer, 29.
[11] Gates, "How Brigham Young Brought Up His Fifty-Six Children."
[12] Gates, "How Brigham Young Brought Up His Fifty-Six Children."
[13] Spencer and Harmer, 46

Not all of Brigham Young's wives had fond feelings toward the homes. An example of dissatisfaction of life with Brigham Young was Ann Eliza Young, who penned an autobiographical tell-all of her life as a Mormon and polygamous wife of Brigham Young in the late 1860s. As a teenager, Ann Eliza Young lived in the Lion House during the week after Young summoned her to perform as an actress for the church theatre.[14] Because she knew several of Brigham's children very well, Ann Eliza did not feel completely out of place in Lion House. She commented that while Brigham's children were not too pleased with the repetition of frugal dishes served for meals, they did not "dare have their complaints reach their father's ear."[15] The Beehive House had reportedly become a place of hostility between a newer wife Amelia Folsom and Brigham Young's third wife Lucy Decker when Amelia was invited to live in the Beehive House. Ann Eliza Young recounted that Amelia never acknowledged Lucy and expected to be waited on by the older wife.[16] Though it is necessary to recognize the sensationalistic nature of Ann Eliza Young's recounting of her experiences in *Wife No. 19*, it provides a helpful juxtaposition to the mostly joyous memories recorded by Clarissa Young Spencer and Susa Young Gates.

Brigham Young's homes did not just serve as his residences but a model of what nineteenth-century Mormon families should look like. As the leader of the church, he knew and expected his wives and children to live up to the ideal. Though this ideal was fluid and not shared by all, these homes were a strong reminder of the centrality of patriarchy, marriage, and family within the church's theology. The status of the Beehive House and its place within the larger city symbolizes the larger change of the church and its women.

In 1919, the Beehive House, once representative of the proper Mormon polygamist family, would later become home to dozens of single, young, Mormon women, who for a variety of

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[14] Young, *Wife No. 19, or the Story of a Life in Bondage*, 376-7.
[15] Young, *Wife No. 19, or the Story of a Life in Bondage*, 383.
[16] Young, *Wife No. 19, or the Story of a Life in Bondage*, 485.

reasons had no where else to live. The idea of establishing a home for young, single women was not without its critics in the early twentieth century. Many of the church's influential women and male leadership thought that the introduction of such a house would encourage young women to come to the city. Allowing young women to live in the Beehive House both unsettled the gendered geography of the city but also reinforced patterns of the home serving as a women's space. The principle difference was that during Brigham Young's time the women were ensconced in the domestic sphere as his wives and daughters, in the 1920s young women were ostensibly on their own only under the protection of a house maiden and the expectation they would live up to LDS ideals.

Prescriptive Attitudes to Mormon Working Women

Young women were also caught in the middle of the church's prescriptions about young women and work and their own desire and/or need to work. An examination of the church's attitudes toward working women and the young women's actual experiences reveal an early disconnect in the early twentieth century over the reasons that women had to work.

During the primarily transitional decades from the 1890s to the 1920s, young women continuously received mixed messages from the church pertaining to whether or not they should be engaged in outside employment. Church leaders not only had to contend with changes in their own culture but reacted to wider issues pervading the whole country. In part to ease these changes, the church developed a rhetoric that emphasized the necessity of motherhood. The rhetoric emerging from the church's male leadership had an extreme approach to condemning women's work. For example, the 21 May 1904 *Deseret News* reprinted parts of an essay by Flora McDonald Thompson, a non-Mormon woman who criticized women's desire to work. The article claimed: "The woman wage earner is under one aspect an object of charity, under another an economic pervert, under another a social menace." While the commentary from the *Deseret News* writer was not as condemning, the writer did include content that supported Thompson's assertions in the end: "Now,

women, themselves commenced to look at the situation from a new point of view. They begin to comprehend that the voice of nature is authority over such questions, and that rebellion is unsafe."[17]

Content in the *Young Woman's Journal* that addressed the issue of girls and young women working in the first decade of the 1900s did not contextualize it as a "rebellion" as the *Deseret News* article did. A 1905 article simply titled "The Girl Who Earns Money," declared: "Selfishness and extravagance often develop in a girl who begins to earn money." The reasons for this selfishness was rooted in the assumption that a girl when compared to a boy was not enjoined to earn money as a young man has been: "A boy comes into his earning experience because of his training with more or less sense of equity and right in the distribution of his income. But a girl entering suddenly into the earning markets of the worlds, finds herself, too often, without any past training, with no home expense to meet and only her will and desires to consult."[18] In addition to noting that young men were taught to earn and contend with money from an early age, the lesson also implies that it is in young woman's inherent nature not to understand the value of a dollar. That innate characteristic in young women in combination with the rising materialism held the powerful potential to distract young women from being able to properly save money for much more important purposes like paying tithing to the church.

Another article from a 1908 edition of the girl's publication, dramatically titled "Timely Topics: The Lure of Gold," at once acknowledges and downplays the economic circumstances that may push young women to work. The author "Aunt Su," Susa Young Gates," wrote: "The lure of gold is breaking thousands of women upon the wheel of life. Tender girls, who should be guarded as life's only promise of life's perpetuity, are thrust out into the wage-earner's wide scramble, to sweat and suffer with unnatural burdens." While it may appear that "Aunt Su" is addressing the relevant issue of child labor and girls employed in difficult and cruel working conditions, the article

[17] "Women and Work," *Deseret News*, 21 May 1904.
[18] "The Realm of Girlhood: The Girl Who Owns Money," *Young Woman's Journal* 15 (1905): 490

is more concerned with the possibility of young women not knowing how to spend or save money. She wrote: "But too often the girl wins money only to squander its upon vanity, or pleasure, and neither her own mind, nor her own home receive a lasting benefit."[19] References to the home indirectly asserted that women should be concerned with her domestic duties. Absent from both of these articles from 1905 and 1908 is the acknowledgment that some young women had no choice but to work to support themselves and/or their families.

Within just over ten years, some articles in the YWJ started to accept and even pronounce that women "have to earn our own living." A later lesson from 1922 focused on "women in the business world." The author factually, comprehensively, and sympathetically explained the reasons why many young women entered the workforce "from choice, many more from necessity." The author wrote that it was currently "almost as natural" for young women to enter a professional life like their brothers did. The article still contains many of the same warnings about the negative repercussions of work that can affect women. However, the bulk of the article offered advice for young working women and praised work as a vehicle for young women to learn efficiency and build their character.[20]

In the same decade, the Relief Society released a lesson counseling that "every young girl" should have an interest and knowledge in the responsibilities of homemaking and earning a living if the unplanned need for additional finances occurred. The lesson continued to say that "an unmarried woman is always happier when following a vocation in which she can be socially serviceable and financially independent. In no case should she be constrained to accept an unworthy companion as a means of support." The lesson was rooted in the practical concerns that some young women may never marry, could be widowed, or could just find themselves responsible to be

[19] "Timely Topics, The Lure of Gold," *Young Woman's Journal* 17 (1908), 207.
[20] "The Latter-day Saint Women" *Young Woman's Journal* 23 (1922), 624.

the sole breadwinner for their family.[21]

Despite the women's auxiliary group's show of support of women working for practical reasons, the male leadership was not nearly as sympathetic to the idea. One extreme example is J. Ruben Clark, who in the 1920s would served on the board of the Young Men Mutual Improvement Association and would be called to serve as Second Counselor in the Church's First Presidency later in the 1930s. In the 1930s, he claimed with alarm: "on all sides we see the apprehension, the failure, the unwillingness of your young daughters to become mothers. My brothers and sisters, I repeat to you that motherhood is a duty. That is why we are here."[22] Of course, motherhood was supposed to only occur within the confines of marriage.

Compared side-by-side, these statements appear to be directly at odds, but a closer read reveals some commonalities. The Relief Society's encouragement and development of woman-centered jobs and programs, like nursing or teaching, arguably reasserted a bifurcation between women's and men's prescribed roles. Nonetheless, these programs did have a profound affect on some young women's feelings of purpose outside motherhood and marriage, perhaps leading some to even put off marriage.

A Message to Young Women from the Country: "Stay at Home"

In 1903, the women of the YWJ printed a cautionary editorial piece by John W. Taylor, one of the church's twelve apostles. The piece titled "Stay at Home" claimed that out of all family members daughters "have a greater temptation to leave home." This temptation was not out of desire for wealth but a yearning to help their "father and mother, who are experiencing great difficulty in providing for their family." But he warned, "My advice to you, if it is possible stay at

[21] Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, 185.
[22] Linda P. Wilcox, "Mormon Motherhood: Official Images," in *Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective*, 213.

home with your mother until you are married—by all means do so." Young women's noble intentions in finding work did not always preclude them from sacrificing their reputation:

> Many young women have lost that which is more previous than life, by working away from home at hotels, boarding houses, railway and mining camps, and other places where they have been unprotected. While their motives were pure and praiseworthy and they thought to bring unbounded joy to their beloved parents at home, they have brought a lifelong sorrow upon father, mothers, brothers, and sisters. In many instances they feel like they are outcasts from home.

Taylor does accept that many young women felt that they had to work to support their families, a noted discrepancy from other pieces in the YWJ that implied that many young women worked for materialistic and greedy reasons. However, no matter a young woman's reasoning for working away from home, the negative outcome could befall the selfless young woman just as it could the selfish one.

What was most unfortunate was that once a young woman's pure sexuality was marred "that which is more precious than life," it is made apparent that they were not usually welcome and/or able to figuratively and literally return home due to the shame they not only caused themselves but their whole families. Though Taylor does not directly touch upon the eternal consequences of the scenario, it was mostly certainly front and center in the mind of the young women reading this advice in the YWJ. In the end, Taylor does not place all responsibility on the shoulders of the young women but to the parents and families who condone a young woman's leaving: "In my opinion no greater evil prevail among the Latter-day Saints theory than sending, or permitting their lovely daughters to leave the home of their childhood and wonder abroad unprotected in the world to be preyed upon by the wicked."[23] For the older generation of Latter-day Saint leaders and parents like Taylor, the hotels and boarding houses located in Salt Lake City held as much danger as the mining

[23] John W. Taylor, "Stay at Home," *Young Woman's Journal* 13:9 (September 1903): 443-5.

and railway camps. An 1896 law outlawed women and children from working in Utah mines, but only parents could actually put their foot down and keep young women away from the city.

As stated in the 1905 announcement directed at young women from the "country settlements," the influence of friends, family, and proximity to home was far preferred to allowing young women alone in a city "where they would be liable to be exposed to temptation."[24] The first strategy largely employed to protect young women from the dangers of the city was to actively repeat the advantages of the country over the city. The perceived advantages of country life were directly tied to older church members' fears of moving away from an authentic Mormonism. Discussing the city versus country dichotomy, historian Lisa Tait writes that the "'country' represented the simple, wholesome Mormon community of their formative years, a past that was increasingly distant and irretrievable." In the fictional stories of the YWJ, "country" and "city" came to represent opposites. Rural Utah, and the families who resided in this area, conveyed an idealized sense of purity, simplicity, and faithfulness." The city was a site of worldliness, loneliness, and, most alarmingly, "danger, and lost faith."[25]

The major issue afflicting young women that drew concern from both Mormons and non-Mormons was prostitution. There was ample evidence in the press that Salt Lake City was a place that young women could fall into deep trouble. A 1901 story from the *Salt Lake Herald* titled "LANDLADY IN TROUBLE" exemplified the issue. The story reported that a young girl and young man were arrested in a "house of shady repute." While the landlady of the home stood accused of keeping a house of prostitution, the article read, "the charge against the girl was dismissed, in view of the fact that she would testify in the charge against Mrs. Young. The girl said that she lived in the country, and promised the officers if they would allow her to go this time that

[24] *Deseret News*, 9 September 1904.
[25] Tait, 224, 243.

she would return to the country and reform."[26] Though the article does not specify the religion of the young woman, this was the exact type of young woman that the church members were concerned about: an innocent country girl away from home for the first time falling victim to the worst sin of the city through the accident of choosing to board in the wrong type of home.

Despite the extreme cases of prostitution, young girls' working conditions in Utah were not particularly difficult when placed within a national context. Nonetheless, they still regularly encountered wage inequality, poor working conditions, and other circumstances that led to long-term difficulties.

Working Conditions of Girls and Young Women

In the early twentieth century, the British-born Mormon convert Annie Bywater, a head female supervisor at a church-owned clothing factory, cheerfully remarked upon the industrious combination of young working women and new machine technology: "Here, happy Utah girls—with the aid of some of the most modern machinery and methods—are turning out close to 10,000 garments a month, girls and machinery [are] constantly being added to keep pace with the increasing demand for the product." Young women, both school age girls and women in their early twenties, were part of the working population that clocked in every day to support themselves or add income to their larger family household. While the church leadership overwhelmingly asserted that the best place for a young woman was inside her family home helping with domestic and childcare duties, the reality was that many young women had to work out of economic necessity.[27]

One of the principle employers for female workers was the Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution's clothing factory. Credited by some as America's first department store ZCMI was

[26] *Salt Lake Herald*, 13 April 1901.
[27] *ZCMI Advocate*, 5: 164 quoted in Martha Sonntag Bradley, "Protect the Children: Child Labor in Utah, 1880-1920"*Utah Historical Quarterly* 59: 1 (1991): 65.

established by the church in 1868 as a large store that sold many items ranging from clothing to wagons. In the 1870s, ZCMI opened factories to produce and introduce their own line of shoes and clothing. Bywater, characterized in her obituary as "a woman of rare good judgment, loyalty, and industry," supervised 100 power-driven sewing machines and the wholesale order department. Even in the church-owned factory, like many other earlier twentieth-century factories, there were reports of safety hazards and employee accidents.[28] Despite the upbeat image displayed in Annie Bywater's quote about "happy Utah girls" and their high rates of productivity, Utah's young female workers were susceptible to a variety of issues relating to safety, pay, long hours, and livelihood that affected many other Americans.

The young Utahn female worker did not present an anomaly when compared to other female working populations in the United States. Utah's gaining of statehood served as a significant sign that the new state and its dominant religion was modernizing itself. Part of this modernization process was the growth of industries that were a particular strength in Utah, including the canning and candy industries. Women's employment was essential to the success of both of these industries due to the fact that women were more easily hired at lower wages and were quick to take up seasonal work that was a staple in both industries.[29]

Utah's success with a high sugar production and its dry climate resulted in exemplary conditions for the development of a lucrative candy industry, which was the state's third most profitable industry in 1910. The numbers of workers peaked a few months before the industry's two busiest seasons: Christmas and Easter.[30] Women's primary task in the chocolate factories was the "skilled" job of chocolate dipping (dipping fondants and creams into chocolate to achieve a ""signature"" of ridges and curls" on the chocolate) and the "unskilled" labor of packaging. Dippers

[28] *Payroll Builder*, vol 8 (1920), 57; *ZCMI Advocate*, 5: 164 quoted in Bradley, "Protect the Children: Child Labor in Utah, 1880-1920," 65.
[29] Miriam B. Murphy, "Gainfully Employed Women," in *Women in Utah History: Paradigm or Paradox?*, 190-191.
[30] Bradley, 63.

and packers typically worked nine hours a day not only dipping chocolate and packaging it but also maintaining a clean and tidy workstation, not an easy endeavor when working with messy and sticky ingredients.[31]

In 1910, fourteen female workers at one of Salt Lake City's candy factories, J.G. McDonald Company, went on strike. In their statement listing their demands to the McDonald Company, they wrote:

> J. G. McDonald Company. Dear Sirs We. the undersigned, have carefully considered our situation as a whole and fully sense the idea that we are underpaid, considering the high price of living at the present time, which we realize you understand. We. your employees , have worked for your interests to the best of our ability, and we now consider it time to honorably approach you for an advance of wages, as follows: On 1 ½-cent goods; 2 cents, small box lemon and small box vanilla. 2 ½ cents.
> Trusting you will kindly comply with our request by noon today.[32]

These fourteen young women, all of whom were likely under twenty-five years of age, served as a departure from other "typical" female workers in Salt Lake City, as they were the first to organize a union of only female workers in Utah.[33]

The young women publicized the problem of child labor in the factory. In a *Salt Lake Tribune* article written after the McDonald Company refused the strikers' demands, one of the union officers drew attention to the young girls working in the factory: "Some of, the little girls are not more than twelve years, and from this those helpers run up to fifteen years. All of them ought to be in school, and if there is any law that touched this condition, it ought to be enforced."[34] Their desire to confront the issue of child labor elucidates that these young women were informed and motivated by national labor trends. Six years before the chocolate dippers listed their demands, the National Child Labor Committee launched a widespread national campaign to eradicate the labor practice. Kathryn L. MacKay argues that because of their articulated awareness of the issues, these

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[31] Kathryn L. MacKay, "The Chocolate Dippers' Strike of 1910" *Utah Historical Quarterly* 83:1 (2015): 41, 44.
[32] *Salt Lake Tribune*, 21 January 1910.
[33] MacKay, 39.
[34] *Salt Lake Tribune*, 23 January 1910.

chocolate dipper strikers likely read the newspaper or lived in homes in which labor issues were regularly discussed. Their main impetus behind the strike was to improve their working conditions. The small strike was not a success and the fourteen girls were let go from the McDonald Company.[35]

Not all young women's experiences were marred by distress from poor working conditions. Some young women found great joy and spiritual fulfillment in their work. One area in which many young women thrived was in different versions of church nursing programs. The Relief Society Nursing Program reinvigorated eighteen year old Mary Bennion's belief in her potential and her religiosity. As explored in chapter three, Mary was contending with pain and shock following the discovery that her father had entered into two additional marriages after the practice was supposed to stop. While attending the LDS University and living with her Aunt Augusta in Salt Lake City, Mary's religious identity and personal ambitions strengthened. During this time, Mary had the chance to become well acquainted with influential women in the church. One woman Emma A. Empey, who supervised the Relief Society Nurses from 1902 to 1910, held a profound influence over the course of Mary's life. In the fall of 1908, Mrs. Empey encouraged the nineteen-year-old Mary to take a spot in the program by waiving the fifty-dollar tuition fee for her. After finishing the program, young nurses were expected to give their time to charitable nursing and sustain a "spiritual component" in their work.[36]

Mary's recollection of her graduation from the program elicited an unusual display of religious faith in her journal. Though Mary's distrust of her father grew after learning of his plural marriages, her faith in Mormonism did not waver. Experiences like the Relief Society Nurses, which included a spiritual component, illuminated how her religion could aid her in discovering her worth. At the graduation, each young woman received a personal blessing:

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[35] MacKay, 47.
[36] Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, 1, 27, 198.

> In my blessing I was told that the Lord was pleased with my desire for righteousness and that if I would be faithful my blessing would be so great as to be beyond my comprehension now. I stayed and listened to the blessing given to a number of the girls. Each one was so appropriate that I was strengthened in my faith by hearing them. The program that followed was beautiful and inspiring. I think we all felt our responsibility then more than we had ever done before.

Mary was just not moved by her own personal blessing, but also by her work with the group of other nursing students. This is the first time Mary formed a cohesive camaraderie with a group outside of her family and ward. Beyond working under influential women like Mrs. Empey, studying alongside other women her own age also allowed her to envision alternate ways of living beside the model provided by her father's family. Reflecting on parting from her classmates, she wrote: "Our association has been so intimate and they are such lovely girls that I feel sad about parting with them."[37] Though Mary did not end up pursuing nursing beyond a year after the program, Mary's experience at the LDS University and participating in the Relief Society Nurses program naturally influenced her goals as a young woman and also led her to reconceptualize what she could do with her future.

Another option for nursing was the Dr. W. H. Groves Latter-day Saints Hospital School of Nursing, which opened in 1905. By 1914, between sixteen and twenty women were graduating from the program each year. During that time at the training school, women spent their time learning and working, providing cheap labor to the hospital. Young women entered the program for different reasons. Of the class of 1919, one student's mother believed the training school would "be a good place for her daughter." Some were encouraged by doctors in their smaller community to seek out nursing. In fact, one young woman claimed a physician in her smaller community "told her" "she was wasting her time in a small town." Messages like these revealed the mixed messages that young women heard from the institutional church and more informal and local influences. Other young women sought out nursing school because they considered it a gateway to an undergraduate degree.

[37] Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, 1, 27, 198.

Eighteen percent of the graduates of 1919 eventually completed an undergraduate education after finishing the nursing training school.[38]

A majority of the graduates of the LDS Hospital School of Nursing married and had children. Yet, this did not stop all from abandoning nursing altogether. Patricia D'antonio writes that the choice of nursing allowed the graduates of the 1919 class "a rather fluid domestic space that responded fairly well to the complicated, and often quite personal, negotiations among a religion's dictates, an individual's desires a child's needs, the value of a husband's work…" The work of nursing was understood to be women's work, and it provided needed stability if a woman needed to pick up extra work when dealing with "the unpredictability of certain economic times."[39] Because nursing was considered in harmony with domestic work, it also provided a way for unmarried and childless Mormon women to assert their femininity in a culture that depended on gender systems.

Just as women's experiences changed in context to where or why they worked, their housing needs also shifted. Some young women like Mary Bennion had the opportunity to stay with a family member or lodged with the LDS Hospital School of Nursing. Other young women sought housing in boarding homes that were or were not conducive to their religious ideals. Like the story of the country girl in the *Salt Lake Herald* article, boarding houses became associated with vice and crime. In the minds of many reformers, at the very rare best, a young woman could find herself in an opportune situation living with a proper family, and at the worst, she could become embroiled in literal "den of inequity"—a house of forced prostitution. Despite the admonition to not leave home for work in the city, young women of Utah followed nationwide trends of living apart from one's family, which was a was a common experience in the nineteenth century;. Historical estimates approximate that between one third and a half of people who lived in cities in the nineteenth

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[38] Patricia D'antonio, "Nurses--and Wives and Mothers: Women and the Latter-Day Saints Training School's Class of 1919," *Journal of Women's History* 19:3 (2007): 121-2
[39] D'antonio, 131

century resided in boarding homes for a time.[40] In early twentieth century, spurred on by the opening of a Protestant Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) in Salt Lake City, Mormon women turned to starting their own home for young women.

Housing for Women in the Mormon City

The Young Women's Christian Association opened its doors in Salt Lake City in 1906. The first YWCA was established in Britain in 1855 and took off in the United States in 1866 in Boston. Soon the association became well known for their rooming quarters that the association described as "friendly and homelike atmosphere" and likened to a "Christian home." Joanne Meyerowitz writes that reformers were interested in helping young women with "the struggle for existence"; this "struggle" generally included contending with "long hours, low wages, seasonal unemployment, and loneliness." Yet, beyond this concern for young women's day to day living was a central concern for young women's sexual morality. For many reformers, the "'temptation' to virginal women to sell or give away their sexual purity was more dangerous then the 'struggle for existence.'"[41]

A 1909 article in the *Deseret News* about the YWCA, which then had between 800 and 900 members in Salt Lake City, cheerfully lauded the association's efforts toward helping the young women through the establishment of their own employment bureau and providing them with a space for worship and recreation.[42] However, what was absent from the article in the church-owned newspaper was a discussion of religious difference between the Protestant owned YWCA and Mormonism. This omission is curious given that the YWCA's larger membership included Protestant reformers who were once involved in anti-polygamy campaign.

Just twenty years before the YWCA opened, the Industrial Christian Home Association for Polygamous Wives, a rescue home for Mormon women, was established in Salt Lake City. The

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[40] Wendy Gamber, *The Boardinghouse in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 3, 97.
[41] Meyerowitz, 48.
[42] *Deseret News*, 18 December 1909.

founder of Industrial Christian Home, Angie Newman, became familiar with the "horrors" of plural marriage when she first visited relatives in Utah in 1876. Newman garnered a small amount of seed money from the Woman's Home Missionary Society, a Methodist Episcopal organization located in Cincinnati, and a much larger contribution of $40,000 from the Senate Committee on Education and Labor to finance the home, which opened in December of 1886.[43] The rescue home for polygamist women was formally open for seven years. Continual low occupancy and general disinterest from the polygamist women made the home an object of ridicule in the Mormon dominated city. An 1890 article in *Deseret News*, the same newspaper that praised the YWCA, described the church's general disdain for the project: "The institution itself needed no opposition, it was near dead as possible when it was born, and has never had any strengths or real vitality. The attempts made to galvanize it with some semblance of life have been ludicrous and pitiable, and the fact is becoming recognized that the whole thing is a humbug."[44] Due to internal power struggles and regular low occupancy, the home closed its doors in 1893.

The general acceptance of the YWCA by the *Deseret News* served as a sign that the church no longer wanted to promote isolationism but were welcoming to people of non-Mormon backgrounds. The article was also a testament to a new level of cooperation between Mormons and non-Mormons in Utah. Mormon leaders and church members were interested in maintaining Salt Lake City as a moral city and seemed to welcome any productive and virtuous influences. However, the question remains, why did YLMIA leadership not just promote the YWCA as suitable housing for young Mormon women?

In 1910, the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association president Martha H. Tingey took note of the YWCA's success and wrote an impassioned letter to the upper level of male

[43] Pascoe, 24.
[44] *Deseret Evening News,* 5 April 1890.

authority of the church, the First Presidency, requesting the use of the church's Social Hall as a home for young Mormon women. In this letter, she wrote that the young women were

> Feeling the urgent need of a home on the order of Young Woman's Christian Association, for many of our girls who come from this country, who emigrate from foreign countries, and for girls who need rest rooms and a place where they may receive instruction in economy, cleanliness, purity; where books and magazines may be acceptable and where they may gather under proper chaperonage.[45]

For young Mormon women to comprehend specific understandings of Mormon girlhood and womanhood, they needed to be within a specific Mormon environment. The church's attitude toward the success of the YWCA represented paradoxical reactions that church members exhibited toward the presence of Protestant reform movements in the city. Behind the welcoming attitude were still old fears that the Protestant influence would work to convert young female church members out of Mormonism. Despite the past, no one could deny the success of the YWCA model, as many groups like the Mormons found themselves modeling their housing after them. Given that Protestant efforts to "rescue" young women from polygamy were still fresh in the minds of Mormon women, there was likely the underlying fear that the YWCA was too similar to the Industrial Christian Home.

Members of the Young Ladies MIA leadership became convinced that offering a suitable home atmosphere would also guarantee that young women would stay active in the church. The first home established by the YMIA in 1913, named the Lucy Mack Home for Girls after Joseph Smith's mother, proved to be a disappointment. Part of the reason for the short run of the home was that members of the General Authorities did not want the home advertised in wards or in local newspapers, as they would prefer for young women to remain at home. Marba Josephson, a leader in the Young Ladies MIA, reflected that "the home never quite measured up to the reasons for its

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[45] Martha H. Tingey to First Presidency quoted in Marba C. Josephson, *History of the YWMIA* (Salt Lake City: Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association, 1955), 157.

establishment. It had become more or less a boarding house…there was no need for this kind of institution."[46]

While the Lucy Mack Home for Girls did not reach its potential, the Relief Society started its own well publicized home in late 1913. Even though both homes opened within months of each other, there is no apparent overlap in shared leadership or funding. In 1912, Emmeline B. Wells urged the First Presidency to aid the Society in creating a home for incoming immigrants and women temporarily visiting the city. A six-page article in the second edition of the 1914 *Relief Society Bulletin* stated the intentions for the home: it was for "Women, without relatives or friends," who "come to this city to do work in the Temple or to visit the conferences of the Church." But then, almost, reluctantly the article addressed the needs of young women: "Girls, who insist on coming to this city to get big wages, are too often allowed to drift about with no secure quarters where they may lodge until they can secure work."[47] Clearly, the Relief Society Home for Girls was caught between offering a safe space for young women and also dissuading others from moving to the city. For all intents and purposes, the Relief Society Home was a success. Many women "found it almost impossible to ever get rooms" in the house.[48] The lack of space at the Relief Society Home worried older members of the Young Ladies MIA especially after learning that sixteen LDS girls rented rooms at the YWCA. While the YWCA may have offered suitable and decent housing, the preference became clear that the church leadership wanted young women to live within an environment that encouraged their particular religious identities and needs.

However, the need for specific Mormon housing superseded religious differences when it was reported two young women who traveled from Logan to work in Salt Lake City could not find any appropriate housing. It appeared that two young women could not even find proper housing

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[46] Josephson, 159.
[47] *Relief Society Bulletin*, vol. 1 (1914), 17.
[48] Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, 185.

with a non-Mormon but still safe boarding situation like the YWCA.[49] Anecdotes such as these reinvigorated the women of the YLMIA to investigate opening another home.

In 1910, the year that YLMIA president Martha H. Tingey wrote her letter advocating the opening of a home, she suggested the "Social Hall will answer our present needs." The letter continued: "we respectfully ask that this building be put at our disposal." The suggested location, the church's social hall, once served as a gathering space for Salt Lake's first settlers to enjoy each other's company, dance, play music, and sometimes attend lectures. Members of the YLMIA were so intent upon providing housing that they made clear that the home would be "self-sustaining" and maintained by the contributions of interested individuals and house memberships. It was likely a considerable surprise when the YLMIA was permitted usage of the Beehive House, the former residence of Brigham Young, in 1919. The Church eventually purchased the Beehive House and it served as the official residence of Presidents Lorenzo Snow and Joseph F. Smith, who passed away in 1918.[50] In 1919, the executive board of the Young Ladies MIA successfully gained permission to use the Beehive House, as it was no longer being used after the new president Heber J. Grant decided to remain in his own home.

On July 1, 1920, the Beehive House officially opened its doors to young women and the following guidelines were established: "Charges for each girl was between $6.00 and $8.50 for room and board"; "No one over twenty-five was allowed to live in the home"; "Residents were allowed to stay in the home for one year." It was understood that this home would serve as temporary accommodation until young women could find a permanent place to stay. Due to the immediate success of the homes, an adjoining building owned by the church was remodeled to accommodate more young women. In May 1921, the "Beehive Annex" opened allowing for the lodging of up to

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[49] Josephson, 160.
[50] Helen Young Spencer Williams, "History Turns Back Its Pages: The Bee Hive House Restored," *Relief Society Magazine*, August 1960, 510.

seventy-two women at a time. During their stay, young women were expected to gain knowledge of the city. Once their time in the home was over, the Beehive House Staff attempted to find them lodging with a Latter-day Saint family.[51]

The opening of the Beehive House also led to the further strengthening of inter-faith cooperation between female Mormon and Protestant reformers. In 1921, the YWCA and Young Ladies' MIA worked together to operate a Traveler's Aid Bureau for young women arriving at the train station in Ogden. The YWCA and Young Ladies' MIA jointly paid the salaries for two women to act as representatives of the Traveler's Aid Bureau to steer newly arrived women clear of dangerous rooming situations and send them along to proper housing with the YWCA, Beehive House, or other vetted residences. To guarantee the continued operation of the Traveler's Aid Bureau, each board member of the Young Ladies MIA raised ten dollars each[52]. The joint efforts of both groups further illuminated how a new level of cooperation was possible and needed to maintain the safety of young women in the city.

This aid bureau would have been appreciated by young women like Bertie Lawson and Mary Bennion who both wrote about the self-consciousness of being a young, single, women on a train. Though Bertie Lawson was in the company of a male companion when she left her home of Ephraim nearly 120 miles south of Salt Lake City in 1898, she still commented that "I was the only lady on the car for a long way."[53] Though she did not specifically articulate any fear or anxiety about the trip, her journal entries indicate the trip took a physical and mental toll on the fifteen year old as she stayed away from home in a hotel for the first time. Eight years later in July of 1906, the sixteen year old Mary Bennion was called to her family's holiday home to care for her mother. She wrote that her brother, "Heber took me to the depot and I took the four o'clock train for Echo. I had to

[51] Josephson, 162-3.
[52] Josephson, 164-5.
[53] Larson Jacobs diary, page 31, September 18, 1898.

change cars at Ogden and as I have never been anywhere on the train alone before I was a little worried. But I arrived safely however, and Papa was at the station to meet me."[54] Many of the young women arriving in Ogden were headed for Salt Lake City and did not have someone to accompany them and assure their safe drop off or pick up.

Leisure in the City and Country

The purpose for young Mormon women to maintain their morality was, expectedly, to marry a respectable Mormon man. Young residents of the Beehive House agreed to reside with the understanding that they were to refrain from vice and live the standards of a proper Mormon girlhood set by the church. The women had to abide by a nightly curfew and report to one of the house chaperones each evening. Despite their busy schedules, young women still found time to have fun. An account of time spent at the Beehive House recalls the fun young women had after visiting Utah's first amusement parks. In 1891, the church decided to build a resort called Salt Air, a family-friendly "Coney Island of the West" in part to neutralize their image to non-Mormons and to provide wholesome entertainment.[55]

Soon other resorts like Lagoon opened outside of Salt Lake City to capitalize on the growing amusement trend. Set halfway between Salt Lake City and Ogden, the "Bamberger line" was an electric train line that allowed easy access to the Lagoon amusement park for young men and women. Kathy Peiss writes that "the 'mass culture'" of the early twentieth century was "realized in the amusement park." She continues: "Not only did Coney symbolize the conflict between Victorians and 'modern' culture, it embodied a subtle debate over what forms that new culture should take."[56] Part of this "new culture" taking over areas like amusement parks embraced the "rise

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[54] Mary Bennion diary 2, July, 30 1906
[55] Pat Bagley, "Living History: Original Saltair Was a Wonder of the World" *Salt Lake Tribune*, 9 July 2012 http://archive.sltrib.com/story.php?ref=/sltrib/news/54445251-78/lake-saltair-history-salt.html.csp accessed January 7, 2016.
[56] Peiss, 116.

of a heterosocial culture that owed its form in part to the structure of working-class social life."[57] For those attending the parks in Utah, an excursion to a place like Lagoon did allow young men and women to interact alone in a public space. Whereas ideas of improper morality was bound up with places like Coney Island, young women who lived in the Beehive House presented outings as respectable. The account of life at the Beehive House states:

> it was something special to have a boyfriend arrange a date that would fill the evening at one of those resorts. It was often a foot-race to get off the last train from Lagoon, their station was on the corner of South Temple and West Temple…and get up the street, those two long blocks, say good-night, and be inside the Beehive House before the door was locked.

The story highlighted the chaste and proper part of such a date, as a "boyfriend" implies a long-term romantic partner not a fleeting interest. The emphasis on returning to the Beehive House by curfew also emphasized that these young couples wanted to obey and respected the rules put forth to protect their respectability.

Of course, not all trips to the amusement parks were tales of modest enjoyment. In 1929, Dr. Arthur L. Beeley, a professor at the University of Utah, released a study called "Boys and Girls in Salt Lake City: The Results of a Survey Made for the Rotary Club and the Business and Professional Women's Club of Salt Lake City." The study looked at recreation, juvenile delinquency, and schooling among other subjects in the city. In his critique of dancehalls and amusement parks, he drew attention to poor lighting in trains to and from Saltair: "The railroad facilities to and from Saltair are open to some criticism from the standpoint or lighting and social supervision."[58] While different authorities at the resort and members of the Social Advisory Committee of the church

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[57] Peiss, 137.
[58] Arthur L. Beeley, *Boys and Girls in Salt Lake City: The Results of a Survey Made for the Rotary Club and the Business and Professional Women's Club of Salt Lake City* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1929), 16.

tried to improve the lighting to prevent immoral sexual behavior among young men and women, these different measures regularly failed.[59]

It cannot be known if all of the visits to resorts by young women living in the Beehive House were chaste and modest. Yet, if the result of these outings ended in proper Mormon marriage, it did not really matter. The goals of these outings were not merely to pass the time but for young Latter-day Saints to become acquainted and, hopefully, in the end, fall in love and marry. The account of life at the Beehive house states those "after a romantic evening" those "last trains to the city were often the perfect setting for a girl to find a new diamond ring on her third finger left hand."[60]

Inspired by the interconnections of new cheap amusements in urban areas and the fresh air movement, various reforming and religious organizations offered day trips and later week long trips to the "country" for both working class children and mothers. Soon such opportunities were available to young working women. An article from the 1913 YWJ spoke to this growing issue of young women being unable to take a proper vacation: "Most of our girls have but little money on hand and when vacation times arrives they either feel the necessity of remaining at home or continuing to work." To resolve these related issues stemming from more young women working, the YLMIA wanted to "provide a place where the girls could enjoy nature's luxuries to the fullest extent; and at the minimum cost."[61] Just like the rise of the home movement, the Mormon YLMIA was one of many religious organizations and charities that offered a respite for working girls during the summer.

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[59] Bree Ann Romero, "Sinners in the City of Saints: Flappers in Salt Lake City" (master's thesis –Utah State University, 2014): 75.
[60] "BEEHIVE HOUSE." MSS 10690. Folder 5. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.
This is a typed four page documents with no legibly written author name.
[61] "Liberty Glen Camp," *Young Woman's Journal* ,31.

The first Americans to regularly take vacations, as they are understood today, were members of the elite and privileged classes, mostly upper and middle class men and women, in the early nineteenth century. Different resorts centered on health and wellness popped up along coastal towns, in country towns, and near springs. Ideas of tourism expanded beyond specialized resorts, as more Americans chose to visit new cities and towns. The benefits of getting some time away from urban centers for children seemed obvious: fresh air, an appreciation for nature, and a chance to learn lessons of cooperation that some reformers assumed that working class and/or immigrant families did not teach in the home.[62] Working-class mothers also deserved a break from the city life within the minds of reformers. Next to children and mothers, the next group that appeared to be most justified in taking time away from the city were working women. The first example of such a resort was led by the YWCA; in 1880, the association established a resort called the Seashore Cottage along the New Jersey shore. Other examples of resorts for children and young women included the White Birch Farm, a resort for city children outside of New York City; some teenagers such as Rose Cohen, a Jewish immigrant to the United States in the late nineteenth century, recuperated and also worked at the country farm.[63] Though some young women felt confined by the different rules and expectations set forth by resorts, women mostly considered the camps and resorts to be a welcome break from the urban atmosphere.[64]

Curiously, no reforming groups seemed to be concerned with offering suitable and affordable vacations to working-age men. Historian Cindy S. Aron asserts that these reformers "subscribed to the belief that female workers were more delicate and frail their male counterparts and that, as potential mothers, they needed and deserved special provisions, protection and

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[62] Cindy Sondik Aron, *Working at Play: A History of Vacations in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 186-7.
[63] Rose Cohen, *Out of the Shadow: A Russian Jewish Girlhood on the Lower East Side* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995), 260-270.
[64] Aron, 193.

services."[65] Mormon women leaders involved in the YLMIA were more than likely invested in young Mormon women's reproductive futures and drew upon this recreational ideology to promote ideas of marriage and motherhood.

By 1925, the YLMIA boasted the operation of nine girls' homes extending North from Ogden and Utah all the way to MIA Girls' Home four hours outside of Mesa, Arizona. An YWJ article "M.I.A. Summer Home Season" reported that nearly 3,000 girls had stayed in the homes during the previous summer. The article declared that time away at the camp was for "Every M.I.A. Girl—city or country." The article's author Julia M. Brixen of the YLMIA's Summer Home Committee stated that the city girl would greatly benefit from setting "a little time" aside from her clock-runs schedule of work, hurried meals, oft changed gowns, movies, and commercial sweets." Inherent in the message for "city girls" was the necessity of not only taking time away from their usual schedule but the larger material and mainstream temptations that existed in urban environments. The reference to city girls' "clock-runs schedule of work" also implies that the camps were for women who had left school and were working full-time.[66] At certain camps like Camp Atoka in Ogden, Utah, young women specified as "aged 14 and older," usually 17 years old, attended the camp.[67] However, other camps such as at Brighton were open to young women of all ages.

Considered the "Crown Jewel" of the YLMIA summer homes, the Camp at Brighton, located thirty miles into the Mountains east of Salt Lake City, first opened in 1922.[68] In 1927, the twenty-two year old Mary Teerlink, who once was a camper at the same camp, returned to the home with a friend for a week's reprieve. Even though the camp still principally served adolescent and younger girls, the YLMIA also used it to provide young women with an affordable and safe vacation

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[65] Aron, 188.
[66] "M.I.A. Summer Home Season," *Young Woman's Journal* 26 (1925): 484.
[67] Hines, 4.
[68] Kimball, *Sports in Zion: Mormon Recreation, 1890-1940*, 150.

option. For Mary, the difference in her two experiences as a teenager and a young woman at the camp, was the deepening appreciation of the respite that Brighton had to offer her. Her trip up to the camp and stay was remarkably different than her initial stay six years earlier. She and her friend took a bus that left the Lion House, which stood right next to the Beehive House, in Downtown Salt Lake every morning. Upon returning to the home, Teerlink said: "When we approached the Home we could see that it had been finished lovely and it looked so beautiful. A real outdoor haven." Teerlink was also pleasantly surprised to see the sleeping arrangements, a small room with two beds, a far cry from nine girls sharing three mattresses on a floor. For Mary, this return to Brighton was one of pride and accomplishment: "We were so happy. This was the first time I had been on a paid vacation and I had earned the money all by myself. I think as I remember the charge was $15.00, bus and all."[69]

Though Mary never outrightly mentioned if she held paid employment, it is likely given her remarks about pridefully affording her stay at Brighton that she earned some sort of income. About the end of her visit at Brighton, she said:

> the week passed all too fast. It was time to pack up and be getting ready to go home again. My friend and I had asked our sweeties to come up to get us, go to church and have dinner with us. We had everything ready and were down to the Brighton Store right after breakfast as Sunday School would be at 10:00 and we had so much to tell them about our full week.
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> After we had church and a wonderful dinner we packed the car and then we went for just a little walk. Nick and I went to Brownie Land. I just had to tell him all about it. We sat there on the rocks for quite awhile and discussed our courtship and decided that it was just about time for us to organize our lives so that we could spend the rest of this life together. Yes, he asked me to be his bride."

Teerlink said yes and, thus, began a tradition of other staff members or visiting young women receiving a proposal at the rock, called Brownie Land.[70] At twenty-two years old, Teerlink like the other newly engaged women living at the Beehive House, a Latter-day Saint about to begin her life

[69] "A History of the Brighton LDS camp."
[70] "A History of the Brighton LDS camp."

with her Mormon fiancé, fulfilled the ideal vision that the older generations held for young women in the 1920s.

Conclusion

Residents living in the Beehive Home in January 1959 received notice that they had to leave by February 1, 1959. The First Presidency decided to close the home to restore the house as it was in the late 1800s for the purpose of using it as a museum. This caused a great inconvenience to several of the young women living and hoping to live in the home—there was often a long wait list to gain a coveted spot.[71] The young women were not the only ones distressed by the closure of the house. "Aging grandmothers, only catching a phrase on television or radio news broadcasts, or seeing the headline in the newspaper, were irate, especially those that had had enjoyed Beehive residency during the decade of the 'twenties.'"[72]

Nearly forty-one years after the Beehive House first served as a home for young women, the newly restored home was opened to the public. It took nearly two years to return the home to its original mid-nineteenth condition. A 1962 *Improvement Era* article by Helen Young Spencer Williams reported that the Temple Square Mission supervised the day-to-day operation of the Beehive House, and that young women served as guides.[73] Today, it should not be lost on readers that many of the young women missionaries, who lead tours of the Beehive House, are the same ages and in similar circumstances (being away from home for the first time) to the young women who inhabited that space from the 1920s to the late 1950s.

The decision to change the purpose of the Beehive House from an active home for young women to restoring it as a historical site serves as an allegory for women's place in the church by the

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[71] *Deseret News*, 10 January 1959.
[72] "BEEHIVE HOUSE." MSS 10690, Church History Library.
[73] Helen Young Spencer Williams, "The Beehive House…A Monument to the Past," *Improvement Era*, January 1962, 22.

1950s. The emphasis of a family-centered life in postwar America led to a great increase in marriage and childbearing amongst many Americans.[74] Latter-day Saint families seemed to embody the most American sort of family at this time. By the 1950s, scholar Linda P. Wilcox asserts that the terms *mother* and *woman* became interchangeable as "motherhood became the central factor in the identity ascribed to Mormon women."[75] This conflation of womanhood and motherhood proved difficult for Mormon women who remained single and/or chose or could not to have children. In the instance of closing the Beehive House to working women, the church was acting on its prescriptive discourse more than the practical needs of its members. Whereas the church leadership struggled but contended with the Mormon working women of the early twentieth century, the decision to close the Beehive House to young women encapsulated the church male leadership's belief that the most proper place for a young woman was in the domestic sphere in the home of her father or that of her husband.

Though many young women who did live in the home fulfilled the vision that older generations held for them, they also were fulfilling a new role in Latter-day Saint society, demonstrating their ability to fuse aspects of American modernity with Mormonism: successfully working, living apart from family, and supporting themselves, while not meandering away from the church's larger ideals. Whereas few records survive of the young women's experiences of those that lived in the Beehive House and attended the camps as adult working women, it can be assumed that some young Mormon women who lived in these homes lived with the understanding that they were living in the midst of a transformation regarding ideas of womanhood .[76] The women of the Beehive House likely accepted their time living in a house was a normative yet transitional

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[74] Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), xvii.
[75] Wilcox, Mormon Motherhood: Official Images," 215.
[76] Lisa M Fine, "Between Two Worlds: Business Women in a Chicago Boarding House 1900-1930" *Journal of Social History* 19:3 (1986): 516.

experience, as they viewed their time apart from their family as a natural stepping stone between adolescence and marriage.

CONCLUSION

Reading the diary of twenty-one-year-old Marian Gardner, one can tell that she looked toward to her immediate future and all of its possibilities. Born in 1901 in Star Valley, Wyoming, Marian was a "typical" Latter-day Saint girl of the 1920s. Her parents were the children of polygamists, which Mary addresses briefly on the first page of her diary. Beside her mention of her family history on the first page of her journal, Marian spends no time dwelling on her family's past.

Foremost at the center of Marian's diary is her desires for her future. In November of 1923, she wrote:

> I have come to the realization that I am a woman with a woman's possibilities and a woman's desires. I want to love and "be loved" I want a home of my own-and kiddies to cuddle. I don't want to keep books in a horrid old Creamery all my life-or teach somebody else's children their three R's—But when I do marry I want to be very much "in love" with a man whose ideals are perfectly congenial with mine. I want to be married in God's house, with God's blessings and I want our life together to be a big fine growing life—I want to go up and up with him—always striving to higher levels. I want to climb over the rough patches with a song in my heart, seeing always in them an "opportunity," instead of a hinderance. Oh I pray God will give always the spirit of progress in my heart, and may I be true to the best that is in me-and always carry with the desire to do my Father's will concerning me.[1]

At first read, Marian's hopes for the future seem to be primarily concerned with marriage and motherhood, as it is related to her religion's theology of eternalness. Her references to "striving to higher levels" and "spirit of progress in my heart" points to how she knew her primary goal as a Latter-day Saint is to perfect herself to be worthy to marry in the temple and be reunited with her family in the afterlife. Her seeming dismay at having a job as an accountant in a creamery or teacher makes one believe that she would be happy to forgo any sort of professional life if an opportunity for marriage arrives.

Nonetheless, Marian was not intent upon settling for anyone with marriage and did look forward to work. Before she wrote in detail about her desires for eternal marriage, her journal was full of longing to complete her college degree, which had become more readily available to Latter-

[1] Gardner, Journal, 1923–25, page 910, November 3, 1923.

day Saint women throughout the early twentieth century. In her second entry of her diary from March of 1923 when considering a return to college away from home, she was torn between her feelings of homesickness and her desire to complete her college education. She felt the near "glory of the College Degree resting upon me now."[2]

Beyond considering her plans for a college education, Marian was also drawn to completing a mission. Even though mission numbers for women remained low in the 1920s, more and more young women like Marian thought that missionary work was a possibility for them. Marian wrote of her father's mission: "Papa had some wonderful experiences during his mission. I love to hear him relate them. It must be a wonderful privilege and education to be a missionary. I'd like the privilege myself some day."[3] During the year and a half she wrote in her journal, several male and female friends left on missions including her brother. When looking back on a celebration to honor a female friend's return, she wrote: "it must be quite thrilling to be a "return missionary"… I'm sure I'd love to go on a mission-I wonder if I ever will?"[4] Marian watched many of her female and male peers, including her brother, leave on missions. Serving a mission mostly remained an elusive idea, due to the limited number of young Mormon women in the mission field.

Marian never did serve a mission but she was able to finish her college degree at the UAC, located only 150 miles from her home. The growing youth culture was ever present at UAC during Marian Gardner's time there. She talks of "batching it up" with three of her friends a small apartment. In addition to attending classes, she and her friends also rushed a sorority and became ingrained into the academic and recreational aspects of the UAC.[5]

Her return to school ended a somewhat serious romance with a young man named Roscoe. She worried that he did not have high ambitions and that, perhaps, marrying him would lead to an

[2] Marian Gardner, Journal, 1923–25, page 2, March 21, 1923.
[3] Marian Gardner, Journal, 1923–25, page 8, June 3, 1923.
[4] Marian Gardner, Journal, 1923–25, page 1, no date.
[5] Marian Gardner, Journal, 1923–25, page 12, no date.

"easy going" but a "hum drum of a life." Roscoe told her that she "had put too much stress on school-and an education-and what did education amount it if happiness is lost." Though Marian wrote that she did want to marry, it was apparent that she did want more experiences before settling down, and she wanted to marry someone more suited to herself. When she writes of breaking off her relationship with Roscoe, she wrote that "I wanted him to square those shoulders-to go forth and conquer the world."[6]

On June 15, 1924, Marian reported that she was a "college graduate with a B.S. degree!!! And I have a job!"[7] She returned home to teach domestic arts at the Star Valley High School. Whereas she did desire an end goal of marriage and motherhood, Marian Gardner knew that an education would enhance her success as a Mormon woman and not detract from her ultimate prescribed purposes as a twentieth-century Mormon woman. The experiences of young women like Marian Gardner showed that young Mormon women could successfully maintain and nourish their Mormon identities while taking advantage of different aspects of mainstream culture that advanced their personal, professional, and religious goals. However, Marian Gardner also serves as an example of how young women's roles were limited within the early twentieth century church. While Marian eagerly wanted to complete a mission, she never did. Her inability to complete a mission did not detract from her autonomy, as she used secular outlets like higher education to exercise her agency and demand what she wanted out of life.

The main obstacle in terms of religious identity facing young women like Marian Gardner throughout the sixty year period from 1869 to the late 1920s was women's gradual loss of identifiable power and actual influence in church organizations. Within the church institution, young women had the most influence as the founders and members of the Retrenchment Association/Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association in the 1870s and 1880s. That

[6] Marian Gardner, Journal, 1923–25, page 9-10, November 4, 1923; page 15, March 1, 1924.
[7] Marian Gardner, Journal, 1923–25, page 19, June 15, 1924.

opportunity allowed many young women to take leadership roles for the first time and play a leading role in shaping the future of the young women's organization. However, due to many factors including the overall loss of women's informal power and religious authority in the church, the end of plural marriage, and Utah statehood, young women in the 1890s and after started to lose the opportunities they once had in the earlier decades. Immediately after the manifesto was passed and statehood gained, though young women appeared to be gaining more official power within the church such as through serving a mission, in actuality, the appearance of increasing power was merely a pretense. Outside of the church institution, young women could claim space in places like their diaries, working and professional choices, and higher education. However, each woman received implicit and explicit messages via their families, church leadership, and prescriptive literature that their religious worth was the same as their ability and/or desire to marry and have children. Though the story behind the origin of the marriage of each woman examined in this dissertation is unknown, almost all the woman stayed faithful Latter-day Saints and married within in the religion. Whether purposefully or not, they were all meeting the ultimate standards of Mormon womanhood that they were taught in their youth.

This examination of young women in a transitional culture bolsters historian May Jo Maynes' assertion that "symbolically, as cultural emblems, girls have stood variously for national purity or for the excitement of modernity, but also for pollution, political oppression, and exploitation." Young Mormon women represented both hopes and fears for the church leaders and, thus, became the focus of several projects like the Retrenchment Association, the Young Woman's Journal, and the Bee-Hive Girls aimed to shape these young women into proper Mormon women. Maynes also writes that "At the same time, girls' actions constructed, contradicted, and often defied such representations." Young women like Annie Wells, Amelia Cannon, Inez Knight, Mary Bennion, and Juanita Brooks all struggled with reconciling their identities with church expectations. In this

struggle, they all showed moments of slight transgressions. Annie Wells imbibed in gossip and discussions of fashion and "light" literature when trying to win the approval of other young women. Amelia Cannon did not even follow her own father's, a Mormon apostle, informal and published dictates against waltzing. Inez Knight, who embodied the image of young, honorable, religious, Mormon womanhood, even indulged in the "wicked" dance style while serving on a mission in Great Britain. On a more serious note, Mary Bennion technically did not uphold her father's patriarchal authority, or the priesthood, a vital tenet of Mormon theology, when she wrote disparaging entries about her father. Of course, her father, though secretly encouraged by a select few members of the upper echelon of the male leadership, strayed from the new church regulations regarding plural marriage after 1890. Even the seemingly happy-go-lucky Marian Gardner struggled with her own ideas about what future was right for within the context of church expectations. All of these transgressions were not necessarily in conflict with Mormon theology but with aspects of the prescribed proper Mormon girlhood. These transgressions were also necessary acts of young women claiming agency within a religion, whose leadership seemed more and more occupied with prescribing ideals than providing sufficient opportunities.

This examination of young Mormon women and girls from the late 1860s to the late 1920s establishes that these young female church members were central to the church's transformation from an outsider religion to a tentatively accepted American church. Young women were integral to this transformation in that they were the objects of church leadership's expectations and anxieties for the future. But they were also integral in that they did not merely accept and abide by new gender ideals directed at them, as they pushed back and molded these ideals to fit their own needs and identities. This process was not simple for the church's young women as they contended with the loss of considerable power from serving as leaders in the young women's groups to not holding the same opportunities for religious opportunities that young men did. However, young women

found other avenues to assert their agency and fulfill their future desires and ambitions. Young women turned to the written page to express themselves. They also carved out their own space in church-sponsored activities like dances. They took advantage of national trends like seeking higher education and living and working away from home at formative moments in their lives. As discussed, some of these actions were transgressions against church expectations but were necessary for these young women to construct their own identities as their church contended with staying authentically Mormon and adapting to American modernity.

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