

THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST AND THE FIRST SHALL BE LAST:
DISCOURSE AND MORMON HISTORY

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*For the gem, the philosopher,
the muse, and the unnamed*

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ABSTRACT

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The writing of history has been treated as a cultural practice. Yet what relation does historiographic practice have to historical process? To investigate that relation I reconstruct the uptake of modernity in Mormonism. I argue that an effect of transition into modernity is the use of distinct norms regarding discourse. Called “language ideologies,” these norms reflexively shape interpretations of historical processes. In such ways history might be spoken, but not necessarily accurately retold. So historiography reflects historical process, though often by presupposition of ideology rather than by accurately reporting past practices. Such presupposition conceals transitions into modernity by mapping back its dominant view of language as a medium for expressing thought. Positioning one’s reconstruction of historical process, however, within the contexts of entailed historiographic interpretations enables tracking of changing language ideologies.

I argue that a dialectic approach to the history of modernity, which treats distinct historiographic practices as outcomes, alone can canvass the semiotic and discursive

changes wrought by modernization. To support this claim I present four treatments of intertwined temporal swatches drawn from Mormon history. I first document how a Mormon Underground developed during the U.S. government's anti-polygamy raids of the 1880s. A space of resistance to federal intervention in Mormon plural marriage, theocracy, and communal economics, the Underground was built using discourse as a tool to misdirect investigation. Mormon resistance withered by 1910, however, and polygamy was officially abandoned. Second, I reconstruct the effects of the Mormon Church's justification for publicly renouncing polygamy. Church leadership distinguished between "belief in" and practice of plural marriage. The argument for jettisoning plural marriage entailed broad theological changes in Mormonism stemming from this uptake of mind-body dualism. Third, I recount responses to these changes among self-described Fundamentalists who claimed to preserve history by embodying it. Finally, I analyze bureaucratic shifts in the modern Church which presuppose mind-body dualism and write such into historiographic curriculum.

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Chapter One

Discourse and History

This dissertation constitutes one definition of *modernization*, a term that describes a process resulting in modernity. Currently we, so we are told, find ourselves in modern, postmodern, post-postmodern, late modern, and for a fortunate few, pre-modern worlds. Is it good to be modernized? Perhaps this is a bit like asking a lifelong inmate if it is good to be institutionalized: without something to compare it to, how can good or evil, the relative merits of modernity, be judged? A great number of trees have been felled for the sake of arguments about the abstract noun *Modernity* and its derivative terms. For some modernization, also called *rationalization*, ends with the clanging door of an iron cage, for others it ends with liberation and enlightenment. And still for others, an iron cage itself may provide a sort of enlightenment.

Writing about modernity, telling its history and planning or resisting it, are themselves positioned in the phenomenon described. Perhaps one can take this fact as a starting point for musing about modernity: moderns write, a lot, and much of that writing refers to other writing. This fact is, in any event, where Habermas positions his theory of modernization. As is well known, Habermas (1984; 1989) claims that late modernity, and its pathologies, is like a dissertation: an unfinished project. Due to the valorization of “purposive-rational” or instrumental action, whereby the most efficient means to an end are taken, and taken to be best, we have stalled along the path to utopia spoken of during the Enlightenment. What was promised to be a glorious age of self-determination and unfettered seeking for truth, indeed the very Kingdom of God on Earth, has instead,

as a result of capitalism's enculturation of purposive-rational action (or "colonization of the lifeworld"), turned into a managed, bureaucratized cage for the spirit. Habermas revisits the founders of modern social theory, Marx and Weber primarily, in an effort to discover what went wrong.

Rather than consider his reconstruction of Marx and Weber, instead I will turn to an analytical conundrum highlighted by Habermas. In writing about social scientific hermeneutics he grounds the justification for his claims about the liberating potential of the Enlightenment project. He concludes, with many others, that social science is particularly difficult because the analyst can only attend to meaning by entering into the culture (or "lifeworld"). Yet this apparent limitation (at least as regards objectivity) Habermas turns into the justification for maintaining a positive faith in late modernity. He calls the give-and-take negotiation of social life, its rules, norms, and facts, *communicative action*. The social analyst likewise engages in communicative action during fieldwork, and by so doing can triangulate meaning in an intersubjective manner. He writes, "Thus the interpreter understands the meaning of a text only to the extent that he sees why the author felt himself entitled to put forward (as true) certain assertions, to recognize (as right) certain values and norms, to express (as sincere) certain experiences. The interpreter has to clarify the context that must have been presupposed as common knowledge by the author and the contemporaneous public if the difficulties with which the text presents us today did not arise at that time, and if other difficulties could arise for contemporaries that now appear trivial to us" (1984:132). An "interpreter" through the exercise of cultural logic can deduce the must-have-been-presupposeds in any text, and these inform the interpreter of the "lifeworld" inhabited by the producer of the text.

“Meaning” is simply constituted in the motion from the lifeworld to the text, and can be negotiated, rejected, criticized, accepted, and so on. Though he claims to ground his theory of communicative action in speech act theory, Habermas treats communication as merely, or at least ideally, an exchange of propositionally based knowledge. (And though he regards “mythic” worldviews as irrational because they confuse referent with utterance, or “linguistify” the non-linguistic world, his own theory prescribes communicative action for what ails modernity.)

By engaging in ongoing communicative action, exchanging propositions, the interpreter gains an index of the correctness of an interpretation. The approach outlined by the German philosopher, which is basic fieldwork technique, certainly seems to leverage what was once a debilitating subjectivism into an intersubjective (interactionally relative objectivism) method. Geertz could have said it better, but no less succinctly. Are there other tools for reconstructing meaning, which do so in ways that document arrived-at “negotiated” meanings and their implications, and which also account for how that arrival came about? Unfortunately, Habermas remains silent about ethnographic analytics or interpretive techniques beyond self-reflexive, critical argumentation. A good deal of thought and reflection combined with a lot of interaction would seem to provide the apparatus for interpreting modern society.

Habermas warns, moreover, that hypostatizing evanescent meaning-makings into a social system (which is functionally different from a “lifeworld”) with rules, norms, and so on, is for analysts to “remain bound to the social context they are supposed to explain because they fall prey to the objectivism of everyday consciousness” (1984:125). Making up rules, and calling it a structure, will simply not do if one hopes to describe

modern society. Hence interpreters of modern life are left attending to meaning, as created through communication, though they cannot rely on heuristics for decoding the meanings of activities across contexts.

Semiotics and Social Life

This dissertation employs semiotic analytics developed in linguistic anthropology in order to describe modernization of Mormonism. Semiotics as developed from the work of Charles Sanders Peirce provides the analytic of social life which Habermas's work leaves unaccounted. Of central importance in the analysis of meaning, or of semiosis, or sign-activity, is the *indexical* sign, for this sign allows reflexive representations to occur. A sign is, using Peirce's succinct definition, anything which stands for something else to somebody (or something) in some capacity. Indexical signs point to, or direct attention to, some other sign. They don't symbolize some idea; they merely represent through bringing together ("presupposing" and "entailing") other signs. By recognizing one part of an index, one can infer another part. Examples include a pointing finger which directs attention to a coin on the street, or a weathervane which points as a result of wind direction. Moreover, indexical signs can emerge from other sign arrays, and so point to these arrays. Examples of these meta-indexical signs include pronoun usage which is taken to indicate interlocutor solidarity or class division (when used interactionally the pronoun points to the speaker, and a meta-index connects this usage to speaker's model of the relationship with hearer, see Agha 2007), and, more complexly, an impersonation of a presidential candidate (the asymmetry of similar and dissimilar signs really linked to the targeted politician and residing on a cohesive text-actor informs the audience to construe it as a performance, and directs their "next turn," i.e., clapping).

Thus indexical signs can be laminated into “indexical orders” (Silverstein 2003) of hierarchical chains of possibly increasing representational breadth; moreover, each new indexical arrangement can negate aspects of the immediately prior order, say by invoking irony or sarcasm. It is these meta-representations, signs of enormous representational breadth and with likely significant historical depth, which become hypostatized or coaxed into “social systems” by the folk and analyst alike. To regard meta-indexical signs, however, as systems is to make the mistake Habermas noted above: one objectifies an aleatory, shifting social phenomenon, and carries its existence beyond empirical justification. This objectification, or presupposition of referential and interactional stability across contexts, is necessary for every social act; though this necessity need not be carried into creation of “a culture,” “a structure,” or some other hard, container-like noun-referent for the constraining of human activity. Rather analysis should account for the generation and effects of meta-indexical phenomenon.

It is at the point of reflexive semiotic phenomenon, the relation between signs and meta-signs, where we must locate our analyses of socio-historical life (Lee 1997; Agha 2007). Rather than treat relatively stable indexical arrays as “systems,” we must capture the emergent, reflexive aspects of these “systems” vis-à-vis other enacted signs. Only by attending to indexical signs and the meta-indexical signs emerging from usage and hypostatized into folk systems, however briefly, can we account for culture change, irony, resistance, indeed “meaning” itself as relevant to social actors.

Meta-semiosis and Protestantism

While the theoretical and analytical features of reflexive semiosis only recently have been outlined in relation to culture theory, many earlier students of society and culture

implicitly situated their analyses in the sign-meta-sign relation. Among these early analysts is Max Weber, writing on the origins of modern capitalism and its place in society. Habermas explains that Weber opened rationalization (or modernization) as an object of empirical study in such a manner that he did not rely on theories or models which would hide the very rationalizing process he hoped to reconstruct (1984:143). That is to say, were he to presuppose rationality in his investigation, Weber would not have been able to see activity which did not in fact presuppose rationality (of whatever sort). In brief, Weber's famous interpretation of the role played by Calvinism in expanding capitalism relied on a more comprehensive model of humanity, and thus, did indeed document a transition into recognizably modern society.

In the classic *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1958) Weber describes how Calvinists sought an index of grace, of attaining a state of election in the here-and-now, the before-now, and the ongoing future; and though a clear index of such was in principle unattainable, Calvinists were not disinclined to strive for evidences of likely grace, such as wealth, probity, frugality, dedication. While they could not achieve or entail grace through their activity, they could acquire suggestive evidences of being in a state of grace, of being among the elect. Grace simply could not be sought rationally through purposive action, and Weber of all people knew this. The doctrine of Grace could, however, produce the motivation that eventually resulted in actions that launched capitalism onto the global scene. The "disenchantment of the world" that followed its launch, and the attending administrative bureaus, specialized knowledge, and division of social labor, were ready indexes of a fully modernized people.

The goods acquired through diligent acquisition and investment which characterized Protestants in general were, as Weber recognized, signs rather than a mere collection of things sought for in their own right. In short, wealth was an index of election (though election did not always produce wealth). Where Weber situated his engine of social change can now be recognized as the relation between signs and reflexive (or meta-) signs: wealth functioned as an index within the Calvinist tradition (as interpreted by early entrepreneurs) because *this* individual who owned *that* stuff constituted a relation that on a second, meta-semiotic level pointed to potential a state of election. The evidence of one's election, as a meta-semiotic or reflexive relation, emerged from other sign phenomenon further put into relation by the Reformation's rejection of Catholic ritualism and collective salvation.

Abductivity, Culture Change, and Historiography

The indexical nature of wealth for early Calvinists entailed what Peirce calls an "abduction," or hypothetical argument (the early Peirce also called it *presumption* and *retroduction*). Grace or election of some individual was suggested by the connection of wealth to that individual. The historical significance of this abduction is that it could never conclusively be verified or falsified; for Weber the undecidability of election provided the motivation necessary to launch capitalism in its runaway trajectory. The abductive argument for election, then, was performed by many Calvinists, and eventually their collective actions created a new economic system. Rapid culture change came from widespread, similar abductions performed across a social domain. What is an abduction, then, semiotically speaking?

In an early formulation Peirce classifies arguments, exemplified in the classic syllogism form, into three types: deduction, induction, and abduction. While induction and deduction are familiar to most, abduction (from a mistranslation of Aristotle consciously preserved by Peirce) may require some explaining. According to Peirce, we abduct “where we find some curious circumstance, which would be explained by the supposition that it was the case of a certain general rule, and thereupon adopt this supposition” (1992 [1878]:189). He gives as an example the following: “Suppose I enter into a room and there find a number of bags, containing different kinds of beans. On the table there is a handful of white beans; and, after some searching, I find one of the bags contains white beans only. I at once infer as a probability, or as a fair guess, that this handful was taken out of that bag. This sort of inference is called *making a hypothesis*” (1992 [1878]:189). The abduction connects “this handful” with “that bag.” Peirce used the deictics “this” and “that,” which as he knew were indexical linguistic signs, and his usage highlights the role of indexicals in abduction.

Peirce classifies arguments on their determination or regimentation of a valid conclusion. Deduction diagrams most clearly a single conclusion, its premises directly point to a particular conclusion; induction’s regimentation of a particular conclusion is a function of the probability of the premises being true. Neither argument gives any new knowledge because these connect parts of the premises to create a conclusion. Abduction, on the other hand, is “a weak kind of argument. It often inclines our judgment so slightly toward its conclusion that we cannot say that we believe the latter to be true; we only surmise that it may be so” (1992 [1878]:189). The conclusion of an abduction is only vaguely indexed by the premises, unlike a deduction which directly

entails, indexes, its conclusion. There are thus many directions any abduction may take in its conclusion (i.e., many signs are possibly indexed as involved in the possible connection of premises), though our interest in abduction as a social phenomenon comes from when many people are making the same abductive guesses. Hence it is that abductions are generated from indexical signs (*this* bag, *that* handful of beans) which, through a guess of sorts, are put into meta-indexical relation to suggest a conclusion or explanation.

Induction is quite different from abduction, as Peirce makes clear: “The great difference between induction and hypothesis is, that the former infers the existence of phenomenon such as we have observed in cases which are similar, while hypothesis supposes something of a different kind from what we have directly observed, and frequently something which it would be impossible for us to observe directly” (1992 [1878]:197). Despite their vagueness, abductions are essential to knowledge, and interlock with other forms of argument. Again, from Peirce: “It only is that from [abduction’s] suggestion deduction can draw a prediction which can be tested by induction, and that, if we are ever to learn anything or to understand phenomena at all, it must be by abduction that this is to be brought about” (CP 5.171). If we regard culture as semiosis, and argument as the most complex sign in semiosis, then the fact that “an abduction is Original in respect to being the only kind of argument which starts a new idea” (CP 2.96), means that only by virtue of widespread, patterned abductions can any new semiosis, or culture, come about. Abductions are not necessarily random, though Peirce never clearly worked out why these tend to seemingly true conclusions amid the vast range of possible wrong answers.

Historical knowledge begins, as any other, with abduction (Murphey 1994). “It is a hypothesis that Napoleon Bonaparte once existed” Peirce notes, and “How is that hypothesis ever to be replaced by an induction?” (1992 [1878]:198). We have some bits of paper which refer to a Napoleon Bonaparte, whose existence we guess would lead to just these papers. Moreover, after reading about this presumed historical figure, we can devise other scenarios which would plausibly be attributed to the same figure. Upon coming into evidence, say, a military uniform with a diary from Bonaparte, we can claim a strengthened hypothesis. And so long as no evidence comes along which falsifies or confuses our hypothesis, we can guess with little doubt that indeed Bonaparte existed. But as Peirce notes, one can never move to induction or deduction to prove a historical character’s or event’s reality; historical arguments forever remain abductions, it seems, unless one finds a way to experiment on the past.

Peirce is no crude positivist or strict constructivist about historical knowledge, however. He warns, “Some minds will here jump to the conclusion that a past idea cannot in any sense be present. But that is hasty and illogical. How extravagant, too, to pronounce our whole knowledge of the past to be mere delusion! Yet it would seem that the past is as completely beyond the bonds of possible experience as a Kantian thing-in-itself. How can a past idea be present? Not vicariously. Then only by direct perception. In other words, to be present, it must be *ipso facto* present. That is, it cannot be wholly past; it can only be going, infinitesimally past, less past than any assignable past date. We are thus brought to the conclusion that the present is connected with the past by a series of real infinitesimal steps” (1992[1892]:314). It is because there exists some connection with the past (here Peirce relied on Cantor’s set theory, see Putnam 1995) that

it can be known at all through abduction: the past is really present as an effect, like those white beans; this presence, for Peirce anyway, extends all the way to the beginning. For those enabled to unpack the indexical chain (like physicists or poets, for example), cosmological history can indeed be made present, summoned perhaps, through new representations (e.g., computer algorithms, mathematical formulas, a myth).

Weber was, to return to our earlier argument, in direct contact with the past by virtue of, first, preserved signs in writing; second, as an inheritor of the traditions effected by those whose actions he sought to explain. Hence, the writing of the *Protestant Ethic* was itself determined, in some way though clearly not by necessity, by the very actions the text describes. Historiography is, then, a meta-sign which has a real connection with earlier signs: historical events and processes. The nature of that reflexive connection, however, may be one not necessarily marked by truth; history can, and likely often does, create historiography that misunderstands history, which cloaks itself.

History and Theory

This dissertation aims to uncloak aspects of Mormon history hidden by its historiographic tradition. When we assume that history and historiography have some real connection, in the same way that other indexicals are connected reflexively to meta-indexicals, we can approach a standing divide in historical anthropology. The divide results in part from the ambition of anthropologists to tell the histories of cultures and peoples without writing.

Historical anthropology was not distinguished from cultural anthropology in the Boasian tradition. To speak of culture was to put it in spacetime, and the stakes of the tents of culture were material goods, such as pottery, weapons, and language. The aim of

cultural mapping was in part to reconstruct a history of culture contact, and native testimony or memory was used to build these histories. Recent work by Kirch and Green (2001) exemplifies the strength of Boasian holistic approaches which triangulate histories of cultures without writing. Not many anthropologists are so fortunate to have the archaeological, linguistic, and oral historical resources needed to conduct holistic histories. Where gaps in data occur, various social theories step into with a sort of interpretive key (e.g., X action means Y). When social theory performs in this way it acts as a sort of meta-indexical Peircean argument, and rather than reconstruct semiotic activity these arguments instead work by representing, or objectifying, this activity as a stable structure for interpreting sign activity. Historians' famous allergy to "theory" arises from this use of social theory as an interpretive key, the more universal the more suspicious, to gloss the meanings of human action by filling gaps in data.

A number of structuralist theories have been cast as domains for histories of people without. From evolutionism and its presumption of scarcity and game-theoretic logic, to structural-functionalism and its denial of agency, to various Marxist inspired approaches, systems or structures of some kind have long enjoyed dominion over history and culture. Where one has shortages in data, these social theories seem all but necessary for understanding past cultures, and do in fact add to our knowledge. Such theories should be recognized for what they are, however, namely, interpretive codes that create fictive contexts for situating actual signs, for speculating about scarce empirical data. In other words, social theories are abductions, and too often remain apparently viable only because they may not be falsifiable.

For their part, political-economic oriented historians critique more “meaning” oriented approaches as unable to explain widespread social transitions (e.g., Roseberry 1989). As Dirks bleakly notes after critiquing cultural studies, structuralist, phenomenological, and interpretive approaches, “Within anthropology, attempts to theorize a new relationship between ‘culture’ and ‘history’ have so far failed” (Dirks 1996:34). Where structure has been reduced to rubble one finds *power* in some form as the key to understanding historical activity. Various resistance-oriented approaches describe how the Other uses history to preserve culture in the face of capitalism and western hegemony. At its best this type of ethnography of historiography accounts for how history is preserved in non-written sources, such as landscapes, rites, or language (see, for example, Abercrombie 1998 and Rappaport 1994 on Andean culture; Foster 1995, Wagner 1991, and Parmentier 1987 on Pacific Islanders). It can foster reflexivity on the part of professional historians, and make them aware of non-written historical resources. At its worst one finds the Other inventing tradition out of nothing but resistance, and oral histories are valued, not for their accuracy, but for their counter-weight against dominant stories. (Whether these stories actually have any lasting effect often is treated as a matter of little importance.) Cohen (1994) for instance, documents how local histories are told, with academics and folk-historians each trotting out differing reconstructions. Some scholars might toss their hands in the air and give up on the very possibility of reconstructing historical cultures in a way that does not privilege western hegemony. Power saturates every act, it seems. The very fact that differently positioned historians can come up with very different narratives, however, indicates that indeed

history does influence the telling of history. Culture-power is thus corralled by culture-history, as Sahlins (1985; 2000) clearly argues.

No tradition is invented whole cloth from non-historically motivated signs (for a philosophical argument against intuition see Peirce 1992 [1868a; 1868b]). There is a real connection between “collective memories,” “invented traditions,” academic studies, and other folk historiography, and events narrated by such. The present work takes pains to demonstrate that fact. To attend to one side to the exclusion of the other, to emphasize historical events without considering reflexive constructions of these events, or to focus on contemporary uses of history as a political shield or bludgeon, is to leave out half the dialectic (Trouillot 1995). (To be sure there are times when one simply does not have the data to attend to historical events and to the interpretation of these events; I see no recourse but to social theory in these instances.)

Perhaps there are times when cultures are capable of being characterized by structuralist models, and perhaps at other times a less bounded model is more accurate (Scott 1994). Yet there cannot be a one-size-fits-all theory of society, because social action is itself characterized by the capacity to reflect on, reject, accept, implement, and otherwise alter existing contexts of interaction, including academic social theories. Power is, after all, a cultural concept, and as Geertz (1980) documents, it can be put into service of pomp and symbolism, while structures can be implemented simply to foreground and mock in a carnivalesque treatment those same laws of society. Sometimes societies follow explicit rules, and sometimes improvisations are allowed even in the declaration of kingship (Southwold 1968). As Sahlins argues, practice cannot be treated without attention to some kind of structure or context; and when accounting for

culture change one cannot dismiss sign-meta-sign activity. To see that signs require contexts is simple enough when dealing with contemporary culture; historical events and historiographic treatments exist in analogous dialectic relation.

Language and History

“To suppose that anthropological description can be done,” Silverstein writes, “without seeing that such historical consciousness is precisely what culture motivates and explains as its implicit framework, is to engage in some other form of study, perhaps in an attempt at social ‘science’” (1987:xv). In brief, the way we tell our histories positions us in historical streams (Medvedev 1978). This simple fact makes historical knowledge possible, though it does not ensure accurate historical reconstruction. And the more involved in that cultural history one is by way of socialization the less likely, one might reasonably surmise, are one’s historiographic efforts to be instantly reflective, to give accurate descriptions, of historical reality. This means that when writing a history of one’s own cultural tradition, the act may be more reflective of historical process than any of the content could be regarded as a true account.

A cultural history should be able, given the dialectic described above, to account for the creation of historiography as a derivative cultural practice, and by so doing evidence that its explanation encompasses semiotic and meta-semiotic phenomenon. Weber’s account of the rise of capitalism now can be seen as casting capitalism’s historiographic effects into social theory, a misstep which Habermas’s reconstruction of Weber finally resolves.

This dissertation works with primary sources produced during the 1880s and the early 1900s by Mormons and their interlocutors. It also considers historiographic work

from the 1920s, 1930s, 1960s, and the new millennium, as produced by now distinct Mormon groups: Fundamentalists and Latter-day Saints. How these groups tie themselves to the 1880s reveals much about the effects of the primary materials produced around the turn of the century. Hence, I argue in this dissertation that one of the effects of the culture change experienced by Mormons around the turn of the last century was the suggestion of abductions for understanding Mormon history. These folk historiographies reveal much about other semiotic practices of Mormon groups, from rituals to sermons to scriptural reading, though I leave for others the task of giving historical accounts of these other cultural practices.

Discourse is the object studied in this history of Mormonism. The term *discourse* is used in many different ways, and here it only means language put to use in speech and writing (Urban 1991). Language has long been the subject of historical inquiry, with various languages being used as a lens or archive for reconstructing world history (Olender 2002). Not only philologists found language a viable index of historical processes; ancient Greek-speakers, for example, linked their language to characterizations of civility and barbarism (Gera 2003). Hebrew was viewed as less corrupt by English Protestants, and tied these groups to pre-Roman worlds (Smith 1991); while Latin enjoyed similar status as tied to pure thought by early modern scientists, philosophers and judicial theorists (Burke 1991). This dissertation does not treat language as itself the thing put under historical investigation. Mormons considered here speak and spoke English; their usage and ideas about language are of interest.

I am not concerned here with the use of particular words. A dictionary of sorts, of terms used by “Mormon Pioneers,” has cataloged the wide range of words (with an odd

preponderance of terms used to characterize nefarious figures) no longer enjoying everyday utterance (see Givens 2003). Word-level focuses fail to reveal how language affects social lives. As can be seen in various essays in otherwise ground-breaking collections edited by Burke and Porter (1987; 1991; 1995), when one focuses on words one can only see what these words reveal about a more foundational level of society: how they indicate class shifts, counter-hegemonic practices, assumptions about gender. In these focuses discourse itself only reflects social life, and flags deeper structural shifts (Bauman 1983). My concern here is to document how discourse shaped Mormon history, and did not merely reflect changes. To capture the effectiveness of discourse one must attend to usage beyond decontextualized words, and move to text-level analyses. In this history I put into dialogue historiography with historical events.

Mormon history has produced more argument, apologetic, and attention than has any other religious group's past, excepting Puritanism. Yet no historian has published on the role of discourse in Mormon history, despite the fact that discourse constitutes the most common object of their study (e.g., letters, diaries, sermons, articles, scripture, etc.). Quilts, fashion, and furniture (honest to God, quilts!) have enjoyed more coverage than discourse, as if these objects could just emanate meaning and reveal the experiences of long dead Mormons. To be fair, some historians have reflexively written on the "ritualization" of Mormon history, though their attention was drawn to overt rites and sites of commemoration: monuments, museums, and the like (Bitton 1994). This dissertation explains how discourse is used to conceal, perhaps even "ritualize," Mormon history, with implications for understanding modern historiography in general.

To see how discourse could be the focus of Mormon history one must recognize that language does more than communicate or express thought. In a now classic study, Lefebvre (1973) recounted the role of gossip in fomenting the “Great Fear of 1787” in revolutionary France. His work addressed what is now called the pragmatic aspect of language, its effects. (Habermas’s work prescribes a “universal pragmatics” in order to leverage society into Enlightenment.) Bauman (1983) and Ormsby-Lennon (1991) focus on how theories of language, now called ideologies of language, shaped the Quaker movement in seventeenth century England. “Plain language” was akin to plain dress, and since all were sinners in the eyes of God, none deserved ornate speech or other fineries. Language was linked to other non-linguistic signs in a process of “cross-modal iconism” (Agha 2007), and the entire repertoire of signs was motivated by a cosmology of Original Sin. Moreover, the Quaker ideology of language catalyzed changes in English grammatical structure, with significant shifts in what social effects came about by virtue of selected, and consciously reflexive, pronoun use (Silverstein 1985). *Thee* and *Thou*, following the Quaker agitation, marked relations of subordination of speaker to hearer (an inversion of an earlier effect), while *You* lost its second-person plural mark and covered second-person singular reference as well. The implications of losing obligatory grammatical markers in English that distinguished second-person plural from singular, during a time of mass-printing (addressed to “you”) and under a language ideology of “correct” or “pure” speech, have yet to be understood fully, though to the average historian such matters are likely insignificant in contrast to political intrigue, aristocratic alignments, and religious conflict. So why should one attend to discourse as not merely reflective of social life, but as itself creative of social life?

Mannheim (1991) recounts in considerable detail the role language ideologies played in the conquest of the Inkas. Spanish and Quechua developed into mirrors of conquered-conqueror statuses, and much of the Quechua culture, in particular its valorization of reciprocity, was affected by prescribed norms regarding correct speech. In a similar study of conquest, Todorov (1984) describes how semiotic ideologies (i.e., models of how signs work) enabled, or at least made more likely, the conquest of the Aztecs and the expansion of Christian colonialism. These excellent studies of culture change share a concern with semiotic and meta-semiotic activity (e.g., language ideologies), and when attention to such is given, one can see the role discourse plays in the direction and intensity of culture change.

Change was always the bugaboo for structuralist theories of culture. The more things change, we were comforted, the more they stay the same. But accounting for real, significant, and rapid culture change, to which only a mind nursed on abstraction would deny reality, constitutes the real cause for rejecting “rules” based explanations of culture. Peirce would consider these “deductive” models. Inductive cultural processes, moreover, create the reflexive models (i.e., conclusions) so readily reified into social systems, norms, or rules. Different times in the social lives of cultures move through different Peircean “arguments”: sometimes rules determine acts, sometimes acts (via “agency”) create more elaborate norms. But how does something wholly new, new rules and norms, new activity, come about? The value of foregrounding abduction as a semiotic process comes not only because it provides a basis for explaining change, but also because it builds on the reflexive nature of semiosis to do so.

One reason I attend to discourse in studying historical change is that discourse provides the conditions for widespread abduction in a social domain. Discourse, through various linguistic features, is built for reflexive activity (Lucy 1993). Speakers can refer to past utterances, can quote (through *reported speech*), define meaning (called *meta-semantics*), gloss speech events (called *metapragmatic discourse*, as in “He promised to attend”), and can trope other semiotic activity (called *irony*, *sarcasm*, and so forth). Through this meta-discursive activity we build interactional frameworks, however durable, for understanding instances of signs and their creators. Even “Improv” theatre builds frameworks through discourse which cue subsequent clowning (Sawyer 2003). These frameworks may be widespread and durable, or they may vanish in a second. My concern in this dissertation is with the uptake and spread of wholly new frameworks used to interpret Mormon history.

Language ideologies (e.g., doctrines of “pure speech” among Quakers) are just one folk framework used to interpret and shape semiotic phenomenon, and these too are generated from folk reflection on linguistic signs (Silverstein 1979). (When speaking of “folk reflection” one need not exclude from that activity professionally trained philosophers, literary critics, historians and anthropologists.) Kroskrity (1993) and essays in Shieffelin, Woolard and Kroskrity (1998) make clear the central role that language ideologies play in culture. Duranti (1992), for example, recounts how Samoan speakers use markers of high status to invoke rules for engaging in “traditional behavior.” In a similar scenario, Hill (1998) describes the nostalgia for more respectful times that followed from a generational shift in the use of Nahuatl, while Kroskrity (1998) describes how “kiva talk” became a marker of tradition, of “speaking the past.” Each documents

the role language ideologies, as reflexive meta-discourses, play in semiotic activity. Their import is in their spread, and their spread results from abductions drawn on the very linguistic signs we use everyday.

In special cases philosophers or other self-styled interpreters of reality can create elaborate language ideologies which set the framework for centuries of interpretive acts. Lee (1997) reconstructs the creation of our modern framework for understanding subjectivity or consciousness. His deconstruction and reconstruction documents the spread of Cartesian models of consciousness through philosophy, logic, linguistics, and modern literature. And so anthropology finds itself back to the task set out by Boas: document the spread or diffusion of cultural traits. Now we realize that discourse is the most significant of these traits for it provides the basis of meaningful activity, of interpreting the meaning of pottery sherds and beads; and in good reflexive fashion we have mapped the creation and spread of Occidental culture's doctrine or ideology of subjectivity. Common sense notions like, "individuals are the basis of society," "individuals' behavior is driven by feelings," and "speech expresses thoughts," are exposed as temporary cultural doctrines rooted in reflexive semiotic activity (e.g., novels, philosophy, linguistics, and historiography). Discourse thus provides the basis for "rationalizing" new cultural arrangements, for spreading an initial abduction through history and across space.

With Peircean semiotics situated in anthropological linguistics one acquires a theory of meaning inextricably tied to epistemology: Where meaning, knowledge, and reflexivity constitute our object, the value of a cultural semiotics cannot be

overestimated. Reflexive discursive activity results from abductions, and the cultural uniformity of those abductions results from two identifiable processes.

First, abductions are, in particular when abstract “concepts” (like time, thought, consciousness, personality, the soul) are elucidated, driven by analogies shaped by the grammatical structure of the primary language spoken by those performing the abduction (Silverstein 2000; 1979). Without venturing into the debates around the misunderstood “linguistic relativity hypothesis,” also called the “Sapir-Whorf hypothesis,” which are beyond the scope of an introduction, there is enough evidence to justify limited use of Whorf’s insight to explain how many abductions are drawn (see Lucy 1992a and 1992b; Mertz and Parmentier 1985; Yamamoto 1999; Gumperz and Levinson 1996). A term like “intelligences,” for instance, used in early Mormon theology is immediately and unavoidably nested in a grammatical noun category, though which category is only partly determined by the shape of the word. (I give a much fuller explanation and demonstration of the value of viewing words as grammatical entities first, and only secondarily as “concepts,” in chapters seven and eight.) English, unlike Hopi for example, allows analogies from concrete objects to abstract concepts (Whorf 1956). Other similarly categorized nouns and their referents are then used to project qualities onto the hypothesized referent of the term “intelligences,” and then analogies are drawn as one speculates further about the referent of the term. From these abductions generalized cultural frameworks emerge which I call *cultural ontologies* and *cultural hierarchies*. These frameworks reflexively order grammatical categories and the terms placed therein. A cultural assumption of mind-body dualism would be one of these high-

order abductions, and is re-taught to every generation through modern pedagogy, literature, psychology, ritual, law, and so on.

Second, abductions of lower order abstraction (or less comprehensive circulation and reflexivity) are cast into linguistic or semiotic ideologies, whose spread and generality result in many people making the same guesses, and acting as if these guesses were accurate. In chapters two and three I demonstrate that the emergence of the Mormon Underground, a space of resistance to the colonial hegemony of the United States, resulted from widespread abductions regarding identification of U.S. spies and marshals.

Historiography and Discourse

This dissertation explores the uptake of modern ideologies (or “reflexive models”) of personhood, history, and signs in contemporary Mormonism. As many studies above conclude, discourse can carry markers construed to indicate “tradition,” “historicity,” or even timelessness. Weyewa of Indonesia speak of an “ancestral voice” which grounds their society and is performatively summoned in rites (Kuipers 1992). Seneca ritual experts rely on particular linguistic cues to evoke the authority of past elders and prophets (Chafe 1992), while Icelandic folktales can be given an air of tradition in a retelling if aspects of a history of oral transmission can be called up (Bauman 1992). I argue that similar summoning of links with the past characterizes Mormon historiography. Such summoning was not without cultural effect: schism in the early twentieth century resulted from debates about how past utterances were to be understood, interpreted, valued.

Mormonism split into two groups by 1930, a self-described Fundamentalist sect and a larger LDS Church.¹ These groups revised Mormon history in ways that grounded themselves in the nineteenth century, and they did so in historically motivated ways. Most foregrounded in the schism was the matter of polygamy: Was it to be practiced; or, as the Latter-day Saints now claimed, merely to be “believed in”? Debates around the soteriological import of plural marriage developed around, and spread through various Mormon groups, identifiable semiotic ideologies. These ideologies eventually framed other historiographic practices conducted over the twentieth century.

Fundamentalists, as recounted in chapter eleven, gave credence to narratives framed by a history of orality. That is to say, stories reflexively recounting their passage from person-to-person, rather than by mass broadcast or publication, gained a measure of historicity. Fundamentalists made a fetish of secrecy, and the less circulated a story, prophecy, or practice was, the more currency it obtained (to put it perhaps too simply). As found in other cultures, secrecy was a mark of authority and the property of ritual specialists (see Bellman 1984). Fundamentalists regarded publicness as a marker of potential duplicity, and so the more hearers one could attribute to an utterance the more carefully one had to attend to hidden cues. Kulick (1998) describes similar phenomenon in a Papua New Guinea village, where concealment is presupposed, and indeed, a marker of masculinity. The ideology of secrecy is of course anchored to the traditional sacred

¹ Most historians of Mormonism would maintain that the LDS Church did not split around 1930 from an earlier church, and would simply point to the fact that the LDS Church’s name extends at least as far back as 1838 (most would simply date its origins with the origins of Mormonism in 1830, with the new legal entity organized by Joseph Smith, called simply “The Church of Christ.” But to maintain that a name constitutes the entity’s identity over time would be to maintain that though I am by all accounts physically and mentally different from the being named Daymon Smith in 1978, that I am the same; and, moreover, that all beings named Daymon Smith are the same. There are many Mormonisms, concurrently and over time, and I maintain for reasons given in this work that by 1930 the LDS Church was different enough from the LDS Church of 1900 to justify calling it a new group.

flutes, an incontrovertible and overt phallic sign whose secrecy, at least from non-initiates and others gendered as non-men, is a perennial concern. The nearer one gets to absolute power the more one presumes misdirection, oblique reference, deception, and covert meaning. The founding prophet of Mormon Fundamentalism, Lorin Woolley, was the point from which all acceptable narratives, practices, and rituals emanated.

Among Mormon Fundamentalists a secret revelation could be treated as stripped of public codes and read as a sincere statement of true events; it carried markers of historicity in its non-circulation. There is an obvious designed obsolescence when one treats secrecy as a mark of value, since one tends to circulate the most valued stories, but by virtue of their circulation they lose value. Fundamentalists by the mid-1930s resolved this issue, as recounted in chapter eleven, by collapsing the power to determine the historicity of practices and narratives into an anointed quorum of apostles themselves granted authority by contact with Woolley. “The Priesthood,” as they were called, embodied history.

Latter-day Saints, as recounted in chapters twelve and thirteen, instead focused on “meaning,” rather than form, as a marker of historical continuity. This process of decontextualizing interpretations as “concepts” was bureaucratized and given exclusively over to what came to be called the Correlation Committee. The process was called “Church-” or “Priesthood Correlation,” and its erasure of historical change is documented most fully in chapter thirteen. Latter-day Saint historiography in a sense denied history, and presented a timeless realm of ideas (or “topics” for the philosophically allergic), into which contemporary practices were cast. In short, the non-indexical aspects of interpretations, sermons, and other speech events allow readings of them as “ideas,” and

washed of temporal, spatial, speaker, or hearer markers, readings as indexes of the LDS Church's transcendence over time into eternity. While Rabbinic ascent texts are read not for the sake of meaning, but rather as technologies for elevating the soul (Janowitz 1989), Latter-day Saint historiography brings the realm of timeless concepts down to the average reader. As analyzed in chapter thirteen, church curriculum is based on valorized timelessness, and itself revises Mormon history into the mold of the here-and-now. Without an analytic that accounts for reflexive semiosis, the absence of indexicals could never be seen as a marker—a meta-index generated by stripping indexicals marking here-and-now contexts—of transcendence.

Discourse is used and interpreted by Fundamentalists and Latter-day Saints as they turn to history.² In the first chapters of this work I describe the discursive practices which lead, by the mid-twentieth century, to the above-noted historiographic traditions. It is necessary to recount these nineteenth century practices in order to see how the telling of history is related to historical events later narrated. Fundamentalists and Latter-day Saints are indeed connected to the historical events, though their narrations of these times do not necessarily accurately reflect. In their misunderstanding of history I find one of the more significant effects of culture change: elimination of capacity to see change.

American History and Mormonism

² That neither group has developed an overt way of “speaking the past” merely indicates they lack the reflexivity, or the competence, to trope on latent cultural readings. Indeed, Latter-day Saints cannot invoke the past through discourse because the authority of their contemporary religion is grounded in transcendence of the past. Fundamentalists are English speakers, primarily, and so lack the obligatory grammatical markers (morphemes) which other cultures use to index the historicity or ancientness of their speech. They “speak the past” by reciting a chain of speech events into the current event links; that is, they index tradition by reported speech. Further study might reveal grammatical and syntactical features which accompany authoritative sermons and writings, though to date no analysis has been published.

In order to appreciate the shift into modernity taken by Mormonism it may be useful to contextualize the religion in nineteenth century American discursive culture. Europeans brought to the Americas more than disease, weapons, and tools. On the one hand, they often carried bibles. Though some might think an English bible an obstacle when proselytizing Native Americans, the bible's divine nature ensured that the intent of the heart of the reader/speaker would carry its meaning to the souls of the savage (Gray 1999). The Holy Spirit, the author of the bible, could speak any language (as evidenced on the Day of Pentecost), and thus the trifling matter of sound form, syntax, semantics and grammar could be set aside. On the other hand, nationalists arrived with a "one-language-one-people" doctrine, with Noah Webster providing "Americanized" orthography in order to prescribe properly American pronunciation (Lepore 2002). (For his part Mormon prophet Brigham Young designed his own "Deseret Alphabet" in the mid-nineteenth century when the Mormons were actively seeking separation, if not politically, at least economically and graphically, from the damnable United States.)

Americans in the early nineteenth century praised and cultivated oratorical skills, which marked gentlemanly manners and shored up the foundations of the new democracy (Cmiel 1990). Of course the Gettysburg Address marks the highwater in American oratory, combining "democratic" or "Jacksonian" simplicity of register with classical poetics (Silverstein 2003b). Americans copied Rome in more than architecture. By the end of the century prescriptivist linguists had codified pronunciations appropriate for usage by gentlemen in every imaginable setting. Our classical oratory tradition continued until the "anything-goes" 1960s when "causal" speech marked the populist in his fight

against the machine (McWhorter 2003). Until then speech was itself, for even the common American, a real entity worthy of cultivation, study, and assessment.

Mormons were never assailed for their oratory, though public opinion held through the nineteenth century that Mormons could not be trusted. Mormons had, in the popular mind, anyway, each a hundred wives to a man (many of them stolen from Mother England!), and any man who could sell “spiritual wifery,” alongside a “Golden Bible” (the pejorative name of the movement’s *Book of Mormon*) to that many women had to possess mesmeric powers and a forked tongue. Polygamy was not only a marker of discursive perfidy, but also a threat to the very well-being of the nation. If the nation was to have one language, surely each citizen should only have but one wife, lest his strength be ejaculated in services rendered not in the interest of the nation. Polygamy mingled public and private spheres, and suggested patriarchal-popish governance (Talbot 2006). And science had good evidence that polygamous generations were plagued by dumbness, irascibility, turpitude, and intemperance.

Mormons were particularly offensive to Protestants, as they added a new scripture, the *Book of Mormon*, said to be “the most correct of any book on the earth,” while the blessed bible was reduced to “the Word of God as far as it is translated correctly.” Alongside their scandalous marital habits and egregious affront to Christian theology, Mormons proclaimed communal economics to be the very economy of heaven. As one Mormon maven declared, “And down with wayward Rome’s economy, Parent of countless ills—monogamy!” (quoted in Cairncross 1974).

So while Americans (i.e., Republicans) were busy stitching together a post-war Union, Mormons in the American West were flouting every principle formative of

civilized nations. Moreover, Mormons did not believe in a linear march of history to ever greater stages. Their religion was founded on a circular-spiral model of history, the now familiar “eternal return” (Eliade 1991), with cyclical restorations of timeless truths, covenants, and rites introduced to humanity. As the Church-owned *Deseret News* explained in early 1884, “The religion of Jesus Christ eighteen centuries ago was regarded in the same light as ‘Mormonism’ is today and for the same reasons. The two systems are exactly similar, one being a reproduction of the other, having the same organization, doctrines, ordinances, authority, gifts, powers, spirit and objects” (DN 1.5.1884). Mormonism was “exactly similar” not only to ancient Christianity, but also to the religion practiced by Abraham, Noah, and all the great patriarchs back to Adam. Mormonism’s reach did not end with Adam, however, as the religion taught of infinite “earths” with many gods and mortals, each at some point practicing a variant of Mormonism. Its cosmology was rich, unapologetically assertive, all-encompassing, and practical to boot.

Anti-polygamy legislation and Mormon resistance

Polygamy was to Mormonism what the bible was to Protestantism. It led people back to God, transformed the earth, and was timeless and undoubtedly correct. It combined the word and the flesh, logos and eros, in Mormon theology. While American politicians, given their penchant for houses of ill-repute and mistress-keeping, were not altogether offended by polygamy (treating that many women as *wives*, however, was disconcerting), they were rather uncomfortable with the prospects of a religious theocracy built on communal economics springing from the western edge of the American empire, the Utah Territory.

The first indictments for sexual crimes attributed to Mormon leaders were served in 1871. These were not under the Morrill Anti-polygamy Act of 1862, however. Federal appointees broadened territorial law against lewd and lascivious cohabitation into crimes describing Mormon marriage. Among those accused of lewd conduct were Brigham Young, George Q. Cannon, and Daniel Wells, constituting the First Presidency of the Church (the governing body comprised of the president, in this case Young, and his counselors). During Young's trial Judge McKean confessed that a "system of polygamic theocracy" was on trial, with its opponent the federal authority (Firmage and Mangrum 2001:137). McKean would be unseated soon thereafter for his behavior, and the indictments were dismissed as a result of a Supreme Court decision which ruled that exclusively non-Mormon juries violated territorial law. Since no Mormon jury would convict church leaders and co-religionists, all prisoners were bid go free.

Congress then passed the Poland act of 1874, which empowered U.S. Marshals to serve all process for district and supreme courts, with U.S. attorneys prosecuting. It also invalidated "earlier supreme court decisions favorable to the Mormons" (Firmage and Mangrum 2001:148-9). *Poland* adjusting the balance in favor of federal rather than territorial officials; polygamy cases, however, remained rare because prosecution required collaboration with at least one wife.

Soon after *Poland* comes John Miles, faithful Saint and all too yielding husband. At the suggestion of church leaders Miles married three women on the same day. Not only would this confuse federal investigators, but more importantly it would bring peace in the domestic realm. Miles fortunately forgot to tell new wife Caroline he was married earlier that day, thereby granting important "first wife" status to two of the three wives.

Suspicious after Miles brought Emily to their wedding celebration that evening, an incredulous Caroline swore him out for polygamy (Hardy 1992:45). He was convicted on her testimony. Her claims were allowed on presumption that she was not in fact the first wife, which status would have rendered her testimony inadmissible against her legal husband. Appealed to higher courts on the basis of her testimony, the case against Miles required a second witness to establish her second-wife status. Daniel Wells was called to answer questions about the general wedding ceremony, and regarding his possible role in marrying Miles to these women. Wells refused to divulge secrets of the temple ceremony, which he had taken sacred obligation never to reveal, and was ordered to jail for his silence. Upon his release an impromptu celebration swept through Salt Lake City, which one newspaper reporter claimed concluded, portentously, with the Stars and Stripes dragging in the dust of celebration.

Without conclusive evidence that Caroline was not the legal wife, her testimony could not be admitted. Only as a second wife could she testify, but only her testimony could establish her status. So long as Wells remained silent Miles's freedom was assured. Mormons would not so easily be legislated out of a practice deemed exalting of humanity; discourse could be used as a shield as much as a weapon.

The 1880s: Conflict and Change

“Mormonism,” Thomas O’Dea remarks in his classic *The Mormons*, “in many respects the most American of religions, is also the only one to carry out a prolonged conflict with American institutions and to have displayed potentialities for separate national development” (1964:117). By 1880 Utah territory had twice the immigrants relative to natives that Oregon and surrounding territories claimed (35 per 100), and a far larger

share of its overall population, over half, was under twenty (Anderson 1966:280). Most Utahns were Mormons by one measurement or another, with the Church claiming 120,000 members (mostly in the territory) against roughly 20,000 “gentiles” and “apostates,” terms used to describe non-Mormons (Roberts *CHC* 6:61). By 1880 the five most populous counties claimed only half the population, a clear reduction that resulted from colonization efforts throughout the West (Wahlquist 1978). Youth and immigrant status, alongside educational and religious instruction, would suggest indeed signs of a new nation sprouting from the irrigated soils along the sundown side of the Wasatch range.

The 1880s began with a new president of the Church in Englishman and former lay Methodist minister John Taylor, who took the reins of the Church after the death of Brigham Young. Taylor’s eventual successor, Wilford Woodruff, meanwhile was hiding from federal authorities in the southwest scrub desert. Amid the pine and sage scented air an oracle warned, “The nation is ripened in iniquity and the cup of the wrath of mine indignation is full, and I will not stay my hand in judgment upon this nation or the nations of the earth” (Alexander 1993:236). What is now known, among the few who know of it, as the “Wilderness Revelation” was accepted in April of that year as the “will of Lord” by the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (the governing body from which the First Presidency is typically created). Enemies of a vengeful God included the American President, various Congressmen, and members of the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court for its part had recently upheld the conviction of George Reynolds for polygamy under the Morrill Act of 1862, while three U.S. Presidents saw fit to address the “Mormon question,” if not provide outright answers, to Congress and the nation within a

year following the Wilderness Revelation. In December of 1880 President Hayes recommended dismantling the Utah territorial government in order to complete the Republican agenda, declared in 1856, to “abolish the twin relics of barbarism,” slavery and polygamy. Garfield’s inaugural address in March of 1881 also considered the Mormons. After his assassination by Guiteau that July, President Arthur urged similar measures against the Mormon marriage system, now emblematic of the uncivilized past (Roberts *CHC* 6:22-23). The Mormons were so despised that influential minister Dewitt Talmage declared that if Guiteau was not himself a Mormon, he was infected with its spirit, and a “paid agent of that old hag of hell” (ibid.:27).

Congress recognized that plural marriage was a useful flog against the larger political problem of Mormon theocracy and economic domination (Hansen 1967). Acting Vice President George Edmunds of Vermont submitted to the House of Representatives in 1882 a report that effectively compiled previous presidential suggestions regarding the Mormon question. Edmunds’s suggestion was turned into an amendment of the Morrill Anti-polygamy Act, granting teeth and claws to an act enforced only a few times over the past two decades. It passed both Houses by the Ides of March. The Edmunds Act of 1882 exacted on the territories punitive measures reminiscent of those imposed on the Confederacy (Gordon 2002:151). It excluded jurors from sitting on trials who were suspected by newly appointed federal prosecutors of “belief in polygamy”; placed voter registration under similarly appointed federal officials who designed a “test oath” to ferret out polygamist voters; declared polygamy a felony; precluded suspected polygamists from holding public office; and most importantly, invented a new crime, “Unlawful Cohabitation.”

The failures of earlier anti-polygamy legislation prompted new evidentiary standards (Firmage and Mangrum 2001:150). “The evidentiary problem of proving polygamous marriages,” Firmage and Mangrum maintain, “was neatly solved by the creation of a new offense, unlawful cohabitation, for which no proof of marriage was required” (ibid:161). As recounted in chapter six, children could be used as proof of criminal behavior, as could rumor (not the acts referred to, but rumor itself). The Edmunds Act of 1882 made unlawful cohabitation (called U.C.) a misdemeanor, punishable by not more than six months in prison and a \$300 fine. With its passage Congress again answered the “Mormon Question,” long ruminated on by politicians, among them Lincoln, for whom Mormonism was “too hard to split, too wet to burn and too heavy to move.” Unlike the 1882 Congress, Lincoln’s administration “plowed around it” (ibid.:139).

Church President John Taylor, deliberate and dedicated after years settling leftover turf like swamps and deserts, and inured to persecution after fifty years in a religion driven by mob and public official from New York, Ohio, Missouri, Illinois and, ultimately, from the United States in 1847, declared from the pulpit his answer to the Fed’s approach to the Mormon question. “Let us treat it the same as we did the morning in coming through the snow storm,” Taylor mused, “put up our collars (suing the action to the word) and wait till the storm subsides. After the storm comes sunshine; while the storm lasts it is useless to reason with the world. When it subsides we can talk to them...” (Roberts *CHC* 6:360). There was to be no “rendering evil for evil,” and the Saints were not to flout the commands of God. While waiting for the sunshine of enlightened exchange, up went the collars and a “game of hide of seek was played on a

massive scale; federal prosecutors complained that the Mormons controlled the railroad and telegraph system so completely that their every move was known as soon as they made it” (Gordon 2002:159).

Anti-polygamy Raids, the Underground, and Historiography

This dissertation is divided into four parts. Part One of this dissertation moves from the newspapers’ response to the anti-polygamy raids to the creation of the Mormon Underground. Chapter two describes the role of the public sphere in catalyzing widespread abductions regarding the identities of U.S. spies. Chapter three details evidence of these abductions, documenting the role of rumor, gossip, and guesses in spurring Mormons to “The Underground.” Chapter four reconstructs the creation of the Underground, a discursive space which concealed polygamists and their wives through a variety of tactics for interactional. Chapter five concludes Part One, and documents the deployment by Mormon leaders of Underground tactics in the public sphere. Part One spans 1885 to 1890, the year Church President Wilford Woodruff published his much-interpreted “Manifesto,” said by some to end the practice of Mormon polygamy, by others to drive with tacit approval the practice itself “underground.”

Part Two tracks the uptake of mind-body dualism by Mormons in an effort to justify abandoning the practice of plural marriage. Chapter six returns to the 1880s, and locates in public sphere reports of trials for Unlawful Cohabitation the initial uptake of a division between mind and body, belief and practice. Mormon polygamists did not draw distinctions between belief and practice, and they held that speech events like oaths were effective in their right. Speech was reported as belief in newspaper, however, and belief, as evidenced by speech produced under oath during court testimony, had real effects.

Men were sent to prison on account of somebody “believing” it was thought by another that they possibly practiced unlawful cohabitation. Mormon leaders after 1890 similarly taught that one could “believe” in polygamy and still garner the eternal blessings promised to those who practice it. “Belief” became a mode of existence with more eternal reality than acts of the flesh, at least for monogamous Latter-day Saints. Chapters seven and eight track the effects of embracing divides between church and state, belief and practice, mind and body, on Mormon theology. I locate what modern historiographers might call “concepts” in grammatical-linguistic structure, thus treating them as “words.” By shifting analysis from concepts to words one can reconstruct the role of grammar, specifically, of Whorfian projection and analogy, on Mormon cosmology, and as recounted in chapter eight, one can then explain the dearth of theological speculation that characterized Mormon theology after the 1930s. Mormon theology is by current interpretive practices a non-abductive space; guesses are not in principle possible, even if acceptable.

Part Three follows the Fundamentalist schism into the 1930s. Chapter nine argues that the covert polygamous underground, of which church leaders constituted the main proponents, was dragged into the public eye during Congressional hearings. The Church again confirmed that it no longer sanctioned plural marriage, and in order to stave off further federal legislation against the Church it began excommunicating members. Chapters nine and ten attend to excommunication hearings in detail, and demonstrate that there was nothing but confusion regarding the Church’s “official” stance on polygamy, at least until 1910. After 1910 members were excommunicated for practicing what was just three decades earlier taught to be absolutely necessary if one hoped to obtain the highest

rewards in the Mormon afterlife. Often these excommunicates viewed the Church's activity as yet again motivated only by public relations campaigns, and so refused to believe public statements by church leaders that indeed polygamy was out for good this time (really!). Chapter eleven reconstructs the movements of excommunicated Mormons through the 1920s as they aligned with Lorin Woolley and his secret history of hidden revelations. It tracks the creation of a self-described Fundamentalist LDS Church with all the trappings, organizationally, ritually, and culturally, of the LDS Church. Fundamentalists took on the body, speech, sex, diet, and dress, as the means of enacting Mormon history.

Part Four addresses the effects of history on contemporary Latter-day Saint historiography. A brief excursus examines the LDS Church's response to Fundamentalism and other modern evils like communism. A committee was formed during 1960, and by the 1980s the "Correlation Committee" became responsible for ensuring doctrinal accuracy, historical truth, and intellectual property rights of all official LDS Church publications. Chapter twelve documents the rise of Correlation, and analyzes how it was launched on its path to bureaucratice-textual power by virtue of being grounded in idealized sacred history. Chapter thirteen concludes the dissertation and describes the creation of church curriculum at the end of the century. I analyze a manual used by teachers and students alike as part of the LDS Church's Sunday worship schedule. The text claims to present the teachings of Church President John Taylor, whose underground activities I treat in Part One. To demonstrate how history is erased from historical texts, I conduct fine-grained analysis of the official manual. The doctrine of Priesthood, the power or authority which Mormons, in any group, claim provides their

exclusive right to act as representatives of the heavens, is shown to be regimented into post-Correlation valorizations of bureaucracy, organizational authority (now called eponymously, and confusingly, “The Priesthood”), and timeless, seemingly eternal “ideas.”

Latter-day Saints reacted against Fundamentalists’ claims to hold the priesthood and practice polygamy. Organizations called colloquially “the Priesthood” in both groups soon governed, and attempted to bridge and conceal, the new divide between heaven and earth. This collapse of soteriological power, once described by Taylor as even outside and independent of the gods, into administrative authority claimed by various Mormon sects remains one of the lasting effects of modernization.

Summary

I argue in this dissertation that metadiscursive activity by Mormons during the 1880 anti-polygamy raids created a hidden cleavage in Mormonism. The cleavage split groups not only according to their practice of polygamy, but also according to their assumptions about discourse. Was it simply a reflection of mind, and thus, meaning was governed by sincerity; or was discourse a tool for concealing identity, reference, and shibboleth practices? By 1900 the LDS Church argued that one could “believe in” polygamy and still merits eternal rewards as if one actually practiced it. The schism of the early twentieth century merely makes official a discursive divide, and both groups quickly rationalized their new doctrines about discourse into implicit historiographic canons. But both Fundamentalists and modern Latter-day Saints fell victim to modern doctrines of subjectivity. Mind-body dualism became in Mormonism spirit-matter dualism, humanity-god dualism, and divisions between church and state, belief and practice, were

written in the matrix of power for both groups: the priesthood. Lay members in both groups were left without a framework for thinking through, for speculating on, once familiar issues in Mormon theology. Instead they were told to rely on their “Priesthood leaders” to guide them, leaders whose organizations are now synonymous with the power of the priesthood. This work demonstrates relationships among a turn to idealism or the body (to the exclusion of the other), a loss of theological creativity, and the upsurge of “the Priesthood” as the mediating body between humanity and heaven. Mormons of any stripe, it may be not too much to say, have lost the ability to think and act like their outrageous forebears, whose combination of mysticism and pragmatism, sex and spirit, god and humanity is certainly one lamentable loss of modernization.

Habermas, to return to the theme of modernity, remains optimistic that Universal Enlightenment can be achieved. I argue here, most generally, that we inherited with transition into modernity a cultural framework which affects how we write history. We are thus caught in our own historical moment, enacting by presupposition time and again a rejection of non-modern culture even as we attempt to tell its history across various peoples. Habermas would prescribe more communicative action, more efforts to understand different ethics, truth claims, and so on, for our current pathology. What of attempts to understand history and its communicative actors?

For Mormons the past is lived every day, in abstraction or through bodily-foregrounding practices. No matter how each turns to understand history, to negotiate its presuppositions and realize its meaning, neither group, as currently constituted, can escape writing onto their past (which as noted earlier grades into cosmological history of the gods, spirits, demons, and their doings) the ways of being modern. Historiography

could be regarded as the final act of American colonialism, and when completed we shall lose even the contrast once provided by really existing non-modern, “mythic” minded people, and fail to see our iron cage as anything but liberation. Indeed, perhaps erasure of our collective history, through social theory, pedagogy, psychology, statistics, and other apparatuses of modern power, is the full rationalization of modern subjectivity: timeless, eternal, abstract; or alternately, corporal, desiring, needful, and soulless. Analytics that can reconstruct, not merely deconstruct, the arrival of modern subjectivity and the writing of such promise at least to preserve the outlines of the bars of our confinement.

Chapter Two

Reportorial Vagueness, Poetic Form, and Print Panic

This chapter tracks the public creation of identity in Mormon owned newspapers from 1884 to 1890. I restrict analysis to mass disseminated representations of identities, leaving for a later chapter the burden of evidencing enactment. My task is to describe the effects on polygamists of newspaper accounts of federal raids.

The chapter inquires into, first, the claims of truthfulness issued by LDS Church owned newspapers. It then recounts the problems these papers faced when trying to warn Mormons about spies and spotters. Here we observe how discursive norms came to characterize Mormons in the nineteenth century responding to seemingly omnipresent spies reported on the pages of local papers. Mormons abducted identities (such as, “there’s a spy!”), but rarely ever confirmed such guesses. The result was an over-representation of the presence of spies.

In tandem with interactional prescriptions (such as, “mind your own business”) given alongside vague reports of spying, newspapers also truncated reports of raids and arrests. The second argument of this chapter concerns shifts in linguistic features of reports of raids. Local papers presented an imagined community of passive, raided, ever-suspicious and uncertain polygamous Saints. The analysis links characterization of spies and Mormons with transitions in formal features used to report raids (e.g., narrative style). In these features one sees that newspapers were complicit in the eventual submission of Mormons to the United States government. Embrace of the public sphere by Mormons as a means of resisting federal assaults, then, engendered the possibility of a

Mormonism not merely arguing, as it were, with the federal government, but increasingly talking in dialogue with it. Later chapters take up this dialogue.

Papers and Truth

The Deseret News, like other Mormons texts of this era, never seems to consider why Americans were concerned about Mormon control of the American West. Why should Americans in the 1880s so vehemently despise Mormons, aside from their explicitly Zionist state-building, valorization of polygamy, and ideal of communitarian economy?

Papers misled Americans about the real virtues of Mormonism; readers were assured this was the source of popular calumny. Once citizens heard the real Mormonism there was little doubt they would be converted. Leap Day 1884 provides an example. The Deseret News (called *The News*) published a confiscated letter “as an indication of the manner in which ‘reliable information’ about the ‘Mormons’ is supplied to the people of the East” (DN 2.29.84). The letter writer apparently was asked “to write up the Mormons” by a friend in the East. The News suggested that this request was intentionally addressed to one “versed in the nonsense and prurient fabrications in common use,” written by a man who “didn’t want the truth, he was not hunting for facts, he was looking for something to pander to a prurient appetite.” Anti-Mormon action was specifically linked to circulation of false reports that led to a readership “miserably duped and deceived.”

After the new year the News would describe how the *New York Mail and Express* “manufactured” interest in an “anti-Mormon crusade” directed by “Chicago Pharisees.” “The press,” the News canted, “may be depended upon to aid the movement with all its powers” (DN 1.14.85). By June of that year the News would dismiss outright, under the

title “Sample lies,” interviews with recent Mormon emigrants reported in the *New York Tribune* as nothing but a “string of fictions” “compiled by the news-gatherers from imagination while seated in their offices” (DN 6.5.85). “What they say,” the News assured, “usually bears little if any resemblance to truth.” We have then, according to reports from the *Deseret News*, three sources that circulated falsehoods nationally about Mormons: deceptive interviews, vile imaginations, and a political crusade against Mormonism. Truth seemed to play little part in the public sphere, as Mormons saw it. Into this cycle of falsehood the News inserted its greatest nemesis, the *Salt Lake Tribune*, cunning Lucifer to the Mormon paper’s heraldic Michael.³

“The Tribune is greatly given to exhibiting strong streaks of pretended benignity of sentiment, which only serve to show the depth of the hypocrisy of its conductors,” the News blasted (DN 1.27.85). *The Trib*, as it is now called, could do no right; even when benign it was dangerous because under a congenial mask lurked the fervor of crusade. A week earlier the News decried a “virulent screed,” “an act of fiendish incendiarism” directed against “Hon. Joseph F. Smith,” nephew of the prophet and counselor to Church President John Taylor (DN 1.19.85). “We have not the slightest doubt that [the Trib’s] original source was the unutterably contemptible and diabolically mean person...said to be guilty of nearly every crime in the catalogue.” If its editors were not simply liars, the chain of production began with vile characters.

And the Trib was not the only source of trouble in the city; it just led the pack. “That most un-Christian and ungrammatical publication called the *Christian Advocate*,”

³ Salt Lakers could read numerous local papers on any given day, among the English papers one could read the *Deseret News* (DN), the *Salt Lake Tribune* (SLT), the *Utah Journal*, the *Utah Democrat*, the *Christian Advocate*, and the *Daily Herald* (which also disseminated from northern Ogden (ODH), from Salt Lake (SLH) and from southerly Provo alongside the *Territorial Enquirer* (TE).

the News needed, “still lingers out a miserable existence and fulminates weak sophisms against ‘Mormonism’ and the ‘Mormons.’...As a compound of ignorance, mendacity, ungrammatical sentences and horrible spelling, in poor type badly made up, the *Anti-Christian Advocate* is a model anti-‘Mormon’ apology for a public paper” (DN 2.13.85). The Advocate was just one of many. “The anti-‘Mormon’ press of this city is conspicuous,” the News blithely noted, “for the subtle, though transparent, dishonesty” (DN 2.28.85). Papers were classed into two categories by the News: anti-Mormon and anti-anti-Mormon (into which fell *The Herald*, surreptitiously supported by the Church and edited by Church leaders; *The Utah Journal* until purchased by the *Tribune*; and the *Territorial Enquirer*). Utah’s public sphere was more like a coliseum than a café.

The Ogden Herald assaulted the “ANTI-‘MORMON’ organ” which “is now, and always has been, totally worthless as a disseminator of credible local news. Just now it is given to the invention of rumors, which it publishes very much in the style of a clown...The last totally unfounded report, which this inane, gullible sheet presents its alleged readers is...[an U]nfounded, worthless misleading article probably originating in some stupid, spiteful reportorial brain” (ODH 3.28.85). The exuberant rhetorical excoriation of other papers by the News and similar pro-Mormon papers is not difficult, presumably, to recognize. Discourse was a means to an end, and only sometimes did telling the truth serve that end. That is to say, language was portrayed, at least by Mormon newspapers, as a tool for swaying public opinion against the Mormons.

Words falsely delivered returned to Utah in the form of legislation. Under the title “Egregious Slander,” the Herald linked seemingly benign tales of local reporters to wider national attempts to exert federal power over the Saints (ODH 3.28.85). “Scandal

and lying misrepresentation...are daily doing some mischief,” furthered by the “miasm of calumny and the contagious breath of aspersion” characteristic of “anti-‘Mormon’ press.” Their lies created a “false public opinion,” bringing, the paper warned,

The ‘Mormon’ people under the ban of ghoulish national prejudice...They repeat through their newspaper minions the most shallow scandalizing rumors and invent the most transparent libelous tales...and although these miserable fabrications are without the slightest force or effect in the vicinity where they are uttered and where the true facts are well-known, yet the shameful slanders go abroad among the unwary and the uninformed, take root in the National mind, grow into a monstrous prejudice, and then come back to us in the shape of the ‘special legislation’ of oppression and tyranny.

The Saints troubles in 1885 resulted, according to Mormon papers, from lies cast by Utah’s “organ of black conspiracy” which emanated from “the filthiest elements of this city.” The cabal’s mastermind, the Salt Lake Tribune, cast “venomous seed,” “spreading abroad to blind the people of the United States” (ODH 3.28.85). The Tribune controlled the Associated Press wire, and set public opinion against Mormonism. May of that infamous year the Herald identified an Associated Press telegram, sent by the Trib from Salt Lake City, designed to “poison the public mind throughout the country” (ODH 5.5.85).

As the above metaphors suggest, for newspapers language was as physically effective as a revolver butt to the eye socket. Mormon papers portrayed false reports as specifically leading to legislation that returned to the territory to be administered by deputies, prosecutors, and judges. Nothing assured that truth would win the hearts of Americans. Indeed, a blinkered citizenry was said to follow false utterances circulated beyond the ken of the organs of the Mormons. If only accurate portrayals were circulated, the Saints’ papers presumed, surely oppression would cease. The Saints failed to face the possibility, however, that perhaps Americans simply could not countenance their sort of religion. Mormon papers instead presented themselves as

earnest and fervent defenders of truth and justice. Did this role as truth-teller further or thwart federal assaults on Latter-day Saints?

Everywhere Spies and Spotters

One could rarely believe both the Trib and the News on any given day, so acrimoniously different were their portrayals of life in the territory. Mormons were to take as true those statements from Mormon papers, while the opposition favored anti-Mormon news outlets. The reader-religion characterization was relatively stable, and in many ways still holds in Utah. Other characterizations were not so easily maintained. It is one thing to call a Tribune reporter a liar, and something entirely different to identify undercover federal agents. While Mormon papers could warn readers of federal spies or liars in some area, actually identifying and verifying the presence of spies was a process not entirely under the control of the newspapers. Partially uncoupled from the textual realm, these more interactionally dependent characterizations, abductions really, had a great deal more sport about them, for Mormons had to find actual instances of spies and spotters if they hoped to resist federal action. Reports of spies, spotters, and raids, as the following material demonstrate, portrayed a territory in which all Mormon men were potential convicts because no person could be trusted not to turn spotter; no assumption of loyal action could follow from evidence of solidary identity.

The Herald in 1884 published what it called a letter from “F.O.U. Races” which argued that in response to the “Spotter Fund” under consideration by the Utah Commission (which would pay for information leading to the arrest of Mormon men violating the Edmunds Act of 1882), Mormons should set up a similar fund to prosecute visitors of houses of ill fame, using money to assuage secrets from the city’s underbelly

(SLH 5.1.84). “F.O.U.” continued that Mormons were not baited by money, unlike gamblers and prostitutes, and so any incentive would not lead to revelations of secrets, to ferreting “of the privacies of Mormon families.” The letter suggested that Mormons would not turn “sneak” on their own people for a few coins. The claim was simple: religious identity of “Mormon” indexed reliability with respect to keeping secrets. But how could one be certain another was indeed an authentic Mormon, rather than a fake? Reports of raids over the following months suggested ambiguous portrayal of some Mormons, and their reported presence provoked interactional dilemmas. When trustworthiness was read from religious identity, and identity could not be established beyond doubt but seemed ever concealed, trust withered in the community. If even Mormons could be represented as turning on neighbors, who could be trusted to keep information from deputies?

First reports of spies were relatively specific. The News advised readers of a “sneak and informer system” built on

persons who have assumed the role of peddlers and itinerants of various kinds...making impertinent inquiries into the affairs of the family, and practically forcing themselves into private residences. Individuals have been discovered prowling...at night. This latter class, as we have stated previously, are liable to be mistaken for sneak thieves and burglars, and it is justifiable to treat them accordingly (DN 1.21.85).

The column identified three characters, peddlers, itinerants, and prowlers, by their intrusive actions: discursively or literally trespassing privacies of family. It advised no appropriate responses to these intruders, presupposing the reader could abduct justifiable treatment of prowler-thieves. The article was definite, however, that the crusade “will never change the views or obliterate the nobler instincts and feelings in the hearts of the Latter-day Saints, and the day will come when the doings of those who seek to heap

affliction up on them and to scatter and peel the flock will be held up as examples of infamy to be viewed with utter disgust.”

We have, then, an early example of identification of interactants by actions (inquiries, peddling) sharpened by contexts (night). Men who fit these roles were already suspected of bad behavior, and the Saints had been warned often to steer clear. Descriptions of spies and spotters were further elaborated on, filled in, and generalized over ensuing months. The first months were marked by specific warnings of spies. The News published a letter from “Lauritz Larsen” of Mount Pleasant that described a “suspicious looking character lurking around here the last few days, prying into family relations...He is a rather heavy man...He has reddish or sandy whiskers or beard; had a long gray blanket coat lined with brown ducking, black pants and vest. People should look out for him” (DN 1.24.85). The article was framed, “One of the spotters.” January 28 the News reported in an article titled “A deputy marshal pursued” that a group of “young fellows” “noticed an individual lurking suspiciously around” (DN 1.28.85). “He entered a vacant lot, and hid behind a large tree near the corner, apparently keeping a watchful eye on a small store opposite, with *burglarious* (?) intent,” when the fellows approached the man “to treat him to something” and he fled into the night. The paper casts this shady character as a deputy marshal because he lurked and fled, just as the “rather heavy man” similarly lurking about the rural town of Mount Pleasant was a “spotter.” And yet no one really checked, according to the papers, no one verified this presumed status.

Responses reported in the paper, and portrayed as appropriate to Saints, failed to verify or falsify characterizations of spotters. Were these men actually spotters, or

simply strangers caught in a fog of suspicion? Reports continued to characterize odd behavior as indubitable evidence that some other was a covert agent. February 12 the *Herald* published a testimonial from “Mrs. Ole Hanson,” recently summoned to testify against her husband on a charge of unlawful cohabitation:

I have heard a great deal about the spying system...but I did not know that female spies were employed until I went before the Grand jury. While I was...awaiting my turn to be called, a lady approached me, and with the warmest professions of sympathy for me, said: ‘Oh, and so you are Mrs. Hansen! Which wife are you, the first or second?’ I saw that she was after an admission...and I answered her sharply: ‘I am his first, last and only wife,’ as I am (SLH 2.12.85).

Mrs. Hanson’s proof of the hypothesized identity was based on the woman entering the courtroom after concluding her inquiry.

Increasingly general reports began to surface. April found a report less definite, or perhaps more presupposing that readers could predicate an identity (ODH 4.11.85). “We hear that some skulking vagabonds have been found lurking around...late at night,” the paper warned, “Whatever the object of these gentlemen may be, it is well to keep a sharp look out, and a suitable reception given them, if necessary. The object cannot possibly be for any good purpose.” Mormon newspapers increasingly offered vague directions for discerning potential spies, and began including nearly anyone as a covert agent; discerning possible from the few actual spies was all but impossible.

Types of potential persons who fit the persona of spy and spotter continued to grow. A March letter from “Observer” to the editor of the *Deseret News* presented a lengthy homily on the raids (DN 3.12.85). “I find in most of the settlements a class of people who are termed ‘soreheads,’ mostly apostates from the Church,” he surmised, “who have seemingly been nursing their wrath for years, and now they have an opportunity, how gladly they embrace it, to tell something against their neighbors, and in

very many instances these are their best friends.” Peddlers and prowlers are one thing, but why might one’s best friend turn informer? The April 17 edition of the Territorial Enquirer described,

polygamous cases are trumped up by the raiders in this Territory...[W]e take occasion to present them to the people that they may understand the *modus operandi*. In the first place, a bait of \$200 is thrown out for anyone giving reliable information...The bait is nibbled at by some one who thinks he knows something of a certain family and begins by quizzing around, or if a relative, gives direct information... (TE 4.17.85).

Note that “someone who thinks he knows something of a certain family,” possibly the least determinate category of persons, is now a potential spotter; failing that, one’s kin might turn spotter. What was once presumed, that Mormons could be trusted by Mormons to keep secrets in a battle against “the world,” now became suspect.

There were just enough actual spies and deputies lingering around to drive suspicion forward. The Herald described one disguise of deputies and spies: the gentlemen caller (SLH 3.29.85). After a paragraph long description of “Eveline Van Damn” – her “figure” with “Hebe or Shebe-like outlines,” her hair like “Niagara Falls” around shoulders “whose rotundity and shapeliness are beyond the comprehension or too close examination of man” – the article introduced the beautiful rogue Endymion O’Toole with an equally romantic description. The article takes pains to describe how O’Toole flattered Eveline by moonlight, and the next evening called on her. He was introduced to her family and promptly served them all subpoenas after shouting, “Wherefore fail not! I am a deputy.” We are then told that one of the introduced wives seized a broomstick and served him with “something harder.” This account is the only one found which reports that a spy actually revealed himself. From the particular

O'Toole case the newspapers would later generalize to a class of "gentlemen" who might actually be spies.

Two articles appeared in early May of 1885 within three days of each other. The first, the Ogden Herald, began,

We do not know that the report is true that several sneaks, spies or 'spotters' have been and are engaged in prying into the domestic affairs of certain residents of Ogden and vicinity, but it is safe to assume that such is the case, as this is the identical course which the rabid anti-'Mormons' have pursued in Salt Lake County and elsewhere in Utah. So we deem it a duty to caution the public against these sneaking gentry (ODH 5.5.85).

Note the disclaimer regarding validity, and presumption of accurate reports by analogy from other areas under similarly presumed observation. Continuing, the article listed four social types defined by increasingly broad criteria. First, "they visit residences of citizens in the guise of peddlers; on some occasions they question children on the streets, and then again we have been told they lurk about private residences at night." These categories, repeated from an earlier article, are directly linked to particular persons as they enact particular signs: peddling, addressing questions to children, or lurking at night. What should one do if the signs point to a spy of this sort, what actions should follow the signs described?

If a child is asked an impertinent question on the streets by a stranger let the identity of the suspicious questioner be established so that others may be on their guard against him. If a man is found pilfering about a home at night he may be a thief...he should either be captured and turned over to the police or shot. As to peddlers, it is a good plan to have nothing to do with them unless they are well-known.

Upon recognition of these three social personas that conceal the more dangerous persona of "spy" the paper prescribes specific actions; however, the actual spy-identity of one's interactant is never absolutely established thereby. Could a spy be more circumspect, more covert? The report continued,

There is still another class of spies that are perhaps far more dangerous and debased than any that we have yet named; we refer to resident informers. We understand...that certain disappointed local anti-‘Mormons’ have threatened to ‘give away’ their neighbors...It is the purpose of these local informers to furnish ‘pointers’ secretly to the marshals.

The article concluded, “Everyone who has any self respect or any interests at stake will find it wisest in the end to maintain ‘armed neutrality’ and tend strictly to own affairs....”

The article suggested that the “wisest” course would be to counter potentially covert spies by sealing oneself from social life. This strategy, however, did nothing to confirm or refute suspicions regarding spies and spotters, and indeed, most likely had the tragic effect of rendering perfectly faithful Saints, tending to their affairs, seem suspiciously to be lurking about, and unintentionally enacting the role of silent spotter (evidence for this assertion is presented in the next chapter).

Three days later the Territorial Inquirer caught spotter fever and under the title “Mind your own business,” long the Mormon creed, listed more characters in the spotter category (TE 5.8.85). “If the report be true,” it began similarly disclaiming verity, “that we are beset in Provo by... ‘sneaks and spotters,’ it would be right for the people to heed well the heading we have given this article.” It then referred to other unnamed reports in papers of the “different guises” taken on by spotters, such as “mendicants,” “peddlers,” “spies, going about at night and peeping in windows,” and added a new, more covert one based on the O’Toole strategy: “gentlemen—think of it!—seeking to ingratiate themselves into your society.” Finally, it addressed “those spies who dwell in our midst.” Its advice was again to heed the creed, “mind your own business.”

If all Mormons minded their own business, then getting involved in another’s affairs could be a sign of a potential spotter. These simple characterizations, however, were vitiated by the obvious fact that the best spies were those who took on non-

suspicious personas, or simply observed from the shadows. Even folks who seemed to follow the Mormon creed could indeed be hiding their inner spotter. Who was a true Saint, how could one tell?

Abductions and Panic

Papers began with warnings of “suspicious” individuals well described at particular places, mostly a list of just generally bad folks like thieves and nighttime lurkers. The specific warnings were post hoc reports likely meant to warn surrounding communities. Five months later, however, newspapers presented a general list of personas, not altogether on the surface evil, who could be federal agents. These characterizations were based on variously discernable criteria. Lurking at night, questioning children, begging or selling wares; these acts indexed identities and entailed “legitimate” actions, ranging from “civility” to shooting. None of these reactions, however, would actually verify or falsify a potential spotter characterization (no agent was ever shot, incidentally). Nor would these actively ferret out spies and spotters. Given this, one should not be surprised that a greater number of covertly nefarious characters, increasingly generalized, developed in subsequent commentaries. Hence newspapers warned that spying could also be done by “gentlemen,” “relatives,” “spies in our midst,” and “someone who thinks he knows something.” These categories included a great many people who likely were not spotters, and indeed, included nearly every reader. More social personas were thus enrolled in a panic of observation making anyone a potential snitch. The effect, I propose, was to raise the suspicion quotient greatly, making the presence of the federal government seem far more ubiquitous than it actually was.

Indeed, it seemed accusations of spotterhood were as slippery to pin down as the targets of raids. In one report, titled “Who did it?” a Mr. Giesy and wife were accused of “giving up” F.A. Brown under the cohabitation law (OH 7.31.86). The report states that “Mrs. Giesy said she saw Mr. Brown in the house of his alleged second wife a short time ago, and that it was through the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Giesy that the matter was brought before the grand jury.” Mr. Giesy then reportedly defended his honor to the newspaper man, claiming his wife discussed the rendezvous of Mr. Brown in earshot of a “hired girl” at their home; she probably carried the story to the feds. The Herald concluded, “We do not pretend to state that there is any foundation for the truth of the rumor,” and so let readers decide the virtues of the case. To muddle matters even more, the U.S. government offered rewards of \$500 and \$300 for the capture of George Q. Cannon, counselor to the other wanted man, Church President John Taylor. This move effectively rendered all folks in their midst as potential spotters.

Who was a spy, and who was spied on? I have traced a trend toward increasingly general portrayals of spotters, and a movement away from specific reports of “suspicious individuals.” All polygamists were potential targets, and all persons, according to the newspapers, could be spies. The problem, and the source of the generalized growth of the characterizations, resulted because one could not discern “real” from “supposed” spotters. The very characterization presumed hidden identity. Nor were mistaken identifications reported (I have found none, anyway), while suspicions were reported on account of public duty. It was instance after instance of a guess without a test, and therein is the source of generalizations I tracked during 1885. Presumably, reports of unverified but supposed visitations by spies circulated back to papers, and these fed the

rumor mill, which resulted in increasingly generalized persona that could be spies. Saints were left with nothing but a rather passive discursive norm: Mind your own business. The creed, however, could also be enacted by actual spies, and so suspicions lingered around any person. Adherence to the creed, moreover, did not address or resolve the underlying source of the generalized characterizations of spy and spotter. Indeed, as we find in the next chapter, as a passive strategy the creed not only failed to enable one to pick out potential spotters, but also made Mormons observing the discursive norm—minding their own business—appear rather suspicious in certain spaces (when among strangers, visiting other towns, etc.).

Arrests in narratives and reports

I have traced patterns in portrayals of precursors to raids (i.e., spying), and argued for necessary relations between earlier, more specific reports with later, more general commentaries. The link between the two suggests Saints followed the admonition to mind their own business in response to non-positive characterizations. Columns warning Saints about these nefarious characters vanish by 1886. Newspapers thereafter enlisted in the realm of actual occurring events, and only rarely ventured in the world of possibilities and stereotypes. One is left with reports anchored to actual raids and subsequent trials, when ubiquitous spotters turned specific witness and the potentially observed became actually defendants. We now visit the handmaiden of pacification by newspapers of polygamous Saints: a shift in reporting style.

Alongside their admonitions to mind the Mormon creed, newspapers over the course of the raids also shifted with respect to reportorial style. The early days saw more narrative reports of raids, while later raids take up a style listing and summarizing the

facts: names, dates, places, results. Though an account of a house raided could just tell the story, it could also give prescriptive guidelines regarding how to delay marshals long enough for others to escape. No longer portrayed as obstructing federal agents through discursive tactics, instead later Saints were simply arrested, arraigned, bonded. They became in newspapers passive victims rather than active combatants. This trend not only portrayed the Mormons as losing time and again, but also failed to provide examples of how Mormons could respond effectively; thereby perhaps contributing to the actual pacification of Mormon fugitives.

As earlier described, newspapers presented any polygamist as a potential target of spies and spotters. What should a good Latter-day Saint do if indeed one has now become the focus of an actual raid as a result of being spied? The Deseret News again stepped in to provide a public service by advising Saints of their rights in the territory. It advises,

An officer has no right to forcibly enter a house to serve a subpoena on a witness...People should not be scared by the pretensions of impertinent persons claiming to be officers. A Marshal, Sheriff or other court official is required to keep within defined bounds or he is liable to punishment. And he has no right to put on airs because of his position. He has no right to question people in regard to their private affairs or those of their neighbors...A witness or prisoner is not required to answer the questions of an officer anxious to get hold of something to incriminate the accused (DN 1.21.85).

It continued, “We counsel no violence, but we do not want to see peaceable people abused and insulted.” The paper then mentioned a recent round up at prominent church leader Abraham Cannon’s home. “The obtusion of Deputy McCurdy into a lady’s sick chamber, without a color of legal or any other right was unqualifiedly brutal, and would have justified his ejection from the premises at the pointed end of a stout boot.” Here the News clearly provides a script of sorts for Saints to rely on when interacting with deputies. In the early days of the raids newspapers frequently provided real or

hypothetical situations in which Saints adroitly enacted scripts that countered the efforts of deputies and marshals.

Two papers reported the activities of U.S. Marshal Sam Gilson in a hamlet north of Salt Lake City. Their differences foretell transitions in reportorial style. First, the Territorial Enquirer reported that Gilson “had reason to believe” Anson Call was “concealed in a certain house, to which admittance, by locked doors and blinds pulled down, was denied him” (TE 2.6.85). Gilson returned in the evening, “burst open one of the doors, and entered. He found, however, that the desired bird had fled; so he served subpoenas on a couple of women...a sick woman and her attendant.” After this report the Enquirer commented, “It strikes us forcibly that if Mr. Sam Gilson should happen to do the like in some places we know in this Territory, there would be one deputy marshal at least temporarily disabled from serving any more subpoenas on sick women.”

While the effect of Gilson’s venture to Bountiful was reportedly the same in the account proffered by the Salt Lake Herald, the devil was in the details. “The peaceful calm that pervades the precincts of Bountiful was rudely disturbed, by...no less a terrible personage than Mr. Samuel Gilson, right hand man of the United States...” (SLH 2.6.85).

The Herald then played the narrative tension with a little buffoonery:

According to the best accounts, certain irreverent rustics guyed him into seeking false addresses, so that the news that Mr. Call was wanted having become thoroughly mooted about the town, that gentlemen took the advantage of the hint and the next underground train whirled him in safety to Minersville, while Mr. Gilson, chewing the bitter cud of disappointment returned baffled to the city.

The same lone women, “ungrateful enough to leave their blinds down and their doors locked,” were eventually served. Unlike the Inquirer’s former report, the Herald includes details of a speech event, attributed to rustics no less, that it promotes as directly related to the escape of Anson Call. Rather than presenting Call as simply not found by Gilson,

here he flees upon the hint that resulted from Gilson being given false addresses by some local rubes. The Herald report provides a script of sorts, under the control of Mormons and producible upon encountering a marshal, while the other account simply notes the “desired bird had fled.”

We find similarly reports of a raid on a residence of John Taylor, the Gardo House. The Deseret News reported that two deputy marshals “presented themselves at the Gardo House and asked admittance, but this being refused,” they sought further authority, and returned with Marshal Ireland (DN 3.14.85). “The gentlemen in charge opened the door and the marshals entered, and were met by an aged lady, who requested to know their business.” She was told that Ezra and Ida Taylor were sought. “The lady answered that the persons wanted were not in; the Marshal then stated that it would be necessary for him to search the house, and was answered that he could proceed no further without showing his papers.” The News continued, “Deputy Vandercock now asked the lady for her name, which she refused to give.” The marshal responded to this strategy by christening her “Mrs. Emma Taylor,” to which the lady remarked, “You might as well call me Marshal Ireland.” The article reports that the search failed, but “one of the servant girls was subpoenaed under the name ‘Emma Smith,’” while another gentleman was dubbed “John Doe.”

Contrast the above report with that in the Herald. Written from the perspective of a “Herald reporter,” he followed upon a “vague impulse” a deputy marshal to the Gardo House (SLH 3.14.85). After a lengthy description of marshals plotting their entry, the reporter takes us to the interaction between them and a “very pale, but very determined looking lady...She demanded to know by what right a strange party of men entered her

house in that manner.” The marshal explained his duty to serve subpoenas on Ezra and Ida Taylor, to which the woman responded, “They are not here.” The report continues,

The Marshal stated they would be compelled to search the house. ‘You don’t search this house, unless you can show your papers for it,’ was the determined reply. ‘You never should have entered if I had been at the door, I can tell you that.’ ‘I have my authority here,’ said the Marshal. ‘I will read it to you.’ ‘I prefer to read it myself, sir,’ said the lady, and she made an attempt to take it from his hand.... Mr. Vandercock asked her if she would give him her name? ‘No,’ she responded, ‘I will not.’ ‘I shall have to subpoena you in some other name, then,’ he responded. ‘Do as you like,’ was the reply. ‘Well, then, I subpoena you as Mrs. Emma Taylor.’ “Mrs. Emma Taylor!” the lady responded with a scornful little laugh. ‘That’s not my name, nor anything like it. You might as well call me Marshal Ireland.’

The reporter recalls, “One of the servant girls had been asked her name, and as she declined stating it, she was subpoenaed as Emma Smith, a re-christening which she received with the utmost good humor; the gentleman who showed the Marshal about was also requested to give his name, but as he also declined he was dubbed John Doe and subpoenaed in that character.”

These two reports of raids on the residence of vanished President Taylor present more or less “semantically” similar reports, which any writer could have shortened in any number of ways. These accounts differ in important ways from each other, and differ radically from later reports. Details provided in the Herald report make for more than good narrative. The account can be read as a guide for strategy because it reported speech across several turns, speech adroitly enacting legal advice given in commentaries in the News. And while not necessarily thwarting the marshals, the old lady occupied a great deal of the marshal’s time, just enough time, one can assume, for the Idas and Ezras of the house to flee. Obstructive speech could be useful in that regard. Each narrative includes various quoted speech, and provides extended dialogue demonstrating a pattern of action appropriate for intruded upon Saints: deny admittance, request to read authority

to enter forcibly, propose the requested persons are not there, and finally, refuse to name names. By so doing one clearly enacted the Mormon creed, and nearly obligated marshals to do the same.

Compare these rather more narrative-like portrayals, with interacting characters, changing emotions, and background thoughts, with the following accounts of raids published a week later. Rich, early narratives of raids provided scripts for Mormons to enact; when the narrative style gives way to simple summaries of raids, however, so does portrayal of active evasion by Saints give way to passive victimization. First, the News reported four of “the latest raids” in one article, sequencing them in column space (DN 3.20.85). “On Wednesday Vandercock and a brother deputy,” the News relates, “made a sudden descent upon the peaceful farmhouse of Mr. Charles Crismon...They were met at the door by the lady of the house, who demanded to see their authority before allowing them to enter.” As expected the marshals “produced a search warrant and were permitted to ransack the building; but to their chagrin, the persons wanted were not found....” “The next we hear of the deputy marshals they are at the house of George Dunford,” where they encounter more success with “two subpoenas served.” The report then describes “about sundown last evening a detachment of the now numerous body of the Marshal’s aides...swooped down upon the residence of Mr. Little....and after searching the premises thoroughly served subpoenas upon two of the inmates and departed.” Finally, “the next place besieged was the residence of Hon. George Q. Cannon.” The marshals “demanded admittance to the house. Mr. Sondra Sanders...was the only man on the place at the time, and objected to allowing the officers to enter. They claimed to have the authority, however, and finally were allowed to come in.” Note that the first

persons sought were simply “not found,” rather than having escaped. Second, the customary request for authority to search is reported indirectly in two of the four raids, and no other speech is reported.

The Herald devoted nearly as much column space to a report of the raid on Cannon’s residence as the News did to the above four. “Between 6 and 7 o’clock last evening a platoon of deputies...appeared at the Cannon homestead, armed with the terrorizing subpoenas with which they are endeavoring to depopulate the Territory” (SLH 3.20.85). As expected, “the officers were first refused admittance, Mr. Sanders warning them not to force the doors. The deputies claimed the authority to gain an entrance by force, if they could not effect one otherwise. However, the dispute was finally adjusted and the deputies served subpoenas upon all the people found on the premises, including...several little children.” This dispute at the door was “adjusted” somehow, and we are not told even by indirect report if names were requested and refused, or if persons were “not found” because wrong addressees were used or their occupants escaped. The article concludes ominously, “In what direction will the deputies next turn and who will be their next victim?”

That same day the Herald described how Eliza Snow, George Dunford’s alleged second wife, avoided an invitation to a Grand Jury inquisition. Snow “came to the door in response to his knock. ‘Are you Mrs. Dunford?’ said the deputy. ‘I am,’ was the response. ‘I have here a subpoena ----;’ this was as far as he got; the door slammed in his face” (SLH 3.21.85). The deputy then requested help with Snow at Dunford’s store, though a “messenger” also failed to gain entrance. The second effort, however, brought to the door “Miss Nellie Colebrook who had been sent for by the mistress of the place to

take charge of it ‘in her absence.’” After describing Snow’s successful strategy, the article concluded by listing other witnesses subpoenaed for an unknown case.

From Narrative to Summary

With more homes raided, reports began to leave out details, and instead simply recounted the next victim, the place of arrest, and other facts undisputed by all involved. The Utah Journal published a correspondence in this vein from “Citizen,” who related benignly enough, “On Thursday last Mr. John Winn, of Battle Creek, was found in Oxford and arrested on the charge of polygamy” (Utah Journal 3.25.85). The letter continues, “Mr. Boysen of this place was brought before Commissioner House on the same charge this morning by Fred Bennett.” Overtaking detailed accounts of raids were more laconic factual reports of the legal consequences of raids. Just as local Mormon papers took on passive reporting, indeed, so did their faithful readers appear pacified.

The first day of spring the News reported “another family subpoenaed,” this time “Mr. Eli Kelsey was visited by subpoena servers, who summoned his entire family to appear before the grand jury yesterday” (DN 3.21.85). The News similarly reported, “Mr. James Thomson, of this city, was arrested on the charge of polygamy and taken before commissioner McKay” (DN 4.15.85). It then listed the time and persons involved in the charge, and the bail amount. Similarly lethargic accounts appeared that day, reporting the arrest of “Elder Edward Brain,” accompanied by a lengthy quotation of the charge, and noting that “Mr. Brain was taken before United States Commissioner McKay, where he pleaded not guilty, and waived examination” (DN 4.15.85). The News also reported that “this morning Deputy Marshal Sprague arrested Samuel H. B. Smith, on a warrant issued...charging Mr. Smith with unlawful cohabitation with Mary Smith

and Julia Winter” (DN 4.22.85). It then listed bonds and sureties. The usually colorful Herald failed to dramatize Smith’s arrest, though it did call him “the gentleman elected to keep up the average of one per day...a man well known from his gigantic height and his occupation as dealer in milk” (SLH 4.23.85). It listed the “going charge,” the marshal attending to his arrest, his alleged wives, bonds, and gives the names of witnesses bound over to appear.

Accounts of unsuccessful searches were comparatively rare, likely appearing in print only when marshals failed gloriously, sought prominent leaders, or when interesting details could be introduced. April 15 the News reported a failed search of “an underground cavity beneath the floor with a light, close to a large quantity of powder” (DN 4.15.85). It then dryly remarked, “Had it ignited they would have adjourned their search with much suddenness.” Two days later the News reported that the charity of a “‘Mormon’ lady” was rewarded with summonses for her entire family (DN 4.17.85). She unknowingly provided dinner to “the minions of the law” out of charity, and was served accordingly. The report then listed witnesses subpoenaed for this and other cases.

Later in April the News described a failed search for Joseph Dean on the grounds of the incomplete temple. “On being assured that Dean was not there,” it recounts, “one of them replied that he was, for word had been brought... that he was at work to-day” (DN 4.24.85). They searched but did not find Dean, and left at “break-neck speed” in pursuit of an unidentified, and by the report, unbound man. Another “special dispatch to the news” summarily remarked that passenger trains were searched along the Idaho-Utah border, though the marshals “failed to find the person wanted” (DN 4.3.85). What one gets in these reports are descriptions of reality, not in the making, but already made.

These even moderately detailed accounts of arrests would wane over the next few months. Even here, however, one sees diminished reports of speech by essentially passive Mormons, whose newspapers leave unspoken whether the raids were evaded by stratagem.

While brief narratives appeared alongside more common summations of arrests through 1885, by 1886 one observes almost exclusive reports styled as summaries of raids. January 14 the News reported in two paragraphs two arrests, giving only names of arrested men, places served, and bonds pronounced (DN 1.14.86). The following month the News similarly reported an “arrest at Uintah”: deputies involved, place and time of warrant service, name of arrested, charge, and bonds (DN 2.10.86). That same day the News described the service of a subpoena upon Wilhelmina Cannon, who “objected to the indignity of having to walk along the street in their company,” but whose “request was only greeted with a laugh” (DN 2.10.86). “Another arrest” captioned a June report which noted deputies involved, time warrant was served, name of man arrested, that other unnamed witnesses were subpoenaed, and that examination before the jury was waived and bonds were set at \$1000, with named sureties of such (DN 6.2.86).

Reports of failed raids continued to note simply that the wanted man was not found. The News and the Herald similarly described another search of the Gardo house by marshals, “from cellar to garret” “looking into every nook, corner, cupboard, under beds and every place in which it was possible for the smallest ‘human’ ...to a full grown man to be secreted” (DN 9.23.86 and SLH 9.24.86). Search was made down the street; it was “likewise futile.” One Joseph Blount was arrested and when brought “before the grand jury made a clean breast of everything,” but could not be found later to enter a

guilty plea. “The whereabouts of the defendant,” the News chimed, “are, of course, unknown at present.” In most reports of raids where marshals left empty-handed the missing Saints simply were not there. Joseph McMurrin was sought by four deputies who left “nothing unturned, and no corner or crevice but what was minutely examined, going over the premises several times” (SLH 9.20.86). They were surprised, the Herald reports, because “word had been conveyed to them only a short time before that McMurrin was seen to enter the house.” The column warns, “It is understood that some of the neighbors carried the report to the Marshal’s office.”

In the same style it was told that several deputies “visited the residences of Mr. George Dunford. They appeared at the family residence on South Temple, between West Temple and First West streets at about 10 o’clock, and made a thorough examination of the premises, but failed to find the object of their search (DN 6.30.86). At another residence we are told “they were also unsuccessful in finding anybody, the only occupant of the house being absent.” Then we are told the reason for including this raid: “It is understood that the Marshal had received word from some one that Dunford had returned with Mssrs. Morton and Eardley, and it was surmised that this was the reason for the descent made on Monday evening.” Rather than rustics deceiving marshals, now they were merely unsuccessful, despite rumored assistance from “some one” or even “neighbors.”

Only a few reports tell of active defiance. In an “affair [that] created the greatest interest in Logan,” local leader C.O. Card evaded his captors (OH 7.29.86). After boarding a southbound train subsequent to his arrest, “the prisoner quietly stepped from the car, and, securing a horse near by, made good his escape.” The report of Card’s

escape is unique among a trail of successful raids interspersed with an occasional failure; it details how the man evaded the depts. A telegram dispatch from Idaho was similarly summarized by the News. It related that marshals “arrested a man in a meeting there, but he happened to be the wrong one, the one they were after in the meantime making his escape from the meeting house. Two of the marshals also made an unsuccessful raid on the Preston and Cottonwood settlements on Saturday” (DN 1.12.86). Few Saints had such colorful stories told of them.

Passive Saints and Factual Summaries

Exceedingly laconic reports mark most newspaper articles by summer 1886. June 13, an “Arrest at Little Cottonwood” occurred “at the house of George C. Watts,” under a warrant for unlawful cohabitation (DN 6.13.86). The newspaper reports his plea of guilty, his wives’ names, and \$1000 bonds. June 30 the News reported that “T.F.H. Morton and James Eardley, both gentlemen who have recently returned from missions to Europe, were both arrested yesterday, charged with unlawful cohabitation” (DN 6.30.86). It quotes the charges against the men, their bonds, and alleged wives. Accounts shifted from dialogic interactions strategically played to reports of deputies as agents and Mormons as served, arrested, examined, bonded, or, if providential, not found.

Reports from summer 1886 seem codified by the standard journalistic reportorial style (if space or patience allowed, these examples could be multiplied greatly). The arrest of “Bishop McRae” was reported by the News the seventeenth of that month, with clock time, complaint against him, alleged wives, and witnesses in the case (DN 7.17.86). The Ogden Herald reported similarly on the arrest of Soren Peterson, following the now standard form: “The gentleman was brought to Ogden and taken before Commissioner

Black. Mr. Peterson waived examination and was bound over to appear before the grand jury in the sum of \$1,500. The bonds were signed by Messers. D. H. Peery and W. G. Child” (OH 7.14.86). July 9 two papers reported a new development rather mildly, merely noting under the caption “released and re-arrested” that D. M. Stuart “was not suffered to go farther than the threshold,” of the prison door “before another warrant was served on him on a second indictment” (SLH 7.9.86; DN 7.9.86). The arresting process was shorn of dialogue, drama or deception.

Now the portrayed process was simply a series of so-and-so’s moving through spaces set by commissioners and deputies, prodded by warrants and subpoenas, to be bonded and insured. Raids perhaps were this one-sided, and it would certainly seem so from these reports; but, as evidenced in the following chapters, the dreary picture of federal assaults fails to capture active Mormon evasions. Did these summaries of arrests, and portrayal of passive Saints, affect the raids themselves?

The next year a people pacified by a style of reporting events is remarkably clear. Even letters took on the demoralized style now common to Mormon journalism. Deputy marshals, according to one letter, “surrounded the Bishop’s house and made a thorough search, but without success. They subpoenaed three persons and left for the night” (Territorial Enquirer 6.14.89). The letter continues, “This morning about 9 o’clock they resumed the raid, with better results to themselves, and subpoenaed a number of individuals.” Some reported speech was included, however: “One used very bad language, but the Bishop reprimanded him and he apologized.” Letter writers now simply reported the facts, rather than regaled readers with the sequence of interactions and tricks which led to arrest or evasion.

Even arrests were reportedly willingly assented to by Saints after 1886. Concerning the arrest of a railway conductor for the “familiar charge,” the News commented, “There was no great achievement connected with the arrest, as the defendant was quite accessible at any and all times, and would have appeared whenever notified to do so without the intervention of an officer at all” (DN 7.7.87). By June 1889 an Ogden paper could report, “On Thursday last Deputy McLellan arrested Abraham Hellam, at Brigham City on the charge of unlawful cohabitation. He appeared before commissioner Carrington and was bound over in \$500 to await the action of the jury” (Ogden Standard 6.29.89). It continues, “Axel Christiansen was arrested yesterday at the same place, by the same officer, and for the same charge. He appeared before the same commissioner and was bound over in \$1000.”

The Public Sphere and Positivism

What happened to the Mormon public sphere, why did it only flaccidly serve a Mormon resistance, if indeed, at all? The motion of deputies through Mormon spaces undoubtedly created a stir, and in line with the requirement of the literary genre of “news,” only stirs were reported by local papers. Editors did not report “nothing happened at Mr. Rogers’ place because he long ago fled to Mexico,” or “a man knocked on a door but did not receive an answer, and no one saw him”; nor should we expect them to do so. Their responsibility is to relay “all the news that’s fit to print,” and that news increasingly recounted activities of deputy marshals, around which other Mormon identities—prisoner, victim, bonded man—circled. Men and women who fled to the Underground were known to have done so, publicly, only after their homes were searched. In other words, failed investigations of which no one knew but the deputies or spies did not

appear in the papers; only positively public events, already circulating among readers, found life in the newspaper.

While it is true that unsuccessful raids were reported, the causes of their failure rarely were recounted, and almost never after the summer of 1885. Moreover, only those known failures made it to print. Presumably marshals failed to spy on, serve, or capture many polygamous Saints, and kept such failures secret. Hence, while reports of successful raids closely matched the number of actual raids (for this was indeed news, no matter how trite after a few years of raids), accounts of evasion only occasionally made it to print, and these were presumably but a portion of the actual failures which went unreported, unknown, unpublicized. Here we can identify newspapers, Mormon or otherwise, serving the American public by over-representing the success of federal raids while locating Mormons as merely patients of active marshals served by omnipresent spies.

Conclusion

Newspapers, to summarize, were responsible for widespread panic and pacification in two ways. First, they painted a distorted picture of the presence of spies and marshals. The spy persona, defined by concealment, was so generalized as to include nearly any person a Saint might interact with. Rumors of spies, moreover, found their way into print, while recognizably false attributions of spy or spotter did not get printed. Mormon papers prided themselves on truthfulness, and also on their service to community. Alongside rumors and stereotypes of spies, the news reported positive identifications, and generalized from these to exceedingly broad characterizations. I account for this distortion as resulting from the lack of feedback to newspapers from everyday

interactions. Editors would warn readers of spies, but fail to take up in subsequent issues whether these warnings were accurate. Falsification did not play a role in the construction of social reality achieved by Mormon newspapers. As a result, newspapers presumably shaped interactions between Saints and non-Mormons (this is clear in the following chapters), but, importantly, did not register evidence of erroneous characterizations of spy and spotter. As part of this distortion, their advice for Mormons in response to omnipresent, ever-concealed spies was to mind one's own business. This advice did nothing to address the distortion, and indeed, the creed may have mangled the picture even more.

The second way in which newspapers created a panic stemmed from over-reporting raids where a Saint was captured, in relation to under-reporting raids where Saints evaded arrest. The process here was similar to that described above. Not only were spies everywhere, seemingly, but only a few Saints avoided arrest. As part of this second aspect, newspapers also abdicated their responsibility to inform Saints of strategies by which arrest could be avoided. This abdication followed from stylistic transition in narratives to summaries of raids and arrests; they painted arrested Saints as simply swept up by a legal juggernaut. Rather than a handbook to avoid raids, Mormon addressed papers became, speaking pragmatically, little more than etiquette books, and after 1886, rarely even that. The news took on a literary style that mirrored the pacification of their readers, and ceased warning Saints or giving advice.

Attempts to appear absolutely honest, and no doubt, write genre-appropriate accounts that journalistically could be respectable, were significant factors in shifts in reportorial form described above. When arrests were still stunning events in early 1885

the details provided good copy. When narrated, these accounts provided strategies for Saints to deploy. In their efforts to combat Tribune farrago, blamed for anti-Mormon legislation, Mormon papers took on a more “objective” journalistic stance regarding arrests. Rich narratives waned amid waxing of telegraph dispatch-like summaries answering unwritten *wh*-interrogatives. “The Triangle” as the style is now called, with introduction answering who, what, when, and where, characterized reports of anti-polygamy raids from 1886 on, even being taken up by letters in 1889. This summary form emerged as canonical to journalism in the U.S. after the Civil War, thanks to Lincoln and Seward’s commandeering of telegraph lines and guardianship over Northern news reports of the war. The form bore a measure of official approval, and of truthful reference buttressed by Brady’s photos. It marked the public pacification of the Mormon people to wider American literary norms, if not yet to political standards.

As Mormon newspapers embraced the American journalistic style, and its mass-disseminated forms of truth production, Saints on their pages became a good deal less combative with the federal government. We see in later chapters that in fact editorial decisions were intimately tied to political schemes of church leaders. These leaders had reasons for banishing from their pages any evidence of Mormon evasion or resistance. For now, however, one need only recognize the transition on the pages of Mormon newspapers, and identify one significant consequence. I reconstruct in the following chapters an underground culture that grew from widespread application of the Mormon creed, “Mind your own business.”

Chapter Three

Generation of the Underground

Anti-polygamy raids set the stage for the great transition of Mormonism. As described here, the raids provoked a response by polygamous Saints, and in this response large numbers of other Mormons were drawn in. What were they drawn into? An interactional space with discursive norms opposed to those presented on and presupposed by the pages of local and national newspapers. This chapter and the following trace the creation of a unique discursive domain opposed to the public sphere. Rather than discursive transparency, Undergrounders and their protectors learned the value of secrecy, of misdirection, and learned that speaking can be really effective, regardless of whether what is said be true or false. In short, the anti-polygamy raids provoked a response which made a segment of Latter-day Saints readily aware that language can be a tool to create reality, not merely to refer to it.

Here I reconstruct the process whereby an underground was built on newspaper-created panic, local gossip, and evasive action. To flesh out the underground, I review diaries of polygamists for accounts of suspected spies and spotters, with attention given to gossip regarding marshals set on raiding Mormon hamlets. Moreover, following the argument from last chapter, reported suspicions of spies are examined for evidence of action that merely avoids rather than confronts and verifies guessed identity. Following this general collage of the underground, I track by diary the careers of several Saints as they enter and exit this space, as they are initiated into underground norms. With these

accounts I outline the suspicion-saturated reality of men underground, a space generated by gossip and suspicion, and extended by various strategies of evasion.

Avoiding Observation and Arrest

Three routes of escape from the panoptic eye of the feds presented themselves to polygamists. Official numbers identify approximately 250 men sent to missions each year from 1884 to 1890, with a total of 1705 (LDS Church Almanac 2003:633). It is likely, though would take a great deal of cross checking, that many of these men were polygamists whose situation – financial, ecclesiastical, familial – allowed “skipping by the light of the moon.” Among them one finds Joseph F. Smith sent to the Sandwich Islands. Nephew of his namesake the founding prophet and counselor to church presidents John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff, Smith’s journey was not typical. We follow his path next chapter. These missions rarely extended past three years, and hence actual numbers of men absent from Utah while serving missions, on any day during the raids, were more on the order of a thousand.

Second, several hundred Saints fled to Mexico and Canada, though like missionaries, their stay rarely extended beyond a year or two, and included trafficking between countries when means and pluck permitted. Some fled to Mexico after John Taylor visited border towns in Utah and Arizona and, by one report, told “all brethren exposed to arrest under the Edmunds Law to immediately repair to the valley of the Casas Grandes River in Chihuahua, Mexico” (Levi Mathers Savage Journal 7.24.1885).⁴ The usual loneliness, sharpened by continuous suspicion and endless worry about family unseen and uncared for which characterized life underground was magnified by an

⁴ Mexican colonies were not altogether successful. One leader in Mexico wrote of a “false prophet” who carried away a good many of the flock, and he attributed much of the colonies’ failure to false reports of the deplorable living standards of Mexican Saints (Henry Eyring Journal 1835-1902, p.65).

austere country and a foreign tongue. Life in Mexico offered poverty as well. One southern Utah leader wrote of a man on his way back to Mexico, who would often visit to be read to or just to talk, and who would “give me some pretty broad hints for cash donations...But unfortunately, I was the victim of a combination of circumstances which left me, for the time, with only 75 cents in change.” The man replied “with some condescension, ‘I’ll take it so you’ll get the blessing’” (Joseph West Smith diary, Spring 1889:75).

The third option was to enter the local underground. Taking a conservative estimate drawn from congressional reports and church figures that 3 percent practiced the principle, approximately 3500 men were involved in polygamy at the time of the raids.⁵ This leaves around 2000 men not serving missions or fleeing to other countries; some found spotty work in the east, but most lingered around Utah.⁶ This figure matches well the number of indictments for unlawful cohabitation during the period (though one need not suppose that men on missions or in Mexico were not also indicted).⁷ Given an average of three wives per man, and three living children per wife, anywhere from 20,000 to 35,000 men, women and children could have been underground at any time. The latter figure seems more accurate, considering that missionaries and Mexican exiles returned to

⁵ While 3 percent would seem to include both men and women, the numbers mislead; the percentage records the number of known men practicing polygamy, excluding their wives. A great many marriages went unrecorded, so figures of women in the principle are less definite than those for men. With an even higher initial percentage, the numbers of Saints involved in the underground rises exponentially.

⁶ Christian J. Larsen, for example, accumulated a debt of a thousand dollars because work was scarce while underground; when news of his immanent arrest arrived, he left with three sons to work the railroad 800 miles east, adding that it was like banishment from the Garden of Eden for exile in the dreary world to leave Utah for railroading.

⁷ According to Gordon, between 1870-91, 2300 indictments were issued for sex related crimes, with approximately 935 convictions, 135 acquittals, 112 dismissals, and results in roughly 50% of indictments; for UC there were 1400 indictments, with 700 convictions, nearly all of which occurred between 1885 and 1890. Other writers find roughly similar figures, with Poll claiming 1000 convictions for UC, McClellan finding 780 men doing time for UC, 146 adultery, dozen for polygamy and one for incest, while Larson claims 1200 polygamists were housed at the pen in last half of 1880s (Gordon 2002:275).

Utah periodically, and also given that 12,000 men and women were disfranchised in 1884 elections as a result of the Utah commission's test oath (Roberts *CHC* 6:61). When one considers that passage underground consisted of moving from relatives to relatives of relatives and then to their friends and back again, the actual number of Mormons involved directly or indirectly in maintaining the secret network easily might encompass nearly all Mormons in the West. And if they were not all involved, it certainly seemed like they were.

Hiding Underground

"Our enemies are on the track of every one that are in polygamy," Enoch Tripp wrote in early 1885. What was he to do? "As I have fears I think it wisdom that I should hide up for a short time for there is nothing but what our enemies are mean enough to do for the Devil knows that his time is short and he is now doing his best" (Tripp 2.5.1885). Church leader Wilford Woodruff wrote of a similar all encompassing raid in early '85: "We are living in Perilous times. No man who obeys the Patriarchal Law of Marriage is safe. I am informed that officers are after me" (Woodruff 8:298). Panic born of rumor and daily suspicion catalyzed the founding of the underground. The next month Woodruff found suspicions confirmed: "We received a message this morning saying that Brother Teasdale was indicted By the Grand Jury on Polygamy and Cohabitation. So we like scores of others must make for the City of refuge. There is hardly a leading Man in Utah that Can Walk the Streets of Salt Lake in safety. Marshals are after him because He had obeyed the Patriarchal Law of Marriage" (Woodruff 8:303). The city was in a panic.

By May the raid fully blanketed the Saints, it seemed, and Woodruff commented that "The U.S. Court in Salt Lake is running in full blast, arresting Every Man they Can

find who has more than one wife. All leading Men who do not want to get arrested has to hide” (Woodruff 5.7.1885). Like many leaders, Woodruff presumed himself a target of the feds. Invisible eyes and strange men dogged his path: “I find my house watched this Morning By a Marshal or some spy. He walked the street in front of my house until 11 o’clock watching my house” (Woodruff 8:298). He later wrote of more daring and inquiring spotters: “My abode was visited to day by 2 spotters. They did not finally search the House But they made a great Deal of Enquiry about the House but finally went off. I was hid” (Woodruff 8:379). Rather than test his assumption and the rumors he heard, Woodruff avoided the potentially dangerous situation, leaving him unable to attend fully to church duties.

Rumors and suspicions, driven by newspaper reports broadcast across Mormonism, resulted in actions which did not disconfirm printed guesses. Instead, rather than risk confirmation (and arrest), Woodruff hid. Fellow leader John Henry Smith reported similar watchers: “In the evening I went for a drive again and in going home found my house was watched” (White 1990:180). Were spies actually watching his home, or were common folks minding their own business just passing by? Again, with each of the above entries, no action is reported which could lead to verification; rather, spotters and spies as pervasive persona categorically covered uninvited and avoided observers. Here we find Mormons taking the advice of the newspapers. The Saints were to mind their own business, and many apparently did. Newspapers hence united polygamous Saints in an imagined community of ever-observed, suspicious and constantly hidden readers.

Simply living near prying eyes was precariously too public. Even before photographs were widely produced and circulated, as public figures church leaders were recognizable to many strangers. This potential for observation posed a dilemma, as Woodruff describes, “Many Called upon me to day... As so many had seen me in the office it was thought wisdom for me to leave the office for a time so in the evening I went to Judge Smiths & talked with him until 10 o’clock when it was thought that Marshal Ireland was seen in front of the House so 2 of the policemen to[ok] me [to] H J Grants where I spent the night” (Woodruff 11.13.1885). Woodruff often hid in southern Utah, though his notoriety led to suspicions cast on anyone nearby. Emma Squire described, “We were a newly married couple and were happy to have the President [Woodruff] stay with us. But we had some very suspicious neighbors, who suspected that someone was staying with us. These neighbors managed to send over to borrow this and that, almost everything we had in the house, to try to get a glimpse of our company” (Squire Little n.d.). Seemingly benign requests for eggs or flour became, once Woodruff was around, indicators that the neighbors were potential spies. Yet Squire does not report any action which verified this assumption; instead, Woodruff concealed himself in a “mother hubbard” dress, and avoided anyone he did already trust.

Neighbors were a constant source of suspicion for average Undergrounders as well. Returning home “big in the family way” after an interlude underground, Annie Tanner noticed a neighbor eyeing her while hanging the wash (Tanner 1983:104). She promptly fled. Given their proximity and heightened likelihood of interacting with Undergrounders, neighbors were frequently described as prying, searching, spying. Rather than verify one’s suspicions, again these reputed spies were avoided.

Like neighbors, strangers also could be potential federal agents. Assistant Church Historian and singly wed John Whittaker worked in the Gardo House, the hub of the public Church until the Salt Lake Temple was completed in 1893. Amid clandestine appointments between “underground apostles” and families, and the frequent distribution to reliable Saints of passes to “underground dances,” were occasional visits by a deputy or two, if only to stoke the coals of anxiety (Whittaker 1:5).⁸ These visits framed other unexpected strangers as potential “skunks.” “I was badly frightened this morning while working at the Historian’s Office,” Whittaker admitted, “when I saw a strange man, whom I thought was a deputy marshal, wandering around outside. Later he came in the office to be set apart as a missionary, and had been waiting for his friends...These are strange and trying hours. One is not conscious of the next upset, change, or trial, or what is going to happen next” (Whittaker 4.13.1886).

The effects of actual spies and raids were magnified by suspicions broadcast in newspapers, and by suspicions carried along person-to-person as plain old gossip justifiably circulated as warnings. As a result, the interactional space for any undergrounder was extended to anyone within sight, or rumored to be in sight. As the Mormon papers advised, in response to these seemingly omnipresent observers the supposed targets armed themselves with the Mormon creed. In their efforts to mind their own business, however, Undergrounders hid or fled from interactions where the other party was simply a stranger. This was the first phase of the underground, which saw the over-generalized claims of the local papers turn seemingly into reality. Public and private space intermingled when one’s business became a concern of the law. The effect dispersed Undergrounders across the territory.

⁸ John Henry Smith writes of a “nice party” with “underground people” (White 1990).

Hearing rather than Seeing

While visual evidence of danger was by no means scarce, a far greater catalyst of intrepid evasion was circulated as good old gossip. One could scarcely neglect word-of-mouth accounts that marshals were seen by so-and-so only yesterday, or that they would soon arrive at one's home. Compounded by the language's lack of obligatory *evidentials* (by which the epistemic status or source of a claim is given grammatical form, see Hill and Irvine 1992), gossip about arrests or mass raids left out significant details depending on where in the train one encountered the tale. Annie Tanner often moved as a result of hearsay, as when she "left Richmond for Franklin, it being necessary that another move be made on account of my whereabouts being known. I remained at Franklin only three days in Hyrum Hatch's home" (Tanner 1983:108) She found short peace at her brother's place, "when word came I must move on and be very quiet about it because I had been tracked" (ibid:109). Her entries after these dates, however, do not report that marshals indeed searched these homes, a silence which may mark false reports gone unnoticed as much as skin-of-the-teeth getaways.

Piecemeal floating rumors circulated in an environment created by the newspapers. As a result, the presence of unfamiliar folks became tied to rumors and print gossip, a scenario well described by diarist Christopher Arthur. After reading a letter from his pal Murdock

Warning me of approaching danger to my liability I sat and read the Deseret News semi weekly until interrupted by one next door neighbor coming to the door; when Jane & I slipped into the next room, put on coats, shawl and hats, and took a stroll. We went to the temple block and walked all around it then up past Bishop Judd's and around home. We were gone nearly an hour. The troublesome neighbors had gone and I read for an hour before retiring the D. News (Arthur 4.24.1886).

One could not wait to verify identities of suspicious persons, and it was best simply to avoid them. Newspapers taught this was appropriate, and Saints seem to observe these norms. There was then, an interlocking of claims made by newspapers, gossip generated by local folks, and of assumptions derived from one's own experience. All these abductions resulted in a new cultural space.

Disconfirmation of rumor or assumption rarely led to scaling back of the overall claims regarding omnipresent spies and spotters. Following the death of his father, one Mormon wrote, "funeral services were also held in the tabernacle... It was a very unsettled time as the deputy marshal was on the track of everyone living in polygamy... Some of my friends persuaded me that I had better not attend the funeral in public, but I told them it was the last thing that I could do for my father and I should attend if I should get arrested, but I was not interrupted" (Henry Ballard journal, 5.20.1885). Note again the concern over arrest, though this time the man reports these suspicions were not totally accurate. He did not, however, according to his diary, cease hiding or attending to his immediate surrounds with grave suspicions. Undergrounders continued to act as if surveillance was continuous, and this panic was fed not only by newspaper reports, but by locally circulated rumor as well.

With a name like Levi Savage one would not expect to find a man running at the barest hint of a marshal, yet "just after I had got to bed this evening, the bishop sent me word that the marshals had arrested John Pace in St George. I soon went to my lower lot and camped out the remainder of the night; morning came but no marshals seen here yet. I hear that Bro McAllister has gone to the mountains, up the river to a place unsettled called Zion" (Savage diary 8.13.1887). From McAllister's journal, however, we learn

that he had ventured to Zion to visit the Saints there, and only learned of arrests after his arrival. Following “recitations, songs with organ accompaniment...and watermelon” he handled church matters and visited with friends (John D. McAllister Diary 8.17.1887). A week later a telegram arrived declaring, “at Pinto today sure, that deputies raided Toquerville last night, arrested Savage; deputy says he will get McAllister if he has to follow him to hell. Deputies left Silver Reef on this morning’s stage for north.” The next day McAllister canceled his “program of travel” and took to the far north.

While Savage seemed to assume McAllister fled to the unsettled Zion, the latter only heard of the deputies after Savage himself was arrested. Presumably Saints saw McAllister on the road, framed his figure with reports of raids in his hometown, and figured with Savage that McAllister was fleeing an exhaustive raid. Moreover, the report to Savage regarding the arrest of John Pace was also incomplete. Another diarist reported Pace’s release the following day on account of a lack of evidence, though Pace carried with him the marshal’s boast that they “calculated to raid all this southern country” (Emma Wartstill Mecham Nielson diary, 8.21.1887). Rumors caused changes in the real world, and did so regardless of their truth value. By 1889 Savage guessed that two leaders failed to visit as promised because “the rumor that the marshals were in the Reef probably prevented them coming” (Savage 7.21.1889). Undergrounders as a result frequently reported on the effectiveness of discourse, as gossip became so often the cause of midnight escapes.

An Elite Underground

While common polygamists were left stitching vague gossip touched by unknown numbers of town rustics and local leaders into plans of evasion, church leaders not only

had more identifiable sources, but also farther reaching communication networks, thereby exposing them to even more rumors and hints of raids. Woodruff wrote that a “Mail Carrier brought word that there were 6 men Camped at the Beaver Dam that looked like officers, so Miron Abbot took me down to the Bank of the Virgin River where I made my Camp & spent the day. I shot 2 ducks. Read the Deseret News. The 6 Men passed through the town without Stopping about 1 o’clock on the way to California” (Woodruff 3.17.1885). When the rumor mill grinds nonstop, and every bit of grist possibly hides a portion of truth, message moves to the foreground while messenger, referred to events, and evidence recedes to the background.

One feature that certainly magnified the effectiveness of gossip was its ability to circulate unattached to any particular source. Franklin Richards heard from Salt Lake mayor John Sharp, “it is whispered abroad that many of the households of old residents are being closely watched by men in the U.S. Marshals’ employ and cases will be worked up for the coming Grand Jury, but nothing of a definite character is known of the matter” (John Sharp to Franklin S. Richards 1.14.1885). Richards’s companion in politicking and legal jousting, John Henry Smith, heard similarly floating whispers. “It is said that 20 marshals from Utah and Idaho are in Logan,” and later, “It is said the Deputies have been watching my house for several days” (Smith dated 4.3.1885 and 8.30.1887, in White 1990). These rumors were acted upon as if they were true, though Smith and others responded in ways which failed to falsify the gossip. Upon fleeing to his sister’s home, Smith “learned the Deputy Marshal had been instructed to search Byron Colton’s home for Josephine,” his wife (Smith 9.15.1885 in White 1990,). His wife quickly moved. Rumor was nearly always taken seriously, for the risk of skepticism was too great.

While reports of spies or marshals hot on one's trail neglected to report sources (in good underground form, erasing its history, as in "it is said"), chains of gossip were sometimes noted, as when "Bro. G. Farnsworth wrote to Bro. A.M. Cannon that a young lady in Mount Pleasant had given out the word there that one of J. H. Smith's wives was in hiding at the place where she had been shopping" (Smith 1.2.1886 in White 1990). Farther reaching communication networks increased the quantity of rumor. Apostle Heber Grant relied on church connections to plan around possible capture, writing, "This evening I went to Centerville on the train intending to spend the day there tomorrow with Emily and the babies, but at the depot I was seen by Tho[ma]s Harris and I learned from Bro[ther] John Woolley that he is the worst person in Centerville to give our folks away to the Marshal and I therefore concluded that it would be better for me to change the location of the folks" (Grant 11.8.1889). Church leaders did not simply rely on community rumor, however; many had direct connections with law enforcement.

No person could be trusted to behave according to received opinion. Deputies and cops did not always act as predictable anti-Mormons; some were bribed (see Charles Nibley to Joseph F. Smith 1.9.1887), other marshals owed their position to church influence in Washington, while many cops were themselves Mormon and so leaked plans. Again identities were in flux. After presiding over work at the Logan temple, Marriner Merrill left for home late in the evening when it was "reported by police that deputies were coming to the Temple on the 16th. Got to Maria's place at 1:15 a. m" (Merrill 3.15.1887). No deputies were reported by Merrill, which omission from other papers and diaries could likely mean no raid occurred. Similarly, Heber Grant's well-placed friends delivered him news of danger only known to folks cozy with grand

juries (or pretending such). He wrote, “I received word this afternoon that in case there were any witnesses that I wished to get out of the way that I had better do so as the Grand Jury were looking into my affairs. I sent Briant Wells to Woods Cross this evening to move [his wife] Emily” (Grant 11.4.1889). Friendly with marshals after his own conviction for U.C., Hiram Clawson also provided Grant “pointers.” Clawson, according to Grant, “said that Mulloy and Paul had had men on my tracks and that they claimed that they could put me in the ‘Pen’ as soon as they got some one besides Parsons for Marshall” (Grant 1.19.1890). Clawson obtained this information from influential politicians (discussed in chapter five), which favors came not without expectation of *quid pro quo*.

Church influence over politics in the region cut no small figure with marshals appointed by the president of the United States. Church secretary L. John Nuttall describes how “Marshal Dyer expressed his wishes to Bro James Jack for our influence at Washington so that he can remain in his office until June 30/89. A telegram was sent to Hon [congressman] John T. Caine to this effect” (Nuttall 4.19.1889). Of ambiguous religious affiliation, possibly secretly baptized into the faith, James Jack worked his influence with U.S. Marshals, who exchanged information regarding raids on leaders for bribes and church support in Washington. Marshal Dyer had earlier made good on a promise to Wilford Woodruff in October 1887, that so long as Dyer occupied the office Woodruff was safe. Indeed, though later stopped by deputies, Woodruff’s pardon was begged upon discovering his identity and the men slinked away (Alexander 1993:246).

Marshals found themselves ordered to arrest men who, by virtue of influence with President Cleveland, could order their termination from lucrative offices. Nuttall wrote

of several communications from marshals around which evasive schemes developed. “Bro[ther] James Jack reported to Pres[iden]t Jos[esp] F. Smith that U.S. atty Geo S. Peters had proposed to obtain for Bro[ther] Smith an indictment for unlawful cohabitation to date if he would arrange so as to have the witnesses he wants to testify against him. This matter was attended to & bro[ther] Smith got his witnesses ready” (Nuttall 4.18.1889). After Jack’s message, “Pres. Smith made arrangements to have his wives and children away from their homes today so that the Marshals could search his houses for him & witnesses to appear before the grand jury, as the grand jury expects to adjourn tomorrow night. Afterwards we learned that U.S. Dist Atty Peters must go to Provo tomorrow so that nothing can be done in Bro[ther] Smith’s case until Monday” (Nuttall 4.19.1889). Whether by their own caution or by political dealing, Smith’s family escaped.

If Mormons should be arrested, so seemed Cleveland’s policy, church leadership was to be left unmolested so long as hidden. (The policy excluded John Taylor and his counselors George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith, political trophies all three.) President Harrison’s policy, in contrast to Cleveland’s, was purportedly to raid and arrest “the First presidency, twelve presidents of the stakes, bishops and leading men generally,” and that “this was to commence after the ’89 elections” (Nuttall 7.30.1889 and 8.5.1889). Harrison’s plan was at the mercy of marshals, however, whose fickle allegiance made them more powerful among Mormons and Feds than either guessed. None could be certain of danger or leniency save the U.S. marshal, whose occupancy of a plum position was held, however, at the fancy of elected officials themselves beholden to the Church’s political influence in the West. And thus many feigned effort where outcomes were

dangerous, in a sort of tacit agreement and gamesmanship reminiscent of World War I trench warfare. Only elites, however, were aware of the games.

One could never be certain, moreover, a marshal or politician was not simply lying or lacked the power to enforce some promised immunity. When John Nuttall's wife reported a raid on her home in 1890, he "conferred with bro[ther] [George Q.] Cannon & he thought matters could be made right with the officers if he or Bro[ther] [Hiram] Clawson were at home. I sent a telegram to bro Smith as follows: 'have folks keep away until G.Q.Cannon and H.B. Clawson returns.' This seemed to be the best I could do" (Nuttall 6.9.1890). No matter promise, actual policy or its enforcement, mistaken identity and rumor still carried punch. Sophia called the next afternoon and explained that "the deputy raid was a false alarm. It was a man from Thos. E. Taylor's to collect a bill and his blundering way caused alarm to Mrs. Francis who was at the house at the time" (Nuttall 6.10.1890). We similarly find Wilford Woodruff suspicious of the promises made by marshals. Despite Marshal Dyer's oath of official indifference, by March '88 Woodruff paradoxically wrote of rumors of a raid on his farm house, and claimed his labors as new head of the Church were hindered by exile; and this while maintaining that church leaders felt softer sentiment regarding their plight and could again attend with impunity public services (Woodruff 3.5.1888; Alexander 1993:246). No one could be trusted, and all seemed to act suspiciously.

Church Presidency Underground

Hidden in the temple in St. George or fishing camouflaged in Undergrunder's standard issue mother hubbard dress and sun bonnet, Woodruff's exile was to fellow leaders

needlessly self imposed.⁹ He had a promise of immunity given by Marshal Dyer, did he not? Yet other leaders were not in the gossip rings Woodruff encountered, and were not privy to its contradictory gossip. He wrote of numerous tips to hide without indicating a source: “I got word last night that Marshals were searching Emma & Delight’s Houses to subpoena them before the Grand Jury but they Both had hid up,” and again, “Word arrived last night that Marshal Greenman from S.L.C arrived at Leeds last night armed with Documents for such as He Could find here but He did not arrive here last night. I occupied my former boarding place” (Woodruff 3.25.1885 and 8.21.1885). His friends also supplied no shortage of advice, for they “Believed that my Enemies were on my track that Marshal Brooks had returned from Salt Lake with two Marshals with him and that they were after me so I left Henrys House & went & spent the night with Bishop Harry J Glines. I spent the night alone” (Woodruff 6.20.1886). The following day another well-informed friend warned he “was Thoroughly Satisfied that Marshal Brooks & Co was after me” (Woodruff 6.21.1886). Again no entries after this date indicate that Brooks ventured near, though Woodruff acted as if he was always on the trail. Not all warnings were accurate. Woodruff was aware of errors in reporting, however few, as when he met his wife Emma and “Brother Thompson was with us & Stood guard And from a false alarm I left the House & went with Asahel to the Creek but returned and took Supper & done our business” (Woodruff 10.25.1886). False alarms, however, failed to falsify the distorted image of suspicion and surveillance that pervaded Underground life for one could never discern true from false warnings until too late.

⁹ G.Q. Cannon to J.F. Smith, 5.21.1887, claims Woodruff would have more liberty “if he were not so nervous.” Assumption of widespread cross dressing also created confusion. Anna Frewin recalled how “you couldn’t tell whether there was a man or a woman coming down the street because the men were dressed in women’s clothing with sun bonnets” (Frewin autobiography, unpaginated).

Like Woodruff, Church President John Taylor similarly evaded arrest (until his death in 1887), and this despite a wanted poster declaring a significant reward for his capture. His network of concealment was sophisticated, reliable, and efficient. Early warning, accurate or not, was essential to evasion. One early morning Samuel W. Bateman “went on guard. At about four, two shots were fired. This was the signal that the depts were coming; this was from the picked guard out on the road. All were asleep. I woke all in the house, the president and the rest of our party got dressed and got out of the way” (Bateman 9.4.1886). Warnings could come from anywhere. Only a week into their new refuge,

While the president and H.C. Birrell were sitting in the room, the globe burst on the lamp all to pieces and flew over the floor. This seemed to bother the president, and on the night of the 12 and 13 the breaking of the globe was interpreted to him in a dream that the deputies surprised us and we were scattered and nary two of us were together...At night a team came and we loaded up and left Bro. Whites’s (Bateman 9.14.1886).

The Taylor party moved in lumber wagons between three farms skirting the Great Salt Lake, veiled by silent desert nights whose attendant cold eroded the usually healthy but now ailing president. Taylor spent his days “pitching quoits,” writing to family, and attending by letter to whatever church affairs crossed his desk. They were rarely far from warning. A month later, “about 11 o’clock at night. D.R.B. [Dan Bateman] came with news that Capt. Edens knew where we were and that 7 of the United States Marshal had telegraphed to Washington to authorize him to offer a reward. I told Danny I did not think there was a word of truth in the report” (Sam W. Bateman 10.11.1886). Despite Bateman’s misgivings, he “told the president and we hitched up and went to Orin Randal’s” (Bateman 10.12.1886). After sunrise “D.R.B. came and brought the news we

were not to move. It was a false report. Bro Woolley got back just before two o'clock with the same news, so we went to Bro Woolley's."

Lorin Woolley (occasional driver for Taylor and son of John Woolley) at whose home Taylor often hid, arrived bearing valuable warnings.¹⁰ As Bateman described, "LW Woolley came on the 13th with a message to us that the marshal had put men to watch our buggy" (Bateman 4.16.1887). Not all reports led to scuttling through the night, however reliable the source, because Taylor's mortality was clearly waning by spring of '87. Guards were placed on watch this time. Yet again, "Bro[ther] Woolley came with a letter about 3 o'clock containing news that the depts were calculating to make a general raid from Bountiful to Kaysville. I had Bro[ther] Rouche see that the guards were put out promptly at night" (Bateman 5.17.1887). Woolley again appeared a week later predicting an imminent raid, and Taylor moved (Bateman 5.26.1887). Each warning pushed the Church president and his posse to the next hole, canyon, barn, or, perhaps, to more civilized quarters among trusted, tight-lipped Saints.

Added to the media along which rumors and warnings circulated, dream was similarly a trusted medium of portents among church leaders. Prominent Salt Lake figure Angus Cannon, an early inmate at the Pen, reported upon his return home some stark night omens. "My little son Quale had awakened his mother the night before in fright saying I thought, that the deputies and uncle Joseph got Pa at aunt Sarah's....I slept at the Gardo house tonight...." A week later he "related to Bishop how I had dreamed that deputy marshal Sprague had arrested me, that morning" (Angus Cannon 5.19.1886 and 5.30.1886). Woodruff revealed that "I dreamed last night I was arrested by 2 Marshal for

¹⁰ Lorin Woolley later figures prominently in Fundamentalism, bearing even more tantalizing parcels of privileged knowledge for polygamists, and this time evading Mormon leaders.

Cohabitation with my wives. This is the 2d time I have dreamed this” (Woodruff 4.10.1885). Warnings could come from anywhere. Only a week into a new refuge,

While the president [Taylor] and H.C. Birrell were sitting in the room, the globe burst on the lamp all to pieces and flew over the floor. This seemed to bother the president, and on the night of the 12 and 13 the breaking of the globe was interpreted to him in a dream that the deputies surprised us and we were scattered and nary two of us were together...At night a team came and we loaded up and left Bro. Whites's (Bateman diary 9.14.1886).

With friends, dreams, mail carriers, police, and altogether unknown speakers auguring capture, it is little wonder Woodruff and other leaders cloaked themselves when no verifiable danger lurked, despite promises of amnesty from U.S. agents.

Amid dreams interpreting seemingly random events otherwise of little note, and flurries that marshals were on their way, both true and false reports carried equal weight. Every sign portended a raid, every contingency an index of doom. Bateman writes, “A boy came and asked Edward and the children if we had any fat calves, if we had, to keep them and Bishop Holdmon would come down to see them. Edward started after a load of coal.” Just an ordinary inquiry, it seems, until framed by the pervading suspicion. Now after the coal, “Rube Gardner met [Edward] and asked him if he knew whether he understood what the boy meant. He said, ‘Does it mean deputies?’ and he said yes. So he came right back and told me I was the fat calf and I had better get somewhere for the depts were coming. This scared the folks and urged me to get out of the way” (Bateman 12.13.86). Again, no deputies appeared by Sam Bateman’s report, and they were only rumored to be there by virtue of an interpretive key applied to an ordinary inquiry. “Fat Calf” meant “Bateman,” who was apparently to hide from deputies, though why direct warning was not simply conveyed is hard to discern. Indeed, it is possible that an over-cautious friend, Mr. Gardner, simply inferred that the child spoke in cipher. Even

unreliable sources had to be attended to, for any gossip could be the means of evading yet another raid. With every ostensible evasion of rumored deputies, moreover, one's reading of veracity into representations of capture no doubt proliferated, despite the obvious possibility that one escaped from nothing but gossip's guessed referent.

Mistaken Identities

More than newspapers were involved in this world of the perennially observed polygamist and panoptic marshal. Tales that so-and-so skipped town just before the marshals dissected his home could follow from seeing the polygamist on the run. Moreover, truth was nearly impossible to discern because persona linked to truth-speaking were veiled, and messages often were explicitly detached from any particular speaker. No identity could clearly be tied to reliability, in large part because of the over-generalized spy persona posited by local newspapers. Likewise, deputy status was rarely so plain as a brass star pinned to a leather vest worn by a man bearing a handle-bar moustache (and accompanying soundtrack). A number of Mormons reported being mistaken for deputies, even by friends.

Men traveling alone in spaces their faces were unknown could occupy the role of marshal with its attendant scattering of local polygamists; a train of riderless horses fit for escorting bagged "polygs" to jail filled out the role. One polygamist sent for his pal Bradford, who "came to arrange to get my team. He created quite an excitement, some thinking he was a deputy marshal" (John Bushman 2.5.1885). Neighbors no doubt paid attention when well-outfitted men knocked the doors of their leaders, and the gossip, one can imagine, sent scurrying a great many polygamists into cellar and barn. Church leaders also created stirs when they ventured into towns unexpectedly. As Angus Cannon

describes, “I drove to Herriman by way of Bingham Canyon, by mistake. I was suspected of being a deputy marshal by the people, but was hospitably entertained by bro. Henry Tempest and his kind family” (Cannon 5.18.1886). That church leaders often stayed with local leaders, many of whom were sought under the Edmunds Act, resulted in untold suspicions and rumors of raids.

Church leaders were not immune from false reports of approaching marshals. L. John Nuttall, whose familiarity with Marshal Dyer was indisputable, got a scare one Saturday while coloring Easter eggs with a wife. “In the afternoon Bro Lehi Pratt called but none of us recognized him so that we all got a scare on supposing he was the U.S. Marshal Dyer or one of his deputies” (Nuttall 4.21.1889). Identities were in flux, even among friends. Sam Bateman described an almost lethal mistaken guess of identity when his midnight horse ride from the hideout of John Taylor to retrieve George Q. Cannon, and the day’s mail, turned ambiguous. From a distance in the dark he spotted a wagon with what looked like Cannon, and he “turned and followed them, hailed them but they would not stop and drove faster. I was sure it was they, but did not know, so on I went after them and drove past them, hailed them gain, but on they went” (Bateman 1.19.1887). The chase was on. “By this time they had loaded their shot guns. I got ahead of them and got them between me and the fence and stopped them. Then they found out who I was. Then we had a big laugh.” Why would friends of Bateman, who likely expected him to transport Cannon, arm themselves upon his approach? Bateman was in disguise, even if only clothed against the January cold. More importantly gossip contextualized his venture into space marked by anxiety emanating from the person of Cannon. “They had heard that 10 depts had gone north and they had prepared themselves

to defend GQC,” Bateman explained. With each call to his friends Bateman indexed his status as one trying to stop the party, and his persistence nearly turned comedy into tragedy. With rampant rumors hinting at raids and spies, even trusted friends sometimes appeared enemy combatants.

Active Avoidance of Marshals

The admittedly piecemeal data previously presented provides evidence that admonitions of newspapers were observed by polygamist readers. The fog of surveillance created by the newspapers indeed became a reality for polygamous Saints. As a result of taking to the underground, polygamists applied the description to everyday interactions of the world found in print, in a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy. These acts clearly presupposed an over-generalized, omnipresent spy persona that newspapers in part created. Spies seemed everywhere, and so one was left with the Mormon creed. Minding one’s own business, importantly, covered more than discursive interaction; it also resulted in hiding, fleeing, and masking of identity.

The Mormon creed in all its forms was a passive strategy for avoiding arrest. It was founded on assuming anyone could be a spy or marshal, and did not falsify presumed identities. What active strategies, on the other hand, were deployed to bar marshals from minding one’s business? We already saw bribery of and political deals struck with marshals; yet these benefited elite leadership almost exclusively, for marshals had little to lose by arresting Mr. Everypolygamist. Common folk report a variety of tactics used to delay or misdirect federal agents, or to warn communities of their arrival. Taking advantage of deputies’ well-known inclination toward spirits, “citizens of St. George treated them with wine of an excellent quality and got them to tell all they was going to

do; this was 7 am and by 11 am they reported all to the polygamists; some jumped out of bed, took a loaf of bread, and made their exit” (Emma Wartstill Mecham Nielson 8.13.1887). One took obvious risks by inviting a deputy for a drink, and this was perhaps a tactic used only by monogamists or already convicted polygamists, as when Annie Tanner’s father “stopped deputies and asked if they would like to come inside for coffee in a downpour” (Tanner 1983:97). Recently returned from the pen, her father compelled his former antagonists to stay for lunch; meanwhile the wanted man seemingly made good his escape.

Rather than risk delaying federal agents, some communities created alarm systems. These were common in outlying, tight-knit towns where strangers could be noted with a glance. Usually a warning shotgun blast from high-perched guards accompanied signs of suspicious visitors. On the southern side of Utah one stake, according to its record book, organized “a company of guards...consisting of young and middle aged men and Indians... posted on all the main approaches to town during the day and patrol guards at night” (Kanab Stake record book). The record then noted that “a similar guard system was arranged for in other parts of the state and the approach of suspicious looking persons was known and reported over the telegraph wires to other places warning those who were mostly in danger to be prepared.” Paris, Idaho, a border town, used a more dignified signal, an alpine horn.¹¹ With the welfare of many men at stake, guards would have little reason for caution when signaling the presence of strange men. Moreover, town guards knew mainly local folks, since their position was filled by men with few pressing financial responsibilities and time to idle, namely, monogamists,

¹¹ Border towns were not only near temple towns of Utah territory, e.g., Logan and St George, but also good for escaping jurisdictional boundaries

if married at all. This demographic trend would leave them less familiar with church leaders or prominent men of other locales, whose presence would indeed be suspicious. Many false alarms followed, which were, of course, nonetheless attended to by local polygamists.

Underground gossip chains were effective in creating conditions from which one could flee along simultaneously provided clandestine havens. If strangers beset a hamlet coincidentally, one man's run would turn into a veritable exodus from the countryside. These men would then carry reports of a raid to refuges, and soon all the effects of a raid came together (with the exception of actual arrests), cascading panic through surrounding communities. In these panics truthful reference was subordinate to possible pragmatic effect: capture and prison. Imaginary raids were actually evaded. "The citizens are expecting US marshals soon," Allen Frost wrote, though none reportedly showed (Frost 2.19.1886). Many men left on account of the expectation, however. Again Frost reported that "another scare occurred here last Friday night, and many are out of town in consequence. It proved a false alarm" (Frost 11.22.1886). The underground was built on two legs: presupposing the reality of discourse irrespective of its accuracy, and concealment of identity. The possibility of raids, of observation by strangers, ordained representations of reality, of varying accuracy, with effectiveness typically reserved for reality. For Undergrounders, then, speech was a real tool to shape reality; the sooner they learned this, the better their chances for continued evasion.

Discussion: Detaching Rumor from Referents

The underground was created by virtue of circular feedback between three seemingly independent aspects of culture: person-to-person gossip, evasive action, and newspaper

reports of supposed spies and raids. By understanding the relationship between these three aspects, one can begin to schematize a model of underground generation. Newspapers magnified guesses, generalized them to be applicable to any scenario, broadcast these reports, and united polygamous readers into a world shot through with ambiguity. I described the functions of this sphere in the last chapter. The only norm explicitly given was “mind your own business,” which was left for individual Undergrounders to apply. The creed was observed with striking similarity across the territory, however, and much of this similarity can be attributed to the fog of suspicion cast by the newspapers. If one is always potentially observed, one has only a few options that provide hope for resistance. One can hide, flee the area, or conceal one’s identity through various means (e.g., pseudonym, facial hair, moving in darkness).

Not only were Mormon identities hidden when underground, but one could never be certain others were not similarly masked. The creed enlisted concealment as an appropriate action, one which obligated others to mind their own business. For the fully initiated, as we find next chapter, Undergrounders presumed surface signs were designed to mislead interactants from uncovering real identity. Ironically, by hiding one’s identity, one could indicate one’s underground status. Here we find overt anti-indexical acts (concealment) being reflexively read as meta-indexicals of identity. Thus the Undergrounder emerged, who not only obscured his or her own identity (by dress, avoidance, moving in darkness), but who presumed that others, either to help or hinder the Mormon underground, also had identities described only by looking beyond surface features. Widespread presumption of concealment, and this being made into an indicator

of creedal adherence, and thus, of reliability, interactionally grounded the new Undergrunder persona. The entire space was driven and sustained by abductions.

Given the presumption (and valorization) of concealment, gossip took on new effectiveness. Gossip and its nearly impossible-to-discern truth value fed off the possibility that its source was reliable, and thus, that it accurately described reality. Certainly Mormons would trust Mormons more than Gentiles, but once these personas were presumed to be faked or veiled, gossip's truthfulness was similarly hard to recover. Well-meaning Saints would send out speaker-detached warnings or recirculate existing ones, with the effect of furthering the fog of suspicion and observance of creed. From most vague "it is said..." to "the bishop sent word..." to indexes of the very source of raids, "Marshal Dyer said....," one could presume greater credibility for the more speaker-laden forms. Gossip which said little about its source could be random and false, or, contrastively, be read as circulated through trustworthy, creed observant Saints. Indeed, "It is said..." could simply mask or have lost its credible source marker. Thus a vague gossip chain could be concealing its actual origin, perhaps in a bribed marshal. Again possibility became presumptive reality, and the polygamists scattered.

There seemed to be just enough actual raids and spying to make plausible the grossly distorted image of mass raids and omnipresent spies. Rumor raised the surveillance quotient, as it were, which further provoked Saints almost immediately into escape from immediate environs. Reports then provoked ever more admonition and expectation of creedal uptake. The distorted image that emerged was much to the advantage of the Feds, for it made Mormons suspicious of each other, hindering their collective ability to hide.

With the above data I complete the functional description of Mormon newspapers as they circulated through Mormon communities. Newspapers laid the groundwork for a fairly sizable migration of Saints into spaces designed to evade spies and marshals. Thus the newspapers inadvertently created the possibility of (quite literally) an imagined community generated by abduction, whose norms revolved around the Mormon creed, and whose actors indicated their status by adhering to the creed. Gossip was the fuel for this new community, and the creed's observance (and its expected adherence) the real engine; to continue the metaphor, newspapers were, dangerously, both road and map. Newspapers, did not, however, further delineate the norms of this space; they were not guidebooks.

What was this new interactional space like? In order to answer this question I now present brief sketches of individual careers underground. In the following chapter I provide a discrete analysis of exactly how underground discursive norms were taught.

Life Underground

“A prisoner as it were in my own house,” Albert Jones returned in 1886 from a mission to Britain embarked in late 1884. He had by then “developed into a regular (undergrounder) with ears already on end to catch any alarm that might be sounded for my warning.” His reticence was such that his son “Master Will for a time could not be induced to come in, saying, ‘If that was my Pa he would come down stairs, he would, I know.’ At last they dragged the young scamp in, who when I got him between my knees soon recognized me as his father” (Jones 6.11.1886).

Jones' diary is a most descriptive account of life underground.¹² Home only a few weeks, it was rumored that his former mission companions had been captured. Jones now considered it necessary to enter the local underground. Exchanging hats with fellow travelers underground, Jones was off to Salt Lake, "so that I would escape observation, they knowing that I was on the 'underground'" (Jones, under entry dated 6.11.1886, p.53). The troupe found its way to the Church quarry. A middle-aged man, Jones was exhausted by the stone dressing, which was frequently, and for him fortuitously, interrupted on account of rumored raids. The setting was bucolic, even if exile. "The leaves were changing color by the action of the frost, the bright red of the maple, making a rich contrast with the yellow of the quaken ash and dark green of the oak," Jones wrote once in hiding, "The sky above the mountain crest, a beautiful deep blue – nature at peace" (Jones 9.12.1886). His communion with nature was occasioned by a canyon excursion of marshals with their "lady friends," seen picnicking near the quarry. "Beneath a willow bush, hid from sight by maple brush and rock," his racing pulse kept time with a steady breeze, and "tells with every throb, that war would be waged against me. Did they know of my presence, and for why? Have I wronged any one? Robbed or murdered anyone? No, on the contrary – they would arrest and imprison me for giving life to seven fine specimens of the race – my children" (ibid.).

A week later Jones walked his wife to a carriage following a visit that brought joy despite brevity. Foliage marked his entry into a third year underground, and "my dear wife broke out into tears while walking as I sung the verse of Home Sweet Home, 'an exile from home splendour dazzles in vain'" (Jones under 8.26.86, p.56). Through fall of

¹² The diary is hand paginated and not always dated.

1886 letters and telegraphs bearing signs from home cheered him, and he often met with wives and children.

Winter closed the quarry, and “like a thief in the night” the intrepid Jones ventured home. With elated children at his bed declaring his first morning home, “word is sent up from the lower wards by Aunt Polly Till that the marshals are searching houses in the 2nd ward for me.” Rumor could not be ignored. He writes crabbed in his niece’s husband’s cellar: “Alas! This cruel warfare; just as I was in the highest of my enjoyment with my people to be forced to fly without a minute’s warning, to escape the pains and penalties of an unjust and cruel law, made to operate upon a people whose virtue is not paralleled in Christendom” (Jones, p.70-71). The often exiled father reflected on his flight and plight:

And Percy’s again with his little hands reaching
Through the fence, as he screams’ ‘there he goes, there he goes’
I may not turn back though my boy still keeps calling
‘come back to me pa’ as I flee from my foes
...
Is it real or a dream, this life that is passing?
Or only a dream are the glad scenes of yore?
Were the joys now denied me, ever mine? I’m not dreaming
When I wish that these days of injustice were o’er” (Jones, under entry dated 2.1.1888).

Jones arranged for a horse to take him to the train (no simple arrangement, for it required several relatives and friends in order to cover his tracks), where he traveled north to Logan, a temple town on the Utah-Idaho border. Employment and housing were acquired with greatest caution, and usually by way of personal reference. With him went a letter of introduction written by his quarry employer, addressed to the Church tithing clerk, who upon reading the letter arranged for boarding with “Mrs. Mary Hurst” for four dollars a week (Jones 12.16.1886).

Christmas day found the polygamist with his diary. “Today I sit in the office at Logan in seclusion and alone; while at my house in Provo City my wife entertains our near kinsfolk with Christmas dinner and Christmas cheer, a tree for the children....”

Reflecting on his new life, he wrote,

Sometimes I think it is all a dream and my fable is simply a myth – together with my home my children – and that the past is a dream -- the present a reality which always was and always will be –the remembrances of the prior life to the spring of 1884 – nothing but dream. And yet I am aware of the fact that the Lord has blessed mine exceedingly with health and the good things of Earth, that they are enabled to gather at my home and commemorate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The sports and pastimes, and the feasting may seem a poor and unsuitable manner in which to memorize an event of such grave importance – but yet methinks the innocent pleasure engaged in at the family reunion, will not be displeasing to Him who died that we may live (Jones 12.25.1886).

The new year brought a visit from wife and child. They attend services at the local tabernacle, “but go separately and return in like manner, observing to keep quiet, and not encourage attention. Logan having so many strangers coming and going on temple work, that we seemingly escape unnoticed and indeed, from the fact of this being a temple town brings to it many strangers, makes it a desirable place for one who wishes to escape observation” (Jones 1.23.1887). Capture was never far from their minds, and caution ever marked their trail.

Resting with his visiting kin sometime later, a midnight knock broke the peace of winter. Shaking, his wife answered through the locked door. The landlady’s inquiry regarding the whereabouts of her drunkard husband relieved Jones “from the fear I was under, but I experienced so much of the horrors of arrest and in such a realistic style as to bring me face to face as it were, with the reality itself” (Jones 2.28.1887). Following this false, but quite effective, alarm, his wife received a letter from her sister claiming that the Grand Jury was investigating other wives in Provo. The scare and the warning were too

much for Jones, who had been in Logan too long for his own safety. Jones left the tithing office for work in the more cloistered safety offered by the temple. His wife and son returned to Provo on a midnight train.

Undergrounders could never be certain regarding their status, and every public foray was a risk. A week later Jones ventured past marshals standing guard at the depot, admitting, “it took a little nerve to walk right up to them, I not knowing but that they may have had a description of me -- as my family had been passing up from Provo so often, but with some fear up on my mind for fear of my safety I arrived in Salt Lake City” (Jones 3.6.1887). Summer of '87 brought sense that persecution slowed, and he walked the streets with less anxiety, though never without caution.

After keeping book at the Salt Lake tithing office, one evening he called on “brother Binders” who invited him to chat in the front room (Jones 8.18.1887). The scene described is telling, for the shared assumption of concealment alters their discussion significantly. While chatting, Binders called out to a passing couple, “Oh, Brother Webster I have you this time!” Binders clarified his mimicry of marshals with a whisper to Jones, “they are old times hand cart people and he’s on the U.G.” Now supping with the “Websters” and the Binders as “Brother Bradshaw,” Jones heard the conversation turn to the guests’ trek (as “hand cart people”) across the plains on foot some four decades earlier, their hands pushing carts hauling a cache of the pioneers’ earthly possessions. The harmless nostalgia posed a dilemma for Jones. In reminiscing,

Many names were referred to (a strange lady was present at supper and I could not take much part in the conversation), the Binder family occasionally giving me a glance –as the old story of the carts was again rehearsed and I unable to talk upon the theme or acknowledge any participation. At last Mr. Webster broke out with “and then there was Sister Jones, I walked miles and miles with her –and then her son Samuel, he lives at Provo, and then there was Albert Jones, where is he?”

Whether this question was disingenuous, Jones does not tell. Indeed, in response to this prickly inquiry “I could scarcely get the saucer up to my lips through my agitations...I thought I would leave the table.” One effect of this near revelation of identity: “My position as an exile in hiding was forced upon me in a telling manner, that I feel it keenly.”

Letters from friends in England, obtained from “the brother of Robert McAdams (Thomas) whom I met after dark at the slough on the Asylum road,” suggested the wisdom of surrender during the slow down of arrests. Jones counseled with local pals fresh from the pen about life there. Easing his anxiety by their tales of prison life more free than life underground, they advised surrender or, more wisely, placing oneself in a position for arrest. Against this advice Jones committed to avoiding arrest, unless “good and sufficient reason shall be shown me by my friends” (Jones 7.27.1887). His experiences and despair, framed by reports of an easier life after surrender and news of a similar path taken by church authorities, would provide ample reason.

Soon thereafter Wilford Woodruff obtained a promise from Marshal Dyer that he would not be arrested, and the leader surprised a congregation gathered at general conference. Jones wrote of Woodruff’s appearance as “bursting asunder of the dark cloud hovering over our heads – the sweep of his hands and their return seemed as a motion of opening of a passage way obscured by hanging draperies” (Jones 10.12.1887). Woodruff’s public sermon indeed presaged a lessening of the raids in Salt Lake City. Jones reflected at year’s end, though “with the fear of arrest upon my mind all the time,” he had “enjoyed great liberty going and coming through the streets of Salt Lake City at all hours, without coming in contact with objectionable characters...my semi-exiled life

has been made pleasant” (Jones 12.31.1887). One wonders that if Woodruff’s appearance cleared clouds of suspicion precipitated by gossip long lingering over underground Saints; that by his public visage unmolested, distorting rumors of raids, at least around the city, abated to more closely reflect actual numbers of raids?

Despite the seeming diminished intensity of the raids, Jones embarked on another mission to audit tithing records among congregations in southern Utah and Arizona. Many folks here were also on the run, and the colonies initiated Jones into further mysteries of underground life. After several months in the desert colonies, he returned to Utah to find a letter from his wife. Her opening apology for shaky penmanship augured trouble. “The depts made a raid upon our house last night between eleven and twelve o’clock, making a thorough search of the Premises....In walked marshal McLahan while others watched outside, he counseled us on learning it would only be a matter of time before your arrest would be effected” (Jones 7.13.88, letter of same date). The marshal’s confidence was bolstered by a claim that “he knows you by sight and that you were on the train with him a month ago while he was on other business.” The marshal’s strategy faltered a bit, however, since Jones was then in Arizona, and so “of course he is mistaken on that.” Albert Jones knew better than to ride a train without first ensuring it was clean of marshals. Two days before they raided his home, Jones waited for the Salt Lake train, “which passed me, [and] by receiving signs from the Engineer that it was dangerous I left and returned to the house of Abraham Halladay” (Jones 7.11.1888). He opted for horseback.

Now hiding in Salt Lake City, his family watched and homes searched, Jones would receive news “most cruel” that the diphtheria epidemic entangling the bodies of

Provo had reached his seldom visited family: “My pretty noble little boy is dead” (Jones 8.24.1888). Thus begins the end of Jones’ resistance. When the most wanted man in Utah, George Cannon, counselor to now deceased John Taylor, surrendered on the fall equinox of 1888, Jones seriously considered following suit. His days were only growing darker while underground. He “works up the question of surrender” and is again advised by his brother to do so. He reviewed underground life, its economic toll on his once prosperous farm, its cleavage of families by suspicion and deception, its demand of near total isolation. Yet the Principle (as plural marriage was called), and God’s law, was worth any sacrifice, he countered, and often He protected His servants by premonition or otherwise. Besides, the nation could not long continue its persecution of the righteous. Alternately, statehood was possible, with its promise of sovereignty, or at least, friendly juries. Indeed, prison was itself a sacrifice, Jones was reminded, and one George Cannon himself submitted too. Perhaps that sacrifice would please the Lord. So the arguments went for and against submitting to federal power. Jones had reached the end of his rope, and his days underground were numbered.

In a dark fall night Albert Jones struck a match. In the hand of his brother Jones read a name carved on a little tombstone. Unable to attend to the funeral affairs of little Lynn because of fears of marshals, Albert’s brother buried the boy, even as his own faltered from the same disease. With his wife weeping, “We had peculiar reflections as we stood in the silent night in the city of the dead, beneath us laid the ashes of many of our acquaintances whom we had known in life as honorable men and women.” The raids were more than a life or death struggle for the Saints, for eternal consequences weighed on the balance. It was, however, difficult to deny the here-and-now consequences of

polygamy. After returning home Jones vowed, “before I lie down to rest this night I shall have made up my mind what to do under the circumstances” (Jones 10.17.1888).

The underground was itself a sort of prison, one he had lived for four years. The next week Albert Jones entered his plea of guilty to unlawful cohabitation. No more concealment, no more hiding from rumors and suspicions, Jones was until his sentencing a free man. Despite a half-year sentence, “feeling once more being free knew no bounds; but by an effort I controlled myself, still my feet hardly seemed to touch the ground; as I shook hands with my numerous friends and acquaintances” (Jones 11.4.1888). The marshals put an end to his elation; during the same-day sentencing for U.C. they were busy subpoenaing his wives as they left the courtroom. They were to testify for another crime: adultery. Jones was again summoned to appear, and sentenced to an additional fourteen months in prison. The evidence of adultery hinged upon admission from his second wife that her premature baby Ether, dead after thirty hours in mortality, was fathered by the already legally wed Albert Jones.

We see in the record of Albert Jones the problem of nearly constant gossip, of elaborate precautions taken to circumvent capture, and of the overall desperate and lonely situation Undergrounders faced. While Albert Jones preserves the richest description of life underground, other diarists left valuable portrayals. Vigilance at all times was their strategy, for even friends could accidentally give pointers to some unknown spy. Even family could not be trusted with certain details. How does Jones’ career compare with those described by others?

John Paternoster Squire ventured underground in March 1885. With a buggy hitched to the horse of a trusted friend, Squire drove to the last known hiding place of his

wife Emily: her sister's home. Here they are told where Emily was secreted away, and travel on (Squire 3.24.1885). In this way Undergrounders were kept relatively safe, though it placed burdens on relatives who wished to contact them. The next day,

We passed a buggy in which were two men. One was a deputy marshal by the name of Lindsay Sprague. He looked at me and I looked at him, but he did not seem to recognize me. I had prayed that the eyes of such characters might not be able to see me. This circumstance seems to me to be an answer to my prayer, for nothing has come of it, although I was told by Favor he was the marshal that called on her and made inquiry about me and Emily (Squire 3.25.1885).

This instance of seeming non-recognition bolstered Squire's courage, as if divine power assisted in concealment. Rather than rely on providential misrecognition, however, he thereafter traveled on foot, keeping off the "high road" for fear of capture. The next week,

After breakfast Matthew Lyon came to my house on a little business. He rode in the street car. He informed us, that two deputy marshals were in the same car with him. I at once thought they might be after me, so I left the house and walked in the mud and rain to a niece of mine who lives about two miles from home. I stayed until evening, when two of my children came to say that the marshal did not call at my house, so I walked home in company of Bennie and Katie (Squire 3.31.1885).

While marshals had not graced his home, he learned that they "had subpoenas for Bro Musser's family, the bishop, and others to appear before the grand jury as witnesses against Bro Musser, who had been arrested this morning for cohabitating with more than one wife." These rumors spurred him to Logan the next day, for he "thought it would be best for me to get out of the way of the courts" (Squire 4.1.1885).

Gossip ever bedeviled Squire, whose well-meaning friends had no shortage of advice. It was whispered that Marshal Ireland rode the same Logan train, so Squire hid in the baggage car. Once in Logan, the same border-temple town that Albert Jones and other Undergrounders found hospitable, Squire found relative safety. He often visited family around Salt Lake, though the usual gossip engendered a move here and there. His

frequent absence, however, was not without consequence. His wife Favor was often missing during visits, and did not appear for a farewell party held in Squire's honor in 1887.

The guests had assembled and sat down to partake of sumptuous repast when Walter came to me and said that Deputy Marshall Franks was at the front door. In haste we flew to the back door, and to our great surprise and consternation there an officer who informed us that we could proceed no further. On reentering the house, we found Deputy Marshals Sprague and Franks. The latter had a warrant for my arrest for unlawful cohabitation (Squire 10.11.1887).

Trial was set for April of 1888. While waiting for his day in court, Squire's wife Favor, conspicuous by her absence from the party, stunned him with news that she had sold her home for \$3100. "I scolded her some for so doing. She manifested a defiant spirit and told me she had consulted a lawyer about getting a divorce so I could marry legally my wife Emily. Many unpleasant things were said and much opposition was exhibited between us" (Squire 3.3.1888). Perhaps Squire would be better with only one wife, Favor pressed though an all-night quarrel. With the sunrise seeming peace settled upon the home, and Favor suggested he find them a cozy home in northern Utah, where they could again farm and raise horses. He stumbled upon a fixer-upper with a few dozen acres, a bargain at \$400. After waiting a week for Favor to respond to his plan for purchase, he returned to Salt Lake to consult her.

"When I arrived home," Squire despairs, "I learned that my wife Favor had left the country and taken my three youngest children with her. She also had taken the \$3000, the amount she got for the nice house and lost which I purchased and built and gave her as a present" (Squire 3.19.1888). Deception was, after all, the norm underground, and it could easily sunder families often separated by life underground as often as it united them against the government.

His first wife having abandoned him for a twentysomething ne'er-do-well, Squire was now eligible for reconsideration of criminal charge. Rather than spoil Favor's reputation, however, he did not seek for divorce until after his exit from the pen; and in consideration of his own legacy, Squire refused to promise to obey the law in the future. His sentence for U.C. was halved, however, and upon his exit Squire wed his plural, now legal, wife at the courthouse.

While Squire and Jones provide accounts of life underground, its deceptions, suspicions, and constant anxiety, Abraham Alonzo Kimball portrays a community afflicted with panic bred by observance of the Mormon creed. Himself arrested on Independence Day 1888 for adultery, the time between then and his court date provided relative freedom. July 5 the marshals and their catch camped at Cove Fort in central Utah. The men were allowed to roam the small town unfettered before leaving for Beaver City early the next morning. B.H. Watts was to wake the group at 2 am,

but all slept on until 4 am and on arising thought Watts had played us a bad trick by running off, which caused the depts to be mad after extending so much liberty, and was quite out of humor with me for a little [time], say[ing] if I could not help his running I could get him if I would...I felt bad about Watts going as there was nothing manly in it. I could have went as well as him as sick as I was (Kimball 7.5.1888).

Watts called on Kimball soon after, and agreed to submit to the law. A month later the marshals came to arrest Watts as promised, but Kimball "could not find him so they remained all night wanting others but failed to catch them" (Kimball 7.25.1888). Watts had earlier fled town, which "had a marshal scare during [a church] meeting. I soon learned there was no truth in it only a Bro Spillsbury from the south went into meeting house during meeting and was taken to be marshal Dyer and lo the scattering" (Kimball 7.22.1888). Tired of constant surveillance and suspicion, Watts knocked Kimball's door early the next morning, and was escorted to the marshals.

Before leaving for his own trial Kimball would write, “time is quite lively as every stranger who comes into town is an imaginary marshal” (Kimball 7.31.1888). He undoubtedly described other towns. Stopping in the hamlet of Fountain Green for supper, they gave “bishop Jorgensen a scare as we were taken for US depts, as Marshal McLellan had searched the house in the morning. Running has become so common it is no fun for those who run or those who see it” (Kimball 8.13.1888). As the train moved north, rumor preceded them that marshals were on the way.

The group arrived in Provo, and he pled not guilty to adultery, his wife the same to fornication. Convicted of the crime, Kimball was sentenced to eight months; his wife’s result is unnoted. Of the trial Kimball wrote, “I was well aware I had had a job put up on me by marshals, prosecution, and I feared the judge had been drawn into it.” None could be trusted, Mormon or marshal. For securing Watts (sentenced to a year), Kimball’s sentence was truncated, but not as promised. Now understanding the shifting positions of friend and persecutor taken by marshals, Kimball’s cordiality waned. His seeming disloyalty toward fellow polygamist Watts and breach of promise to plead guilty provoked the deputies to insult Kimball’s honor, and “we came near to getting into a row” (Kimball 10.29.88). Like others, Kimball’s underground exile ended at the pen with renewed appreciation for the power of language to convict, promise, conceal, warn, confuse, and, eventually, to offer release.

The above three men held positions of relatively little authority in the Church. Jones worked for the Church as a tithing clerk, Squire was of unremarkable position, and Kimball was at the time a postmaster assistant and local leader. What advantages did elites have in their journey underground? We have seen some already: friends in

Washington, deals with marshals, and use of telegraphy. How does the life of John D. McAllister, as represented in his journal accounts, differ from the above cases?

With a telegraph at the St. George temple, McAllister frequently communicated with church leaders. This is how McAllister, president of the temple, learned of Savage's arrest and of the trajectory of the depts' hunt, which he evaded time and again. With telegraphy leaders employed a mode limited in access to trustworthy, church-sanctioned (because it was church operated) speakers, though sifting accurate warnings from those merely pulled from suspicious circumstances was no easier. His was the end point of relays that marshals had raided a town here, a farm there. By January 1886 he had another line installed in his home. By that line he was requested to meet church leaders in Salt Lake, and at four the next morning boarded a stage. Already one can note distinct advantages to being an elite Mormon. Greater privilege, however, entailed greater recognition and potential for capture.

At Cedar City his contacts informed him that stage travel was no longer safe, and he was by "light conveyance" taken to another meeting point, from which he traveled by night to Milford train depot (McAllister 5.4.1886). From here he traveled to LDS Church headquarters in Salt Lake. Telegraphed by insider James Jack about an "important matter," his son greeted him the Salt Lake depot. Leaders were nearly always one step ahead of deputies, whether by mutually consent by simply outwitting the latter. Upon arrival at the son's home, another message requested McAllister meet at Mayor Frank Armstrong's home at 9 pm to discuss "important business" (McAllister 5.7.1886). No indication is given regarding the meeting's business. One can guess that with Jack involved, political schemes were outlined and debated.

McAllister left Salt Lake two weeks later. He carried a note given him by John Q. Cannon. It declared,

To all bishops and bishops' agents between this city and St. George, dear brethren, the bearer of this letter has been engaged in this city on special business and is now homeward bound. You are hereby desired and authorized to furnish him suitable conveyance to take him a certain distance on his journey in that direction, until reaching another settlement where a renewal of similar accommodations are desired. You will also furnish all other commodities such as are usually required for man and beast on a trip of this kind. All expenses that may thus be contracted should be forwarded to this office at an early date so that it may be covered by a regular order. Respectfully, your brother Geo. Q. Cannon (McAllister 5.20.1886).

With this note his travel was immeasurably safer and reasonably pleasant. McAllister also traveled with Woodruff when the latter hid in southern Utah, providing him with further connections, early warnings, and security.

Elite Saints clearly had an advantage over rank-and-file, though this often meant more time hidden away, and even greater caution made necessary by virtue of public position. McAllister's position in the Church as well as at the end of a telegraph (accompanied by a cipher book) further engendered evasion from deputies, though not without a few close shaves. McAllister's days (and often, nights) were spent in a temple guarded by armed patrol. His cloistered residence was further shielded from assault by federal concerns over the possibility of popular resentment of a raid on the sacred site.

Conclusion

We have in this chapter moved from mostly diary accounts, scattered here and there, to developing a model of the underground as a space where discourse plainly mattered. Talking is a frequent source of trouble for Undergrounders, and was often an object of reflection. Gossip and rumor were especially relevant. One ignored them with peril, and discerning true from false claims was, even *post hoc*, often impossible. Generated by the newspapers' failure to provide reliable indicators of spies and only spies, gossip about

strangers-spies-raids fueled uptake of the Mormon creed as the core feature of resistance. The creed, however, did not staunch rumor, but provided more stringent boundaries trespassed by folks entirely innocent of spying. Even friends could confuse one for a marshal.

The same features plagued the individual underground careers of four men, as gleaned from diaries. Though important in their differences, each account supports the schematic outline wherein newspapers, rumor, concealment, and assumption of nearly constant surveillance led to evasive acts that presupposed the unreliability of nearly all of one's acquaintances. As a result of widespread abductions about spies, observations, and raids, Mormon polygamists orchestrated a mass resistance. A meta-discourse, or language ideology, attended this resistance as speech acts were foregrounded for their effects rather than for their truthfulness. Language could cloak identity, and next chapter I discuss this cloaking and its cultural effects in detail.

I relied on newspapers in the first chapter, and diaries in this chapter, to explore the underground. The accuracy of newspaper articles was irrelevant; indeed, it was their formal reporting techniques which concerned us, for these would be read by polygamists. With diaries I presumed the reports were accurate in some measure, that so-and-so really did say thus-and-so, or that rumors about marshals really did circulate. There is no way of verifying these accounts, just as there was no way at the time to verify whether rumors were actually true. Indeed, what matters is that discourse was effective irrespective of reference. What remains to be seen is how an underground culture developed around the discursive doctrines entailed by the Mormon creed.

Chapter Four

Underground Discourse and Cultural Entropy

Suspicion and secrecy governed the Undergrunder's life, and was the only certain marker of trustworthy identity. After running to Arizona "a fool and alone," John H. Smith requested of Jesse Smith "a team to meet me without fail on Wednesday...and I would like a man who won't talk to any lady neither going nor coming" (John H. Smith to Jesse N. Smith 2.12.1887). This man was to replace his companion, who abandoned Smith upon hearing that subpoenas were in the hands of men about the town. "There is no need of my saying to you be mum in regards to the contents of this letter," Smith warned. And yet he did request his cousin keep silent, even while presuming there was no need. Once trust could be firmed up to a reasonable degree, shared presumptions of concealment (and reliability) allowed for overtly oblique communication to be rendered more clearly. This gives us a peek into how the underground was not only created, but also maintained and taught.

This chapter demonstrates that positive markers emerged underground by which relatively reliable indicators of identity could be enacted, though by so acting one created confusion. In this chapter I locate unique interpretive habits among a demographically outlined social domain and thus identify precipitates of radical changes in Mormonism. The first part of this chapter describes how vague norms presuming concealment were explicitly taught to Undergrunders. It then turns to tracking letter-by-letter correspondence between Joseph F. Smith and others to discern the growth and maintenance of an underground which came often at the cost of friendship.

Teaching a New Tradition

Then barely a teen, Anna Frewin recalled how “in our home, aunt Nellie [her father’s plural wife], whenever the door was knocked or the bell rang, would run and hide and get in a great big cupboard and father always told us children: ‘you don’t know anything. If anybody asks you any questions, you don’t know.’ I never knew anything, but that is the way we were raised, but we always lived in fear” (Frewin, n.d.). We have already seen several newspaper articles whose advice matched the words of Anna’s father. Concealment in every capacity, “armed neutrality” or “minding your own business,” ironically marked reliability for Undergrounders. Tanner describes similar etiquette: “When a young woman with a little baby came to my father’s, the only question asked by any of the family was, ‘Is she on the underground railway?’ No one wanted to know more for fear of being questioned by some Deputy Marshal who may be looking for her” (Tanner 1983:101). Knowing too much placed folks in danger, and so one was expected not to ask or not answer questions about marital status. Tanner reports such strict adherence to the creed that while dining with Woodruff she refused to answer an inquiry about the father of her child, reminding, “That is hardly a fair question, is it, Brother Woodruff?” (Tanner 1983:111).

With the inherent difficulty of knowing whom to trust and just what was worthy of secrecy, a default position gained prominence among Undergrounders: tell nothing of another’s personal relations or plans. “It is not so easy as some may suppose to prove men’s secret and sacred acts,” Joseph F. Smith wrote Jesse N. Smith during his first foray underground. “I think... men should know as well as women, whom to entrust with family secrets. In other words who not to make confidants of” (Joseph Fielding Smith

[hereafter “JFS”] to Jesse N. Smith 11.17.1884). While a fine tactic for evading arrest, highly selective and laconic interaction posed definite problems for polygamous culture. First, with everyone presumably hiding identities, who could one trust? “There was much uncertainty connected with the underground venture,” Tanner explains, “One never knew how long one would stay at a place, nor with whom they would stay, nor where they would go next” (1983:101). Moving here and there at the hint of marshals, she “had no companionship with anyone because of the necessity of keeping secret any relationships” (ibid.:103). In her ignorance and isolation she enacts the Mormon creed, teaches others of its importance and application, and indexes her own status as an Undergrunder. The dilemma of discerning whom to trust with family secrets or future plans resulted in widespread presumption of concealment of identity; this presumption made social intercourse at every level fraught with ambiguity, from newspapers and their spies to rumors of marshals, finally, to hints in personal interactions that another’s identity was not as it seemed.

The prohibition of inquiry about domestic life, for instance, created conundrums for men looking to marry. How could one discover the status of seemingly available women, perhaps whose secret husbands were underground? While employed at the Gardo House, John Whittaker courted President John Taylor’s daughter. Their engagement was not without suspense. “It became so that one hardly knew who were and who were not married,” Whittaker writes, “for the principle of polygamy had such a hold on many unsuspecting desirables, that as they became of age, one had only to seek their hand in marriage to find some of these creatures shying away from any compact offered them by their friends” (Whittaker diary p.7). By coyly obliging suitors to adhere

to the creed, women could say a great deal to reduce confusion. If the woman minded her business beyond standard dating strictures, she indexed her status as an Undergrounder. Whittaker confesses, “I well was tested several times while working in the historian office...Francis Lyman or Angus M. Cannon would sometimes come up behind me, put their arms on my shoulder, look toward the Gardo house and tease me by saying, ‘brother John, how do you know that Ida is not already married to some of the authorities?’” (ibid.).

The other dilemma engendered by widespread presumed concealment was that Mormons underground could not rely exclusively on already initiated Undergrounders; more folks than polygamists were needed to make the underground work. Thus non-polygamists were taught the rudiments of underground etiquette. After working his fields all day, John Bushman heard a sermon from apostle Erastus Snow, during which Snow “showed the harm that might be done by writing about our friends” (Bushman 4.20.1886). Church leaders were now fugitive apostles, and they visited outlying colonies of Saints and discoursed on the merits of discretion. Tabooing polygamy-related topics was part of larger effort to cultivate the underground. During dinner following another of Snow’s sermons on discursive etiquette, he made explicit what was expected. “Bro Snow said the underground is being extended,” and so as a discursive space, “it is not always wise to announce who is on board...Don’t be too anxious to find out everybody’s secrets or to know who arrives on the underground railroad” (Jesse N. Smith 5.17.1886). Note that non-Undergrounders were taught only how to avoid giving away polygamists. They were not given guides to interact with Undergrounders, but rather,

how to shield them from federal agents. One learned more extensive underground etiquette by going underground.

Underground discourse is difficult to track because it was found in not saying, in not intruding, in short, in negatively actual signs constituted in the reading, not only in the utterance, of a sign. For this reason recovery of underground norms (or etiquette) cannot rely solely on diary reports, but rather requires multiple-turn texts put within context of the Mormon creed. Explicit statements or guides for Undergrounders, moreover, such as in newspapers or sermons, fail to capture the improvisational foundation of the underground. These are models which give some insight into how norms were taught, but cannot be relied on as describing (by prescribing) “structures” of underground life. Indeed, the absence of expected interactional signs could be read within the creed as meta-indexical of Undergrounder status or discourse, but there was no durable model of which particular omissions indicated what meanings. “Mind your own business” was positioned metadiscursively, and thus, it allowed for much play when practically applied. By relying on improvised, often unspoken signs, Undergrounders found relative safety as they created confusion. To reconstruct this space one must descend, then, from some realm of eternal verities, perhaps located in the minds of Undergrounders, and instead look to interactions. What should be concealed, who was trustworthy, how could one say implicitly what could not be made explicit—these concerns, like Bourdieu’s *habitus* of discernment (1984), were learned practically, that is to say, on the underground. As a result, reconstruction must use “realtime” data which itself sustained the underground, lest we too fail to see it as so many federal agents did.

Writing the New Tradition

The analytic required to reconstruct cultures shot through with secrecy, misdirection, and deception, is one which reads texts as creative or destructive of culture, rather than as simply referring to some more real reality. Textual features are investigated in this second part of the chapter as I present letters written to and from Joseph F. Smith between 1884 and 1890. Feature analysis of socially alive texts reduces reliance on reference and eliminates worries about some text's veracity; moreover, such analysis allows me to reconstruct an underground developing text by text with signs that ambiguously indexed reliability, trustworthiness, and other qualities of correspondents. I first trace basic pragmatic features of letters: addressee and sender relations. Then I move to reconstructing one man's underground, and conclude with suggestions that a demographic divide became a discursive one as well.

What one did not say said, to the right ears, much about the relationship between sender and addressee. That is to say, semantic meaning was utterly entangled with extra-textual aspects of communication, such as speaker and hearer identities. Trust was tied to truth, and these could only be discerned over long-term interactions, and even then only guessed at by Undergrounders, and even then, easily reconsidered. Joseph F. Smith, a member of the LDS Church's First Presidency, was throughout the raids "in exile." Smith found himself in the Sandwich Islands from 1885 to 1887 (where once he had served a mission from 1854 to 1857 as a fifteen year-old boy), and then in Washington D.C. from late 1887 to 1889 overseeing political schemes. He rarely ventured home to Utah, and thus letters carried nearly all communication with family, church leaders, and ordinary Saints. The collection accessible to this researcher is far from complete,

however, with the greatest known lacuna being a lost/hidden/non-existent letter book from the Hawaii years. Much can be learned from the extant materials, however.

The creed was the only explicit norm for underground discourse, and it was rather vague with respect to practical application. Some of these applications were described in earlier quotes, though with letters as the communicative medium the underground took on more distinct shape. The most obvious way to hide identity by letter would be not to sign or address it. What mattered practically, though, is that one or both interactants were concealed only to readers outside the speaker-addressee dyad. Identities were masked by envelope addressee forms, which used names only vaguely related to addressee, such as “Jasper Mack” for Joseph F. Smith. Moreover, letters to Smith were often sent with church members, missionaries and leaders, and bore no envelop address. Otherwise one might use pseudonyms on the letter itself; by so doing one indicated observance of underground etiquette. Smith’s political contacts used the widest variety of names, including “Bro J.F. Speight,” and “Solomon.” “My dear boy Joseph” begins a letter from political schemer Alex Badlam, who signed as “Dad” (Badlam to JFS 3.25.1887). More frequently politicians, along with close friends and fellow leaders, used variants of “____ Mack,” filled in with “president,” “elder,” Mr.,” “Jason” “Bro” “Mr. Jason,” and on one envelope, “Mr. Jasper Mack.” Roughly one-fifth of a sampled eighty letters used the “Mack” address form. Of similar occurrence was “Brother Joseph _____”, emended with “F.” or “F.S.” No politicians used this term, however, which seemed reserved for close friends who signed with pseudonyms, “C.Williams” (Charles Penrose, editor of the Deseret News), “C Wilson” (Charles Nibley), “5” (Woodruff) and “William Wallace”

(William Cluff). The first two would take up leading positions (Presiding Bishop and Apostle) under Smith's presidency (from 1901-1918).

One-fourth addressed Smith with some variant of "President Joseph F. Smith." This class of writers was least exclusive, ranging from Marshal Dobson and Hannah Grover to John Taylor and Apostle Francis Lyman. With the exception of Lyman, however, all leaders and friends who used this form also used "Mack" or "Brother" variants. By far "Dear Papa" was most common, one-third used it, and these were Smith's wives and children.

As for sender forms, only relative equals signed pseudonymically, with "Maude," "Mabel," and "Tobias" used for exclusively political allies, "C Williams," "C Wilson," and "W Wallace" used for ecclesiastical peers, and "E," "J," "A" signed by wives metonymically. Ordinary members simply signed their common names. Note the relation between name signed and relation between writer and reader: politicians used the most unrelated names (even switching gender forms), church pals signed with more related personal names by use of middle name, and wives signed metonymically. Note also that wives most presupposed construal of identity by virtue of deploying only a single letter which differentiated them from other wives.

In this most elementary classification of features, then, one can see that sender and addressee forms were often icons of presumed relations between sender and addressee. Here language is doing work beyond reference, and pointing to, if not establishing social facts. From most unrelated form (with respect to the bearer of the name "Joseph F. Smith") to least so, variants of his own "Christian" name (J.F.S, for example), duration of relations and relative power asymmetry between sender and

addressee could be read. Names like Solomon, Speight (used more often on envelopes than actual letters), and Dear Boy, christened Smith anew with names quite unrelated to his own, and did so by senders with whom Smith had purely political relationships. In these new names political interests alone forged relations (more on this next chapter), with Smith clearly beholden to Trumbo's, Badlam's, and Lambson's influence and wealth, alongside his new name. These men also used "Mack," Smith's grandmother's maiden name, as did other friends and ecclesiastical equals. We can view this form as more related to Smith, and hence, users of it as bound to Smith by more than political interest. They were all men of similar age as Smith, and thus "Mack" could be read as also indicating more solidary relations. Nearer to his given name we find "Brother Joseph," used by closest friends. The relation is overtly cast with the fictive kin title appropriate to any member of the Church, but one rarely used for leaders. "President Joseph F. Smith" was used by senders of obviously subordinate status, as well as by equals and even the Church president. Non-subordinates, however, used alternate forms already given (except Lyman, a recognized sycophant). "Papa" of course was reserved as a kin title that spoke of the closest of ties, though whether this meant the sender was privy to more secrets is a different matter.

For his part, Smith was under no obligation to reveal his location in order for the letter to be construed, and so in the vast majority of letters (excluding those from Hawaii which are not available) did not sign from any place. So long as a continuing dialogue was manifest, there was no reason for identifying place. With the exception of "Terra Incog." from a letter of December 1884 to "W.W.B." (W. Burton), all letters written from a designated place were dated January or February 1889, when Smith had changed

residence. Smith alternates in five letters between presupposing form “As Usual” and explicit “Washington D.C.” These were addressed to church leaders Wilford Woodruff and Charles Wilcken, and also to “Mama J” (his wife Julina). One letter was written ironically “In ‘The Land of the Free’” to A.M. Musser. Smith usually relied on reports passed person to person to inform kin and peers of new whereabouts. However, when reference to place was present, it could be read as an index of trust placed in addressee, that Joseph F. Smith would identify his residence. One sees this claim concerning locale, names and speaker-addressee relations marked by trust confirmed in later data.

These speaker-addressee signs matter, for who was speaking, and where they spoke from, as revealed in the text, were interpretive keys to the initiated. At a basic level, if one did not know who sent the letter, one had a difficult time making sense of it. Similarly, if one could not be sure the writer trusted oneself, addressee could presume deception, misdirection, or omission as integral to the letter. But were details omitted under presumption that one could construe the hints, or because they were not trusted? The Mormon creed again led to ambiguous social relations (not resolved by the static picture regarding interactional indexes presented above), as the following material evidence. Just how trust was manifest, read, and sustained was a much more muddy matter than something as simple as sender- or addressee-identification. To see how language functioned to build or destroy trust and establish identities we must turn to multiple turn interactions. The following data are arranged more or less chronologically, and loosely grouped by sender membership in the above described classes: peers, politicos, kin, and common Saints. Interspersed are letters from Smith.

A Man Underground

Smith fled Salt Lake in 1884. Readers of letters to Smith should pay special attention, not only to explicit statements of creed observation, but to features which implicitly enact the creed. For his correspondents, the easiest way to ensure construal of creedal adherence across interactions, when initiating dialogue, would be to state one's position vis-à-vis its norms, something akin to "I can keep a secret, but certainly don't want to hear any." Claims of this sort are less common among more trusted correspondents, such as wives and fellow leaders. Indeed, in the following material, between correspondents with multiple turns, there is increasing use of highly presupposing signs (i.e., signs that rely more on established contexts for construal), in essence performing rather than stating the creed.

The below listed features, found in the following letters, typically demonstrate creed uptake: Anaphoric pronoun use without cotextual referent maintenance (e.g., *he* without prior male human mentioned in text); generalized nouns (e.g., *the lady, the folks*); deixis (e.g., *this, that, here, there*) that, like the other features, presupposes prior extra-textual grounding; explicit directions for contextualization by text-external sources (e.g., *the letter bearer will explain...*); use of metadiscursive nouns and verbs of speaking, such as *gossip, secret, promise, or your earlier letter*; and occasional use of cipher to substitute forms according to necessarily prior agreement. These features share a washing of reference which summons, by presupposition, an interactional history required for accurate interpretations of texts. This presupposed history is glossed as a relationship marked by "trust," though it could also easily be read to mark suspicion.

Alongside displays of formal features constitutive of their uptake of this discursive framework, folks underground evidence in letter and, as seen last chapter, in diary, raised awareness that discourse can be used as a tool, to index identities, to shape culture, to create social conditions. Moreover, interspersed in these exchanges reports of spies and gossip of raids randomly appear, as well as warnings about possible, inadvertent re-circulation of letter content. Like rumor in general, these reports drive secretive practices onward, even when communicating with absolutely trusted Saints. One could never be sure a letter was not intercepted. Hence, the safest practices, textually speaking, would be those presupposing prior communications (which would have to be stolen and responded to fraudulently over multiple interactions in order to be construed correctly). To see these features at work I turn to letters.

The earliest “underground” letter from Smith was to William Ashworth. He writes,

As to the other matters. I took occasion to caution the person who brought your letter, as I saw the party taking a course with regard to our circumstance at least, to jeopardize their own cause. And that was going about answering and taking notice of rumors too. The very thing, of all things, to arouse suspicion. A letter had been written by said party to another party who was supposed to have said something, which if it had been sent would have done more towards corroborating suspicion than anything else could have done, short of full confession (JFS to Ashworth 3.21.1884).

After deploying vague reference which marked underground discourse, Smith then reports initiating the unnamed “party” into underground etiquette, which he parlays into the same for Ashworth:

I advised that the letter be destroyed at once, which was done. And that no further notice be taken of anything which might be said or done...You should advise silence, and non-concern. No one should have gone to the Dep or noticed one thing, unless obliged to...Rumors had better be laughed down than combated. I should not advise removal to B_2 just now, as I think under the circumstances it would heighten suspicion. All hands be silent, but open and fearless, admitting nothing in anyway.

Appropriate activity befitting true Saints included not only “non-concern” and silence, but also more discerning interpretive habits. Immediately after writing of his hope for an enjoyable visit by “Dear Sister,” he instructed, “No matter what you hear so it lacks confirmation and the elements of truth. There is no danger in false rumors and ‘old wives fables.’ Truth is more to be feared and shunned sometimes than fiction. I trust you and others are on the right side and have wisdom enough to keep there till ‘the clouds roll by’ as the song has it” (JFS to “Sister” 7.9.1884). These overt statements of discursive norms were not sent to fellow leaders or wives, whose reliability could for the most part be presupposed, at least initially. From them a flurry of letters arrived after October 1884, when Smith fled to hideouts around Salt Lake City. It was his first foray in underground space.

“The place is swarming with spies,” George Q. Cannon warned Smith, “Every house which is occupied or frequented by any persons whom they wish to entrap is watched by deputy marshals” (Cannon to JFS 10.27.1884). The obligatory caution served, Cannon then engaged in a little gossip, sourced to his son: “John Q tells me that Louis Wells, his Sister-in-law, concerning whom and himself there have been rumors, without foundation however, says that she has seen a deputy marshal near the house, evidently watching every morning of late when she got up.” Cannon stated, somewhat paradoxically, the strategy: “One point I hope will be appreciated by the faithful Saints at least, and that is, the importance of holding their tongues. The most of the trouble from which we suffer has its origin in the want of caution on the part of our own people.” Circulating gossip about raids clearly did not fall under creedal guidelines, though its free circulation made them increasingly relevant, as seen in previous chapters.

Another onset of spies was described by Smith's wife Edna: "Our neighbors keep a good watch all the time. I think they have an object in view more than hunting for a witness in the Clawson case. We are careful anyway" (Edna Smith to JFS 10.27.1884). Smith's wives report even more restrictive strategies than silence, given their position as potential witnesses. "I was very much pleased to hear from you," Julina wrote a week after Smith fled, "that you are well and comfortable. If I can always hear as good news as that I care not where you are" (Julina Smith to JFS 10.23.1884). Smith's daughter would write of a similar disinclination to know of his abode: "WB called to see us. Said he spent Sunday with you...I am truly thankful you have such true good friends. I think he would have told us where you was if we had not told him we did not want to know" (Leonora Smith to JFS 10.22.1884). Silence was enjoined upon fellow interactants, in good underground form. Another daughter, Donnette, "would write [even] if I don't know where you are" (Donnette Smith to JFS 11.9.1884). She continued describing domestic life with a "Papa" present only in letter:

Mama told Georgie about his [letter] and then told him to go to bed but he said I want to see my little letter don't I? David had the letter so I gave him another one. He took it to bed with him, he got up in the night and got in bed with mama, taking his letter with him as soon as daylight he called for his letter. It had dropped behind the bed and mama told him to go to sleep and when he got up he could get it. But he got up and crawled under the bed and got it. He carried it in his hand all the next day and wrote a sheet of paper on both sides, he said he was writing. Dear papa come home.

Letters from family sounded the theme of not knowing time and again in the early months of Smith's underground. Rather than requesting information, however, these shored up the trust between parties, allowing Smith to write without fear of giving his location away. The strategy required guesswork, however, as one could not be certain Smith would receive any particular letter. Correspondents found ways around not knowing addresses. As Julina wrote, "We are all well. Received yours of the 25th,

nothing since, and not knowing where you are or whether you will get this I will not write much.” She then promised, “I will write again as soon as I hear from you” (Julina Smith to JFS 11.29.1884). This letter, a brief scratch really, concluded by describing writing in a home cold enough to shake her hands. Her declaration of ignorance is telling, for the letter had no purpose other than to evidence letters received, in effect calling Smith to verify dialogue with a reciprocated letter, so that she could write without suspicion of letter interception or risk of misaddress.

Given the delicate situation, confusion marked Smith’s first months underground.

Julina reported that “Bro C”

Told us secretly what they had talked about in their council this afternoon. Said that Bro Wells was there, I asked him if the President had sent you any word to come home. He said he had not, but he (Bro C) gave me permission to write and tell you to come home, but be careful and not let any one know. I asked him if he would please write to you. He said he would if we would wait. He gave it to me to post, but said he had not told you in it to come home, but that no one could read what he had written even if they opened it but you. He has got the advantage of us (Julina Smith to JFS 11.26.1884).

Cannon wrote in Hawaiian, and Smith did not come home for long, soon thereafter boarding a vessel for the islands. His home for the next two-and-a-half years, in Hawaii he could do little about raids in Utah. The luxury of metacommunicative checking, moreover, would all but disappear after Smith sailed to Hawaii. Rather than assuming textual transparency and completeness, letters took on more oral-like qualities, and thus required “next-turns” to verify accurate construal. As a result letters would become more presupposing of dialogue, effectively verifying one’s seemingly correct construal in some later letter. Like identity, reference was often concealed, and more importantly, widely presumed to be so. It is appropriate that only by some future response could one’s interpretation find confirmation: the underground was a space made by guesses, and guesses about guesses.

Reading Silences

Smith received reports of federal activity most often from George Reynolds, the first Mormon to serve time for polygamy after the U.S. Supreme Court decided his case in 1879. Reynolds's correspondences provide the finest data set for the Hawaii years of 1885 and 1886. Following a description of raids on various homes, Reynolds wrote that "Saturday last Gilson and three other deputies made a raid on your house. (Reynolds to JFS 2.12.1885). He reported that Smith's children "refused to give their names, telling them it was none of their business," and then wrote, "The five of your children who were in the house have been taken charge of by relatives, and if they again go to find any of them they are not there. I understand Sisters Edna and Sarah have considered it wise to take another move from the places where they were staying." By saying enough for Smith to fill with his own framework, anchored to "relatives" and "another move," Reynolds perfectly enacted the creed. With another letter Smith could further contextualize locations, and do so without linking names and places in the same letter. What one did not say said much about what sort of Saint one was, but importantly this construal was limited to fellow Undergrounders.

In a correspondence dated 11 May 1885 Reynolds wrote, "I took your letter to the party to whom it was addressed." Names should still be avoided, for "With regard to the opening of mails there are strong suspicions that they are tampered with by some one after they leave our hands, but as yet we have no positive evidence in that direction. How do your letters appear?" (ibid.). Smith wrote of similar suspicions (did anyone lack for these?), and Reynolds responded, regarding a recent indictment, "I fear to write details lest our communications are tampered with" (Reynolds to JFS 5.29.1885). This textual

framing preceded a claim that “McKay [the commissioner] states they are waiting for Amelia [Reynolds] to be confined before they arrest me.” Why he would identify an ostensible inside source, after writing of fears of letter pilfering is not clear. It may have been an oversight, maybe an attempt to frame McKay, or perhaps McKay let it slip to other ears; in any case Reynolds’ intent is hidden. By July he would write of just such a raid on his home, describing his wife Amelia’s sprint to and plunge down the outhouse trapdoor, and the nurse’s parleying which delayed the deputies long enough for her escape (Reynolds to JFS 7.12.1885). Reynolds was Smith’s personal delivery agent, and would return time and again to the theme of letter interception, writing “your letters came safe, except the one addressed to Bro Richards, that did not pass through my hands” (Reynolds to JFS 8.13.1885).

Through 1885 Reynolds continued to report on the details of cases and on efforts of leaders in Mexico and Washington. By his own admission his letters repeated a great deal of news found in local papers, and by 1886 he even began to replicate the summary-like journalistic form described in chapter one, listing arrests, jail time, etc. His seclusion precluded, per the creed, interaction with folks other than fellow leaders, men whose business could not simply be trotted out on paper to the delight of prying eyes. His letters, at least, did not give away important details to potential post office spies.

By 1886 he addressed his letters to “Bro Jason,” or “Elder Jason Mack,” and wrote of “Our young friend,” [possibly John Taylor or one of Smith’s wives] who has “returned to Provo, and when last I heard was well; you will no doubt receive details direct” (Reynolds to JFS 1.13.1886). Reynolds continued a theme of ignorance through the spring: “I have not the slightest idea where Prest C[annon] is. All I know is that his

brother David says he is all safe” (Reynolds to JFS 3.24.1886). After his arrest in February Cannon had skipped bail, set at \$45,000 (for a misdemeanor), and guessing his whereabouts was one the pastimes of Saints. And “As to the whereabouts of the Twelve, I am as ignorant as anyone.” These overt claims of ignorance are clear enactments of creed, but only when dealing with another properly creedal Saint. The metadiscursive nature of the creed allowed meta- indexical activity such as when silence indicates character or relations. But this meta-indexical reading is not evident in the text, for it requires reading between the lines, and across multiple turns. Could not Reynolds just be ignorant? That Smith continued to correspond (from Hawaii no less) is good evidence that Reynolds was trusted, if only because he seemed to report little of interest.

Subsequent letters reported rumors and raids (and divided the two categories), among the former that a number of church leaders had been unchurched; among the latter, one resulted from a failed bribe, by Taylor’s party, of ten dollars given to a “woman who emptied the slops,” but who apparently “thought this too small and went to the marshals” (Reynolds to JFS 9.4.1886). Even these reports were quite general, giving no details of time or place. Reynolds’s frequent concern about interception also frames his texts as saying more than is written. “I will say,” Reynolds wrote, “I am of your opinion that our letters have been tampered with in the mails, more especially those addressed to the Logan temple” (Reynolds to JFS 5.20.1886). The next month, however, he acknowledged a more complicated situation, that “I believe all your letters have reached us safely, though some appear to have been delayed in transmission” (Reynolds to JFS 6.16.1886). Framed by explicit concerns over letter tampering, Reynolds’ communications to the end of 1886 reported gossip of spies saturating the countryside, of

possible raids on temples, and criticized the frivolity of Saints. His position was unique: confidant of John Taylor, friend to Smith's wives, and himself underground. What could he say that would not immediately place these Mormons in danger, and himself in the category of Saints unable to hold their tongues? Creedal observance was found in the blank space of mostly, and admittedly, redundant reports, contextualized by Smith who almost certainly understood that Reynolds knew a great deal more than he revealed. Yet such meta-indexical readings were available only to those initiated into something like underground discursive norms. Laconic letters made him quite trustworthy, and under Smith's later presidency Reynolds would become a leading figure.

Supporting evidence of the above claim regarding the significance of particular silences is difficult to find, since by its nature it was not written. The great difficulty posed by these texts is that much of culture is working behind positive signs. It did so for readers then and does so now. Here we approach the limits of standard empiricism, and require semiotics in order to move further into the reflexive space of the underground.

Arranging appointments in Utah

As a result of reports of President Taylor's waning mortality, Smith planned to move to Utah within reach of the marshals. His received letters took on more cloaked habits. Charles Penrose, editor of the Deseret News and good friend to Smith, began a letter dated 11 February 1887 with a telling phrase: "It seems a long time since I heard from you, though I have heard of you" (Penrose to JFS 2.11.1887). In so writing Penrose lays out a plan for his letter, and its limited presupposition. He presents an extensive argument for Utah statehood, and then relayed in general the movements of various apostles, though he "feel[s] quite willing to keep quiet, still, and others are ditto."

His next letter, in response to one from Smith, could now presuppose trust, and the presumed topic was Smith's immanent return. "I do not think you will find a better or safer hotel than this in town. You will be welcome whenever you come" (Penrose to JFS 3.19.1887). His oblique claim becomes clear: "the housekeeper feels that way as well as the undersigned." By speaking of himself in third person alongside the housekeeper, "this" "hotel" is rendered a sign for Penrose's residence. Other sentences could not be so easily guessed from the text. "I know of no prohibition of the officials you name taking the step described. It appears to me that if they do not move they will throw themselves open to suspicion and probable annoyance." By reliance on ambiguous pronouns and metadiscursive verbs, Penrose hides direct reference from others, and yet provides indexes enough for Smith and only Smith to construe what he describes. It is now known they were discussing the propriety of monogamist Saints taking a test oath to vote, and whether approval should be given by leaders and on Penrose's editorial page at the Deseret News. This inference is supported by Penrose's metaphorical rendering, "the keynote is, circumvent the devils and retain the 'balance of power,' and this affects all who feel they can take the necessary step to secure it." Near the end Penrose gets explicit about the value of implicitness, parenthetically writing, "(This is private, so are the other two items at present.)" A following letter would make explicit the position of the Church on the test oath (more on this next chapter), now made public through Penrose's paper. Other strategies could not yet be revealed so explicitly, as with "John W. T's case, I think is fixed O.K. if a certain person in Idaho is true to agreement. Our friend will not be troubled to appear. I need not be more explicit, I guess you will comprehend" (Penrose to JFS 4.22.1887).

Planning to return to Utah, Smith was advised by fellow apostle Francis Lyman to use his name on epistles in conjunction with those of Cannon and Taylor, in order to throw the depts off his trail (Lyman to JFS 3.18.1887). Discourse was a recognize tool for Undergrounders, and applying this insight to political strategy was a natural move. Charles Wilson Nibley wrote Smith from Washington, apprising him of efforts there aimed at gaining statehood for Utah. To further these Nibley suggested Smith head a “bureau of workers” in Washington in order to sway public opinion, for “time will come in your history when such a political experience would be exceedingly valuable to you, for as we grow older and more powerful, we will more and more have to learn to cope with governments and powers by the weapon of diplomacy” (Nibley to JFS 5.1.1887). Discourse indeed could create and shape reality, and its effects reached into friendships and family ties of Undergrounders.

Nibley played the good friend, and even sent Smith a diamond as a sign of their bond. He describes writing to Smith from Washington: “I addressed it as usual, when Bro Caine noticing the address said, ‘I guess you better send that east instead of west’” (Nibley to JFS 1.9.1887). Nibley then reported the work of the creed: “I thought I knew your address as well as anyone, but while [Caine] disclaimed knowing anything of your whereabouts [he] still persisted in saying I had better send it east. So to the east I sent it.” To England the letter was addressed, but leaders rerouted it to Hawaii. Nibley then plied, “Well where are you anyhow? Or is it so profound a secret that nobody knows?” Here is emerging a richer, overtly relationship-oriented reading, one unique to a definable underground demographic. The reading arranged indexes of an Undergrounder’s whereabouts into a sign of trust between correspondents. It was quite limited in practice,

however, for it only worked with those who communicated often with Smith, and who did so not solely to scheme and strategize (thus excluding politicians), and who had no proprietary right to his locale (thus excluding Church secretaries and fellow apostles). This leaves us considering family and friends of inferior rank to Smith. Only truly trusted friends were privy to Smith's whereabouts now that marshals could arrest him.

Trust and Truth

Julina Smith explicitly notes how trust was read from knowledge of addressee's residence, and of the concerns engendered by this reading. "John [J.F. Smith's brother, and much to the concern of other leaders, a confirmed smoker] says he has never known where you was his letters always come under cover, and when he writes to you he takes his blank letter to Pack and says 'Send this to my brother'" (Julina Smith to JFS 4.15.1887). She inferred the relationship between forced ignorance and trust, and "told him it was not because you could not trust him, but because you could not trust those he had around him, and you knew not whose hands they might fall in, and if he looked at it right he ought not feel bad." Whether this reported conversation ever occurred, it is still significant that she should write so to Smith, for in so doing she nominates herself as able to hold her tongue, even to relatives.

In a letter dated the next day she reports a conversation with "Bro Haddie" (Cannon) regarding Smith's possible return to Utah, move to New Zealand, or travel to England. She writes, "Now he said what do you think he will do? I think he will come. S[arah] and E[dna] think the same as I do. We think we know our papa pretty well" (Julina Smith to JFS 4.16.1887). Two days later Julina's sure knowledge of Smith's arrival would break on a report from sister-wife Emma. Julina writes, "Our hopes were

built up O so high! But what a fall!! When Em came today and told me that she would start to you Friday, [because] you wished her to come as soon as possible and not to be later than June” (Julina Smith to JFS 4.18.1887). Her response: “Have you lost all confidence in me? I never wronged you or deceived you in my life, and I feel now that there is a misunderstanding somewhere. I cannot think that you would deceive your family or try to wrong even our feelings in any cruel way. You know we would consent to it, and why not tell us yourself?” She included in postscript, “I had to work hard to find out anything from Em. Only that she was going. She said ‘she cared not to say anything to the family it intended so far.’ I had said to her, you need not be afraid to tell the family what word you have got. I asked her if she intended to meet you in San Francisco, she said no on the Islands, and accompany you to England. Good bye.” In postscript is Julina’s own admission of her intrusion into another’s business, even if a co-wife’s, and the reported virtuoso performance of creed by Em. Is it any wonder that Em would seem to be in confidence with Joseph F, leaving Julina in the dark?

Contextualizing reports of Em’s hinting of explicitly secret plans were floating rumors from “two or three persons [who] have told me that they heard the President say that you was at liberty to go somewhere else if you wanted to” (Julina Smith to JFS 5.3.1887). With new hope that her husband might return to Utah, Julina demonstrated that she too could play the creed. “I sent a letter by Sister King. I don’t know if you will understand it all. So I will write you a few more words, but keep this to yourself.” She writes of a new plan for Smith’s return, that “it was decided that W.W.C. [Cluff] should go as a messenger to you...But a letter to Westley [identity unknown] states that the Pelekikena Kela [President Taylor] health is improved...I felt that it was my duty to tell

you this. Don't betray me" (Julina Smith to JFS 5.31.1887). She concluded in fine fashion, "The letter I spoke of is in the hands of the messenger. You will have no trouble in knowing who he is, as he has visited those islands with you and bro. K in your younger days." The wives had contradictory information regarding Smith's probable move. Rumor had it that Smith was on his way to England, or New Zealand, by way of Utah; church leaders were as confused as Smith's wives. "Many that pretend to be our friends," she writes, "have called to see how we feel about the new move you have made. I understand that her [no cotextual referent, but likely a co-wife] folks keep it no secret" (Julina Smith to JFS 6.18.1887). Smith was on his way to Utah, however, and Julina heard as much by virtue of conversations with Cannon [Haddie], but by her own report did not correct nosy "friends."

None could be certain their guesses were accurate until the plan came about, for trust was ambiguous as truth. Emma leaving for Hawaii presented the possibility that Julina was herself misled. Indeed, wives and leaders were not entirely on the same page when it came to Smith's plans. "Bro Haddie heard that Edna said that he did not want you here and it touched it him very keenly," Julina reported, "I told him that I hoped that such reports would have nothing to do with your coming home, for I felt much safer knowing that you were entirely out of the way than I would if you were here hiding" (Julina Smith to JFS 7.8.1887). She continues,

S[arah] understands what is taking place but E[dna] does not for I was told not to tell it till now...I did not mention what happened when Sister [Susa] Y[oung] was here, but I was mortified, and I am afraid you did not hear the story as we would tell it....Sarah told me she expected to see Edna slap Em in the face. Em and I went out then sister Y[oung] turned to S[arah] and said, 'That confirms all that I have heard.' Edna mentioned nobody's name but it was unwise for her to speak as she did.

Julina then returns to the source of interwife strife, truth mingled with trust, with each concealed or revealed differently:

The spirit that Em has manifested each time she has been here has not left a favorable impression with me. I would hate you to think that I would accuse you of deserting your family, not so. What hurt me was that you sent for Em to go by the first vessel and said nothing to the rest of us about it. That is not like you, and she treated me as though it was none of my business, and I could not blame her very much when she found out that you had said nothing to me.

As Heber Grant lamented in his journal, “On account of the many disappointments . . . to those on the underground it is almost impossible for a person to make his plural wives think that he cares as much for them as he should” (Grant 12.13.1889). Each wife (or friend, for that matter) was in different, generally unverifiable gossip chains with various portrayals of future plans, and rationale behind them. There was no stable “model” which could contextualize signs across turns. Each interactional dyad had aleatory histories that ran against other histories, and the result was almost uniform confusion. Rumors of new wives always provoked a flurry of angry or confused letters.¹³ With rampant presumption of deception and concealment, and multiple wives hearing different stories and connecting the dots to construct different images, none could be certain they had the truth, that they were trusted. The reflexivity of discourse was disorganizing culture because personal attributes, such as *trustworthiness* or *undergrounder*, were tied to readings of meta-indexical activity built from, per the creed, non-indexical (non-referential) signs. Thus two reflexive readings were always possible, in principle: one was not told something because one was not trusted, or because the addressee

¹³ For example, Julina reports in a letter dated 7.7.1887 that “Foi Apua” told her Smith had introduced Apua to another “Wahini Hou,” (wife) dressed in silk, though this report was contradicted by “Na an” who claimed to know all of Smith’s wives. She wrote, “Now what could I say?”

presupposed trust and its construal. In short, the underground was a highly abductive space.

By summer 1887 Smith, now in Utah, was considering working in Washington to gain statehood for Utah by hook or by crook. With the Church facing disincorporation as a result of the new Edmunds-Tucker Act, leaders in Washington deployed the weapon of diplomacy while preparing to challenge escheatment of church properties (instituted the day after Taylor's funeral) before the U.S. Supreme Court. With political schemes and the Church's future on the line, Smith communicated even more circumspectly, and only with friends and kin. He sounded Nibley for a possible leak, to which Nibley responded, "In regard to those 'secrets' I am glad to be able to say that I have been scrupulously careful. While absent from home I wrote to my family regularly, but never one word in regard to my business there, unless such a phrase as 'everything seems to be moving favorably,' could be construed as 'divulging secrets'" (Nibley to JFS 8.18.1887). Called to the carpet due to rumors of covert church interference in statehood platforms, Nibley defended point-by-point his faithful observance of the creed: "Never has a solitary word has been written by me as to who we were in communication with, or any other details whatever, except that one letter to yourself, and you will admit, I think, that that was cautiously and carefully done." In the letter referenced Nibley employed numbers in place of personal names, and sent the code separately (by Julina Smith), dividing the labor of the underground.

He continued denying writing to various folks, and offered to produce his letter books as evidence. "I do not know who Bro. Addy is but I thank him all the same" (for his defense of Nibley). Then he admitted, "This accusation [of divulging secrets] grieves

me very much. Bro. Cannon has trusted me greatly in these as well as Idaho matters and I feel bad to think that he may now regard me as unworthy of confidence.” Nibley’s letter is emblematic of underground life: “Brother Addy” and “Cannon” in all likelihood referred to one and the same man (judging by, among other evidence, his frequent co-signing of telegrams with that name alongside “Lewis Allen,” i.e., Woodruff), a fact which surely demonstrates that not as much trust was placed in Nibley as he claimed (and this despite admission of earlier confusion regarding Smith’s whereabouts). Trust was difficult to manifest or manage in the underground, for suspicion and concealment were overriding assumptions. The underground was particular hard on friendships maintained mostly by letters.

Reference and Pragmatics

With an explicit but vague norm—the Mormon creed—being the means of enacting Mormon undergrounder identity, doing so meant not discoursing in ways or on topics that might move another into a striped suit. As a result reference (rarely verifiable) was reckoned through sender-addressee relations. Specifically, figuring addressee was reckoned as trustworthy by sender was required as a sort of interpretive key for underground discourse. That one could keep a secret had to be conveyed without actually contradicting the claim by revealing some secret. Smith’s pal Nibley disclaimed desire for “state secrets,” Lyman declared that because the norm of secrecy was strictly observed by Smith that Lyman would throw caution to the wind in his communications (which ceased thereafter), and Penrose was explicitly “not saying” anything about an interview with “P” in New York. The importance of secrecy was often discussed among

church leaders, whose intercourse was freighted with ambiguity and suspicion, and often read for subtle hints. Their relationships were severely strained as a result.

If told the truth, one could presume one was trusted, but one could only presume one was told the truth if one assumed one was already trusted. Evidence that one was served inaccurate information, moreover, possibly indexed a withered trust, but one could not, per the creed, speak enough of this information to check it against that received by other wives or friends. The underground as a result was a highly abductive, necessarily guessed space. This was particularly true for polygamists dependent on written communication, given its collapsing of pragmatic and semantic functions into a single graphic mode verified only, at a minimum, days later. In any event, great confusion resulted from playing with pragmatics as a way to fill out reference (and from using absent reference as a way to regiment pragmatic matters like trust), for not all communicants worked with the same pragmatic “dictionary.” When did concealment index creed observance and presumption that addressee could read between the lines, and when did it indicate lack of trust in addressee? What did misdirection indicate about relations? Answers to these questions could only be guessed at by Undergrounders, and so am I limited in reconstruction. What I can recount is the source of confusion and its effects on underground culture. Pragmatic and semantic functions depended on the other, as rendered more clearly in some later text, and though cultivating confusion and hurt feelings, their interdependence made the underground possible. Throw in lost mail, stray or otherwise stolen, and it is a wonder anyone trusted another to trust them (and so on). Over the next few years, trust became a scarce good indeed.

Mistrust and Politics

After a brief stay in Utah following the death of Church President John Taylor in July of 1887, Smith headed to Washington. Here he would govern the effort for Utah statehood. Letters to Smith from Woodruff, Penrose, Lyman, and Nibley would take a familiar form. Woodruff's cipher to "My Dear Mr. Mack" well demonstrates it. The note begins,

Promptly on time your document came to hand, and upon careful perusal we call it a full statement of the case. You must make no use of this opinion in W. but send it to our friends at '61'. If ever 33 got the idea that we could get a decision he might not grant us any favor at all. If he thought we would get an unfavorable decision he would. He still may likely grant us the favor asked. I have sent the decision to my friends in 70 (5 and 61 to Mr. Mack [Woodruff and Cannon to JFS] 3.31.88).

Telegrams were often deployed during this time, and all were written in code, substituting word for word from a cipher book and occasionally using letter initial iconism. Further interpretive assistance from cotextual framing suggested words not on a cipher list. Take for example the following, received by House Representative John Caine who worked under the auspices of Smith: "...attends heptagonal sufficiently fogginess propitiate shortened irritate tiresomeness Richards anatomy colleagues idiomatic thereafter apprentice Hallow irritate tiresomeness Maude Keep alike knight octogenarian Maude frippery thatch...." It is decoded on the same page interlineally as "...attorneys here suggest follow proposition show it to Richards and colleagues if they approve hand it to Maude. Keep all knowledge of Maude from them..." (Telegram to JFS 3.29.1888). The majority of equally vague telegrams treat political schemes, and great care was taken to ensure highly presupposing signs were sent only to those who could decode them (these schemes are discussed next chapter).

The cost of this strategy was rendered in fractured trust among church leaders, who could never be certain they had the right story, or whether they were left in the dark as a result of rumored indiscretion. Penrose complained about a shift in policy regarding a state constitution which now contradicted a position propounded by the News (though the contradictory positions may have been indirectly planned). He wrote from “over the way,” that “the brethren have gone too far to recede before word reached of the change of policy. ‘Abraham’ of Idaho had not only made the altar and the fire, but had put the boy on the pile and completed the sacrifice” (Penrose to JFS 10.30.1888). All this vague talk around political schemes sundered the usually united apostles.

1889 was a year of great confusion and distrust, the source of which was a recognized disparity between positions taken by church leaders in public regarding plural marriage and statehood, and in non-overlapping private chains of communication which sometimes clarified these disparities. What was true? We can see the problems engendered by the over-abductivity, the necessary guesswork required, of underground communications in another letter from Penrose. He reports a letter arrived which contained nothing but “intelligence clippings,” and “it had no ‘Box B’ [their code for intrepid senders] on it. Perhaps John W [Young] had letter be wired to know just how he addressed the letter. If the dispatch is sent to John T [Caine] he could find out without cipher to John W” (Penrose to JFS 3.15.1889). Penrose continues wondering, “He may have addressed either Williams or Penrose. He may have entrusted it to someone to mail who forgot it. Or he may inadvertently have addressed it ‘New York’....There is something very mysterious about it and quite perplexing,” Penrose confessed. Caine sent

a similar request to Smith for clarification of a telegram from F.S. Richards which he did “not understand” (Caine to JFS 2.27.1889).

The underground was beginning to break under the weight of interlocked semantics and pragmatics, of tying construal of reference (“meaning” and “truth”) to pragmatic meaning (“trust” and “reliability”), all read from meta-indexical construal of addressee by sender. The overall effect ironically imposed the Mormon creed on everyone, obliging a freeze in communication and organized action. Even recognition of appropriate addressee forms unraveled, as Jesse Smith wrote to his cousin, “President Joseph F Smith,” “I do not know whether you have letters directed in your own name so I take the precaution to send them under cover to Bro. Spencer” (Jesse N Smith to JFS 4.20.1889). Throw into the interactional fray the occasional gossip and lost letter, and it’s a wonder any sort of underground culture continued as long as it did.

The Underground Strained

Letters from wives Julina and Edna sent during the spring of ’89 well demonstrate the problems of underground communication. Now herself “in exile,” Edna wrote a valentine (so to speak) to Joseph F.: “Bro Wilcken said I was to go up to the ‘Captains’ so here I am” (Edna Smith to JFS 2.14.1889). She then reported another miscommunication:

I did not say Aunt Zina told me sister Emily [Richards] said so and so, what I did say was I was surprised that she should ask me if I had heard from you or if I had any news from you from W[ashington] but I was not surprised when I learned how she knew your whereabouts. I fling nothing at sister R[eynolds] but after aunt Zina had gone another lady called and she said sister Emily told on the stand in the woman’s suffragist meeting where you were.

Edna then defended the reported public revelation of Smith’s hideout, writing “I do not think she would willingly give you away but I have now told you just how Aunt Zina

found it out and I am sorry I mentioned it at all.” Now on the defensive as a result of Smith’s accusation, “I did not do it to make anyone trouble but to let you know and you only. You rather go for me on the subject and seem to think you could trust her [Emily Richards, non-kin] as soon as me, well I am glad. I will not review any more of your letter, it is not worth while altho’ I would like to say a little more.” She then described her own observance of creed with “an underground lady” “who gave herself away to me yesterday. I was surprised but I never let on to her that I knew who she was, I played ignorant and at last she up and told it so plainly that no one but a ‘dunce’ could help understanding. I shant let on I know anything tho’.” Underground discourse meant miscommunication, and this was often read as a sign of mistrust when recognized as such, though it could be nothing more than adherence to the creed.

Also hounded by rumors of spies and marshals, Julina nevertheless arranged to rendezvous a visiting Smith. She described another confounded interaction.

S[arah] told me she would not write or I would not have written what I have, but she has just sent a letter for me to deliver. I sent A[lice]’s directly to her. She made a mistake in what I said. I went down to take her money and I told her, ‘that it was thought best for the folks to go away during conference, that Edna had gone and the other folks were going but I knew not where.’ I thought she understood me but it seems that she took *the folks* for you (Julina Smith to JFS 4.4.1889).

Presumably Alice would then regard Julina as in the know about Smith, though when this story did not pan out, multiple readings ensued: Was Julina lying to protect Smith, or was she herself deceived? How could Alice be certain she was not herself deceived?

Smith’s return from Washington to the territory for a general church conference, where he would be sustained as counselor to newly sustained President Woodruff, was marked by rumors, published no less in the Tribune. These hinted at more than raids. During this rough month, Smith declared to his cousin John Henry, “You are well aware

that I have no more wives now than I had more than five years ago, and that I have taken no one to wife since more than five years ago” (JFS to John H. Smith 4.21.1889). His defense was spirited for “what effect his [the Tribune reporter’s] lying may have had on those who know no better, is hard to tell.” Rumor had it that Smith had taken another wife while in Hawaii. One of those who would presumably “know better,” Edna, would write of the same article, “I cannot describe my feelings when I read the clipping from the ‘Trib’. I think Sarah’s [letter] describes the situation tho’, exactly as being s__t on and rubbed in. Hyrum [her son] boiled over, said ‘to think Papa has no boys big enough to make them eat their words.’ I have about 40 things to say but Emma is squawking as usual” (Edna Smith to JFS 3.28.1889). Rumors dogged Smith’s wives, who had now taken to hiding to avoid being compelled to testify against Smith. Edna wrote, “I think the underground agrees with me remarkably well. You need not be at all backward about keeping me on it, that’s taffy” Written while on the run from marshals, the letter described a situation made painful by a new home built for Smith’s “young wife,” a veritable “palace to the beloved A[lice]” (Edna Smith to JFS 4.27.1889). The year would conclude with more suspicions cast upon Joseph F. Smith, among them Edna castigating him for failure to keep secret her ailing health, and for mentioning “their (M[ary] and A[lice]’s) name, which he was not to do, “as I am not in love with either” (Edna Smith to JFS 7.23.1889). The Mormon community was falling apart.

Smith was also, by his own report to Nibley, blackened by a vague but telling “broad hint” from Apostle Moses Thatcher, “that some things transacted in our councils here had come to him from a source outside, which led him to the conclusion that there was a big leakage somewhere. By a furtive but meaningful look and significant

expression of countenance I could not help thinking he intended to link me in some way with the circumstances” (JFS to CW Nibley 10.5.1889). He brought the accusation to Nibley for a reason: “I wondered if it was possible that you were the outside source, also aimed at. And if so, I thought if I mentioned it, you might throw some light on the subject.” Smith recognized the delicate position he now found himself in, writing, “of course I am partially leaking in this mention of the subject, and it would never do for you to breathe it to any living thing but myself.” He then worked the relationship: “You are the only man to whom I ever spoke confidentially to my knowledge, outside my immediate associates, and that because my confidence is unbounded in you, and because I have no secrets about M. that I have kept from you. This is between you and me.” Though adeptly linking aspects of sender-addressee relations to reported speech, Smith’s letter well demonstrates the problems of underground discourse: When reading another’s apparent subtle accusation of one’s loose tongue, rather than address it directly to the accuser, one begins similarly investigating fellow interactants. And one did so without explicitly stating what exactly the breach was. Nibley and Thatcher shared business interests, and also worked on Washington matters, and undoubtedly discussed confidential matters that, perhaps forgotten by Thatcher, would return to him without a source. One also wonders whether others “in council” were similarly accused by the “furtive look,” and rather than sounding out correspondences, instead limited communication to absolutely trusted folks or further limited their talk to news reports widely known. What was at the beginning of the raids a sign of Mormonness, namely, observance of the Mormon creed, now opened signs for interpretation as indicating mistrust between interactants, of quite un-Mormon status. The underground could not for

long bear the weight of confusion begotten of entangled semantics and pragmatics, of every sign seemingly concealed another layer and boding ill trust between friends.

Smith began 1890 by writing a letter to reliable George Farrell, admitting that “I did not reply directly as I had nothing of importance to say. But on seeing, the other day, you had fallen into the hands of the ‘Philistines,’ my sympathy was aroused. I am very sorry the hounds have scented you out” (JFS to Farrell 2.21.1890). The scent was, by Smith’s report, laid by Farrell himself: “The moment I read, in your letter, about your going from the train to the meeting, I felt concerned about you.” Perhaps a little concerned that Farrell may link him to the hounds, Smith wrote, “I am satisfied that a much less exposure on my part would ‘cook my goose.’ My experience on the U.G. has demonstrated beyond a doubt that complete safety depends on running no chances.” He concluded with sagacity, “My experience proves that the greatest danger to the exile is in trusting his friends.” With this statement the fellowship once enjoyed by apostles and run-of-the-mill Saints faltered precisely when collective resistance was most called for. It was as if the over-generalized framework which made spies and skunks of anyone and everyone had finally captured even the leadership with vague, ubiquitous suspicions.

A general panic provoked by newspapers initially led to underground excursions, whose passengers happened to take on ambiguous reference as part of a repertoire of concealment. This referential opacity was tied to characterizations of addressee as reliable by speaker, pragmatic meanings only clarified in some later semiotic event. Without further confirmation established by continued correspondence, however, textual ambiguities could also be read as indicators of mistrust, which would bring further correspondence to a halt. Given the miscommunications and changes of plans

unmentioned, in an environment saturated by rumor of spies, the reflexive reading of reliability that was the very backbone of the underground snapped. This break had as much to do with formal features identified here as with dynamics described last chapter.

A Discursive Divide Precipitates Cultural Schism

Undergrounders found interaction with Mormons living above board especially difficult, given the latter's non-initiation into the loose trappings of underground etiquette. Here I find precipitates of cultural cleavage. Kinsman John Henry Smith confessed, "I begin to feel in my inmost soul that the Lord is not pleased with our methods and the shifts to which we are resorting to avoid the issues he has permitted to be raised to test us as to our faith" (John H Smith to JFS 3.12.1888). "Would it not be better," he reasoned, "to suffer bonds, imprisonment, exile and even death than to so connive and plot that one almost loses his own self respect, his love for the truth, and feels he is a trickster if not a confirmed rogue?" The strategy of leaders of the Church (to foreshadow the next chapter) was to exert influence in Washington, double dealing Democrats and Republicans alike while wire-pulling a public face of non-interference. Alongside this tactic, sermons carefully approved an anti-polygamy provision in the state constitution (predicated on a distinction between "celestial marriage" as authorized plural marriage and "polygamy" as Gentile plurality). John Henry lamented, "I am reaching that condition that I blush in shame from the peculiar and startling situations in which we so often find ourselves as the result of the course we are pursuing. We preach honesty and truthfulness, but where are we in our actual practices?"

His rejoinder to Joseph F's apparently heated response revealed the desperate situation the Church was in: "It looks to me as if the only chance on that scene

[statehood] is to give the whole business away, renouncing our faith say for five years and then taking it up again when once inside the great governmental folds” (John H. Smith to JFS 4.3.1888). He then took up his earlier censure of Mormon discursive tactics. “It seemed to warm your blood somewhat,” he inferred, “for me to write in the strain I did. No personal reflection upon your course was meant by me...Nor did I intend to awaken within you a suspicion that I felt I had more courage than you because it had been my good fortune under the blessings of God to be at liberty.” Monogamists and free-roaming polygamists simply did not understand subtle distinctions drawn by Undergrounders, nor could they accurately decipher their ambiguous utterances. Here we can see a fracture in the monolith of Mormon culture, slowly separating Saints according to their valorization of discursive strategies, and the readings of personhood thence.

A similar concern about “deception” came to Smith from monogamist church attorney Franklin S. Richards and Deseret News editor Charles Penrose. In a policy statement outlining the advantages of statehood founded on an anti-polygamy provision (written as a ruse), Richards asserted, “So far from being a subterfuge, it would relieve our people from the endless subterfuges and prevarications which our present condition imposes, and which threaten to make our rising generation a race of deceivers” (F.S. Richards and Penrose to Taylor and JFS 5.3.1887). Richards plied his discourse in courtrooms, while Penrose worked the public sphere. Both realms lacked important features of underground life: the papers lacked for the most part dialogic interaction, while courtroom players paid the bills by revealing what was subversive to law. Monogamists and public polygamists shared interpretive frameworks that differed from

those of Undergrounders. When the Church took to the public sphere to make its case for statehood before the nation, Mormonism began to break on this new fault line.

Conclusion

It is important to note criticisms of apparently deceptive tactics stemmed from these public spaces. Non-Undergrounders read concealed reference, addressee reliance, and intentional misdirection through discursive norms common to the public sphere. Criticisms of underground practices did not take into account the effects of speaking, as it were, in underground tongues: one's faithfulness was manifest by not revealing more than local contexts demanded, though one depended on hearer/addressee to read among these contexts an assessment of trustworthiness by speaker. The creed indexed both speaker identity and speaker-addressee relations. In this way the line between (meta)pragmatic function (to reveal trustworthy speakers, for instance) and semantic content (dictionary meaning) became demonstrably more entangled for Saints underground than for those freely going about. One can only imagine how non-initiates misinterpreted underground discourse. Though essential to underground existence, this circular interpretive framework created serious problems for Undergrounders, and eventually, as seen next chapter, for the Church as a whole.

Those not initiated into underground practices saw these tactics as merely underhanded. Non-Undergrounders read referential accuracy only in terms of public promulgation of Christian ethics enjoining honesty while denigrating the esoteric. To put it another way, critics relegated pragmatic effect (speaker characterization of addressee or of enactment of creed) to matters of reference (true statements). Such relegation is common for speakers of English (Silverstein 1985). As John Henry Smith and Franklin

Richards evidenced, seeming inaccurate statements were read back onto speaker as indexing a “liar,” rather than lack of trust in addressee. The pragmatics of underground texts hence were simplified by monogamists and public polygamists with regard to marking intricate hearer-speaker relations, and were made into characterizations of speaker only. Is it right and good to always tell the whole truth, or only to say enough to those trusted to not tell others? Here Mormonism shall be rent in twain.

In the face of public criticism, rampant private suspicion and attendant presumption of concealment, Undergrounders lost their voice and their capacity to organize collectively. A letter to Jacob Gates from Joseph F. Smith outlines the new, modern, public, transparent, monogamous Mormonism which took up public discourse:

I am also tired of bondage. The road out seems to point ahead to statehood as the only remedy for the great evils we suffer....We are exceedingly humiliated and ignored and oppressed. We are debarred from juries, and from sitting as judges of our own elections, our religion is made a test of citizenship and we are subjected to obnoxious test oaths. The door of relief is the door to statehood, so far as I can see (JFS to Jacob Gates 6.12.1889).

The man recently sustained as a “prophet, seer, and revelator” continued, “Mark you, I have no fear as to the final outcome for I firmly believe our destiny is fixed in the purposes of God. But I would like to enjoy a few liberties...I have wronged no man or woman or child on earth to my knowledge...I do not want my children to learn, inevitably, that this is American justice or freedom, or that only tyranny and misery prevail in the land of their birth.” He then divided speakers according to their public voice:

The arguments by our friends in congress looking to our admission took a broad range...but the opinions of John T. Caine, or those of F. S. Richards are their own, and they and their monogamous associates are alone responsible. Polygamists have no voice in the matter and can only hold still and await results...But the gist of the matter is this: we have succumbed to, if we have not accepted in good faith the situation.

For polygamists, and a great many church leaders, silence was the refrain, and “we have ceased to proclaim against submission, ceased to oppose by public speech the law and to advocate defiance of it. We may say we have submitted in good faith to the inevitable, and know we must take the consequences if we dare to ‘face the music.’” Smith would in September of 1890 hear that music, and warn his wife Sarah that “you may hear some news that will no doubt startle some folks, in the shape of a pronouncement by Pres. Woodruff, in relation to our political and domestic status. But it will not startle you, neither will you be worried about it for you and the rest of us are all right. It is only those who could and would not, and now can’t, who will be affected by it” (JFS to Sarah Smith 9.24.1890). He let the future fill in the pronouns and ambiguities. Sarah needed wait until the paper delivered to her home the next day carried Woodruff’s “Manifesto,” addressed “To whom it may concern.”

Chapter Five

Public Transparency and Speaking Truth

This chapter further reconstructs the effects of the raids of the 1880s and moves between two spaces. As thus far argued, Mormons relied on discursive tactics that made underground life rather difficult to sustain. Alongside the overriding suspicion and fear of surveillance that produced the underground was the brute power of the United States. In tandem these forced a change in Mormonism, which this chapter recounts was public submission to the reigning view of language and church-state relations. Federal power, did not, however, determine how Mormonism would change, only that it must. To understand these changes one must turn to broader semiotic processes in Mormonism, including doctrines about the nature of language, and various uses that presuppose doctrines.

This chapter recounts how in public, over the last half of the 1880s, leaders designed public statements with an eye to their effectiveness, rather than because they reflected sincere attitudes. “Public opinion” was the only belief appropriately granted status to affect America in the here-and-now, and church leaders set out to shape that opinion through discourse. I trace their subversive strategy as it developed among the leadership, up to Woodruff’s 1890 Manifesto which declared the Church President’s intention to obey the law. Though this chapter is the most traditionally “historical,” it must be read in light of the earlier discussions of underground discourse. This space required two-party construal of meaning, for statements were designed under various linguistic cloaks. I noted last chapter that underground discourse made relationships

difficult to sustain due to constant presumption of deception, mistrust, and suspicion. The underground could not continue amid the elliptical, ambiguous, and ever guessable statements required of its inhabitants. Here I demonstrate that underground tactics, when plied in mass media, spread a foundation for later transition and schism.

Church and State, Belief and Practice

At the threat of passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Act, looming in Congress in one form or another since 1884, statehood with a government run by Mormons (polygamous or not) seemed the only way to save the Church. “Under even the most generous standards of legislative latitude,” Firmage and Mangrum argue, “the Edmunds-Tucker Act skirted the boundaries of constitutionality. It was legislation that nakedly attacked a religious institution and imposed civil punishments on an entire group of people solely for their religious beliefs” (Firmage and Mangrum 2001:202). The act aimed at the institutional power of the Church rather than at individual polygamists. Under its provisions the federal government dissolved the corporate status of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; thereafter the government would escheat property valued at over \$50,000 for the benefit of public schools in the territory, and would liquidate the Perpetual Immigration Fund (by which converts funded emigration to Utah). The act also abolished woman suffrage in Utah, disinherited children of polygamous unions, and declared a test oath to be created (on the model of Idaho’s test oath) which disfranchised voters on the basis of their stated belief in polygamy or their membership in the Church. It also required all marriages be recorded by an appointed official, setting a separate fine for “marriages” not recorded (Arrington 1993:361).

There was little debate about the constitutionality of the act. Its human toll concerned some, however, as James N. Burnes of Missouri reported consequences of the first Edmunds Act to the House, “I found in one cell (meaning a cell of the penitentiary of Utah) 10 by 13 ½ feet, without a floor, six women, three of whom had babies under six months of age, who were incarcerated for contempt of court in refusing to acknowledge the paternity of their children. When I pled with them to answer the court and be released, they said: ‘If we do, there are many wives and children to suffer the loss of a father’” (Firmage and Mangrum 2001:208). Congressman Charles Dougherty from Florida, like the majority, expressed no sympathy for mothers who violated the law. From the Mormons’ perspective, passage would, according to Wilford Woodruff, seal Congress’s “condemnation” and lay “the foundation for the overthrow and final destruction of the United States government” (Alexander 1993:242). In response to its passage in 1887, the Church would, however, adopt a scheme to become a part of the same U.S. under the umbrella of a Utah state government.

With statehood the Saints could be free from territorial servitude. As Mormon leaders publicly accepted statehood as a means of “temporal salvation,” they set about shaping public opinion. Their efforts resulted in a political escapade which involved fantastic disparities between what was said person-to-person and what was printed. Indeed, underground discourse was plied in public spheres by Mormon leaders as they worked for statehood; and as usual readers were confused and divided. Person-to-person intercourse, however, could reframe and clarify the truth value of public statements, resulting in different interpretations of what Mormons were really up to in public.

In an 1887 letter from Charles Penrose, Joseph F. Smith was given the initial plan.

The ploy involved typically underground tactics regarding language. The underground editor-in-chief of the Deseret News wrote, “Let celestial marriage remain outside of the recognition and regulation of the state, and each claim its own” (Penrose to JFS 2.11.1887). His plan was to define *polygamy* in a way different from how *celestial marriage* would be contracted. While he “would be opposed to any real compromise with the devil or the nation as any one could possibly be,” Penrose asserted, “a verbal concession without compromise to fortify, not forsake a principle is a very different thing.” From the very beginning of the push for statehood the leadership explored discursive tactics as a means of circumventing federal authority.

Penrose and Franklin S. Richards sent a similar, though far more extensive letter, to the other two members of the First Presidency (Cannon and Taylor). They argued that statehood would free them from the vassalage of territorial status (Enclosed in Richards to JFS 5.3.1887, dated 2.16.1887). Freedom required a familiar distinction be drawn. They argued that the Church is “distinct from any political organization, whether of a Territory or of a State.” Furthermore, “the acts of the people, as citizens of the State or of the Territory, must not be confounded with the acts of the Church as an ecclesiastical body.” Thus church and state were finally to be, at least in public, separate entities. The Church’s “temporal salvation” depended on monogamist votes in favor of a state constitution, and with the Edmunds-Tucker passage they were required to take an oath before voting. Regarding the newly administered test oath, the authors admitted that it would preclude “all true ‘Mormons’ from voting and thus leave the local government entirely in the hands of enemies of the Church.” In counter to this, monogamous Mormons could take the oath, and the Church “would be the ‘power behind the throne’;

the spirit controlling the body; but not the body itself.” A little deception by monogamists, at the behest of the leadership, could secure safety for the entire Church. Once attained, statehood held the promise that “plural or celestial marriage need not be disturbed as a religious institution as long as it did not seek the sanction of the State as a civil institution, or infringe on civil law.”

They then asked, “But can the conditions be accepted, honorably and religiously? It must be kept in mind that this is a political matter. It is not a proposition to the Church. It is a question to the citizens.” “The plurally married members of the Church,” they continued, “embracing its leaders and most of its influential men, need not give direct answer to the question...It is a secular issue.” The scheme, then, involved allowing monogamists to draw distinctions between church and state, belief and practice, so that they could vote for a state constitution, and this vote would be made in order that polygamist leaders of the Church could continue to govern the state. Monogamists were to act in public according to American political norms, while polygamists were secretly flouting civil law.

Even without the scheme to define “celestial” as different from “polygamous” marriage, after statehood polygamists risked only prosecution by their monogamous church-going friends. The plan to let monogamous Saints push for statehood was “all perfectly fair and above board, without mental reservation or quibble, or any fine-drawn distinctions as to the difference between plural marriage and bigamy, or celestial marriage and polygamy, and those who pleased to do so could class them all together.” Finally they outlined a discursive strategy for enacting the statehood scheme: “If members of the Church who would vote on the Constitution question were quietly

informed as to its effects and given to understand it as a political and not a Church question, and that it would not interfere with their standing as Latter-day Saints, it would soon be appreciated in its true light.” The alternate plan was, in short, to let monogamous Mormons converse (according to a secretly scripted dialogue) with the American public by submitting a state constitution, and after securing statehood allow the former to “punish” polygamists (often their church superiors). It was so simple, surely the Lord would approve of this scheme, and had a hand in its development. No concessions need be made, and freedom would follow from Utah’s christening as a state.

John Taylor and George Q. Cannon had a different response. They posed the realistic question whether submission of a constitution banning polygamy would guarantee statehood, and doubted that it would.¹⁴ Adopting the provision against polygamy would result only in humiliation, “we would thereby not only lose our own self-respect, but our own people would be weakened, and the world would say we had offered to barter away principle for the sake of expediency.” They cited the decades of declarations that polygamy was a central tenet of the Church, and saw no way to maintain the Principle’s status while submitting an anti-polygamy state constitution. Having spent much time underground, they argued moreover that others would similarly see the plank as a simple ruse. The letter concluded, “We have put our trust in God in the past, and we must trust Him in this as in all other things in the future. In doing so we are not troubled with even the shadow of a doubt as to what the result will be.” Taylor was not opposed to statehood entirely, for he counseled Washington delegates to seek out some way to include Utah in a proposed omnibus statehood bill. He was quite clear, however, that the

¹⁴ The response was enclosed in Richards to JFS 5.3.1887, dated 2.19.1887.

mere appearance of compromise, of giving up plural marriage, was unacceptable; and he drew no line between monogamists and polygamists with respect to that decree.

Despite this clear rebuttal from the Church presidency, Nibley, Richards, and Penrose (alongside John W. Young, comprising the political arm of the Church), set to convincing Joseph F. Smith, then exiled in the Sandwich Isles. Penrose again reminded Smith that “statehood is our earthly hope of political redemption....But there is no compromise, or surrender, or agreement to abandon a principle, tenet, or practice of our faith” (Penrose to JFS 4.22.1887). The promise of solution without further sacrifice was, obviously, tempting for anyone. The Saints’ “political redemption” sought along the lines of statehood required clear compromises, however, at least publicly, with the first being a distinction between belief and practice; this distinction only monogamist Mormons could draw. In their votes a theoretical distinction became a socio-political one. As (monogamous) Church attorney Franklin S. Richards advised Smith, “a careful examination and analysis of the law made it apparent that the question of belief did not enter into the matter at all, and that the law simply required the voter and office holder to swear that he would not commit the crime...and that he would not aid, abet, counsel or advise any other person to commit any of said crimes” (Richards to JFS 5.3.1887). Thus Mormon monogamists could promise to obey the law with the blessing of the Church, while polygamists, as documented next chapter, were crucified on the pages of church newspapers for making similar promises in courtrooms. Church leaders began implementing the scheme over the following months.

Statehood and Temporal Salvation

With Taylor's health fading a group of apostles and "some fifty or sixty of the leading brethren" of the Church met in spring of 1887 at the president's office to discuss a state constitutional convention. Before entering the office George Q. Cannon pulled aside John W. Taylor, Heber J. Grant, Moses Thatcher and Franklin D. Richards.¹⁵ With the exception of Richards the men were new apostles and leading businessmen in the territory. Cannon explained that President Grover Cleveland was willing to sign a bill admitting Utah into the Union, provided a provision was put in the Constitution forever prohibiting bigamy and polygamy. Cannon claimed he and Charles Penrose put the matter before President John Taylor, who, according to Cannon, thought the provisions proper. At the somewhat incredulous look returned by John W. Taylor, a fiery apostle (and the president's son) frequently running against political and public schemes of the Church, Cannon admitted that he did not even express his own opinion to President Taylor. Furthermore, Cannon claimed it was explained to the Church President that some men thought a provision of this kind was going back on our religion, enjoining condemnation from God for declaring a virtue a crime. Taylor believed, Cannon averred, that the brethren need not be too particular in these matters. Cleveland also was pleased at Taylor's softened stance, Cannon reported. Cannon then read two provisions for statehood written by leading Democrats, and charged that the men must not betray Cleveland or the Democrats, that the convention and provision must seem devised without meddling from politicians back East.¹⁶ As confidants of Cannon the apostles

¹⁵ F.D. Richards was the father of F.S. Richards, the Church attorney. The following account is drawn from the diary of Heber J Grant, 6.20.1887

¹⁶ The anti-polygamy provision was secretly written by U.S. Solicitor General George Jenks (Lyman 1986:51).

were to influence the meeting to make it appear as if the decision for statehood was local and secular in origin.

The meeting went well, with no opposition voiced to a constitutional convention. There would be a cost, but purely financial, Cannon warned the group, and large sums would be spent “in a legitimate way.” A great deal of vexed debate, however, was generated by the prospects of taking an oath in order to vote. Polygamists were scourged for taking similar oaths in court, and yet monogamists were to be enjoined to do the same? Undergrounders understood the distinctions necessary, but it seemed like pure subterfuge to monogamous leaders. Following this meeting Cannon discussed the constitutional convention plans with Franklin S. Richards. The latter pulled from his vest pocket a letter from Joseph F. Smith which argued for a monogamist vote on the anti-polygamy provision. Richards confessed this breach to Smith, but claimed that good came of it because Cannon felt he had Smith’s support, though he admitted that Taylor’s views were unknown (Richards to Joseph F. Smith 6.28.1887).

With Taylor barely conscious and Smith on his way to Utah from Hawaii, Cannon led another meeting with the apostles. He warned the brethren that too much could be said about the convention, and that argument should be avoided, particularly in print and at the pulpit. The proper way would be for local leaders to apply a dose of underground etiquette, and after receiving guidance from an apostle or stake president, to visit monogamous members privately and advise them of their right to a state convention (L. John Nuttall Diary 7.7.1887). As Richards made clear, belief did not enter into the question, since the oath only covered speech and sexual practices, not those of the mind.

As monogamist Saints voted, the divide between marriage castes of Mormonism became politically relevant, with polygamists represented by silence.

Smith would arrive the following week, and for another week the First Presidency would be together for the first time in three years. Taylor died on 25 July 1887, forty years and a day from when Taylor, Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff and other pioneers rolled in the Salt Lake Valley to establish a kingdom in the mountaintops. The day after Taylor, the “twice martyred,” was interred the federal government began escheatment proceedings for all Church property valued over \$50,000. Handling of the escheatment process fell upon the President of the Quorum of Apostles, Wilford Woodruff.

Effectively the head of the Church (though not sustained as such for eighteen more months), Woodruff began categorizing letters sent and received by the terms “public” and “private” (Woodruff 9.2.1887). His work in the escheatment case was hampered by lost auditing books, with suspicions cast about in the Apostles’ Quorum meetings that George Q. Cannon had more than the Church’s interest in mind when the books were lost. Moses Thatcher said he would rejoice when secrets were fewer in the Quorum, while Smith, ever observing the creed and suspicious of subtle aspersions cast by Thatcher, disclaimed any desire to see the auditing books (Grant 8.3.1887 and 9.9.1887; Woodruff’s diary dated 21 and 22 March 1888 also describes similar accusations). Interactions in the Quorum were hamstrung by a patchwork of discursive norms, sometimes underground, sometimes naively above-board, but never consistently one or the other for all members. As described in a previous chapter, the Quorum of Apostles was riddled with suspicion, and their meetings did little to assuage this, for what

was not said spoke volumes, though it was interpreted differently by each man. Was Cannon telling the truth about Taylor's inclination toward statehood, and if so, at which time? Were others accurately reporting Cannon (reporting Taylor)? That I have these concerns gives some reason for assuming that fellow apostles likewise were uncertain about who was trustworthy and who, on the other hand, was simply honest.

Late September 1887 the apostles met as usual and were presented with a document missing both date and signature (Grant 9.29.1887). It argued that though the people of Utah had adopted a constitutional provision banning polygamy, this vote was meaningless unless actions followed suit. Sincerity was at issue, and Mormons as usual had difficulty convincing Americans. The mysterious letter urged that men in court submit to the judges' request to promise to obey the law. Without on-the-ground evidence of changed persuasion, it argued, Congress and the White House would believe the constitution a political dodge.

The apostles responded; first was Lorenzo Snow, who held seniority at this meeting. The men agreed, according to Grant's report, that "no Latter-day Saint could make any such a promise and still be true to the covenants he had made with God and his brethren when in the House of God and having wives sealed to him" (ibid.). If such promises were necessary for statehood it was best to cease efforts immediately, the apostles agreed. Washed of indexes of authority, the document was readily rejected, though monogamist Saints were enjoined to proceed just as the letter advised.

Not all church leaders believed or claimed the wire pulling and double-dealing was right or wise. Newly called to the Presidency of the Seventy, Brigham H. Roberts was likewise concerned not only about the reception of the constitution, but also about

what it said about Mormons. He confessed to Joseph F. Smith (who advised the opposite),

I personally do not see how any consistent ‘Mormon’ could vote to adopt a clause in the constitution prohibiting the practice of Celestial Marriage without raising his hand against that which God has commanded. Nor have I been convinced by any of the reasons yet set forth....It seems to me that our position would be stronger before men, certainly before the heavens, to refuse making even the resemblance of a compromise of our position on the question of celestial marriage (Roberts to JFS, undated).

Just as no Mormon could promise in the courtroom to obey the law simply to avoid the pen, no Mormon could promise simply in order to vote. For Roberts, ever aware of the slipperiness of interpretation after years underground, candor was best:

It seems to me that the nation will adjudge the clause in the constitution prohibiting polygamy as insincere, as only a political maneuver to gain a state government, through which to control our own affairs. That is what I believe it is, and it is too transparent. Congress will see through it, and will scourge the petition with pitiless scorn, so that we shall have another defeat for our pains, and the humiliation of having apparently, at least, offered to abandon that which he have preached God has revealed.

Like the late John Taylor, Roberts had enough hiding and prevaricating; were he allowed voice, he “should vote for telling Congress and all the world to go straight to hell, and fall back upon the promise of God to sustain us in the trials.”

The sort of upfront, out-in-the-open contest between God and state encouraged by Roberts never happened. Instead church leaders opted for a stealthier approach, where public would meet public, politic with politic, and the Church would stay behind the scenes. The tactic had its advantages, such as a seeming submission to separation of powers claimed essential to the Republic, while leaving intact the real power of the Church. And it had a familiar ring to men accustomed to underground norms, who veiled so much and relied on canny interpreters to piece together meaning. The statehood scheme in fact scaled up underground norms into the public sphere, and leaders banked that enough members would read between the lines (while fearing that Americans would

also) and see that plural marriage was to be saved by, not bartered for, statehood. Failing this reading they could always rely on person-to-person counsel. Though the scheme, to say in private what was taboo in public and to preach publicly what no polygamist could countenance in private, had its resemblance to underground tactics, the brains behind it were acclimated to public life. The link between Undergrounders' and politicians' interpretations made by Roberts was no mere guess, but was grounded in their similar disinclination toward presuming earnestness, sincerity, and honesty in any text.

The Statehood Lobby

The Saints carefully followed John W. Young's admonition to dress up the city red, white, and blue for the nation's birthday in 1887. Young had promised his influence with New York editors would result in a revolution of public opinion, but ten-to-one the papers criticized the Mormons and their bid for statehood (Lyman 1986:72). Newspapers around the country declared it yet another boondoggle by the Mormons. Still indelible, no doubt, were the half-masted flags from two years earlier as the city mourned, on Independence Day, a fallen nation persecuting the religious.

Just days after Taylor's death and Young's failure to turn the American public to their favor, church leadership turned to a California gang claiming deep reach in Washington. Led by distant relatives of Mormons, the group began meeting with Woodruff in September. Isaac Trumbo and Alex Badlam, presidents of the Bullion-Beck mine in southern Utah, fronted a lobby funded by Southern Pacific Railroad; Leland Stanford was no minor player in its decisions. The rail had a pecuniary interest in Utah's statehood. And just two lines were joined with the driving by Stanford of a golden

spike into the transcontinental railroad north of Salt Lake in 1859, another deal was struck between parties with very different agendas. Both gauged statehood as beneficial.

In contrast to John W. Young's plan for the Saints to wave more vigorously the American flag, Badlam advised indifference. Public indifference at any rate, while behind the scenes the lobby and church leaders were to apply essentially the same strategy as before. The Church, with its increasingly orphaned polygamists, was to remain in the shadows, seeming nonplussed about the prospects of statehood and its anti-polygamy constitution. The California group had a decisive advantage of not being Mormon, and had great wealth. They replaced the AP man who so frequently sent damaging portrayals of Mormon despotism, and with a sizable donation from the Church (\$70,000 to \$150,000) obtained the ear of prominent national papers (Lyman 1986:80-87). Though he had earlier written pieces alternately dismissive of, taken aback by, and back-handedly generous towards Mormons, even Mark Twain climbed aboard with the help of Stanford.

For its part the Quorum of Apostles chastened Byron Groo, editor of the Salt Lake Herald, urging silence regarding the federal government; the same was expected of the Deseret News (Alexander 1993:248). At Badlam's insistence church newspapers tabooed mention of plural marriage, and polemic with the Trib was outlawed. Abraham Cannon noted in his journal that "public talk on polygamy and against the government is forbidden for the present and only wise, discreet men are asked to speak publicly" (Lyman 1986:52). The fact that many polygamist leaders only appeared in public at peril of imprisonment meant that the pool of "wise, discrete men" was mostly filled by monogamists. The janus-faced plan regarding plural marriage and statehood was

perplexing at times to Saint and sinner alike, leading one prominent Gentile to “comment that public insistence on Mormon sincerity in ceasing the practice was matched only by Mormon sincerity in promising other audiences that they would never give it up” (Hardy 1992:55). What was a Saint to believe?

Amid talk of prosperity and peace assured by statehood, one polygamist wrote wishfully, and abstrusely, to Joseph F. Smith, “what a pleasure it would be to have the opportunities of the past reviewed that our brethren of the priesthood might come out in public and counsel the people in matters fraught with so much interest to the future prosperity of the Kingdom of God” (Ward Pack to JFS, March 1888). No such decisive clarification was forthcoming. Papers reported the Principle dead, and carried interviews with “Apostles” who asserted that while the practice was no longer allowed, belief in it was yet expected of Saints (Lyman 1986:88). While these would have been dismissed by the Deseret News as typical falsehood conceived in the fevered brain of some Mormon-eating editor, polemic was forbidden and the story, it was thought, might do some good anyhow. Perhaps it was a manufacture of Mormon leaders. Monogamous Mormons, on the other hand, had no reason to suspect their leaders of bad faith. Reports which suggested that plural marriage would never cease could be written off as a Tribune roorback. To once-married Mormons, church leaders had finally realized the futility of fighting sixty-five million Americans and were striding toward a division of labor, with church treating souls and state the dealings of the flesh; this promised deliverance. To the future Mormonism turned, and silent the polygamists fell.

Polygamy was represented by church leaders as increasingly a relic of the past. Designed as a boondoggle for the American public, the public face of a dying “polygamic

theocracy” was a manufacture of underground discourse which presumed between-the-lines reading by the Saints. Unfortunately, not all Mormons were so sensitive or privileged to hear what was not said; they had not been trained in underground tactics. They, like the messages’ intended targets (i.e., Americans), were given a portrayal of reality intentionally designed to conceal activities of leaders as they politicked, purchased influence, and preached the virtues of being “wise as serpents and harmless as doves.” One can now grasp the larger significance of underground tactics. Yet, in order for these tactics to work, as seen in last chapter, one needed extended dialogue, preferably oral in mode. Unlike underground discourse, where more was said by not saying, public texts failed to employ the multiple-turn interactions required to secure more or less probable interpretations. As a result non-polygamous Mormons were misled as to the nature of their religion, which increasingly took on in the public sphere the trappings of standard Protestantism: A community of faith which treated the spirit, the mind, leaving the state to govern matters of the flesh.

By Spring of '88 the horizon had cleared somewhat, and public opinion (i.e., editorials) seemed not unfavorable to a union with Mormon Utah. All ears would be on the April general conference of the Church, and reference to plural marriage, criticism of the government, or orations for statehood were strictly out of bounds. This censorship was too much for some apostles, who by Woodruff’s report accused Cannon, “and in some measure applied to myself,” of being “men worshipers, sycophants,” and guilty of “toadyism” (Woodruff 3.22.1888). The lickspittle approach to building the kingdom of God was shameful to many younger apostles, particularly those either monogamous or

who had spent time in stripes. Should one hide the truth, or speak as Moses did to Pharaoh in order to set the Lord's people free?

Nothing was settled before conference began. While Rudger Clawson's reminiscing at general conference about his own prison term for polygamy was distressing enough for the California lobby and for church leaders, Seymour Young's proclamation that nations which frustrated the work the God would suffer condemnation was outright damning. Young later explained, "in the first place I did not use the word *polygamy* in any of my remarks," and relying on the semantic hairsplitting which was the heart of the statehood scheme, he clarified,

I spoke of *Celestial Marriage* as the Eternal marriage covenant and a covenant that continues after death and that this covenant was revealed through the prophet Joseph in order that husbands could be sealed to their wives not only for time but for all eternity....Polygamy was not mentioned nor was there any bombast in my remarks nor implied threats nor anything which the senators or congressmen of the United States could have taken the least offense (Young to JFS 4.16.1888).

George Q. Cannon thought differently, however, and contrasted Young's and Clawson's carelessness with that of Woodruff's latest epistle, confirming there

were subjects that he felt if he alluded to them at all he would have to say too much or too little upon – too much for the world to have said them just now, and too little to satisfy the feelings of the Saints. If the same feeling had prevailed with the speakers at the conference, it might have saved our friends some mortification (Cannon to JFS 4.18.1888).

Cannon wrote with palpable frustration that it "requires great exertions and management to prevent unfavorable mention of us and our cause, and credit is not given by the public at large to those who achieve this." Indeed, discourse was a tool often difficult to wield, and leaders differed in their views regarding just when underground tactics were valid, and when transparency or outright confrontation was better.

The levy was high indeed for these breaches of linguistic etiquette at the conference, where, it was presumed, the real Mormonism was propounded. First, it was thought too transparent for papers bribed by the Church and its lobby to defend out-of-bounds utterances. As Woodruff and Cannon telegraphed to Smith (now directing efforts in Washington), “politics of paper might injure more than do good and would lead public to think its influence bought, so say our friends (Woodruff and Cannon to JFS 5.13.1888). The diaphanous defense in papers the leadership hoped for now disappeared, and only direct cash contributions to political parties held hope. “Mack” (Joseph F. Smith) received the following telegram from Woodruff and Cannon: “Ten days ago we gave E. Curtis five thousand dollars to help [*hinder* crossed out] Democrats in Oregon and five hundred for personal expenses. Sent you by telegraph to John T. Caine ten thousand dollars today” (Woodruff and Cannon to Mack 5.12.1888). Ten days later Smith sent to James Jack a message to confirm sending “5500 dogmas [dollars] to Odessa [Oregon],” with a question about sending more at the advice of John W. Young, who “is eager to find out something and to take a hand in the money business, but we prefer not and will tell nothing to him” (JFS to Jack 5.28.1888). While the California lobby oiled Republican palms, the Church, through emissaries in Washington, supported Democratic endeavors, even promising labor parties to work rail lines in Nevada, Oregon and Idaho in order to swing elections to the Democrats. The schemes had an air of desperation, and Badlam and company doubted that Utah would be among those offered fellowship in 1889. Still hope remained among the apostles.

Desperate Measures

An event that speaks volumes about Mormonism in the 1880s, dedication of the Manti temple would be twice done. The underground apostles met in May 1888 with their more public brothers and offered prayers for the redemption of Zion. George Q. Cannon prayed that the statehood efforts might find success, while Woodruff supplicated for the preservation of the temples (Grant 5.17.1888). With a full heart and eyes wet with tears, Cannon declared that the day was not far off which would see the Saints their liberties. Woodruff again followed with a passionate defense of Mormons taking the oath to vote, and asserted that it was no renunciation of the faith. "Some people thought," Grant recounts Woodruff's sermon, "we were going to give up plural marriage ... [but] we were not going to go back on any principle of the gospel." Woodruff reportedly declared, "We are not going to stop the practice of plural marriage until the coming of the Son of Man." Such a prediction from Woodruff, then the leader of the Church, was remarkable. The last of the old guard Mormons, Woodruff must have had queer impressions as he walked about the newly built House of the Lord. Other temples offered refuge on more than one occasion, and the time could not be far off, so it seemed, when the Lord would visit His people and deliver them from bondage. Woodruff's promise that plural marriage would not cease until His coming harkened to an oracle given to Joseph Smith as he pondered, amid the stirring Millerite movement in 1843, when the Lord would claim His Kingdom. Woodruff no doubt pondered this text as he dedicated the Manti temple.

Now found in *Doctrine & Covenants* 130, this passage proclaimed that, "I [Joseph Smith] was once praying very earnestly to know the time of the coming of the Son of

Man, when I heard a voice repeat the following: Joseph, my son, if thou livest until thou art eighty-five years old, thou shalt see the face of the Son of Man; therefore let this suffice, and trouble me no more on this matter.” Joseph Smith admitted, “I was left thus, without being able to decide whether this coming referred to the beginning of the millennium or to some previous appearing, or whether I should die and thus see his face. I believe the coming of the Son of Man will not be sooner than that time.” Martyred in 1844, the founding prophet was born 23 December 1805, making the first possible second coming no sooner than 1890. Many Saints did the math, and rumor had it that prophets were among the Native Americans. Under Woodruff’s direction of the public dedicatory ceremony the spiritual manifestations the increasingly millenarian Saints had come to expect from opening the House of the Lord did not disappoint. Through the Church burned stories of angelic choruses, of visions of the future, of speaking in tongues, and of a halo around John W. Taylor. One more temple just might persuade the Lord to redeem His people, if only because it meant one more temple taken by the American government.

Woodruff by July 1888 would sign a note releasing Church property (with the prospect of losing the temples) to the government appointed receiver, none other than friendly and opportunistic Marshal Dyer. With no resources, maintenance for the underground became a privately funded venture. The Church advised its leaders that submission was not unacceptable. George Q. Cannon evidenced by his own surrender that there was no shame in it, and his submission was noted by others underground. At sentencing, which Cannon’s son had managed to wheel and deal down to 175 days in prison, Judge Sanford admitted, “we care nothing for your polygamy. It’s a good war-cry

and serves our purpose by enlisting sympathy for our causeWhat we most object to is your unity; your political and commercial solidarity; the obedience you render to your spiritual leaders in temporal affairs” (Arrington and Bitton 1992:183). Once skipped by the light of the moon, Cannon’s surrender had untold effects on underground morale. To the monogamists, Mormon or otherwise, the persecuted now turned for protection.

With statehood more or less a pipedream by autumn 1888, and the nation looking to cast off its brief romance with the Democrats, church politicians churned out a number of desperate schemes. Nibley offered his annexation plan, which would redistribute Utah territory to surrounding states. A glance at the population to be redistributed killed the idea, for Mormons would hold the balance throughout the West, though with the Edmunds-Tucker provisions their votes would go silent. The plan was put into practice on a smaller scale, however, with both dollars and votes sent out to the world. Men and money were squirreled to Nevada. Like Utah, Idaho similarly disfranchised members of the Church; but excommunicates were welcome, and voted in droves in towns along the border. Their voting left Susana Young Gates (the “thirteenth Apostle”) writing to Joseph F. Smith, “You know such a course as that adopted by our Bear Lake [Idaho] brethren seems to us rather foolish. Jacob [her husband] says with the feeling he now possesses he would go without the franchise till he died before he would sell his birthright [membership in the Church] for a mess of pottage” (Gates to JFS, 12.11.1888). How could any Mormon renounce membership simply to vote?

The men were in fact willingly unchurched at the behest of their leaders, as part of the larger statehood scheme, (though not all leaders were united in the now-I’m-a-Mormon-now-I’m-not circumvention of test oaths). Franklin D. Richards confided

stoically, “the brethren present take a much milder view than I have been doing of the whole transaction [in Idaho]” (F.D. Richards diary 4.9.1889). At the weekly meeting of apostles, Lorenzo Snow reproached the group for their reliance on politics and money; they had not given the Lord a chance to resolve the contest which His commandment to “do the works of Abraham” had now instigated. Snow lamented about the Russian doll approach, where each smiling face concealed an altogether independent creation, warning, “we must stop somewhere in always following the policy plan, a[nd] make a correct and true record to be handed down to our children such a one as was made by Daniel of old” (Grant 10.31.1888). The fall elections made clear the writing on the wall, as the U.S. went heavily Republican and the Mormons lost political control of Salt Lake City.

Distraught over election results and its implications, the apostles met to discuss the future (Grant 10.31.1888). Richards and Penrose asked for direction, and cast an aside about fault finding with respect to their previous course. Another fiery young apostle, Moses Thatcher, agreed with Snow, suggesting that too much consideration was given to what people said, and that worse than this was the vacillation in course. It was time to stand and fight. Smith interjected that the Spirit of the Lord manifested its guidance to the brethren in Washington; Thatcher answered that he sustained their efforts, once John W. Young was replaced by Smith. The two apostles renewed old suspicions. Though he directed the political committee, Smith confessed that many things were said which he could not bring himself to state, as he could not bring himself to believe plural marriage was not mandatory. The political committee (Caine, Richards, and Penrose) clarified that they always taught that church leaders indeed considered it

mandatory, but that the monogamist majority of the Church, according to their actions, thought otherwise. The meeting ended with unanimous approval of the course set for statehood, and promised more of the same.

Entering the Union required more than an approved plan, however. At their last meeting before Christmas, the apostles heard Woodruff introduce yet another document of unknown source, which like an earlier rejected text, was to be read and considered.¹⁷ It had to do with the plank in the state constitution, and would demand their utmost discernment. The text asked the Latter-day Saints to conform to the laws made by the U.S. Congress, and included scriptural references in support. It promised nothing in return, and was to be signed by the Quorum of Apostles for presentation to the membership, as if written by them. After it was read twice, Woodruff opened the floor to comment, starting with the youngest man. Heber J. Grant could not approve it without some promise of future gain, and John H. Smith could similarly consider such a request only if made by the Lord. Both men were cautious in speaking of the document. Francis Lyman doubted the Lord would justify abandoning principle; had he not promised that a way was made for fulfillment of all commandments? Moses Thatcher concurred, and claimed the scriptural quotes misled unwary readers. Joseph F. Smith spoke, and could not submit a command from heaven, such as plural marriage, to the fetters of the laws of men, though he, like the others, admitted that if the Lord required it, he would consent. Smith then warned of the “yielding and stretching our consciences so we could retain the City and County governments,” as when monogamous Saints were asked to take the test oath in order to vote. “To my mind,” he confessed, “it has come to this point now, that

¹⁷ The account of the meeting, like many others, is found in Heber J. Grant Diary, 12.20.88, with a similar summary by John H. Smith (White 1990:213).

we must yield no more. I feel we should take a stand right here and never yield another point, or come out and say we will not in the future carry out the commands of God because we are prevented by our enemies.” He continued listing earlier failures to carry out the will of the Lord, and declared, “There is a point to my mind that we have reached where we must take a manly stand and stand the consequences no matter what they may be....If we don't take a stand now I feel we will have to yield our manhood before we get through yielding.” Smith’s stance was far more resolute than any he had taken among the apostles, who had until his criticism offered only lukewarm assessments of the proposed document.

“If we yield as requested by this paper,” Brigham Young, jr. avowed, “the next day we will be called upon to abandon the Priesthood.” Franklin D. Richards added, “Suppose we were to take such a step as is proposed; those of our brethren that have been to the Penitentiary would naturally ask, ‘why did you not think of this counsel sooner and save us from suffering in the "Pen"?’” He agreed with Young: “If we take the proposed step I should then look for a demand that we stop exercising the functions of the priesthood....I feel we have got to a point to stop at.” It was the priesthood, “the authority to act in the name of god,” (and thus certify ritual acts) which would be under considerable danger if the present course of concession continued, the apostles agreed.

Now the discussion was joined by the most senior members. Lorenzo Snow referred to the redemptive potential of sacrifice for the Lord, while sacrificing principle to man would only entice more loathsome demands. Gratified by the union evidenced, Woodruff acknowledged that had they yielded to the document’s advice every man would be under condemnation. “The Lord will never give a revelation to abandon plural

marriage,” Woodruff declared, and likewise asserted, “We cannot deny principle. There is a place for us to stop [in concessions].” He concluded, “I will say to you if we were to come out and say we had abandoned polygamy tomorrow it would not get us a State government. God will hold the nation responsible for what suffering they bring upon this people. We have got to stand and trust in the gospel.” The Quorum of Apostles kept this position strictly private, of course, while the pages of Church newspapers carried sermons proclaiming the end of polygamy.

Though abandoning plural marriage was declared an impossible exchange for statehood, the declaration of such an exchange was pressed on Smith by his political adviser and financier Alex Badlam. The lobbyist warned,

I have had the pleasure of another interview with our new President and can assure you that I have left nothing undone to have him fully advised on all matters connected with your territory. If he develops into an enemy it will be solely on account of a failure of your friends to make some public proclamation like that proposed by me. Without any hint or suggestion from me he advanced the ‘change of faith’ which we have talked about (Badlam to JFS 1.24.1889).

Smith reported the warning to Woodruff, and asserted that since statehood was a political matter, “it would be inappropriate to ask the Church ‘to issue a manifesto’ in order that the Territory may be admitted” (JFS to Woodruff 2.7.1889). The distinction was drawn between church and state whenever convenient for leaders, and it was certainly convenient now. The concerns of the territory, however, were no less those of the Church, and similarly so for the Nation. Badlam was not taking the bait, and fired back, “as you say, the law is on one side the equities on the other. There is nothing for you but submission” (Badlam to JFS 2.7.1889). Statehood would not come until the ruling power, the LDS Church, submitted to the federal government.

Smith's perhaps tongue-in-cheek remark on the purely political nature of statehood notwithstanding, some distinction had to be drawn, some separation of realm of effects made. The Church could not govern practices and beliefs, and still hope to join the Union which declared its preeminence in the realm of practice. The courts would again take a drastic step toward deciding, as it were, spheres of influence. The last day of May 1889, Judge Anderson decided that Mormons were unfit for citizenship, and ordered a vessel of Mormon emigrants returned to England. Thus augured the physical separation of church and state unless the LDS Church would submit to a distinction between belief and practice (and there was serious discussion of exodus to Mexico). Was yet another exodus and wandering required of the Lord's people? The Church was offered the realm of belief in exchange for remaining on the soil and letting politics decide proper practice. Before the offer could be realized, however, the distinction between mind and body, flesh and spirit, faith and practice, had to be made clear to Mormons.

To their prophet the apostles turned, and his answer provoked Joseph F. Smith to weeping. "Thus Saith the Lord to my servant Wilford," the revelation opened, "I the Lord have heard thy prayers and thy request, and will answer thee by the voice of my spirit. Thus Saith the Lord, unto my Servants the Presidency of my church, who hold the Keys of the Kingdom of God on this earth" (Woodruff 9:67-69). The oracle announced, "I the Lord hold the destiny of the courts in your midst, and the destiny of this nation, and all other nations of the earth in mine own hands, and all that I have revealed, and promised and decreed concerning the generation in which you live, shall come to pass, and no power shall stay my hand." Then came a warning:

Let not my servants who are called to the Presidency of my church deny my word or my law, which concerns the salvation of the children of men. Let them pray for the Holy Spirit, which shall be given them to guide them in their acts. Place not yourselves in

jeopardy to your enemies by promise. Your enemies seek your destruction and the destruction of my people. If the Saints will hearken unto my voice, and the counsel of my Servants, the wicked shall not prevail...I the Lord will hold the courts, with the officers of government, and the nation responsible for their acts towards the inhabitants of Zion.

Why this and other revelations of similar tone were not presented before the Church membership takes little political acumen to answer. As Joseph F. Smith once taught, “I am heartily in accord with the idea that the truth should be told though the heavens fall, whenever the proper time comes to tell it. There may be times, however, when silence is wisdom, even in regard to the truth, tho’ it might be gospel truth and essential to the salvation of mankind” (JFS to Zeno Gurley 6.19.1889). The leadership again was placed in a position of keeping secret a position they held to be divinely sanctioned, while publicly allowing misrepresentations to abound.

Though they would speak to The People, church leaders would do so in a speech genre more fitting public ears, leaving religious speech like revelations and prophecies of destruction for more cautious and worthy listeners. The dialogue between representatives of God and representatives of the American People thereafter ceased, and the church leadership instead issued a “manifesto,” the political document without comparison. The “Apostles’ Manifesto” was published in 1889, and among other claims it denied well substantiated allegations that Mormons secretly took oaths against the nation and its leaders. One could describe it as exemplary political speech, neither committing outright lies nor truths to print. It was preeminently a public document, in genre (dialogic response to a court ruling and subsequent editorials) and medium (newspapers). The proclamation did not allow for refined interpretation by prolonged dialogue and it had no targeted addressee but the faithless mass. This mode of presenting the Church’s position vis-à-vis American politics, in short, was the antipode of underground oral discourse.

And yet it clearly relied on tactics common to Undergrounders' repertoire. Did that gap between the presupposition of authors (that Mormons could "read between the lines") and those imposed by virtue of the text's medium and style affect its transmission, its interpretation, its transduction from proposition to practice?

Woodruff's biographer well described the 1889 Apostles' Manifesto, issued to coincide with a church-wide fast on what would have been Joseph Smith's eighty-fourth birthday, noting,

It looked forward to a changing relationship between Latter-day Saints and other Americans. More than any previous statement of church doctrine and policy, the Manifesto of the Apostles laid the groundwork for accommodation with the people of the United States in large part by fashioning a doctrinal basis for separation of the already dividing holistic temporal and spiritual spheres and by constructing a version of the Mormon past that looked forward to future accommodation with American society (Alexander 1993:259).

It is one thing to issue a political statement with an eye to the future, and yet another to have it interpreted by somebody in a manner which accommodates into practice norms of American culture. Monogamous Saints would make the Apostles' Manifesto more true, more accurately depicting reality, over the following decades. They needed help, however, from the apostles.

The Year of Public Prostration

1890 began with reports in local papers of Indian revolts catalyzed by the Ghost Dance. For the Saints the supposed revolt, one of many over the years and received with typical skepticism: the rumored Indian revolt may actually be intended, by the federal government, as a warning for Mormons (to prepare for a federal siege to staunch rebellion). A possible war was not that farfetched; driven by rumors of Mormon rebellion, three decades earlier federal troops had marched into Salt Lake City. Perhaps it was an omen of a far greater revolution? Rumors of an Indian prophet organizing

scattered tribes into a community bound by Christian love coincided with the year of the (late) Prophet Joseph's eighty-fifth birthday. Folks in the Utah territory were on alert. Would the world end in a hail of fire from federal agents, or by reigning in fire from above? Were church leaders actually seeking for redemption by fellowship into the Union, or were they concealing millennial designs leaders hoped would find fulfillment before the nation made war on the Saints? Why seek statehood, after all, if the nation is soon to be destroyed? The difficulty in providing answers lies in the fact that statehood was a goal for many different people (Gentiles, Rail barons, Democrats, Mormons monogamous and polygamous) with very different reasons, though with convergent means (money, political leveraging of votes for policy, editorials), that rested like in inverted pyramid all on the Church. Many came together under its public presence, and for not altogether consistent reasons.

Though church and state were to be separate, there was no reason they could not work toward the same goal. Church leaders were bound to the California lobby which had an interest in the Church's Bullion-Beck mining stock.¹⁸ Woodruff warned in Quorum meeting that if the Church failed to deliver its stock, "The parties in California will certainly cause a great deal of trouble if their rights in this mine are not respected" (Abraham H. Cannon journal 1.24.1890). Joseph F. Smith joined him, describing how Trumbo and Badlam often assisted the Church: they subsidized newspapers and censored the more hostile editorials, influenced Marshal Dyer to search less zealously for leaders, and more importantly, restrained Dyer from making diligent search into creative accounting practices employed by the Church as the government sought escheated

¹⁸ What was going on among the Bullion-Beck Company, the Church, the Cannons, Central Pacific, and the Badlam group is, as far as I am aware, not entirely sorted out, and may never be.

property. The Church could least afford trouble now, and its friends were scarcer by the day.

The next week Woodruff and Smith rehearsed the epic deeds of “our California friends,” though by Abraham Cannon’s estimation great bitterness attended the meeting (Cannon 1.31.1890). Apostles suspected chicanery in George Q. Cannon’s use of Church funds to buy Bullion-Beck stock, and perhaps resented the selective concealing and revealing of who was involved in the scheme, and for what purposes. Their concerns over the California group and Church funds would soon evaporate, along with Church property, after the Supreme Court ruled in May 1890 in favor of taking “property both real and personal” from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This was the final act in the series of anti-polygamy legislation, and the Mormons were reeling. Wilford Woodruff wrote privately, “This is turning the Last [key] that will seal the Condemnation of this Nation” (Woodruff 5.19.1890).

Despite Woodruff’s prophecy, the next morning Joseph F. Smith (at the behest of Alex Badlam) directed Church Assistant Historian A.M. Musser to compile a pamphlet with editorials that seemed favorable to “our side,” to be presented to Congress, editors, and prominent men, with hoped for “good effect” (JFS to Musser 5.23.1890). Statehood still seemed like salvation for some, or, at least, a ruse able to buy time. Church statements had little value for any but Mormon readers, however, and Gentile claims about the Church were the only recourse for the Church. Mormonism had effectively lost its voice; Latter-day Saints were disfranchised, the Church’s assets were taken, and the polygamists were imprisoned, scattered, hidden. The term *polygamy* itself was taboo, and the practice would follow suit.

By July Joseph F. Smith would write to his pal Nibley, in answer to a request for permission for “a friend” to take another plural wife. “I shall not attempt circumlocution or metaphor,” Smith warned, “but go right at the matter affecting your ‘friend’ as a matter of duty, for I feel quite as deeply for your ‘friend’ as I would for you if it were your own case” (JFS to Nibley 7.18.1890).¹⁹ Smith writes that the direction is entirely right, “but the times have changed, the conditions are not propitious and the decrees of the ‘Powers that be’ are against the move. I don’t care so much for outside powers as for those within....The decree now is that there shall be no p___l M___s in the United States.” The p-word could not even be mentioned by letter, though Smith disavowed circumlocution otherwise. As it disappeared from the public sphere, at least so far as the Church and its lobby could effect, the term faded even from private conversation. It could only be said where it was still approved as a practice, namely, Mexico and Canada. In the American public sphere, moreover, the referent of *plural marriage* moved from physical reality, practice, to the realm of individual (Mormon) minds. It was becoming an idea that one could “believe in” yet not practice. All that was required to complete the transition to a distinction between belief and practice, church and state, was public teaching by leaders that belief in the principle secured the same rewards in the future afterlife as practicing it once did for men and women in the past. Such sermons were not far off.

The Manifesto of 1890

Woodruff’s signature escorted the Manifesto of 1890 onto newsprint across the nation on September 25. The document did not merely respond to political aspersions like the

¹⁹ The “friend” is most likely Henry Naisbitt, who had written for permission, without success, during the last months of 1889. Though of course, another referent, namely Nibley, is also likely.

earlier Apostles' Manifesto; it also announced a new policy: no more plural marriage. Or did it? The lore around its production is as important to future developments of Mormonism as what the text actually said. In other words, the contexts of circulation, and speaker-writer and addressee-hearer-reader characterizations, reshape the semantics of the text, its truth value. Who wrote it, when, why, makes the words mean very different things. For many Mormons then and now, one's reading of the Manifesto might very well determine one's eternal prospects. Was it a revelation from God, a political dodge, only "inspired" to be issued but in origin not itself divine, or was it what Woodruff described in his journal, an "inspired" act designed for the temporal salvation of the Church arrived at after a dark night of wrestling with the Lord?

It began, "To Whom it may concern," and denied reports by the Utah Commission regarding recent plural marriages. "We are not teaching polygamy or plural marriage nor permitting any person to enter into the practice," it declared, and then concluded,

Inasmuch as laws have been enacted by Congress forbidding plural marriages, which laws have been pronounced constitutional by the court of the last resort, I hereby declare my intention to submit to those laws and to use my influence with members of the Church over which I preside to have them do likewise...And I now publicly declare that my advice to the Latter-day Saints is to refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the Law of the land.²⁰

Did the 1890 Manifesto really end plural marriage, was "advice" the same as "command"? Could Woodruff even revoke what was earlier described as an eternal, divine, necessary practice? What the text "means" can only be recounted by finding what it did to readers in 1890. In order to make full assessment of the Manifesto one must account for its interpretation; many came from Mormons, editors, and politicians.

²⁰ The text quoted is from Woodruff's diary, 9.25.90, but the Manifesto is printed as an "Official Declaration" in all LDS Doctrine & Covenants published after 1910.

Explaining why one Mormon may interpret it differently from another, and doing so along patterns recoverable from discursive domains and practices, has been the task of the preceding three chapters. Some folks believed it because it was in the papers, and signed by the President of the Church. Others were accustomed to doublespeak, and this group included Undergrounders as well as skeptical gentile editors. Three responses to the Manifesto draw out how an interpretive divide followed from the discursive practices that earlier chapters endeavored to describe.

First we have a communication from Trumbo to “Solomon” (Joseph F. Smith), which warns, “Don’t you forget for one moment that I don’t keep urging this thing [statehood] as hard as I can, as I want this to come to a quick ending, and I know we have got men now, and we want to work it and with the assistance which President Willard [Woodruff] gave us the other day, we have used it for everything it was worth, as you will see. I got it into the dailies of this great Republic and just as it was sent to me in that dispatch” (Tobias [Trumbo] to Solomon [JFS] 10.2.1890). All the pieces had come together with the issuance of the 1890 Manifesto. “Tobias” then directed,

Now I want it published in the Deseret News on Monday afternoon, and also read the Articles of Faith out in the tabernacle on the beginning of conference. There is nothing in this to do, and I want you to do it. And I don’t want to explain why we want it done, but you will see the benefit of it in a very short time, as we intend to have it in all the leading Dailies of this country telegraphed at that time, so don’t fail in this point. I will entrust this little thing to you.

The Twelfth Article of Faith, soon to become almost creedal for Mormons, was most important, for it declared, “We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law” (more analysis of the Articles of Faith is given in subsequent chapters). At the Church’s fall general conference these orders were put into action. Following a reading of the Articles of Faith, and a vote that

it was now a binding policy, the Manifesto was read to the congregation. It too was accepted by the same, with a customary show of hands of those “in favor” of the policy. The vote by the Church, reportedly without a single vote in dissent, gives us our second response.

While there is no record of a dissenting vote, whether silent dissent (expected of polygamists) was possible went unregistered. Indeed, B.H. Roberts, previously in favor of telling the nation to “go to hell,” admitted, “I saw that movements were on foot to have the whole people support it, a proceeding I viewed with great alarm. When the crisis came I felt heart-broken but remained silent. It seemed to me to be the awfulest moment in my life, my arm was like lead when the motion was put” (Quoted in Hardy 1992:135).

Two days later Smith replied to Trumbo, “I trust you will be satisfied with the results of our effort to carry out your suggestions. Conference is now over. The ‘Child is born’ and I hope it will rapidly grow to good proportions and fulfill all our hopes” (JFS to Trumbo 10.8.1890). Smith concluded, perhaps ironically, “It is absolutely astounding to us how prominent men can be so destitute of correct information on our question.” If only the newspapers would print accurate information, surely all the problems faced by the Mormons could be solved.

I conclude with a letter from Moses F. Farnsworth, temple worker in Manti under the assumed name of Marcus Franklin. In this third kind of response, of kin with Roberts’s silent dissent, he advised his wife Clara, “let me say a few words in regard to the Manifesto. It is all right, and is given [for] a certain purpose, and the servants of the Lord were moved up on to send it forth” (Farnsworth diary, letter to Clara, 10.11.1890). He then reported,

As Prest. Cannon remarked at the conference, 'it was necessary to do something to save this people,' and we must save our temples. But few of our people know the pressure that is brought to bear and they acted with the wisdom of the Gods, but you know as well as I know that the purposes of God will not be frustrated but that he will overrule and control all things for the best and you know that ½ are wise and ½ are foolish, etc. etc. And there are some things that we are required to keep, i.e., we must not cast our pearls before swine etc. and it places some in a peculiar position, for they cannot talk neither can they write, and they cannot print, and I want to say to you, when any busybodies come around with their talk and cant, tell them to stand still and see the salvation of God, or else go home and mind their own business. We have made a covenant with the Lord, and we have something to keep, and there is no boys play about it, and Manifesto or no Manifesto you are my wife for time and all eternity.

“Marcus” concluded with a familiar refrain, “We too will be wise in saying little.” Their silence would leave the public sphere to the monogamists, who increasingly seemed indistinguishable from ordinary Americans. The Church had turned a corner, but where it was heading none could say.

Chapter Six

Mind made Public

Submission of Mormonism to American culture involved far more than renouncing polygamy, theocracy, and communalism. Nations require a grounding of citizens into their respective histories (Anderson 1991). Mormonism was given no exception when the LDS Church opted for statehood rather than outright conflict. Complete submission required that Mormons forget, or at least misread, their own history in order to prevent any future ethnic or proto-nationalist uprisings. History as a matter of reading and writing implicated doctrines about discourse, or language ideologies. The modern ideology of subjectivity, of mind being foundational for being, is built on just such reflexive semiotic activity (Lee 1997). This chapter describes the mass representation of mind in Mormon public spheres in the late 1880s, a process preparatory to Mormon modernity.

Here we observe steps toward modernity taken by Mormons, steps which, as seen in later chapters, produced misreading and forgetting of history. This chapter in general traces the expansion into the Mormon public sphere of American norms regarding thought-and-language. Like chapter two, it works with newspaper reports, though here I consider courtroom interactions between Mormons and federal agents. And like chapter two, this chapter portrays possible effects of mass representation, effects which must wait for the following chapters for elucidation. The chapter first delves into Mormon polygamists' refusal in court to take an oath to obey the law, and explores the metaphysics behind refusal. After introducing some linguistic matters crucial to our

analysis, the chapter then describes how jury selection hinged on “belief.” It afterward turns to strategies witnesses used to avoid revealing knowledge, and addresses the government’s counter. The chapter concludes by comparing newspaper reports of thought and speech with those drawn from diaries and letters.

On Oaths and Covenants in Marriage and Politics

When brought before the judge for sentencing, polygamists were given a chance to renounce their presumed marriage relations and to take an oath to abide the laws of the land. What all Saints could agree on, in public and in private, was that none could promise to obey the law and still claim faith. Agreeing to obey the laws of the land impeached one’s cultural membership. The News predicted of one C. H. Greenwell, “he is one of the last men we expect to so disgrace himself [by taking the oath], and we predict he will be true to his religion when brought to the test” (DN 2.20.86). Whether this claim was prescriptive or descriptive is unknown, but Mormon papers did their best to define out of Mormonism any who buckled and covenanted with the judge. Polygamists could not promise to obey the law without incurring serious consequences, unlike monogamists who were advised to take oaths in order to vote.

The News pounced on an early promiser, C.V. Spencer, whose guilty plea and vow to obey the law, as a “spectacle...was exceedingly repulsive. The piteous pleading for judicial clemency...has had a sickening effect upon the Latter-day Saints” (DN 5.2.85). Men who faltered were excoriated in print, in large part because they proved that Mormons could promise to obey the law, which put other polygamists and the Church as a whole in a poor bargaining position with the American people. If one polygamist could promise to obey the law, why not all? Non-Mormons thus seized on “promisers” as real

Americans, and Mormon no less, while the leadership of the Church did their best to remove the same from their group altogether (without actually unchurching them). Indeed, promisers of any prominence were released from Church positions. Thus the Promise, always offered and highly anticipated in every trial, was the event over which both sides contested in order to define what exactly made a Mormon or a citizen.

“Have you anything further you desire to say?” Judge Zane inquired of defendant Angus Cannon, “‘If so, say it.’ Mr. Cannon: ‘Nothing’” (DN 5.9.85). Threatened with full punishment for U.C., Cannon was given one more chance to alleviate the sentence. Zane asked if he would promise to obey the law in the future, “And if any man satisfies me that he is in good faith in making this statement, I should be very much disinclined to impose on him imprisonment in the Penitentiary...I would love to know that you could conform to the law.” Cannon’s response did not please Zane:

If your honor please, it has been the rule of my life, since I have had knowledge, especially to make my acts the evidence of my good faith...It was said by your honor that if the evidence were that I had held out to the world, as my wives, two women, a verdict of guilty must be returned. I reposed in calmness and serenity, and was happy in that thought. For me to state what I will do in the future---give assurance that I will do that which in an hour I may find impossible---I cannot...I did not think I would be made a criminal for having eaten with them.

Their disagreement turned, in part, on what exactly evidenced “good faith.” Was it a matter of spoken sincerity, or tied to acts declared? For polygamists faith, like belief, was inherently tied to practice. Having “vindicated his claim to universal admiration,” Cannon concluded, “I now submit and humbly bow to the decrees of this court, trusting that I shall be able to bear up under the same.” Annoyed by the eruption of applause, Zane responded sharply, “You decline, I see, to make any promise, as to the future.” Cannon confessed, “I have never been in the habit of making promises; I have declined on all occasions to make promises, lest I fail.” It would have been easy for Cannon to

promise, and once released, take to underground life as if promises made under duress were infelicitous. Yet so few Saints took Zane's oath; why not simply promise?

Others have answered that "social pressure" in the form of scathing reports and loss of church position caused many men to refuse Zane's olive branch. This of course neglects the obvious fact that one's family was included in "social pressure" and suffered greatly at the imprisonment of a father, leaving children going to bed hungry and many mothers unwell. These men were not, it seems, ready to abandon newborns and long-suffering wives at the criticism of a newspaper or an acquaintance. Modern folk-psychological, game theoretical "explanations" of the spurning by the sentenced a freedom purchased by promise misrepresent the culture of nineteenth century polygamous Mormonism.

Why should Cannon claim, for instance, that he declined to make promises "on all occasions...lest I fail," when the very reason he stood before the bench was his marriage vow? Are different claims as to the nature of language at work in this parley over promising, claims which contrast what one might call a more medieval-like, binding-by-oath-view with a more modern, social contractarian one (where expression of sincere states of mind prevail)? In many ways Mormon metaphysics and ritual provides the foundation for Cannon's refusal. Cannon states that his actions are the evidence of good faith, and this seems to imply that a promise also would be an act. Promises for these Mormons were actions, not expressions of desire. His faith was no mere "belief," but resulted in relations with wives and children. To lie would not simply be a linguistic trick, but an event with effects not merely isolated in the mind.

To understand nineteenth century Mormonism is to encounter the collapse of heaven and earth, speaking and reality, past and future, God and man. In temple rites this mingling is still ritualized through a sequence of rites, among them the marriage “sealing.” When uttered by authorized “sealers” and assented to by man and woman, the simple ceremony gives the couple a promise of eternal companionship. In this “patriarchal order of marriage” a three-way covenant binds man, wife, and God. That may seem only slightly different from other religious marriage ceremonies, but Mormons are taught that the couple becomes eligible for the promises given by the Lord to Abraham. As taught by Joseph Smith and sometime later inscribed as *Doctrine & Covenants* 132, Abraham is now a god as a result of the Lord making good on his promises. Promise of divinization was extended to those taking on the “works of Abraham,” which works were obvious (i.e., polygamy) to nineteenth century Saints. The implication of Abraham’s path is clear: man and woman may become gods and goddesses. Moreover, we have the reverse: god was once a man, his wife once mortal woman, and these obviously are pluralized. To become divine is, in part, in Mormon cosmology to possess the power to procreate “spirit children,” organize planets for their inhabitation, and work to bring about deification of one’s children. Humanity would be deity’s literal seed in spirit, temporarily taking a form encumbered by natural bodies.

Thus the entire cosmology of Mormonism, though set in the heavens to revolve around Christ and His redemption of humanity from sin, is built on bonds of kinship that stretch across earth and heaven. These ties are spoken, sealed, and declared in a progression of speech acts marking ascension of man and woman to divinity. The power of oaths to bind heaven and earth, called “priesthood,” similarly created legitimate

polygamous unions. Priesthood ensured the validity of oaths.²¹ To promise to obey the nation's laws, expressly created to destroy these bonds on earth, and as on earth so in heaven, was not even a consideration for most Mormon men. The government did not have authority to dissolve sacred obligations.

The contest between “polygamic theocracy” and the American People became a discursive wrestle between language ideologies and their position on the effectiveness of speech. Was language a real participant in creating the world (by oaths, commands, even gossip), or was it a reflection of mind where the real work of creation ensued and to which speech referred? What was a promise, and how did it affect the world? The exchange (as presented in the Deseret News) between John Y. Smith and Zane demonstrates the subtle differences between Mormon and what have called here American-Protestant perspectives on language and mind. “Is it your intention to obey the laws of your country?” Zane asked (DN 2.27.86). Smith's answer seemed satisfactory, at least initially,

My intention has always been to obey the law.

Court—Is it your intention to obey it in future?

Mr. Smith—As far as I know. I do not know what I will do in the future.

Court—Do you intend to obey the law?

Mr. Smith—I believe in polygamy, and in supporting my wives and children.

Court—Do you intend to obey the law against polygamy and unlawful cohabitation?

Mr. Smith—I desire to obey all the laws of the Unites States. I have tried to obey the law in the past.

Court—That is not an answer to my question. Will you obey it in the future?

²¹ “Priesthood” refers to something more comprehensive, a more creative and independent power, for nineteenth century Saints than it does for Mormons a century later. I discuss these differences in greater depth in later chapters, and so refrain from providing too rich a definition here.

Mr. Smith—I do not know what I will do....

Court—Do you intend sincerely and honestly to obey the law?

Mr. Smith—I do not know I will do....

Smith refuses to operate in the realm of intent, and instead takes refuge in ignorance regarding future events. The judge then arrives at the point of the promise. “You have no confidence in what you believe, or in yourself. You are not a good citizen. You say you cannot promise to obey the law? *Mr. Smith*—I do not intend to commit any crime. *Court*—As you do not intend to promise to obey the law,” Zane concluded, the full penalty must be levied. Promises evidencing good citizenship were apparently matters of the mind, where confidence, intent and sincerity were the main considerations.

Smith seems to accept submission at first, but then it becomes clear that he is troping on conventions of the courtroom promise and its dependence on intent. He rejects submission and presents his mind as an unregimentable space, if only because the future is similarly uncertain. By relying on the future as a “felicity condition” (Austin 1962), rather than on his own mental state, he evidenced that indeed he was not a citizen fully convinced of the discursive basis of the American social contract. That is to say, for polygamous Saints the act of promising required some assurance that the future would conform to the content of the promise; that speaking affected the future, shaped it. Priesthood alone could create such future conditions. Individual beliefs as mental positions lacked punch; Zane, unlike deity, of course could offer no assurance about the future. Indeed, by Franklin S. Richards’s report no sooner would a man promise than Zane would send a deputy to dog his feet in order to catch him on double counts of U.C (Richards to JFS 12.25.1886). On the other hand, God was, according to Mormon scripture, able to secure promised conditions.

The first pages of the *Book of Mormon* made explicit that God's promises are sure, and these assurances were often cited by raided Saints in support of defiance. In the sacred text a young, exiled prophet name Nephi is commanded to return to Jerusalem to retrieve "the record of the Jews" from a local religious figure named Laban. While his brothers vacillate, Nephi proclaims, "I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commanded" (1 Nephi 3.7). This verse was widely cited during the raids as proof that one could always meet the conditions of covenants made with the Lord, and not simply because he was trustworthy, sincere, and reliable. God was no modern individual, but He could shape the future to fit promised returns. As the sacred tale continues, Nephi stumbles upon a drunk Laban, and is "constrained by the [Holy] Spirit" to behead the man and thereafter gain the records through subterfuge. By sacred scripture's account nothing was impossible that God commanded, and even assassination could be justified.

The covenantal basis of Mormon cosmology, however, presented an enigma for polygamists hunted under federal law. Joseph Smith reportedly affirmed that until plural marriage was accepted (i.e., practiced) by the Church, the kingdom of God could progress no further. Why then was another kingdom, the United States, allowed to interfere, to send men to prison who followed a commandment from on high, to the staying of God's handiwork? This was the question of the day for all Mormons. How it came to be answered, or ignored, is no simple matter.

Belief and Practice

Prior chapters endeavored to reconstruct how practices inadvertently made plausible raising the U.S. above the Kingdom of God. The most important player in the “Americanization” of Mormonism was the public sphere, which, as the following data demonstrate, narrated the thoughts of various actors, and made mind a publicly accessible good which could be separated from bodily practice. The public narration of a modern people, whose ideas were more real than their words, magnified the judicial power of the American government, and, indeed, served as its fourth branch.

Utah courtrooms that sent a thousand polygamists to the pen were extending the 1879 Supreme Court ruling against polygamist George Reynolds. Written into the Constitution, or read from it, the American judicial position on *Reynolds* established language-mind relations that made belief different from practice (Gordon 2002). As rendered by U.S. Chief Justice Waite, who relied on his reading of Thomas Jefferson’s definition, religion was a “matter which lies solely between man and his God; that he owes no account to none other for his faith or his worship; that the legislative powers of the government reach actions only, and not opinions.” The court concluded, “laws are made for the government of actions, and while they cannot interfere with mere religious belief and opinions, they may with practices” (Firmage and Mangrum 2001:154; see Gordon 2002, ch.4).²² Note that “faith” is not here used to refer to oath-bound actions (i.e., *faithful*).

Construed as a mental event, faith, or worship, of course could not be legislated, as Mormons pointed out, for even a dungeon cannot contract the mind when severed

²² Since *Reynolds* the Supreme Court has realized the folly of claiming that the constitution protects citizens from legislation of belief, construed as mental, and following *Yoder v. Wisconsin*, ruled in the early 1970s, a compelling state interest must be demonstrated in order for the state to legislate religious practice.

from the body. The Constitution in this reading preserved only that which was already beyond legislation. For polygamists, however, the necessary tie between belief and practice was no easier to sever than the tie between heaven and earth, spirit and flesh. Their reading granted religion the right to establish practices the legislation of which was beyond the ken of the government. And yet in public, where polygamists often fell silent, a separation of mind and body, belief and practice was made in the name of Mormonism.

Mormons were given by Judge Zane clear directions regarding the proper position taken by true citizens. At the sentencing of Amos Musser the guilty party asked for advice as to how to avoid prosecution upon release (DN 5.2.85). “To live with more than one woman as your wife is a crime, whatever your religious belief may be about it,” Zane answered, “the laws of the United States have defined it as a crime.” “I wish here to correct an error,” Zane noted, in the interpretation of law by Mormons, “into which you have fallen right there.” The error resulted from failing to make a distinction: “The Church has its sphere, and the State has its. The Constitution of the United States says that Congress shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Lest any Mormon overstep their interpretive rights, Zane reminded,

The Supreme Court of the United States has given an interpretation of that passage; Congress has given an interpretation of it in this Act; the Chief Executive of the nation has given an interpretation of it; and it is this: that so long as your religion consists of belief and worship it is protected by the Constitution; but when acts, overt acts, occur, the State has the right to control....And as there seems to be so much misunderstanding on this point, I wish to impress upon you the distinction the Supreme Court of the United States has made....Congress was deprived of all power over mere opinion, but was left free to legislate over actions. Laws are made for the government of actions, and while they cannot interfere with religious belief and opinion, they may oppose polygamous practice, and unlawful cohabitation, also a practice.

Musser refused to promise, calling Zane's request a personal insult parallel to asking him to barter his children and wives for few turnips. The preponderance of justice rested on him. Zane then advised, tellingly, "I think it would be better for you and everybody else, if that venerable man who stands at the head of your Church would just stand up, as every good citizen does, and say that he will obey the laws of the country, and that he will support the laws of the country, and teach others to do the same." As seen last chapter, Woodruff's Manifesto of 1890, issued five years after Zane's suggestion, echoed this advice. After 1890 Mormonism treated the mind as a real space, indeed, as the appropriate space for religion to occur. It became orthodox to teach that "belief in" plural marriage produced the same results as actual practice; that is to say, belief in the "works of Abraham" was just as exalting as actually doing them. Indeed, more than just different marital practices came about as a result of the Church's renunciation of polygamy: mind supplanted the real foundation once provided by speaking; and oaths, covenants, and promises were similarly supplanted as the glue of the cosmos.

Types of Reported Speech and Thought

I now address the representation of mind in Mormon public sphere. The effects of a shift from oath-covenant-discourse being the ground of society, to one with mind at the foundation are quite drastic, as demonstrated in this and following chapters. Yet the transition did not merely follow from abandoning obligations to practice the Principle. More widely circulated representations of the reality of mind made such a renunciation more acceptable. The following reports of trials collapse speech into a reflection of thought. In order to not misread the reports, it is necessary to introduce some technical terms that aid analysis.

The publicness of mind in modern narrative is created by a literary feature called “reported speech-and-thought” (Volosinov 1986). This narrative technique, also called “quasi-direct discourse,” collapses the distinction between narrator and narrated agent by introducing the agent’s mental activity into the stream of narration. It tropes on traditional quotation standards. Usually taboo in historiography for obvious reasons, “If only he knew nothing about the marriage!” would report quasi-directly. With reported speech-and-thought one is given the thought, as it were, of some knower in the form of a proposition ambiguously conveyed by both or either narrator or actor; and once read a number of subjectivities converge. Lee (1997) argues this technique, made possible by grammatical slippage between verbs of thinking and verbs of speaking, contributed to our modern doctrines of subjectivity and consciousness. *Direct reported speech* is identified formally by tense and pronominal coordination that establish different times for events of speaking and events of narration, such as “He said, ‘I don’t know.’” Quotation marks in written texts most readily preserve this form of reported speech. *Indirect reported speech* also preserves distinction between speaker and narrator, though the distinctiveness of reported speech is not formally preserved. Indirect speech might take the form, “He said that he didn’t know much,” which correlates verb tense and pronouns, and positions these from a narrator’s perspective. While direct speech presents formal resemblance, indirect focuses on preserving semantic-pragmatic meaning.

Quasi-direct speech, or reported-speech-and-thought, mingles mind with speaking, and marks the modern novel (Bakhtin 1981). The work of Joyce most fully develops quasi-direct discourse. All three narrative techniques are found in reports of jury selection, judicial rulings, and witness testimony found below. Statements about

belief are inserted into otherwise direct reported speech, and are attributed to a third-person agent; often personal pronouns disappear altogether. Public presentation of beliefs, knowledge, and thoughts, interchangeable with events of speaking in courtrooms, rendered Mormon subjectivity or consciousness transparent in the public sphere. This representation was not unrelated to the events reported. Importantly, mental objects reported (so were speech events glossed) also were effective in themselves. Men could be sent to prison on account of what another “believed” (as stated under examination), or set free if no one knew anything about him. While Undergrounders experienced the reality of language to affect lives, once shuffled into court (and into print) the reality of speech was transformed into the reality of thought, equally effective in the public sphere as gossip was underground.

Belief as a real mental thing

Federal officials exerted raw power over Mormons in courtrooms, sentencing over a thousand men to prison for polygamy-related crimes. Two discursive spaces were decidedly under their control: courtrooms, and, inadvertently, newspapers. Courts were official spaces of honesty (though of course perjury was possible, it was still a crime), and when examination concerned one’s beliefs, speaking and believing seemingly collapsed. Of more expansive consequence than the actual trials of polygamists were representations of courts in newspapers, especially Mormon papers. As they covered trials, newspapers printed “transcripts” of hearings, jury selections, and trials that replicated the courtroom collapse of mind and language. In short, Mind became transparent on the printed page and often was framed as directly responsible for real events. This most significant marker of modernity was a semiotic artifact which rendered

the dexterous use of a sensitive interpretive framework learned underground entirely superfluous. One could not hide beliefs when necessarily “expressed” through language, nor did one need to read “between the lines” when rock-bottom, foundational belief or knowledge was publicly accessible. What one said in court (and repeated in papers) was what one or many believed.

Church Historian, poet, and once indicted polygamist Orson Whitney wrote, “The federal courts, and not the mountain fastnesses, became the battleground of the great contest, which was fought out with laws, arguments, and judicial rulings in lieu of swords and bayonets” (Gordon 2002:155). It was a war with and over words, though the overt battle concerned polygamy and Church power. 2 February 1885 marked the day of Taylor’s departure underground, as well as the first day of the second term of court. The papers reported the jury selection as a mix of mental and spoken discourse.

Jos. Wm. Taylor possessed the statutory qualifications, and all looked smiling for his chances until he was asked if he was a member of the Church...[an objection was raised] The statutes, said Messrs. Harkness and Rawlins, did not authorize any such questions. Judge Zane overruled the objections; this of course was anticipated...Mr. Taylor did not arrive at a full understanding as to the law of plural marriage, he was not a polygamist himself, but he believed it right for a man who accepted the revelation on the principle to practice it.

Mr. Dickson – I challenge the gentlemen.

Judge Zane – You are excused. The next witness F.K. Benedict was a Mormon who did not believe in polygamy. Mr. Dickson was evidently distrustful of the old gentleman as the following broadside will show (SLH 2.3.85).

The paper then reported the dialogue:

Q. – Are you a member of the church? A. Yes sir.

Q. Do you accept the doctrine of polygamy? A. No, sir.

Q. Do you reject it? A. I do.

Q. Do you believe it to be spurious? A. Yes.

Q. Are you in fellowship in the Church Mr. Benedict? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Hold an office? A. Yes, sir, I am an elder.

Q. Have you never taught nor encouraged polygamy?

A. Never. I do not believe in it at all?...

Mr. Dickson gazed imaginatively at Mr. Benedict for a few minutes and then passed him.

Shifting from quoted speech to opening the minds of jurors, the article continues, “James R. Miller was a Mormon, believed in the doctrine of polygamy, and was summarily excused...Elias Adams stated that he could only write his name, but he could not read writing. He believed if a man could not get along with one wife and must have another, he would be justified in taking her. Excused amid boisterous laughter.” All jurors after this, ten by my count, are represented as believing rather than as stating belief or as answering inquiries regarding belief. A dialogue initiated by a question as to belief was thus collapsed into a statement of addressee’s belief, a telling, portentous merger of American and Mormon subjectivities into consciousness cast by mass disseminated print.

Narrative technique that combined subjectivities into a proposition about mental states was the default; verbs of thinking used in the question are noted only when particularly interesting exchanges occurred. In this form the Deseret News reported jury selection:

Joseph H. Grant passed the preliminary questioning. The District Attorney then asked:

Do you believe it right for a man to have more than one wife at a time, living and undivorced? A. That is my teaching.

Q. Do you believe it wrong? A. Under the law, yes.

Q. In the absence of any law on the subject, do you believe it right? A. Yes.

Q. Are you a member of the Church? A. Yes.

Q. Do you accept the teachings of the Church as true? A. Yes, without the law of man.

Q. If you thought the law of God commanding men to have more than one wife, to be above the law of man, which would you obey, the higher law? A. The law of man?

Q. Do you believe this law is wrong? A. NO.

Q. Do you believe it right? A. I couldn't say. I think it would be wrong.

Q. Do you believe it wrong? A. Yes....Challenged and excused (DN 4.13.85).

Contrast this quoted speech with the next paragraph in the same article,

George Barton was a clerk in T.W. Jennings' store. He did not believe polygamy was right; would indict as readily for that as for any other crime...passed. James Howell believed polygamy was wrong under the law; thought he had a standing in the Church, did not know; was baptized when eight years old; did not know whether the revelations on the plural marriage was given to the church or not, nor anything about it; did not accept the revelation.

And so it continues for three more jurors, similarly described in terms of belief (though it is likely jurors often responded to questions about belief with a simple "yes" or "no"). These response could entail different readings—honest answer, deception, misunderstanding, repetition of script—yet as mental events cast into print these features of speech evaporate and the mind stands transparently revealed.

The Herald also portrayed this particular jury selection as a mix of mind and speech. I take up the text at the examination of the same Joseph Grant. Note the introduction of "belief" into his response, which he states is a function of legality:

Mr. Grant was asked this question and replied, 'That has been my education.' Mr. Dickson asked for a direct answer and the juror replied. 'I wouldn't go into it now, since the law has ruled against it.'

Q. Do you believe in that revelation? A. I would believe in it had it not been for the law.

Q. If in your opinion the law of man and the law of God came into conflict, which would you obey? A. I believe the law of man should be obeyed.

Q. Would it be right or wrong for a man to obey the revelation? A. I believe it would be wrong now (SLH 4.14.85).

The paper then claims, “Mr. Rogers answered similarly and was similarly excused....Mr. Howell thought polygamy was wrong since the Supreme Court had decided against it. He had been baptized a Mormon could hardly say whether he was a Mormon now or not. Had never been cut off from the Church. Was not prepared to say whether he believed or disbelieved the revelation.” The Herald tersely reports,

Mr. Mitchener answered all questions satisfactorily to the prosecutor. Mr. Heim believed it was right for a man to practice polygamy if his religion taught him that it was right. Excused. Mr. Noble answered satisfactorily. Mr. Hunter believed in polygamy and was ruled off. Mr. Gillespie was also accepted on giving replies as to a non-belief in polygamy. Mr. Cowan was ruled off, answering similarly to Mr. Hunter.

Similar reports of jury selection mingle direct, indirect, and quasi-direct discourse, subtly inserting mind where once speech stood. The News reports,

L.J. Ruth and J.L. Dickinson believed polygamy was wrong, and were accepted. Robt. F. Turnbow was excused because he believed the laws of God were superior to the laws of man...B.S. Young was the son of Brigham Young, and grandson of the late president Young. Believed polygamy was right if it was not contrary to the laws of man. The revelation on celestial marriage he thought to be of divine origin....Excused. Louis Cohn believed polygamy was wrong, and was accepted. Jas. H. Poulton was excused on account of his belief in plural marriage. Enoch F. Martin did not believe in polygamy. Passed (DN 4.14.85).

It continues on like this for seven more men, with what was presumably dialogic interaction reported as juror belief, and the question is omitted that provoked juror response. The Herald reported the same jury selection, with a similar mix of mind and speech. I pick it up at the examination of Young:

Mr. Young said, in answer to Mr. Dickson, that he was a grandson to President Young. Asked as to his belief in polygamy, he said he would think it were right if it did not conflict with the law of the land...Mr. Cohn answered all questions satisfactorily, and was passed...Mr. Poulton answered ‘yes’ to the question as to his belief in polygamy and went down. Mr. Martin was passed on replying satisfactorily (SLH 4.15.85).

No clear patterns are discernable among the papers. Collapsing thinking and speaking is made possible by the grammatical structure of English. Newspapers worked with

grammatical arrangements that make virtually exchangeable every verb of speaking with verbs of thinking.²³ By alternating between speech reporting forms they presented a free ranging discourse and exposed consciousness in speech. I have found no reports of lying, accused or real, in any report of juror impaneling (although one Gentile juror was accused of committing U.C. after rendering a verdict of guilty on a Mormon). Under oath it was as if what one said was what one believed. For Saints accustomed to underground discursive tactics, for which truth had a more complicated, speaker-addressee entangled relation, such a representation must have been poorly received. But in courtrooms, rendered in newspapers at least, all speech reflected mind.

Examination Strategy

Underground Saints, despite their reliance on discourse being real in itself, deployed the speaking-thinking equivalence to use speech to conceal, rather than reveal, one's "own business." Witnesses used the newspapers' representation of mind to their advantage. In courtrooms they effectively concealed potentially dangerous utterances (e.g., *I am married to so-and-so*) by casting their inquisitor's utterance as a matter of mental consideration. They used every strategy to preclude prosecutors from venturing into the private recesses of mind. Refusing to answer on the stand, on the other hand, was a strategy of little value. Judges could easily compel answers. Asked whether she knew if Maggie Naismith was pregnant, "which question the said Phebe Carter declined to answer to the said Grand Jury," Dickson appealed to Zane (SLH 2.5.85). Zane reportedly said, "I am of the opinion that his is a proper question," and she answered in the affirmative. In contests over linguistic etiquette the judges' opinions always prevailed

²³ Lee (1997) analyzes how this arrangement results in Cartesian subjectivities and idealist trajectories in investigations of language.

over others. Before the Grand Jury another woman was asked whether she lived with a supposed second wife. She declined to answer because “I do not think it a proper one to ask,” when Zane “informed her that he looked upon it as a proper one, and that she must answer it” (SLH 3.31.85). In the seat of power, Judge Zane established rules of interactional propriety, and pulled them from nowhere other than his mind, judging by the papers.

For their part, witnesses soon learned that rather than challenge the court’s power, they could resort to “forgetting,” “uncertainty,” and other mental acts explicitly stated in order to avoid answering dangerous questions. As Gordon (2002:161) notes, wives learned from the Reynolds’ case of 1879 that there was no safety in silence, and when compelled to testify, it was best to abjure all knowledge related to the accused. Naturally the Mormon creed facilitated this ignorance. While usually wrong to lie, one could never be too sure where the line between assumption and knowledge was legally fixed, and one was not obligated to think too hard. “Frustrated federal prosecutors,” Gordon reports,

railed against the annoyingly effective tactic: ‘[Mormons] study the art of forgetting what they seen and heard, and so it often happens that a Mormon...goes upon the witness stand, and testifies that he cannot remember having performed a marriage ceremony that took place within a week past....They all have wonderful powers of forgetting---I have never found one who had a retentive memory when a polygamy case was on trial’ (2002:162).

The line between knowledge and assumption was never to be drawn so distinct as to leave one open to a charge of perjury, nor did honesty oblige one to reveal mere assumptions about the accused (such as who fathered one’s children). Ever looking for a chance to inform the Saints of their discursive rights, the Deseret News editorialized in July 1885 about the propriety of claiming ignorance. “Can it be reasonably expected that

they will be eager to tell all they think, or imagine, or have reason to believe concerning the objects of official malevolence?" (DN 7.12.86). Traversing the philosophical highway of epistemology, and noting the vagueness of the landscape, it declared,

We unhesitatingly take the ground that those forced witnesses are justified morally, legally, and rationally, in stating nothing but what they really know of their own knowledge, and in answering only such questions as are proper to be propounded in a decent court. A mother replying, 'I do not know,' to the question, 'Is your daughter married to the defendant?' does exactly right unless she actually knows of the alleged fact....What he or she knows is to be told, what he or she surmises is not to be told, under oath.

Determining when one knew one really knew something explicitly was simplified by the Mormon creed: "They can be careful to avoid knowing too much, and to refrain from swearing to anything they do not know....It requires very little to put any good man into the penitentiary. Rumor, opinion, reputation, is plenty with a packed jury, a vindictive attorney, and a zealous court, to imprison and impoverish any victim selected for the sacrifice." One might now get in a muddle worrying over what exactly constituted "justified true belief," or simply knowledge of the world, yet Mormons well understood the politics behind declarations of knowledge and the advantages of declared uncertainty if not outright ignorance.

The papers well presented model witnesses who shielded the accused with the cover of the Mormon creed. Mothers and alleged wives usually fared well under examination. At the John Penman trial, the mother of an alleged wife was described as one who "did not know who the father of the child was; had not talked with Jon. Penman on the subject; did not know whether her daughter was married; had not enquired of the person whom she believed was the father of her daughter's child" (DN 2.10.86). The mother "believed her daughter was married; had seen the person she believed to be her daughter's husband; the defendant asked witness's consent to marry her daughter Mary

Ellen,” though she “did not know how long since.” The alleged wife Mary Ellen came next: “She knew the defendant; was married to him; did not know how long since; had known the defendant a long time; she had a child.” Though she admitted marriage, Mary Ellen “could not tell the day she was married; thought it was two years since she was married in this city; was married in the day time; had never been in the Tabernacle; did not know who performed the marriage ceremony; was not acquainted with him.”

Reports of ignorance were common in papers, a norm followed closely in the following example. “Miss Lizzie Devereux, the sister of the alleged second wife, was the first witness examined: My sister worked for Mr. Austin....Have never heard of Mr. Newsome speak of her as his wife; nor have I heard my sister in his presence address him as her husband....Do not know what the child’s family name is. We call her Maud....Don’t know whether my sister is married or not; have never asked her” (DN 5.9.85). Mormons could learn the above strategy by reading papers. Note the reliance on reports of speech events in order to justify uncertainty. Such distinctions were second nature to Undergrounders.

Mormons quickly learned that statements unhedged by verbs of thinking levied a dear price on fellow Saints. As an early case demonstrated, straightforward responses, not of the mind but purportedly drawn from the “real world,” invoked the possibility of perjury. In the Royal B. Young hearing one witness made a mistake of revealing too much about reality and by this allowed a state of mind (intentional deception) to be attributed to her. Mary Pratt Young testified first, and speaking of alleged second wife claimed, “[I] don’t know that my husband ever occupied the room with her. Don’t remember having heard my husband speak of her as his wife or as Mrs. Young” (DN

1.29.85). The Commissioner then explained that the defendant admitted that he had married the three ladies mentioned in the charge, and thus ignorance served little purpose. The question was when they married, before or after the Edmunds Act passed in 1882. An acknowledge wife, Miss Agnes McMurrin, then testified:

I was married to him February 8th, 1881 in this city. I think Joseph F. Smith married us.

Q.—Have you ever lived with your husband as his wife? A.—No, sir.

Q.—Has he ever occupied the same room with you? A.—No, sir he has not.

Q.—Have you and the defendant never assumed the relationship of husband and wife?
A.—No sir, we have not.

Mr. Dickson—You will pardon me, but I shall be under the necessity of asking you a very plain question. Witness—Very well.

Mr. Dickson—Have you ever had sexual intercourse with your husband at any time?
Witness (pointedly)—No, sir; I never have.

Q.—You have never had any children then? A.—No, sir.

Q.— Why did you marry him, then? A—Because I wanted to.

She then admitted that Young occasionally ate dinner with her, once hung a picture in her bedroom, and entered the bedroom to wind the clock at other times. Then her confident reporting of reality recoils under the examination by Dickson.

[Witness]---At the time of our marriage we agreed to live separately as we were until such time as the Edmunds law was settled.

Q.—You were married in February, 1881, were you not? A.—We were.

Q.—That is as good a thing as I want. Do you know that the law was not passed until March, 1882?

Her cover exploded by the discrepancy in dates, McMurrin was held over for perjury and escorted to jail. So long as Saints under examination could report that they did not know for certain some important facts about the accused, proof of unlawful cohabitation was

hard to come by. The government was not so easily beaten, however, and they would make the mind itself evidence rather than that which offered concealment.

The Federal Response

The prominent strategy of running to the inscrutabilities of mind for refuge from cross-examination, however good a tactic, was well countered by Zane and Dickson. This was done by judicial baptism which declared what evidence constituted criminal behavior justifying conviction for U.C. April 1885 hosted the Cannon trial at which these decisive discursive moves were made by federal authorities. After dismissing an initial request that charges be dropped because the warrant for Angus Cannon failed to identify him as “a male person,” Zane heard arguments regarding the relevance of testimony about sexual relations.

The prosecution’s first witness Clara Cannon took the stand. After spending a great deal of time on the architecture of the home, where people slept and how often, the defense examined Clara. She claimed that her daughters occupied her bedroom for the past two years. According to the newspaper, this line of questioning was “objected to by [assistant prosecutor] Mr. Varian as incompetent, because it would tend to establish non-marital intercourse [or non-intercourse], and the plan of the prosecution was hostile to such testimony....” (SLH 4.28.85). Varian then argued how one should properly prosecute “cohabits.” “The spirit and intent of this law, was in its purpose,” he inferred,

To be considered as a whole....Certain communities, in contravention of the moral sense of the people, had adopted a certain form of marriage. It was not the intent of the law to strike at sexual sins. This was left to the local law....The object was to withdraw from plural marriage the sacred name of marriage, and Congress left out all questions concerning sexual sins, and the illicit commerce of the sexes. It was the act of creating the marital status, and Congress did not stop there...Congress did not mean lascivious cohabitation, nor matrimonial intercourse, but matrimonial cohabitation. This meaning was clearly expressed....Living and dwelling as husband and wife was the practice at

which the law was directed. The crime was against the marriage state—that was what Congress desired to correct.

Varian continued his exegesis, “If it had been adultery or fornication, those words would have been used; but no, it was ‘cohabitation’—the living together of married persons. ‘Cohabit’ means dwelling together, in this act, as husband and wife, matrimonial—cohabitation.” Varian then established the evidentiary standards he sought to meet:

If a man lives in the same house with a woman he calls his wife, where the status was created by a ceremony, the relationship was practically continued by cohabitation, by living in the same house, eating at the same table, and it makes no difference what the secret conditions, the matrimonial cohabitation was perfect without these...Matrimonial cohabitation and matrimonial intercourse were separate and distinct.

According to the intent of Congress, moreover, “It was the habit and repute of marriage, not the fact at which Congress directed the law. It was to prevent the holding out that a man was violating the law of the land to the scandal of society, in the habit and repute of polygamous marriage. It was a recognition of families not known to the law and society, that the act was designed to prevent.” Just who reputed a relation to be a marriage was left out of consideration; as long as someone “believed” it to be so, or could report on the “general repute” of a marriage, there was evidence enough to convict. What actually happened, what was referred to, was irrelevant, for it was the “repute” of marriage that scandalized society.

The defense countered the next day, claiming the ambiguity of “cohabit” precluded any imputation of meaning beyond its stereotypic connotation. “The word ‘cohabit’ should be given its best known and understood meaning,” the paper reported the argument (DN 4.29.85). It then shifted to indirect report, writing that the defense

Searched in vain in Webster’s dictionary for the definition of ‘cohabit’ given by his friend on the prosecution. It was not in the book; it must be a misprint. (Mr. Varian admitted that the definition given was not in Webster’s.) That authority said *cohabit* meant *to dwell with; to inhabit or reside in the same place or country*. This was one

definition, and under this it would be absurd to say that a man was guilty of unlawful cohabitation because he lived in the same country as a woman not his lawful wife.

He then argued that sexual relation constituted U.C., that the word as used today “included sexual intercourse.” The defense in support quoted the judge in his charge to the jury in the Clawson trial the previous October, which stated that conviction should follow from “reasonable belief [among jurors] of the practice of sexual intercourse.”

Judge Zane’s earlier admonition that jurors must have “reasonable belief” would be expanded by the prosecution, such that as long as someone believed a marriage occurred there was a crime being committed. The prosecution argued that sex did not matter, that the crime lay in the realm of the mind, not the flesh; as if he who hath committed U.C. in the heart of another was already guilty. “It was this holding out as wives that gave the force of evil example,” Varian asserted, “and neighbors could not know that a man who was living with half a dozen wives was not having sexual intercourse, and the effect of this example would be to break down the devotion of all for the monogamic system. It was an offense against public decency, no matter whether the parties had intercourse or not.”

Judge Zane ruled for the prosecution, that sexual intercourse need not be proven, and that “holding out” one’s wife in public was sufficient to convict. It was not even necessary to live in the same house so long as the public believed something scandalous went on under the pretense of marriage. Following this ruling, all reported speech (hearsay) became admissible evidence, as did reported beliefs about another person’s relations. What was once an exclusive privilege extended by the state to priests, judges, and few others – to pronounce man and wife – was now *de facto* granted to anyone with a belief, and *de dicto* reports became in effect *de re*. (The opposite power to dissolve

relations was not so willy-nilly handed out.) Despite objections, reported speech and thought, even of unidentified minds and tongues, was nearly always sustained as admissible by the court. Cannon himself was convicted after twenty minutes of deliberation on the basis of living in the same house with two women, and for reportedly referring to them as wives.

Mormon papers were outraged at Zane's definition. The Herald called it a "monstrous decision" designed solely for sending Mormons to the pen, while "there is comfort for the fornicator, whoremonger, and adulterer" (SLH 4.29.85). The Herald captured the unreality of the decision, writing, "Chief Justice Zane, being in a condition of senility if not second childhood, imagines that he sees things which do not exist. He reads and re-reads the Edmunds law, and so intense is his desire for it to contain matter that is not found in it...that he imagines he sees what he wants....They never had existence outside his imagination" (SLH 5.2.85). Reality as ordinarily construed held no sway in the courtroom. The world of the mind, opinion, and belief became the means of sending Mormon after Mormon to the pen. It was a world created at the inquiry of federal prosecutors.

All witnesses were granted pragmatic *carte blanche*, capable of creating any world since the only world that mattered was the spoken-thought one. Capturing the fictiveness of court, the Territorial Inquirer announced,

The usual programme was carried out in Salt Lake on Tuesday last. The same old farce, entitled: Edmunds vs. Mormons.

Edmunds---Deputy Marshal Colins,

Mormon---Abraham H. Cannon,

Suretias---J.C. Cutler and N.V. Jones (TE 5.1.85)

It described the “semi-barbarous plot,” and divulged that “unlike other farces it generally has a semi-tragic ending, the innocent are usually found guilty on very flimsy charges. This, however, is the usual ending of the first act of the general drama, the second and last act is yet to come, and the innocence of the guiltless will be vindicated.” The realm of events outside of and referred to by language was rendered superfluous, a scenario nicely captured in the parody of Cannon’s trial. The same situation characterized the underground, though in courtrooms it was beliefs that changed the world. The Mormon world was penetrated by the power of the federal government to regiment Saints into its reality, created by the mind of some public.

The Herald would rely on its old standby, parody, to convey how cohabitation could be evidenced. It argued that in order to avoid committing U.C.,

A man must not commit adultery with his own wife. This is a crime too heinous to be overlooked. In the second place, he must not hold out two women at arm’s length, as his wives because it might injure his constitution and by-laws. In the third place, all communications with the hired girl should be made through the post office or a district messenger. In the fourth place a man’s extra wives, who are not wives in the sight of the law, must be divorced as the law directs. In the fifth place, beware of widows...A man ought to be awfully careful about what he does in the presence of the opposite sex; in fact, he had better do it somewhere else, for the best of women will talk (SLH 5.7.85).

All these strategies, tongue-in-cheek or not, failed to address the actual crime: that someone believed, and said so. Cannon’s trial immediately preceded that of A.M. Musser. This trial was riddled with objections. Alongside the usual jousting about what was or was not heard, known, or remembered, Alice Sheets, daughter of accused, was told,

State whether Belinda and Mary are known in the Musser family as married or single women? Objected to as hearsay. Withdrawn.

Q.—State whether or not these ladies mentioned are known in the Musser family as the wives of your father? Objected to and overruled. A.—I don’t know.

Q.—State whether or not they have been recognized as your father’s wives? A.—Yes they have (DN 5.1.85).

While the first question regarding general knowledge was withdrawn, the proceeding ones were sustained as legitimate. What mattered in court was that some witness stated a belief, even a belief about beliefs. In his charge to this jury Zane inscribed the prosecution’s earlier argument from the Cannon trial into solid tablets. He advised,

It is not ‘marriage,’ but ‘holding out to the world as wives,’ that constituted the crime....The law was against the example, and it made no difference whether there was a marriage or not, so long as to the people it appeared so. And it was the example, causing the public to understand that there was a marriage, whether there was a ceremony or not.

As noted by Firmage and Mangrum, “in effect, the presumption became conclusive in law,” which “reasoning of the court is almost directly antithetical to modern rules of evidence” (2001:187-92). Zane’s definition gave the federal government absolute power.

Before Zane had given his definition as “holding out to the public a marriage relation,” there was no definitive way to commit or not commit U.C. To give a sense of how muddled definitions of unlawful cohabitation were, I present transcripts of jury selections conducted before Zane’s decision. The Musser case evidenced the problems of identifying “cohabs.” To juror T.G.M. Smith the defense asked,

Have you ever unlawfully cohabitated with more than one woman? A. That is too personal.

Q. How is that? A. That is not a proper question.

Q. You decline to answer? A. I decline to answer...

Q. Is polygamy spoken of in the Bible? The juror did not answer this question intelligibly, and Mr. Brown remarked: ‘I do not get you.’

Juror: No, I don’t want you to get me. He believed polygamy was spoken of in the Bible (DN 4.30.85).

The defense challenged him on basis of his refusal to divulge his unlawful cohabitations. In response the assistant prosecutor asked the juror about “living in the practice of unlawful cohabitation.” The phrase seems to suggest that a distinction between U.C and the practice of U.C. was not definite, as it was similarly muddled for polygamy practiced, believed, or otherwise. The defense inquired, “Do you mean to say you never cohabited with more than one woman? A. That is not the question.” After an explanation by the court that the question meant living in the practice of unlawful cohabitation, the juror said he never had. The next juror did not fare well either:

J.M. Richardson replying to Mr. Brown: Was not a member of the Church; did not believe in polygamy; had never been a polygamist, and did not believe in unlawful cohabitation.

Q. Have you ever unlawfully cohabited with more than one woman? A. Please define your question.

Q. Have you ever lived in the practice of unlawful cohabitation with more than one woman? A. I have not.

The defense then exposed the mercurial definition of U.C. “Have you ever had intercourse with more than one woman? Objected to by the prosecution as improper. Objection sustained by the court.” After Zane defined Unlawful Cohabitation as the crime of provoking someone to believe one was married, any evidence regarding practice was irrelevant.

The above apparent confusion belies the crime’s circular, discursively dependent definition. Unlawful cohabitation had an “extensional” definition (achieved by some identification of an instance of the referent) that depended on the “intensional” (the “dictionary” meaning). Its intensional definition, however, merely required some baptismal event by some person that another seemed to be cohabiting unlawfully, thereby making an extensional act itself intensional (not to say intentional). In short,

power to declare U.C. was granted to non-Mormons, who could do so by virtue of spoken belief. Sustained by federal power, the linguistic circularity of U.C. generated great rifts in Mormonism. By 1886 flat out rumor and repute is used to convict, and is the only real evidence sought by the prosecution. To counter, the defense could only offer other people who reported a different reputation.

Speech becomes real because reflective of Mind

Zane's definition not only made identifying instances of unlawful cohabitation as easy as eliciting testimony that someone "believed" a marriage existed, but also led to questions about how one could not practice U.C., how many times U.C. could be committed, and how one might dissolve a relation that existed only in the world of general repute. Confident after initial convictions were upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court, district courts adopted another scheme: segregation. If a man could be convicted of U.C. on account of reputed relations with a woman not his legal wife, perhaps multiple counts could be found against the same man.

Lorenzo Snow tested segregation, though under the more respectable guise of capture (Abraham Cannon Journal 3.12.1886). Evidence used to convict Snow on three separate counts of U.C. was of the by now familiar "it is rumored, it is known, he is recognized as, they are thought to be," type. This evidence contradicted other claims that Snow only lived with one and the same wife for the past three years, though rumor had it that he visited children of other wives several times a year. The court accepted these defenses, but ruled that since his chosen wife was not his legal wife, the law could presume the legal wife was his second cohabitant. Repute established and was itself fact; and should not legal, ceremonial utterance have this same effect? The court rendered

statements spoken under legal authority, such as a marriage ceremony, as indicators of a reality presumed by the public, thus completing the circle. For neglecting to live with his legal wife Snow was sentenced on three counts of U.C. to 18 months and ordered to pay a \$1000 dollar fine.

Under the cloud of segregated offenses the trial of Charles Middleton began. As given by the Ogden Herald, witnesses testified as to what children around the neighborhood said about alleged wives, another recounted the “general reputation” about ladies and Middleton, and one man based “his belief” in Middleton’s plural marriages on a change to one woman’s last name. This rumor he “learned from his daughter, who learned it from the daughter of Annie Bailey” (OH 1.7.86). Though another man testified that general reputation held that the women were not his wives after 1882, he admitted that he never saw any “public announcement of separation.” The Mormon defense trotted out several others who testified that the “general reputation” held that indeed no marital relations continued after 1882. Countering this, in his charge to the jury, Zane admonished, “No public act of divorce or public proclamation that he had put away the women would be sufficient to hold him guiltless.” In other words, what a husband actually did mattered little compared to what was reputed to be the case, and so long as someone could testify it was believed a marriage was scandalizing the neighborhood there was evidence enough to convict. Middleton was found guilty.

With the segregation scheme the federal courts could sentence a man to life in prison and a million dollar fine, so long as repute could be gathered for every day of the past few years. Times were out of joint, and the horizon looked foreboding. Segregation circumvented the legal restrictions on sentencing, used Judge Zane’s definition of the

crime, and was by leagues the greatest threat to Mormon polygamy, and, by extension, to Mormonism. While awaiting Snow's appeal to the highest court, Royal B. Young was tried on four counts of U.C. and one for polygamy. Released from an earlier stint in stripes a year before, Young now was facing four years in prison. In his charge to the jury Zane formally redefined U.C., citing the ruling of the Utah Supreme Court (which he headed) in the Snow case. The Utah court "held that a lawful marriage and the acknowledgement of that relation, in this district, is conclusive evidence of cohabitation as to the lawful wife, and no evidence can be admitted to contradict cohabitation....It is sufficient to show that the defendant visited or associated with that plural wife as his wife" (DN 6.7.86). In this charge Zane again made speech acts creative of reality, and shrewdly made annulling effects of said speech beyond the purview of the husband or anyone else. A man was married by the state's reckoning whether he proclaimed, acted, or was rumored to no longer carry on the marriage relation. In Young's case admission of a visit to a wife, following the death of her child, became the means of his conviction; such association was forbidden by law.

Snow's case eventually made it to the U.S. Supreme Court (it was for a time held up at the Territorial Court, on which sat the three district judges). The highest court ruled against segregating offenses because the crime was "continuous," thereby rendering U.C. a mass noun rather than a count noun capable of numerous instances. One could commit U.C. but not many U.Cs.

Mind as Defense and Refuge

Times were certainly out of joint. Presumption of cohabitation with a legal wife circumvented protection of legal wives from being compelled to testify; rumor was proof

of public scandalizing; and a man was unable, even by public proclamation, to renounce wives bound by general reputation. What someone thought, believed, or held to be the case mattered more than any fact brought forward, and what someone thought to be thought the case by some undefined hearer was the most damaging fact of all. A man charged with U.C., polygamy, or adultery (or all three) had no real defense since testimonies were damning regardless of referential accuracy. Ironically gossip carried the same impact in court as it did underground, though for very different reasons. Here it reflected some state of mind, rather than a possible state of affairs. A man fleeing home because someone heard that a deputy was seen at least presumed the possibility of accuracy. One's only hope in court, then, was to rely on the regimentation of all witnesses to underground norms to the absolute preclusion of certain knowledge. The war over words thereafter presumed linkage of language with mind.

Mormons could only rely on the creed for protection. When all took the stand and "didn't know" anything of the accused and his business, even Dickson sometimes admitted defeat and dropped charges. Such was the fortune of a Mr. Langton. After a number of witnesses called by the prosecutor denied knowing Langton had any wives, Dickson brought out a deputy marshal. He inquired, it was reported,

Have you ever conversed to him about his belief? Objected to by the defense. Mr. Dickson thought it was proper to show that the defendant believed plural marriage right, and advocated the practice of a crime. If the defendant believed it to be his religious duty to practice plural marriage, it was probable he would follow the practice. Mr. Sheeks argued that such a one-sided manner of admitting testimony was improper (DN 2.20.86).

The objection was overruled and the deputy replied,

The defendant said Jesus, Abraham, Jacob and others had more than two wives, and it was right; witness had seen two women at defendant's house—Mrs. Langton and her sister; did not hear the latter's name; she had one child. (This witness Newham, of gossiping proclivities, now lives in the 15th ward, where, if any rumors such as those he testified to are obtainable, he will doubtless hasten with them to the District Attorney.)

Dickson reminded, “The question was not the fact of marriage, but the repute of marriage—the reputation among the neighbors. Witness had heard the neighbors speak of defendant’s second wife.” This stretched it even for Dickson, for no mention was made of a second wife. The deputy’s wife was called by Dickson: “Do you know what the general reputation was of the relationship, if any, which existed between Phoebe Lindsay and the defendant? Objected to, objection overruled. Witness—Do not know what *reputation* means. The neighbors said she was his second wife. Heard his little daughter say so.” She then admits she “did not remember where, when, or how it came about.” Unlike other vague testimonies, this one was stricken because the deputy’s wife had shown herself “incompetent.” “I would like to find somebody who does know Langton,” Dickson quipped after all other witnesses professed ignorance. The defense replied, “No doubt of it, wait until the trial is over.” At the rare request of Dickson, Langton was relieved of all charges. (This was, however, not before Dickson called to the stand the recognized legal wife to testify against her husband. Though ruled inadmissible by the Supreme Court, the legal wife was compelled to testify and denied that her sister was a co-wife.)

By far the most adroit application of Mormon creedal etiquette in court was attributed to the alleged mother-in-law of A.E. Hyde (her replies are rendered in italics). Asked, “Where does your daughter live?” she replied,

I don’t know.

Q. How long since you saw her? *Some weeks ago.*

Q. Where was she living then? *I don’t know....*

Q. Where has she been staying all that time? *I don’t know.*

Q. You don't know? Is that a truthful answer? *Well, she boarded around at different places....*

Q. Is your daughter married? *I don't know.*

Q. Did you never take any pains to find out? *I presume my daughter is married, but I never saw her married to any one.*

Q. What makes you presume she is married? *I don't think she'd have a child if she wasn't married.*

Q. To whom do you presume she is married? *I am here to tell what I know, not what I presume (SLH 7.10.86).*

Now desperate, Dickson ordered,

State what your belief is as to her husband. *Well, I have heard it stated that she was Mr. Hyde's wife. But it may be so, or it may not.*

Q. Is that your belief? (with some reluctance.) *Well, I have believed so.*

Q. Now, why? *I can't tell you as I know of.*

Q. What led you to think so? Why did you think it was Mr. Hyde any more than any other gentleman here? *I can't give any reason as I know of. I can only say what reports say.*

Q. On your conscience now, don't you believe that Mr. Hyde is her husband?

The woman turned to her mind after a long pause, gave "many evasive replies," and admitted,

I think now days, where ignorance is bliss it is folly to be wise.

Q. That's not an answer to my question. Have you any doubt as to whom she is married to? *I have no doubt that she is married to someone. I came here and held up my hand to tell what I knew to be the truth, not what I supposed....*

Q. Where is she now? *I don't know.*

Q. And you don't care, I suppose.

With underground norms providing sanctuary for beleaguered witnesses, Hyde is acquitted, but not before Dickson griped that the obvious perjury of the above witness proved Hyde's guilt. Speech was used as a smokescreen for belief and knowledge, as it

was on the underground a veil for names, places, and plans. It did not so much reflect states of mind as it deflected inquiry into the mind, which like polygamists, seems to have veiled itself in a discursive underground. But the mind was public here, and readers unfamiliar with underground discourse could easily misconstrue declared ignorance as the simple state of facts summarized by the newspaper.

In nineteenth century Utah courtrooms the effects of the crime of unlawful cohabitation were held to be in the realm of belief, which was joined to the realm of language as its mirror. Secured through spoken testimony, belief evidenced a scandalizing of the public (metonymically represented by a citizen) which, Zane intuited, Congress could not countenance. Here the standard language ideology of Protestant America was put to use. It denied any pragmatic impact to discourse beyond the realm of mind, and made intent the sole arbiter of meaning (Silverstein 1996; 1985). Giving repute the same effectiveness as evidence of real practice moved real marriage relations from being a purely legal construct to one actually created by “the public mind.” Zane’s decision to render legal wives as default cohabitators, moreover, restored the legal system to equal effect. Hence, no man could annul reputed relations with other wives, and only by legal divorce was he relieved of presumed cohabitation. Just as spies were everywhere and nowhere, husbands found themselves equally ubiquitous and their relations perduring in the mind of the public and its defenders.

Verbs of Speaking and Thinking in other Media

It is worth summarizing the argument thus far before considering the final piece of evidence. First, we addressed the polygamists’ position on oath-taking, which seemed at odds with American judicial doctrine which held that just as church was to be separate

from state, mind and body were to be divided. In taking the oath one submitted to the American distinction and also declared one's intention. Those who refused to take the oath did so because promises were what shaped the future, rather than one's intent giving assurance. Promises for polygamists fit into wider metaphysics, as it was covenants made during sacred rites that promised future divinization. Without assurance that the future could be shaped by covenants with federal agents, these polygamists could not take the judges' offering.

Then we encountered in newspapers a mingling of mind with speech and collapsing of subjectivities. Beliefs made one ineligible for juries, and Mormons were rendered by papers as believers in polygamy, though not necessarily practitioners of the same. I then presented discursive strategies of witnesses, and found most effective was lingering about one's mind, publicly wondering what constituted knowledge, usually without explicitly stating such. Since a definition of knowledge never fell from Zane's pen, witnesses could avoid perjury while admitting ignorance of the dealings of the accused. The contest moved from the courtrooms, attended by witness, evidence, argument about facts, and jury, to the minds of witnesses. Zane and company quickly established "belief" as ground for conviction, and in so doing, extended the effectiveness of belief from jurors to witnesses.

Engle-Merry (2000) uses nineteenth century Hawaiian courts to see more powerful economic factors shaping culture. I have described the public representation of courtrooms as itself effective in presenting a new cultural order, where language and mind converged, where speech was surreptitiously effective because it was made to reflect mind. Courtrooms made speech matter, gave it impact, and newspapers

circulated widely these representations of speech supposedly reflecting mind. The effectiveness of discourse, its ability to mislead, conceal, or thwart investigation, was erased in the newspapers' summarizing of courtroom speech as merely belief.

I now present a final piece of evidence that the collapse of speaking and thinking portrayed in Mormon newspapers imposed non-Mormon standards on polygamous Mormons. The data thus far could be part of a common trend for all reported discourse, and if so, it is misplaced to point to courtrooms (as represented in papers) as effective in their circulation of Protestant American "notions" of speech, belief, and practice among Mormons readers. What matters here, however, is that newspapers presented courtroom interactions in a way different from customary reporting styles of Saints. While it is common for Americans now to slip into, "he thought..." when reporting speech, such in fact was not common for Saints writing underground. Infrequent use of verbs of thinking to describe speech of others in non-public sphere texts suggests that newspapers uniquely employed a narrative position which divulged the secret minds of folks outside the immediate speech event. To see this contrast I turn to letters and diaries of Saints.

I now compare briefly the recognizably common use of verbs of thinking attributed to non-speaker-non-addressee (i.e., third person) subjects in newspapers, with usage found in diaries and letters of Undergrounders. 159 instances of verbs of speaking or of thinking were collected from diaries of sixteen different polygamous writers. A sample of letters was taken from approximately equal size. I then catalogued all first- and third-person subjects animating these verbs. Results from diaries are presented below in Table A.

<u>A:</u>	<u>Subj.</u>	<u>Verb Speaking</u>	<u>Verb Thinking</u>
	1 st p:	16	28
	3 rd p:	82	33

As the table conveys, in diaries significantly more speech verbs were used for third person subjects (n=82), as in “He said,” “The marshal claimed,” and similar constructions, than were used for first person subjects (n=16). This is no surprise given the mode. Of more interest is the disparity between reported speaking and thinking for third person, over two-to-one in favor of reported speech (82 to 33). Most of these “thoughts” were attributed to no one in particular, as in “it is thought....” These numbers take on added significance when compared with data from letters, written by 8 different underground Mormons, presented below in Table B.

<u>B:</u>	<u>Subj.</u>	<u>Verb Speaking</u>	<u>Verb Thinking</u>
	1 st P:	17	51
	3 rd P:	49	18

As table B suggests, there was roughly equal usage of first-person subjects for verbs of thinking (n=51) and third-person for verbs of speaking (n=49). Similarly symmetrical were first-person speech reports (n=17) and third-person thought reports (n=18), as in “he believed” and “he thought.” Nearly all the first-person verbs of thinking are of the hedge form, “I think,” while fourteen of the third-person thought reports are attributed in the works of one writer, George Q. Cannon (whose predilection for writing another’s thoughts may well play a larger role in the newspaper’s publicized thinking than I have space here to address). Without his contribution, the number of third person subjects

described as thinking falls to a paltry four. What conclusions can be drawn from this admittedly small data set (in consideration with previous chapters)?

When writing to one's underground self, reporting speech of another was standard reporting form, and this norm figured more stridently when writing to another. One did better to report speech of another, even if unidentified, than to attribute the proposition to the thoughts of another. The few reported thoughts, when linked to a particular person, were attributed to wives, marshals, and other non-superiors. This etiquette resulted from underground discursive norms, founded on "minding your own business," whereby one refrained from presenting what anyone thought or believed, let alone what they believed another person meant. Speech was not a reflection of mind for Undergrounders, but could be used to misdirect another from one's thoughts. Obviously newspapers did not submit to such caution.

Representing the state of mind of deputies, spies, prosecutors, judges, and even Mormons was the standard narrative mode for Mormon papers. Their narration of mind was made possible by the provisions of promising enjoined on witnesses, by the evasive strategies deployed by overtly "ignorant" Mormons, and by the realization of belief as sufficient to convict Mormons of U.C. Mormon papers were again the handmaidens of American government, and cast Saints as just as transparent, just as mentally open, as any other citizen. Men went to jail, moreover, because someone (reportedly) believed they seemed to be cohabitating, while others remained free if the thoughts of their companions could not be extracted by federal agents. The overall effect made mind a publicly accessible space wherein occurred acts that really shaped Mormon reality, and shaped it

not by virtue of discourse in itself (as an oath might), but because speech was rendered a reflection of mind on the pages of newspapers.

Conclusion

The battle in courtrooms was, in part, over whether minds were revealed or concealed through speech acts; and Mormons usually lost because they could not conceal the mind of the public as well as Gentiles or apostate Mormons could reveal it by their act of speaking. Belief (elicited through discursive practice nonetheless) was thus made effective in the real world, but was cleanly severed from any relationship to actual referents.

Newspapers facilitated an amiable interaction between the two combatants because they likewise unveiled the minds, as the realm of belief, opinion, and ignorance, and separated these from the practice of U.C. By so making speech-as-mental act as real as, yet distinct from, practice itself, a way was created by the federal government and the public sphere for the LDS Church to renounce the practice of polygamy. Saints were by 1890 advised to believe in the principle, but no longer to put principle to practice. That rift allowed Mormons to fit with accepted American church-state relations. Each was to be real, but in different worlds. The Church could thus maintain plural marriage as a matter of belief, as a principle but not a practice.

What was the effect of widespread representation of Mormon belief as, like American beliefs, actually effective and as real as practice? Nineteenth century polygamous Mormons often claimed before the raids that belief without practice, or “faith without works,” was as dead as “immaterial spirit without passions or parts.” Their Gods were decidedly passionate, partial, and had very real parts. Did the crucible of the

raids reshape Mormonism in ways other than “merely” changing beliefs/practices involving polygamy? What was changed when mind replaced speaking as the privileged site for narrating Mormon social life?

Chapter Seven

Mind and Body in Mormon Theology

“For *intelligence* cleaveth unto *intelligence*”

-*Doctrine & Covenants* 88

“Man was also in the beginning with God.

Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be. All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all *intelligence* also; otherwise there is no existence.”

-*Doctrine & Covenants* 93

“I [God] rule in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath,

...over all the *intelligences* thine eyes have seen from the beginning;

I came down in the beginning in the midst of all the *intelligences* thou hast seen.

Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham,

the *intelligences* that were organized before the world was;

and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones”

-*Book of Abraham* 3

(All LDS Scripture, italics added)

The following two chapters track Mormon theology as it changed from 1850 to 1950; each deals with approximately half a century. The analytic here used to retell the history of Mormon theology is drawn from the work of Benjamin Whorf (1956), as developed by Silverstein (1979; 1985; 2000). I work first from words, rather than from “concepts.” By so reading historical texts as comprised of words, sentences, phrases, instead of “ideas,” one can bring out transitions in theology and relate them to grammatical structure. Over the course of two chapters I present a history of three theological entities in Mormonism:

intelligence(s), spirit(s), and god(s). Each shifts around the turn of the century from more corporeal renderings (even seemingly mental entities like intelligences) to inhabiting the realm of mind (by that I mean being characterized as similar to “mental” events: abstract, atemporal, ethereal, inanimate, etc., rather than localized in spacetime, corruptible, tangible). The following two chapters extend and support the argument regarding a shift toward mind-body dualism. As practice was severed from belief with respect to polygamy, and belief was construed in Mormon papers and U.S. courtrooms as itself effective, mind took on separate reality. This division marked a fundamental shift into modernity for Mormonism.

I consider how the fundamental elements of the Mormon universe were construed by early and later writers, how deity was characterized, and address descriptions of a particular deity/element, the Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit. This history of Mormon cosmology begins, however, with brief analysis of an earlier work, published in 1835, called *Lectures on Faith*. The first Mormon text overtly participating in the genre of theological treatise, *Lectures* in comparison with later doctrines taught by Brigham Young and Orson Pratt gives some perspective with respect to how much Mormon theology developed in its formative decades. After a brief reading of *Lectures on Faith*, this chapter then compares Young with Pratt (with occasional reference to Orson’s brother Parley). As a matter of reckoning, the history presented here comes roughly to 1880. The following chapter runs up to mid-twentieth century.

A Brief on Grammar and Analogy

Some explanation is necessary in order to orient readers to the analytic employed in this history. Terms used to describe celestial matters are construed, and hence, Mormon

cosmology develops, according to two interlocking features: first, the grammatical category in which terms are located; and second, reflexive characterizations of the relations among grammatical categories.

First, with respect to terms, nouns fall into a hierarchical classification scheme according to formal elements, and these dovetail with “notional cores,” essential attributes or qualities ascribable to terms so categorized. These notional cores provide the default features which are mapped onto referents during communication. The noun categories are reproduced from Silverstein (1985) in the diagram below.

Differential Reference to	Notional Core	Formal Category
States of Being, Ideas	<i>Abstract Thing</i>	ABSTRACT
Segmentable Wholes	<i>Enumerable</i>	COUNT
Food, artifacts	<i>Edibility, Utility</i>	THING
Inanimate Manipulables	<i>Shape, Physical Trait</i>	SHAPE, MANIPULABILITY
Small Creature	<i>Thing</i>	NEUTER
Spirits, Weather	<i>Potent/Volitional</i>	AGENTIVE
Beast	<i>Large Being</i>	ANIMATE
Social Role	<i>Human</i>	PERSONAL
Man	<i>Male</i>	MALE
Woman	<i>Female</i>	FEMALE

With regard to the formal category, noun placement is achieved by grammatical elements (prefixes, suffixes, interfixes, etc.), or by contexts (as with pronouns or verbs in English).

Word form plus contexts of use nominate the noun for placement. The lower categories presuppose those higher, such that, for instance, a MALE categorized noun would also be ANIMATE, but ANIMATE categorized nouns are not necessarily MALE. Often nouns in one category will be interlocked with verbs similarly categorized, so that, for example, one could speak of a rock *falling* (non-ANIMATE, but perhaps AGENTIVE) but not *leaping* (that is, without coming across as “poetic” or metaphorical). What matters in the following analysis is that a noun (e.g. *intelligence*) that starts at, say, PERSONAL could be abstracted up the ladder to refer to ABSTRACT entities. This slippage results from the indeterminate features of the term. Usage often recategorizes nouns, locking them into linguistic structure for some interactional duration. This movement of nouns up the ladder occurs in Mormon theology to the degree that by 1950 nearly all theologically relevant nouns are rendered in the ABSTRACT category.

Formal categorization is more slippery than it appears, and can shift by usage, particularly in less inflected languages like English. This fact is significant, though space does not allow explanation more than a simple statement that usage can shape grammatical structure. Not all action is structurally determined. Whatever category a noun occupies in utterance will entail an associated “notional core,” qualities which in use further allow linguists to identify which formal category the noun occupies. *Table* would be formally classified under THING, which would grant its referent “edibility, utility” according to the notional core. A noun referring to spirit, deity, or force could be, like those for humans, categorized under AGENTIVE, and thus its referent may take on core qualities of that category (potent/volitional). But because *man* is used to refer to a further specified being, it also takes on further qualities appropriate to the form’s notional

core. *Man* could, of course, be used to refer to males or humans, and this act of referring involves the third column, “Differential reference to.” Our concern is less with this third column, because Mormon theology generally treats entities and objects not ordinarily in the realm of immediate experience and reference. This fact likely contributes to the trend toward abstract categorization that marks Mormon theology.

Why should one care about obscure linguistic matters? Historical texts are written, and thus implicated in linguistic structure. The grammatical framework described by the above diagram, moreover, provides a foundation for analogies to be drawn, for what Peirce calls *abductions* (see chapter one). A noun such as *intelligences* can be formally classified a number of ways (e.g., PERSONAL, COUNT, ABSTRACT, ANIMATE). Where one puts the term, according to usage, will grant its referent qualities associated with the affiliate notional core. Thus in English if one used *intelligences* in the “subject” position in a sentence, and used verbs normally restricted to PERSONAL nouns (e.g., *cleave*), one could surmise that *intelligences* refer to entities analogous to those picked out by other PERSONAL nouns. These analogies could fill in attributes of new, initially unfamiliar terms with more concrete, palpable referents similarly classified. Analogies run along grammatical structure, in short. The analogical cohort of *intelligence* might be referred to by a “mass noun,” such as *water*, an “abstract noun” like *beauty*, or some other non-countable noun; or, if pluralized as *intelligences*, by a “count noun,” as in *humans* or *bricks*. This process is described by Whorf (1956), and explicated by Silverstein (1979; 2000).

One could further speculate about just what intelligences are by drawing on the default qualities opened up in the analogical relation (intelligences could possess identity

or structure, for example). Obviously analogies drawn from less concrete, less palpable referents (such as beauty), provide fewer bridges across which even more qualities could be trafficked in order to further figure the referent of the new term. Qualities of water (beyond category defaults), in other words, are more easily stated and considered than are those of beauty. The grammatical-analogical structure so briefly described here provides the basis for theological speculation and for filling out metaphysics. As Whorf put it, “Newtonian space, time, and matter are no intuitions. They are receipts from culture and language. That is where Newton got them” (Whorf 1956: 153).

The second aspect of language that shapes speculative thought like philosophy and theology are reflexive characterizations of the relations among grammatical categories. The form of a term, at least in English, does not rigidly index a category. Usage can break from tradition to a degree, and by virtue of idiosyncratic reference leverage movement of a term into another, temporarily stable, category. Analogies will then follow, and the term might take on entirely new qualities as a result of abducting a relationship between similarly categorized terms. There is no set sequence for the above process. What matters is that the noun hierarchy interlocks qualities with form, ties these to acts of reference, and that every category presupposes those “above” it (the rationale for verticalization is this presuppositional aspect). Because the categories are interlocked, as it were, horizontally and vertically, what one does with one term affects the others. This shifting is a reflexive process.

The magnitude of effects is a function, as the following material demonstrates, first of the referent’s place in cultural hierarchies, e.g., “The Great Chain of Being,” and, second, of the stable cultural ontologies, e.g., mind-body dualism. It is because

grammatical categories are implicated in reference that usage can reflexively alter the relations among categories.

Theology can be treated as cultural practice, and versions of same two cross-cutting schemas matter here in relation to grammatical structure: God-man and mind-body (or spirit-body) relations. Whether God and humans (in the Great Chain of Being) are of the same or of radically different orders of being opens or closes the door to theology by way of (anti)anthropomorphic analogy. How God is described (i.e., fleshed out analogy) is further shaped by whether the mind or body (per cultural ontology) is most fundamentally human, and whether mind and body are of the same material order.

		Cultural Hierarchy	
		God=Man	God#Man
C u l t u r a l	Mind=Body	Deity acts, loves, thinks, eats, dies, as humans	Deity utterly different, anti-human
	O n t o l o g y	Mind#Body	Deity analogized as either mind or body

Notes:
 '=' reads as 'same order'
 '#' reads as 'different order'
 x-axis represents "Chain of Being"
 y-axis represents "Cultural Ontology"

Deity can be analogized by anthropomorphic reasoning under the column "God=Man"; only when made utterly anti-anthropomorphic can deity be described appropriately when "God#Man." If relying on monistic ontology (mind=body), deity can be a total mystery,

completely unthinkable; or rendered simply more sublime, grander, than humans with respect to eating, fighting, loving, thinking, etc, (depending on whether God and Man are of the same order). If the cosmos is dualistic then deity might be rendered more carnal than humanity, though most often the mind is made the basis of anthropomorphic analogy. If both mind and body, and God and humanity are radically different, deity will likely take on “absolute” attributes utterly different from anything experienced by humanity, and thus, made into mystery analogized by abstract nouns.

The above square, with Cultural Ontology on one axis and Cultural Hierarchy on another, provides columns, as it were, for the passage of analogies. Ontological categories provide the basis for hierarchies, which can reflexively structure the orders of being. Doctrines about how referents in the world relate (hierarchically) govern the expanse of analogies. For example, if humans and dogs are of the same grammatical and ontological order (as evidenced through elicited interviews, for instance), then analogies can be drawn from terms applicable to humans onto terms applicable to dogs. Dogs could then be regarded as humorous, sad, rude, and so forth. Doctrines about the qualities or essences that comprise referents (ontologies) allow for mapping of qualities to terms in other formal categories. For example, if all terms falling under PERSONAL noun categories have referents united by “spirit,” then any shift in how the term *spirit* is characterized will be magnified throughout all terms in these categories. This analogical process works in reverse as well: if enough terms whose referents are united by some essence are recast as also having some other essence, the former ontological unity of the referents may fall apart and “spirit” may be re-analogized accordingly (that is, it may fall back into the churning cauldron of categories and get re-abducted with a more

comprehensive term). In Mormon theology just this sort of restructuring of ontology and hierarchy is observed. When belief was distinguishable from practice, a new ontological division engendered a reconsideration of hierarchical orders. The effects on speculative thought about the heavens, the cosmos, its origins, and so on were profound, as the following chapters demonstrate.

In summary, then, analogies make possible the fleshing out of qualities of unfamiliar referents of known terms. These analogies are first made possible by grammatical categories, which categories then allow for enriched characterizations of referents of similarly categorized terms. Usage can shift a term's category, and this usage then makes possible different analogies, and thus, different characterizations of the once unfamiliar referent. All this abductive work, guessing about the nature of some referent by virtue of analogy with another, is governed by cultural hierarchies and cultural ontologies.²⁴ A very odd abduction can be widely magnified, however, if the term that undergoes revision is one of the essential elements of being which reflexively characterizes all other referents possibly denoted (I call these types here *ur-elements*); or, if someone with cultural authority makes an abduction and proceeds to circulate these (e.g., by publication). In Mormonism both these processes—revision of *ur-elements* and authoritative circulation of revisions—resulted in a cosmology by 1950 which only vaguely, superficially, resembled that taught by Mormons in 1850.

²⁴ Abductions are only relevant when widely circulated, or when simultaneously performed across a group. Accordingly, analogies drawn from more concrete terms in order to flesh out some unfamiliar term will be more widely spread with more uniform features, while analogies drawn from abstract nouns will be far less homogenous in both features and spread (think of all the attempts to define “love”). And it is only by these abductions, by shifting relations among referents of terms and by re-analyzing with analogies, that any new cultural arrangement (e.g., cosmology and rituals) can develop.

Mormon Theology

The following materials demonstrate, to introduce their respective positions briefly, three different theologies regarding God-human relations. *Lectures on Faith* clearly fit with the “God#Man” category, though rather than utterly mysterious, God was made minimally knowable to humans by virtue of “faith,” a decidedly mental phenomenon in this text. Brigham Young is the most monistic of Mormon theologians, with mythic-like gods who act in ways typical of humans, though at more extreme degrees. Pratt moves toward a dualistic, Platonic cosmos, with ideas as abstract but divine, animate, elements. Pratt’s work, however, also preserves monistic reasoning cut in the figure of Young’s work, with gods visiting friends on other planets, eating vegetables, bearing children. (If one labeled Pratt’s work, it would likely be “pluralistic,” rather than merely dualistic.)

In this chapter one finds a nineteenth century Mormon cosmos rendered by monistic, “naturalistic” theology, characterized by gods more in fellowship with ancient and folk religion than the God of great monotheistic religions like Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. By the twentieth century, however, as detailed next chapter, one can see movement toward mind-body dualism, with the divine clearly mental, and thus rendered increasingly abstract and unlike profane humanity. Both grammatical categories and cultural practices, reasoning about deity and ur-element as well as semiotic habits detailed in chapters two through five, caused this shift. Of particular importance was the distinction between belief and practice made in order to renounce polygamic marriage as a legitimate practice. Belief in polygamy had the same exalting effects as actual practice, according to sermons after 1890; the realm of the mind was just as real as that of the body, and, moreover, was far less politically dangerous. What is detailed in this history

of Mormon theology is the cascade of effects that followed from distinguishing belief from practice, mind from body, church from state.

On or Of Faith

A compilation of seven lectures apparently given at the School of the Prophets in Kirtland, Ohio from 1832 to 1835, later called *Lectures on Faith*, accompanied explicitly designated “revelations” given to Joseph Smith in what was titled *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*. Published in 1835, the revelations comprised the covenants, while the lectures were granted epistemic footing as doctrine. These doctrinal lectures remained in the canonized scripture *Doctrine and Covenants* until removed by vote of committee in 1921. There were concerns about the authorship of, as well as the actual doctrines presented in, the Lectures; specifically, what these said about God. What are now published separately as *Lectures on Faith* (or formerly, *Lectures of Faith*) remain, however, popularly cited as authoritative, almost creedal, propositions on the nature of faith, God, and man’s relation to both. The Lectures begin, “Faith being the first principle in revealed religion, and the foundation of all righteousness, necessarily claims the first place in a course of lectures which are designed to unfold to the understanding the doctrine of Jesus Christ” (1.1).²⁵ It then consented with Paul that faith “is the assurance which men have of the existence of things not seen,” and added it was also “the principle of action in all intelligent beings” (1.1). This “assurance” is particularly important, for though “all intelligent beings” rely on faith in order to act, only “men” are assured of things not seen, and hence, capable of true faith. Of what nature is “assurance”? It might be a mental event; or perhaps, since we are dealing with originally

²⁵ I rely on the 1985 edition, which has no significant textual variations from the 1835 edition; citations note lecture and section numbers.

orally rendered lectures, a result of speaking; or both. Whatever “assurance” is, its ontological status, as it were, says a great deal about what human “faith,” abstract noun that it is, is. Three passages enlighten the inquiry.

First, immediately following the above quoted text the lecture enjoins the reader to “turn your thoughts on your own minds, and see if faith is not the moving cause of all action in yourselves” (1.10). This direction would seem to make “faith” at least recoverable from Cartesian methods, eyes rolled back to question a transparent mind. A second passage complicates the picture. After arguing that faith requires an object, and the object is God in whom one has faith, the second lecture asserts that the content of faith is passed along orally by “the testimony of their fathers,” the grand patriarchs from Adam on down (2.2). “It was human testimony,” lecture two asserts, “and human testimony only, that excited this inquiry [into the nature of God], in the first instance, in their minds” (2.32). Here we have “faith” discovered by virtue of mental inquiry, but that the content, “faith in” something, is passed along as tradition. The third passage makes clear the link between speech and thought.

We ask, then, what are we to understand by a man’s working by faith? We answer—we understand that when a man works by faith we work by mental exertion instead of physical force. It is by words, instead of exerting his physical powers, with which every being works when he works by faith (7.3).

Thus the foundational attribute of beings in the universe, according to the Lectures, is an abstract idea, experienced through self-reflection and filled in by discourse. Faith was mental (“we understand”), found expression through words (“we answer”), and could be examined by Cartesian self-reflection. Is this position on faith, which is effectively a position on language and mind, related to a particular construal of God?

The lectures have a decidedly Protestant flavor common in the first decade of Mormonism before Joseph Smith announced doctrines elaborated by Brigham Young, Orson Pratt, and Parley Pratt in the following decades (Vogel 1989; Swanson 1989). The “concept” of God posited by the Lectures retains this Christian (Aristotelian) flavor, though with one slight emendation: faith was an attribute of God without which He would cease to be (Lecture 1.13). Faith was a sort of divine, animate substance, “in Him the principle of faith dwells independently”; because God possessed faith, He held the “first great governing principle which has power, dominion, and authority over all things; by it they exist, by it they are upheld, by it they are changed, or by it they remain, agreeable to the will of God” (1.24). While The Prime Mover had faith in Himself, and thus contained the self-existent attribute, man required faith in God, the right kind of God, for salvation to follow from human actions.

Deity was perfect—omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent—according to the first lecture. The second and fifth lectures elaborated on the nature of deity. There were “two personages” who comprised deity: the Father, a being of spirit; and the Son, in the bosom of the Father, with “a tabernacle” (later modified, “of flesh”). These two “possessing the same mind” manifested the emergent Holy Spirit, the mind which bears record of the Father and the Son, “and these three are one.” The Son was the Word, the Father the meaning, one might say, and the Holy Spirit the means of communicating this relationship to the mind of man, perhaps through sacred writ that preserved the testimony of the fathers.

One finds in the Lectures no elaboration or innovation concerning the nature of deity, with perhaps the exception of his dependence on faith to act, if not to exist. Given

the ontological primacy of faith, it is appropriate, then, that the entire text is devoted to explicating this divine, but independent attribute, rather than to innovating doctrines about God. What was said about deity had already been said long ago by Christian theologians and Greek philosophers. Man might not know more about deity given the abstractness of his formulation in the Lectures, but by understanding how the divine worked, by mental exertion made reality, man might have more faith in Him.

Faith is important for the earliest Mormon doctrines because it links a position on language and mind with the heavens and its metaphysics. There was at the publication of *Lectures on Faith* a clear division between man and God, spirit and flesh. Language matters because it reflects the mind, in this model, just as the Son does the Father, and the relationship of sameness between the two generates the Holy Spirit, a deity which ensures translation of meaning across readings of sacred texts. Thus the Holy Spirit was wherever the Word appeared, and transmitted meaning from mind to mind. Though faith would serve as the explicit primal material of the universe, it was decidedly mental, not physical, and hence, thought about God must be similarly in the realm of thought. I account for a lack of innovation about the divine as resulting from the abstractness of the fundamental stuff of the universe, referred to by *faith*. The division between man and God was great, and only by anti-anthropomorphic reasoning could anything be stated about deity: It was not like humans.

Joseph Smith did not long countenance the divide. In ensuing revelations *spirit* (as a sort of element) would be declared material, though more fine and elastic than crude natural matter. This was the first step, a large one at that, taken away from Christian metaphysics. By uniting spirit and flesh in the same ontological category a whole world

opened for investigation. By his death in 1844 Smith had secretly and then publicly taught that man could become God, and that the “Great Secret” was that our God was a man enthroned in yonder heavens. Moreover, during the finest of Smith’s sermons (now called the King Follett sermon), the Prophet declared that something about man, his intelligence/mind/spirit (each of the four records of the sermon renders it differently) was “coeval” or “coeternal” with God. Among secret “anointed quorums” Smith would add that plural marriage was absolutely essential to one’s progression to godhood. With God now of the same order of being as humanity, by virtue of being made of the same indestructible material (spirit/intelligence/mind), the foundation was set for doctrinal elaborations by men who would guide the LDS Church during the next half century (following Smith’s death in 1844). The ground from which they worked was common soil, unrefined anthropomorphism justified by the ontological sameness of man and God.

Intelligence in Brigham Young

Rather than identifying *faith* as referring to the ur-element of the universe, Brigham Young developed into a radically different cosmology Smith’s declaration that the mind-spirit-intelligence of man is “coeval” with God. It was founded on more anthropomorphic reasoning. “A question arises at once in the mind: ‘Where is Eternity?’” Young begins seemingly Cartesian like, and answers, “Eternity is here: we are in Eternity just as much so as any other beings in Heaven or on Earth. Heavenly beings are no more in Eternity than we are” (Collier 1987:230). The temporal-ontological divide now closed, Young worked through its implications. “Pertaining to this world, when we speak of spiritual things and temporal things they are all one to me. They are first spiritual then temporal. Next temporal then spiritual” (ibid.). Though

different manifestations whether spiritual or temporal, the material of the universe was of a single kind, in the same order.

He continues, “The spirit constitutes the life of everything we see. Is there life in these rocks and mountains? There is....There is also a spirit in the Earth” (ibid.:240). This spirit-life filled all matter, indeed, was matter in various manifestations. As Young elaborated, “There is life in all matter, throughout the vast extent of all the eternities; it is in the rock, the sand, the dust, in water, air, the gases, and in short, in every description and organization of matter, whether it be solid, liquid, or gaseous, particle operating with particle” (ibid.:277). Indeed, all change in the world resulted from the operation of this “Spirit of Life,” even “what we call death is the operation of life, inherent in the matter of which the body is composed, and which causes the decomposition after the spirit has left the body. Were that not the fact, the body, from which has fled the spirit [of the person], would remain to all eternity just it was when the spirit left it, and would not decay” (ibid.:276).

Different manifestations of the “Spirit of Life” were in different organizations of the matter, producing different degrees of natural- or spiritualness. Again, the realm of the spirit was simply more refined and elastic than the natural world, and this was a result of the spirit-stuff that organized, and was, matter; there was no inherent difference between natural and spiritual worlds, or between what we call life and death.

Following the logic of the argument, Young worked back to Smith’s earlier claim, asking along with the Prophet, “Can you realize the eternity of your own existence? Can you realize that the intelligence which you receive is eternal?” (JD 1:4). Thus Young identified intelligence as the eternal material of the universe. The

intelligence that is in humans “is past enduring. This intelligence must exist; it must dwell somewhere. If I take the right course and preserve it in its organization, I will preserve myself eternal life.” Young then declared, “This is the greatest gift that ever was bestowed on mankind, to know how to preserve their identity” (JD 5:53). Intelligence in Young’s theology is in all things according to various degrees of refinement and organization, and is the source of the eternity of one’s existence.

Rather than render it abstractly, Young made sense of the primal material from his observation of the natural world, a method made possible by the nature of the substance he elucidated. “God has placed intelligence in every person, to a greater or lesser degree; that intelligence must be improved,” Young taught, and one must act upon intelligence so far received “in order for the principles of intelligence to expand within the person, that they may increase and grow, that they may receive, and continue to receive” (Collier 1987:74). Young was not speaking metaphorically, or as these Saints would have described, he was not “spiritualizing” any meaning. “It is not the optic nerve alone that gives knowledge to the mind of man,” Young argued, “but it is that which God has placed in man—a system of intelligence that attracts knowledge, as light cleaves to light, intelligence to intelligence, and truth to truth. It is this which lays a proper foundation for all education” (JD 1:70). Young taught of intelligence that it “governs and controls all things in eternity, [it is] the principle by which matter does exist, the principle by which it is organized, by which it is redeemed and brought into celestial glory” (JD 3:355). He then explained that this principle of intelligence,

is the life of Christ and of every Saint; in this capacity they are in us and we in them. We must be possessed of the spirit that governs and controls the angels, we must have the same spirit within us that our Father in Heaven is in possession of. That spirit must rule you and me, it must control our actions and dictate life to us, we must cling to it and imbibe it until it becomes second nature to us (JD 3:355).

Intelligence would take the place of faith in Young's cosmology, and most importantly, it was material from which innovative doctrines could spring. Innovation was possible because *intelligence* was used as an AGENTIVE noun, rather than one merely ABSTRACT, and as the primal material it reflexively linked heaven and earth. Intelligence-spirit was an agentive substance, potent and volitional, and when organized comprised all one might experience in any world. Young's main supporter and, occasionally, combatant, in this vitalistic rendering was Orson Pratt.

The Pratt Brothers on elements

Orson and his older brother Parley Pratt, early converts and apostles, made the most of the doctrine of intelligence. This they did by relying on an alternate rendering of Joseph Smith's King Follett sermon justified by the passage from the *Book of Abraham* (quoted at the beginning of this chapter), in which *intelligence* was pluralized. By so rendering the term, it was made a count noun rather than a mass noun, and the analogical base from which the Pratts leaped into the realm of the unexplored varied from Young's. Parley argued a then familiar point, "all the elements are spiritual, all are physical, all are material, tangible realities. Spirit is matter, and matter is full of spirit" (1990:194). Pratt continues, "Who then can define the precise point, in the scale of elementary existence, which divides between the physical and spiritual kingdoms?" (ibid.). The answer given was that the divide was a matter of perspective: those composed of pure spirit would discern differently from those whose spirit had filled their physical bodies, and the amount, as it were, and refined nature of the in-filling further affected one's reckoning of the divide. Of course the difference was one of degree rather than of kind. Thus far Young and Parley Pratt agree about the basic nature of matter.

Parley Pratt then inquired further into the nature of this basic element, asking of spirits, “Of what are they composed, that we can neither see, hear, nor handle them, except we are quickened, or our organs touched by the principles of vision, clairvoyance, or spiritual sight? What are they? Why they are organized intelligences. What are they made of? They are made of the element which we call Spirit” (1990:173). Thus we find in Pratt’s cosmos spirits which are organized intelligences, which intelligences are made of the element called Spirit. So far it would seem Spirit is the building block of the cosmos. What was this element like? Electricity, air, or other substances not seen but effective; indeed, “the spiritual fluid, or element called electricity is an actual, physical, tangible power,” and could “convey a token of one intelligence to another...in a very small portion of a second, or, we will say, in the twinkling of an eye” (JD 1:6). This spiritual element or fluid not only moves, but has more “superior powers of motion” than crude, unrefined matter. Electricity, however, is one of the cruder forms of Spirit element. If we take its basic feature, namely, being less tangible and more animate than ordinary matter, and refine it, as it were, “till we arrive at a substance so holy, so pure, so endowed with intellectual attributes and sympathetic affections, that it may be said to be on par, or level, in its attributes, with man” (ibid.). Pratt’s purified element has the same attributes as humans, and this attribution opens the door for further speculation.

While Pratt began by analogizing from the material world to electricity, to a holy substance, he could thereafter run his speculations on a second leg, drawing analogies from humanity. The analogical diagram is: intelligence is to spirit as spirit is to flesh. While flesh dies, “the thinking being, the individual, active agent or identity that inhabited a tabernacle, never ceased to exist, to think, act, live, move, or have a being;

never ceased to exercise those sympathies, affections, hopes, and aspirations,” and this because these features “are founded in the very nature of intelligences, being the inherent and invaluable properties of their eternal existence” (JD 1:15). Since flesh can be at times animate, volitional, educated, and so on, and at other times putrefied and decayed, the difference is given to spirit. Since spirit element manifests similar distinctions, from electricity to a “holy substance,” credit for varieties of life in the universe is given to intelligences, the most purified organization of Spirit element. As Pratt later claimed, “each individual organized intelligence must possess the power of self motion to a greater or less degree....All motion implies an inherent will, to originate and direct such motion” (1990:189).

Pratt worked with *intelligences*, rather than *intelligence*, and thus divided what Brigham Young had made a function of intelligence, namely organization, animacy, and learning, into the combination of intelligences made of Spirit element. The distinction seems minor, but foretells a subtle dualism. It can be drawn out by asking: Is Spirit element as animate as intelligences, or is it the medium of their existence? That is to say, Parley Pratt’s cosmos may be as monistic as Young’s, but it may also be dualistic, with intelligences separate in kind rather than degree from other elements. Parley’s brother Orson, who continued to work another two decades after Parley was murdered by the ex-husband of a plural wife, would build a more dualistic universe.

Orson Pratt explicated a materialist conception of the cosmos. He assigned to a spiritual substance, which filled natural bodies, the attributes of feeling, thinking, seeing, smelling, hearing, and designated it a “self-moving, powerful substance, that quickens, animates, and moves the natural body—that forms and fashions every part—that

preserves the organization from decay and death” (Seer 1.3:33). While Young made death an alternate effect of the spirit, for Orson Pratt it evidenced a removal of Spirit substance. This is the first indicator of an implicit dualism in Pratt’s work. This Spirit substance as “living self moving force” “possesses the capacities of intelligence and self-motion,” according to Pratt, and even “the great laws of nature, themselves, are the results of this force. There is no other force in the universe” (ibid. 1.7:102-3). Gravitation and other mechanical forces are only effects of Spirit operation.

Student of Greek philosophy and typical nineteenth century polymath, Pratt could not sustain the monistic universe. While he analogized from PERSONAL nouns, and linked attributes common to humanity in order to elucidate less material substances, this materialism, with even attributes so cast, would rend the universe in two. His claim, “The capacities of all spiritual substances are eternal as the substance to which they belong...These capacities may be suspended for a season, but never can be annihilated” (ibid. 1.7:102), implicitly developed a dualistic rendering of the universe.

Pratt carried the logic of materialism into abstract nouns, rendering *Truth, Beauty, Knowledge, Will*, into materials which filled Spirit element. A potential conflict emerged: Are these abstractions the same as intelligences? Pratt would answer no. “Admitting the eternities of the capacities,” Pratt continued, “then the materials of which our spirits are composed must have been capable of thinking, moving, will, etc. before they were organized in the womb of the celestial female. Preceding that period there was an eternal duration, and each particle of our spirits had an eternal existence, and was in possession of eternal capacities” (ibid.). Particles possessed the capacities; that is the key

point. He soon made explicit the division between substance and capacity, or as he later called them, *attributes*, writing,

How very different in their nature is light and truth from substance. A substance can only be in one place at a time: while intelligence or truth can be in all worlds at the same instant. A substance cannot be divided, and a part be taken to some other place, without diminishing the original quantity from which it was taken, while the different portions of light and truth may be imparted to other beings in other places without diminishing in the least the fountain from which they are derived (ibid. 1.9:129-30).

Here Pratt links *intelligence* with *light* and *truth*, other mass/abstract nouns, and by virtue of their abstractedness from ordinary substances their referents can be divided without actually diminishing, unlike substances.

Pratt would follow this line of reasoning into a cosmos on the order of Leibniz's, with a combined quality-quantity ur-stuff the latter called *monad*, and the former called *the fullness of the attributes of godliness*. Orson had, it seems, inherited dualism from his brother, who earlier wrote that even God is restrained in his creations, he cannot make two and two equal five any more than he can annihilate or originate matter, "because these are principles of eternal truth, they are laws which cannot be broken" (1990:104). These laws, which Orson would claim were composed of attributes (Truth, Eternity, etc.), were simultaneously fleshed out by analogy from the anthropomorphized Spirit element. Both were material, and yet distinct in important ways: attributes did not change, they did not occupy space as substances do, and did not act when spread across space like other substances with which humans could claim familiarity. They were anti-things.

Pratt worked through the implications of beginning with *intelligences* rather than *intelligence*, and formulated a rather different foundation for the cosmos. While Young would make intelligence (also called the "spirit of life") the matter which formed all, including laws, gods, and rocks, the Pratts found a more primary substance which formed

intelligences, called *Spirit*. This Spirit element was further tied to capacities or contained attributes that were themselves separate and separable from the elements. Orson Pratt would call one of these attributes *intelligence*, though again, this was far more abstract (an inverted analogy from ordinary stuff) than the matter of the same name formulated by Brigham Young. These differences may seem absolutely irrelevant to Mormon history, but Pratt and Young argued for very different celestial mechanics as a result.

Celestial Beings According to Pratt

Truth and light differed from other substances materially in the philosophy of Orson Pratt. These differences provided the way through a seeming contradiction between oracles from Joseph Smith at the beginning and end of his mortal career. Was God eternally so, unchanged and one, as early revelations held, or was heaven populated by a plurality of gods, each rising to that level from lower states? Did *God* refer to a substance or a person? How could he/it be everywhere if embodied? Pratt's answer was complex, and fully developed a materialist, pluralist universe. "As God is Light and Truth, and Light and Truth God," Pratt reasoned, "all the characteristics which belong to one belong to the other also." There are thus "an infinite number of tabernacles filled with Truth," though these "contain no more than one filled with the same: so likewise an infinite number of tabernacles filled with God knows no more than one knows" (Seer 1.9:133). There was for the gods an end to their being filled with God, as the fullness of the attributes of godliness, and all were equally filled with the same stuff to the same degree:

All these Gods are equal in power, in glory, in dominion, and in the possession of all things....The fullness of the attributes is what constitutes God...‘God is Light.’ ‘God is Love.’ ‘God is Truth.’ The Gods are one in the qualities and attributes. Truth is not a plurality of truths because it dwells in a plurality of persons, but it is one truth,

indivisible...Persons are only tabernacles or temples, and TRUTH is the God that dwells in them (ibid. 1.2:24).

It followed that “It is truth, light and love that we worship and adore....And as these constitute God, He is the same in all worlds.” When Joseph Smith spoke of a plurality of gods, he meant, according to Pratt, a plurality of tabernacles in which The One God dwelled, undiminished by space, time, or distribution (ibid.).

Pratt could anthropomorphize as well as philosophize with the best. Though Truth had no beginning and no end, according to Pratt, the first tabernacle which it filled did. Intelligences that contained godly attributes first joined together, and through trial and error organized themselves into body form, and then realized that fashioning these through an embodied womb was far better than any other method (quoted in Woodruff 3:216-18; and see also Seer 1.9:130). How did one take in these attributes of God in the spirit realm? “The Celestial vegetables and fruits,” Orson Pratt reasoned, “which grow out of the soil of this redeemed Heaven, constitute the food of the Gods.” Why does food matter? “This food differs from the food derived from the vegetables of a fallen world: the latter are converted into blood, which...produces flesh and bones or a mortal nature, having a constant tendency to decay,” Pratt analogized, and so “celestial vegetables, are, when digested in the stomach, converted into a fluid, which, in its nature, is spiritual, and which...[F]orm a spiritual fluid which gives immortality and eternal life to the organization in which it flows” (Seer 1.3:37). Hence spirits born in a celestial womb would inherit this fluid rather than blood, making the fluid to the flesh as the spirit is to the body, and, to take the analogy further, so were attributes to gods. There is a clear poetic principle in Pratt’s work, which replicates a form-substance dualism familiar to students of Greek philosophy. The substance features opposite traits as the forms:

changelessness, non-diminishing, animating, as if “fullness of God” were analogized from the form “stick of wood” in a classic Whorfian abduction. Faith would be one of these attributes.

We have thus far covered Brigham Young and the Pratts on the primal material, and tracked the Pratts theology as it integrated biblical claims about one God with Smith’s revelations announcing a plurality of changing Gods. These two points serve as guideposts for reckoning the character of the Holy Spirit, who during the nineteenth century remained characteristically ambiguous. Was the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost a person or an animate, agentive substance-force akin to the attributes? “I cannot fully make up my mind one way or the other,” Orson Pratt confessed, though his brother was less reticent. “The purest, most refined and subtle of all these substances...is that substance called the Holy Spirit,” Parley claimed (1990:90). The substance makes a plurality of gods united in one, each omniscient and omnipresent, and “is one of the elements of material or physical existence” (ibid.). This divine material, which we identified earlier as the converging point of Spirit element and intelligence, “is the grand moving cause of all intelligences,” and is, according to Parley Pratt, “the great, positive, controlling element of all other elements. It is omnipresent by reason of the infinitude of its particles, and it comprehends all things.” This spirit element “penetrates the pores of the most solid substances, pierces the human system to its most inward recesses, discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart. It has power to move through space with an inconceivable velocity, fare exceeding the tardy motions of electricity or of physical light” (ibid.191). It is this substance-entity, according to Pratt, Holy Spirit, which allows

multiple tabernacles to be in constant interaction, and by one's in-filling with this substance one becomes a god, one with God.

Holy Spirit in Parley's theology functions within the cosmos in the same manner as the referent of his brother's *attributes*. I surmise that Orson likely would have no place for the Holy Spirit, and for this reason admitted (perhaps the only time he ever claimed ignorance), that he did not know (nor care) whether the Holy Ghost/Spirit was a person or power. For Orson Pratt there was no real distinction; identity was simply an agglomeration of attributes, and since all gods had the same attributes, presumably they were more or less the same: one God. Here ontology collided with hierarchy. In this world, however, Orson Pratt faced the problem of identity in the form of Brigham Young, a man not given to sharing power with an infinity of beings, nor to "lariatting" any being with a sort of celestial ceiling that stopped eternal progression of knowledge and power.

Young on God(s)

On hearing Orson Pratt's theology of attributes that dwell in the gods as God, Young mentioned it sounded familiar. "Brother Hyde was on the same theory once," Young began, "and in conversation with brother Joseph Smith advanced the idea that eternity or boundless space was filled with the Spirit of God, or the Holy Ghost. After portraying his views upon that theory very carefully and minutely, he asked brother Joseph what he thought of it." "It appeared very beautiful," Brigham reported Joseph's response, "and he did not know of but one serious objection to it. Says brother Hyde, 'What is that?' Joseph replied, 'it is not true'" (JD 4:266). Despite this objection, Young taught, "That God fills the immensity of space is a true principle to me. There is no portion of space where He is not. There is no element in existence that does not contain Him....He is

through it and round about it” (Collier 1987:232). This would seem to fit Orson Pratt’s theology; perhaps Brigham abandoned the anti-omnipresent argument upon reflection?

This quote is framed by Young’s vigorous anthropomorphism. Speaking of “animal magnetism,” Young declared it a true principle, but that it is a manifestation of “the Spirit of Life, The power of the Holy Ghost, or the Life of God in the creature” (ibid.:242). He then clarified, “it is the life that is in everything, and God is the author of it, and in this way He is in everything, and round about everything.” “This does not,” Young declared, “refer to his personal tabernacle, it is not in you nor in this room. He is at home, or else on a visit to some of His friends.” Though the tabernacle of God is not everywhere, “the elements that every individual is made of and lives in possess the Godhead,” Young explained, and admitted, “this you cannot now understand, but you will hereafter. The Deity within us is the great principle that causes us to increase, and to grow in grace and truth” (JD 1:93). The immanent divine is not some mysterious abstraction for Young; rather the divine is in one thing or another, a man or a tree, to the degree that the intelligence of which it is composed renders obedience to the will of the Father, to whom all roads lead:

If we are obedient to the will of our Father in Heaven it accomplishes one grand object...one eternal principle governing and controlling the intelligence that dwells in the persons of the Father and the Son. I have these principles within me, Jesus has them within him, and you have them within you.....[Our Father] learned them, Jesus learned them, and we must learn them in order to receive crowns of glory, immortality, and eternal lives (JD 3.355).

Being made of the same material did not make all beings equal, however, but each was relatively more or less divine than another according to the concordance of actions with the will of God.

Thus for Young progression to godhood resulted from following the orders of the already deified, who fashioned the universe we inhabit so that we might progress. This universe follows the laws set by its God and Father to the benefit of all. Where, one can imagine Orson Pratt asking, did God learn these laws by which he organized and infused his influence into his creations? From his Father, Brigham would respond, for though we call our Father perfect, “When we use the term perfection, it applied to man in his present condition, as well as to heavenly beings. We are now, or may be as perfect in our sphere as God and Angels are in theirs, but the greatest intelligence in existence can continually ascend to greater heights of perfection” (JD 1:93). Here Young refutes Orson Pratt’s theory regarding the changelessness of the Gods (as One God) by making perfection relative. There has always been a god of some sort in existence, and this god was of the same species as humanity, indeed, is kin to all creation. Moreover, there is no equality among deity, according to Young, but infinite hierarchy tied by patriarchal kinship. To cease progressing is for Young to descend into chaos, for one cannot remain static (JD 1:349). This doctrine gave Pratt fits. He refused to consider that once godhood was attained it could be lost through sloth or other means; the One God was timeless, ideal, abstract, material. Young, however, worked through the possibility of a fallen god and created what is his most controversial doctrine.

Speaking of our Father, Young taught “He is a being of the same species as ourselves; He lives as we do, except the difference that we are earthly, and He is heavenly. He has been earthly, and is of precisely the same species of being as we are.” Young continued his sermon, “Whether Adam is the personage that we should consider our Heavenly Father, or not, is a considerable mystery to a good many....It is no matter,

whether we are to consider Him our God, or whether His Father, or His Grandfather, for in either case we are of one species—of one family—and Jesus Christ is also of our species” (JD 4:217). The mystery here spoken of came from Young’s rejection of the account of Genesis which described Adam’s creation from the dust of the earth. A baby story, Young laughed, “But suppose Adam was fashioned the same as we make adobies.....He would have continued as he was to all eternity, never advancing one particle in the school of intelligence” (JD 2:6).

After “the Father actually begat the spirits,” in the spirit world, “Then He commenced the work of creating earthly tabernacles, precisely as He had been created in this flesh himself,” through sexual intercourse. Young pointed to Adam as the person “who brought the animals and the seeds from other planets to this world, and brought a wife with him and stayed here....He was made as you and I are made, and no person was ever made on any other principle” (JD 3:319). Prior to Adam and Eve consummating their marriage in the Garden of Eden, however, Adam partook “of the coarse material that was organized and composed this earth, until His system was charged with it. Consequently, the tabernacles of His children were organized from the coarse materials of this earth” (JD 4:218). Now agreeing with Pratt on the role of food and the effects of food on the fluid that courses in one’s body, Young taught the bodies of Adam and Eve were changed so that they bore mortal children, filled with blood rather than spirit fluid.

A super-Noachic figure, Adam came to Earth after managing its construction, and brought seeds and animals from his former world, where he was called Michael, the arch-angel who threw down the dragon Lucifer. Moreover, Young “reckoned” that Adam was a “Celestial” being, meaning a resurrected, perfected man effectively of the order of the

Gods, as was his wife Eve. The implications were clear: the parents of all humanity were fallen Gods, who fell by eating mortal food so that their spirit children could inhabit tabernacles of flesh. Finally, Young declared (in his most controversial revelation), following the logic of man becoming god, that Adam-Michael was “our FATHER and our GOD, and the only God with whom we have to do” (JD 1:50). The universe worked, then, because celestial mechanics acted in ways not dissimilar from how mortals behave. They sacrificed for the good of their children. For Pratt the universe worked by celestial mechanics that attached, lawlike by way of affinity, attributes with intelligences, and which attributes eventually filled tabernacles to the brim of godhood. Young’s cosmos was firmly anchored to humans in one order or another, while Pratt’s was built on a divide between eternal attributes and those filled with these.²⁶ There were no non-personal attributes in Young’s universe, and Pratt’s claim to worship attributes, rather than the dispenser of attributes, was heresy (Bergera 2002).

Now that the gods were closer to earth, one could begin identifying members of their order. “If you find out who Joseph was, you will know as much about God as you need to as present,” Young remarked, “for if he said, ‘I am a God to this people,’ he did not say that he was the only Wise God. Jesus was a God to the people when he was on the earth.....Moses was a God to the children of Israel, and in this manner you may go right back to father Adam” (JD 4:271). Godship meant becoming fathers and mothers of spirits, and just as this world has its share of deity, countless planets have theirs. “Every world has an Adam and an Eve, named so simply because the first man is always called

²⁶ It is of course no coincidence that Orson Pratt was a member of the Quorum of Apostles, while Young was President of the Church; each man was positioned in the cosmos, as an analogue with deity, in a manner that mirrored their position in the Church. For Pratt the Quorum was to be one, united, equal, for Young they were to obey their leader because he was more perfect than they.

Adam, and the first woman Eve,” Young revealed, while their oldest son “is the savior of the family” (Collier 1987:349). Here we find President Young applying a principle of plurality made possible by reading Adam and Eve as social roles rather than proper names. Linking the production of Adams and Eves to mortal offspring on every earth allowed mortals fill these roles in the future as they become like their parents.

The great war in heaven was brought here to earth, for if Adam was Michael, Lucifer was Satan, a former exalted, “godified” being with a priesthood despite his rebellion against the gods, Michael, and his seed. Young explored further the darker realms, teaching that all devils will eventually return to their “native element,” though because their identities are eternal, they can never be destroyed. Again the doctrine of intelligence suggested to Young that devils could again be organized into a spirit, “their dust will again be revived....Some might argue that this principle would lead to the re-organization of Satan, and all the devils. I say nothing about this, only what the Lord says....[Y]ou cannot annihilate matter” (JD 1:118).

The third member of the godhead, the Holy Ghost, was characterized by the reigning anthropomorphic principle. “The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of the Lord, and issues forth from Himself, and may properly be called God’s minister to execute His will in immensity,” Young clarified, “being called to govern by His influence and power; but He is not a person of tabernacle as we are, and as our Father in Heaven and Jesus Christ are” (JD 1:45). Because the Holy Ghost lacked a body he could only influence by diplomatic persuasion, in this his power lives. Moreover, Young scoffed, the Holy Ghost could not have been the father of Jesus, for he lacked a tabernacle to give a son, which role Young definitively ascribed to the father of the human race (JD 1:51).

Young apologized upon revealing the mysteries of gods, noting, “Were I to tell you the whole truth, blasphemy would be nothing to it, in the estimation of the superstitious and over-righteous of mankind” (ibid.). His development of Mormon theology was bold, and consistent within his anthropomorphic framework. The entire cosmos was reckoned by analogy from PERSONAL nouns, and even abstract principles were tied to person-like entities. That is to say, there was no beauty independent of a beautiful being. Young’s God was no mysterious essence emanating here and there, but a man, and a woman, and they did that which men and women did here on earth, though on a grander scale: colonizing planets rather than territories, overthrowing Satanic kingdoms rather than human fiefs in the heroic drama set in the cosmos. They had spirit children and fell in order to provide their children mortal tabernacles on the path to godhood. How did Orson Pratt respond, was he one of the “over-righteous,” or as blasphemously anthropomorphic as Young?

The Pratts on Worlds of Spirit

Parley and Orson Pratt clearly admitted the advantages of a material God, and developed it into a natural theology of the non-natural world. A heaven “without buildings, or materials out of which to form them, or foundations on which to place them,” was absurd to Parley Pratt, “mere relics of mysticism and superstition” (1990:104). “These narrow minded sectarians,” Parley scoffed, “whose motto is that ‘ignorance is the mother of devotion,’ not only shun all investigation on these subjects [they] teach others so.” He continued the assault: “It is painful to the human mind to be compelled to admit that such wonderful inconsistencies of language or ideas have ever found place in any human creed,” yet such were the features of Christian theology (ibid.:185). The Pratts aimed to

make respectable to science their seemingly crude anthropomorphism. They plumbed the depths of eternity entirely by way of analogy: since reasoning worked here, it could enlighten other worlds as well.

They began with a personalized rendering of intelligences. These formed a union by mutual consent, and in this way learned of the material world much faster: stimuli in one part could teach other parts about the world. Yet the birth of the spirit did not begin the career of any individual intelligence. Orson Pratt argued for a “transmigration” of intelligences from lower to higher organizations, from dirt to vegetables to animal matter, a sequence culminating in an “Image and likeness of God” (Seer 1.7:102). By virtue of their birth as an organized spirit child, organized intelligences in a bond of fellowship inherited attributes from spiritual parents. This transmission occurred at two points. The parents’ state of mind at the time of conception, and the state of the mother’s mind during pregnancy, “will be constitutionally impressed upon the offspring”; a theory which clearly eschews non-causal relations between mind and body (Seer 1.10:115). The parents impressed “germs of attributes” on the child, which attributes united this “being of beings,” bonded intelligences, into one being, a lower-scaled model of Pratt’s heavenly quorum that constituted the One God.

By affinity with more attributes of godliness, the most important of which were Truth and Intelligence, the spirit child progressed in the spirit world, learning laws that all gods must obey. This instruction no doubt occurred over a very long period, according to Orson Pratt, but one’s time was not spent in a nebulous world with ether as one’s only companion. Divine animals would accompany one’s education, and one would tend gardens teeming with celestial fruits and vegetables. Travel among the interplanetary

kingdom would be made more efficient by taking on the attributes of light. Being composed of light would shorten travel time, “and thus we shall be able to accomplish, and perform a greater amount of righteousness among other worlds and beings, than if we were compelled to lose three-fourths, or nine-tenths of our time on the journey” (JD 3:104). A world populated by spirits, who ate, played music, argued, and farmed, and visited other realms would over time get crowded. At this point, as with a farmer with too many sons, a “Royal Planter” would organize a planet. As one in a “great family widely diffused among the planetary systems, as colonies, kingdoms, nations, etc.,” the new earth would be shaped, and seeds from one’s home world would be planted (1990:187). Though he refused to regard Adam as a god, Pratt here seems to affirm Young’s rendering of prehistory.

After Adam-Michael established a kingdom here as one of the Royal Planters, according to Parley Pratt, sin by way of Satan “soon entered in triumph, with his numerous train of associates, dethroned old Father Adam, our lawful sovereign, and put our garrison to the sword,” and “clad with frightful majesty proclaims himself ‘The King of Terrors’” (1990:111). Hence evil was not in our disposition until a wicked ruler usurped Adam’s kingdom and taught evil to his children. Lucifer planted the seeds of death in this world, with thorn and thistle his fruit. We can surmise that Orson Pratt would have no difficulty identifying whence came this King of Terrors:

Is it possible there are worlds reserved in eternal night, in an eternal eclipse, rolling in the shade?...They are homes of them that love darkness rather than light, and it shall be said unto them, Depart ye cursed, into outer darkness. There are planets that revolve in eternal darkness, [so] that you who love darkness rather than light may go and find your own home (JD 1:130).

If one hopes to return to a celestial world, or to make this earth one, the physics of the revolution were clearly identified by Orson Pratt: one must draw down attributes of light

and truth into this benighted realm. Only in this way could interplanetary travel occur and could outside, more celestial influence take root on this fallen earth. If this meant planting a new garden with celestial soil in which to plant fruit which contained redemptive seeds that renewed life, then this was no more mysterious than colonizing the Utah desert. Once redeemed, the earth and its inhabitants would become similar to the sun, generating their own light for the benefit of other lower realms.

These were not just stories that Orson and Parley Pratt told; they were written as if reporting life in the pre-mortal existence was as simple as writing about France. We have no record that Brigham Young ever condemned their writing about the spirit world. Theirs was an ethnography of sorts of the unseen realm, and it was made possible in part by reading practices. Orson Pratt read scripture as strictly referring to reality; even metaphors were real, as truth and light were material. For him the redemption of the earth would come at the arrival of the bridegroom Christ to the wedding feast, a common claim for Christians. Pratt however, linked this apocalyptic imagery with the parable of the ten virgins, in which only five had enough oil to make it to the wedding feast. These were daughters of kings according to Pratt, real women who would take their place among the plural wives of the returned Messiah. Though he could appreciate the allegorical features of scripture, Orson Pratt clearly found more value in the story's filling in of unknown history.

Parley Pratt was similarly dismissive of scripture when it blocked inquiry into the history of the universe. Of the Genesis account of the creation of the world, Parley Pratt wrote that because the world rejected truth, and wallowed in sin,

The holy man [Moses] was forced again to veil the past in mystery, and, in the beginning of his history, assign to man an earthly origin. Man moulded from earth, as a brick! A woman, manufactured from a rib! Thus parents still would fain conceal from budding

manhood, the mysteries of procreation, or the sources of life's ever flowing river, by relating some childish tale of new born life, engendered in the hollow trunk of some old tree or springing from spontaneous growth, like mushrooms, from out of the heaps of rubbish. O Man! When wilt thou cease to be a child in knowledge? (1990:197).

The Pratts and Brigham Young were neither "Fundamentalists" nor "literalists," as these labels arise only after they wrote and describe practices not at all in league with their work. I cannot imagine any biblical fundamentalists calling Genesis's origin myth a child's tale, designed to hide divine intercourse and interplanetary colonization. They were, one might say, naturalists, for the world was as spiritual as any unseen worlds. Though admittedly crude and fallen it could in its more refined experiences provide light, reflect truth like a book, on these worlds. The world was very thinkable for them. Guesses about the spirit world, life before the earth's existence, and the everyday physics of these worlds, were made possible by the ontological collapse established by the doctrine of intelligence(s). Since God and humanity were of one kind, and mind and body only shaded distinctions, why not dive into the mysteries of god? Moreover, the universe was composed of intelligence(s), and worked by affinity and sympathy: a little truth uncovered would draw more, and this effect, presumably, would be their explanation for the rich, sometimes wild, but always normal worlds they wrote about. How does one account for the differences in worlds portrayed between *Lectures on Faith* and theologies produced by Young and the Pratts?

I can draw out an answer initially by comparing what Young and Pratt said of faith with that spoken of in the Lectures. Pratt was part of a committee which published the Lectures alongside revelations in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. He wrote of faith as a belief, a mental position. This may seem no different from the position in the Lectures, but when we consider that Pratt's world was composed of attributes and substances

entirely material, and that mind was simply a more refined material than body, a once concealed distinction emerges. *Faith* was an attribute for Pratt, itself volitional and animate, and one could draw it down by acting (mentally). In the Lectures *faith* was a “principle of action” and of power, as well as an assurance, but this principle was wholly separate from the carnal body. Indeed it came by way of the Holy Spirit, the united mind of the Father and the Son.

Moreover, though the Lectures were “on faith,” it developed no metaphysics of faith as one might find in the work of Orson Pratt. Rather one finds discussion about how faith can be strengthened by belief in an omnipotent God. This distinction between faith in a dualistic, mind-body divided world, and faith in materialist, mind-body not-entirely-divided world (a difference of rather large implications), would be missed were one simply to do a topical search on “Faith” and look over various commentaries. Thus an abstract noun can tie together seeming similar theologies which in fact use the abstraction quite differently. This misleading gluing effect wrought by abstract nouns will become more prominent as we venture into the twentieth century.

What did Brigham Young say of faith? “I have faith enough, all that is lacking is the works. Everything is done by work—the use of faith is to call somebody to your assistance. When a person is healed from sickness by faith—it is to have power to call some unseen assistance” (Collier 1987:295). Brigham Young was planted firmly in the realm of humanity even in his description of faith; it was part of a speech event which roused spiritual powers, that is to say, beings with greater power than mortals. Note then the movement of an abstract noun, *faith*, into cosmologies built on mind-body unity; it

takes on qualities presupposed by this unity. How did grammatical categories, manifest in use, enable development of the radical cosmologies of Young and the Pratt brothers?

Intelligence(s), God, and Holy Ghost as nouns rather than concepts

Silverstein (1985) identifies a noun classification hierarchy which falls into the array described by an earlier diagram. These categories, to recap, are important because they link formal aspects of words with other grammatical features (verb tenses, pronouns, adjectives) by virtue of the physical shape of the word. *Intelligences* require certain verbal and pronominal constructions, and these are put into play with every utterance. Similar nouns can then be relied on to flesh out, by analogy, the referential features picked out by *intelligences*. If these terms are regarded in one's analysis as "ideas," however, one loses the structural framework provided by language, and instead misplaces analysis on individual minds (*Genius! Heretic!*). Do these linguistic categories enlighten one's understanding of the historical differences between *Lectures on Faith* and theologies created thereafter? Does a history of discourse disclose more than a history of ideas?

The Lectures came before the doctrine of intelligence(s) was revealed, and thus faith was the foundation of the universe. The term was an abstract mass noun, and when used within the reigning Christian culture, referred to operations in the mind which were assured of veracity by virtue of prelapsarian divine nature. That is to say, the term was filled in by the second analogical ground, portrayal of deity. In the Lectures God takes three forms: spirit as Father, tabernacle as Son, and shared mind as Holy Ghost. These deities are drawn into the grammatical categorization. The Father would be akin to an ANIMATE noun, not quite portrayed as human but having some human traits

(knowledge, will, presence). The Son would be two steps down the grammatical hierarchy as a PERSONAL noun, a slot granting more human traits. The Holy Spirit would be positioned between deity and ABSTRACT element, in this case *faith*. And so the Holy Ghost is sort of like deity, in essence the most refined as mind.

Why is mind the most refined form of deity? Because the ruling element, faith, is supremely mental, and so it provides the “leading principle,” as it were, for the development of abductions. Here the reflexive effects of cultural ontologies shape the analogical process. Hence, the Holy Ghost becomes the mediating entity built from the ur-element and deduced from the traits of the Trinity/Godhead: Love, Knowledge, etc. It is positioned on the grammatical hierarchy between *God the Father* and *faith*, just as theologically it was positioned between the minds of Father and Son. With these three terms, one referring to the basic material (*faith*), another to a basic being (*god*), and a third being-element between the two (*Holy Ghost*), the 1830s Mormon cosmos stabilized. It could not, however, given the abstractedness of the entire scheme, develop any speculative momentum. How could one speculate on *faith* by analogy, when it was positioned as supremely more abstract, utterly distinct, from ordinary experience? It could, as the Lectures taught, only be discerned by rolling back one’s eyes in a search of mind.

How do the Pratts and Brigham Young create a more expansive, dynamic picture? Were they simply geniuses (or nuts), or did culture and language have something to do with their innovative histories of the cosmos? For these Mormons, intelligence is the foundation rather than faith; though as noted, for Young it was *intelligence* as mass noun, for the Pratts, *intelligences* as count noun. Most importantly, in neither formulation is the

term exclusively abstract, for the spirit-body division (as a cultural ontology), by the time of their writing, had been closed by Joseph Smith. Hence, *intelligence(s)* is/are free to range up and down the grammatical ladder and take on more human-like qualities. Unlike *faith* they were not restricted to mind-like environments. Just as with *faith*, however, where the term ranges on the ladder depends on how deity is reckoned (as well as whether one deals with mass or countable *intelligence*). Because the Pratts worked with *intelligences*, these took on qualities akin to individualized personal nouns: will, sensory system, identity, agency, motion, etc. This rendering made them almost notionally identical as *God(s)* (except intelligences could be organized in non-body forms), which, of course, were only more perfected humans.

Pratt's cosmos was complicated, however, by an attempt to reconcile biblical theology with Joseph Smith's teachings. God is Love and God was once a man, which was it? A resolution came by way of introducing other qualities, like truth and light, which as Orson Pratt theorized, are not like substances at all. These attributes became purely abstract, unrelated to the rest of the cosmos. Thus Orson Pratt distinguished between *god* as a PERSONAL noun and *God* as an AGENTIVE noun akin to weather, a force of some kind. The logical conclusion was the One Grand Intelligence: God. Here he departs from the course set by Brigham Young. These nouns, however, remained as material as the rest of the cosmos, but as abstractions (negations) from ordinary substance, they could be spread throughout the cosmos without diminishing their quantity, nor changing quality. (Note that Pratt never developed a theory of attributes beyond basic affinity and sympathetic capacity: they were too abstract, too sundered from

human life to be thinkable beyond movement and attraction, standard principles of natural philosophy during his time.)

Anchored as the rest of the cosmos was to anthropomorphic Gods, reading attributes as independent, abstract nouns resulted in a dualism that Orson Pratt did not resolve. There were abstract attributes and substances, and the latter was filled by the former. These abstractions became divine, and Pratt replicated a form-substance dualism throughout the cosmos, with the form of Truth worshiped rather than the tabernacle-substance that housed it, the One God that filled the gods. Though dualistic, Pratt's cosmology was rendered materialistic, and given motion by way of analogy from PERSONAL noun categorization. Again theology and grammar combined, though here one found a decidedly more robust speculative framework than appears in the Lectures.

For Brigham Young this dualism never seems to have appeared; why? Intelligence could be theorized as a substance that was eternal and everything in the cosmos, spirit element, physical matter, and people. *Intelligence* began its career on the grammatical hierarchy as a substance, and as it was molded by persons, it could become more in the image of a person; that is to say, humans could draw *intelligence* down from substance to agentive to animate to personal noun. Young was able to maintain this system because it was anchored to beings human-like, with bodies interlaced with mind; and though individual beings had an origin, there was always some being around who could move the intelligence up the chain of being to become a god. Just as *intelligence* could move up and down the grammatical hierarchy with relative ease, so could its referent be drawn to, and eventually become, person-like entities. Where then did Beauty, Truth, Knowledge come in? Again the analogical filling in of *intelligence* was

achieved within the cosmological framework, which was anchored to personal nouns. Beauty and such were not abstract things, because Young invariably tied them to beings who were beautiful or created beautiful things, spoke or learned truth, and obtained or dispensed knowledge. Young resisted the urge to make ambiguous adjectives or abstract nouns into nouns referring to real things, separate from human-like beings. Instead everything was affixed to persons, who were composed of intelligence just as everything else was.

Primal material was referred to by some noun, and this noun could move or be restrained on the grammatical ladder according to the elements of the noun (pluralized or not), as well as by ordering with cultural hierarchies and ontologies. If god and man were of the same order, nouns could freely move between, as it were, heaven and earth, abstract and concrete, and take on qualities that allowed for elaborate speculations. If god and man differed radically, such as one finds in the Lectures, then the nouns were divided as well: *faith* referred to a mental event, just as the Father and Holy Ghost were mental beings. As a result of constraining noun movement up and down the grammatical ladder, the Lectures lacked speculation and development.

The Holy Ghost was situated on the grammatical hierarchy between nouns referring to the element and the being most akin to humanity (but nevertheless divine). For Pratt, then, because attributes were divine as well as beings, he had no place to situate definitively the Holy Ghost. Was it a he or he an it, animate but without tabernacle of flesh, extended and locatable in space and time, or an abstraction the same everywhere and never diminished by space or time? Pratt could pick either one, but not somewhere between, for the attributes of god could not be limited in space, and the divine being

could not be everywhere unless an attribute. Hence his dualism is unveiled in his uncertainty regarding the Holy Ghost.

Brigham Young's characterizations of the Holy Ghost clearly locate it as personal deity, like Adam, Christ, Joseph Smith, etc., who visits friends on other planets, eat food, and fight battles (as did Orson Pratt's gods). Though lacking flesh, he also was like intelligence, in perfect synchrony with the will of the gods. By virtue of being bodiless and yet organized into a god-like spiritual form, he could act as a mediator between intelligence unorganized, humans, and that evolved into gods. The Holy Ghost thus operated like people, through influence, persuasive rather than occult, and did so by communicating with intelligent elements that made up the universe. He could call on assistance from unseen realms, and intelligence marshaled at his command.

Similarly one can find dualism or monism exposed in definitions of *faith*, a noun similarly mediating like *Holy Ghost*. For Young *faith* referred to one's ability to call for divine aid, an act of speaking that called on another animate person with empathy as well as physical ability to change the situation. For the Pratts, *faith* was mental, though material nonetheless and could be theorized into the natural metaphysic they developed. For the Lectures *faith* was mental, God was spirit, or flesh, or a mental union between these, and faith was their bond, made possible because the flesh housed a mind, separate and after death distinct. To put it simply, Young's faith was a speech event, Pratt's a living material that sought its own level and kind, while the Lectures made faith a mental proposition, a belief about God. Doctrines about *faith*, a most important abstract noun in Christianity, unveil theories about how the universe works: by action, by affinity, or by sincerity.

Conclusion

For both Brigham Young and Orson Pratt, mysteries implied an unthinkable-ness that could not be countenanced in a religion that preached man could become a god, and that god was once a man (or a woman). Knowledge, or intelligence, was central to this progression. With mind-body dualism scrapped for a unified cosmos, God became thinkable, and spiritual history inferable. Young and Pratt worked by analogy from the here-and-now, though they did so in slightly different ways. Anthropomorphism allowed them to infer and fill in gaps in sacred history: Where did Adam come from if people cannot be created from ribs or dust? What do we do after we die if we have held to covenants made with our Father? By making *Adam* a personal rather than proper noun, a social role rather than a name referring to one being, Young could answer these questions by filling in what he knew about everyday life here. Pratt could write of the pre-mortal spirit world by working from everyday life, though with more bodily effects attributed to mind than one experiences here.

Unlike the God of *Lectures on Faith*, Young and the Pratts' gods were utterly familiar, friendly, and, indeed, a good deal more personable than the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent mystery substance-force-being-thing that the Lectures called God. Gods with bodies, passions, and parts were made thinkable by virtue of the cosmological collapse effected by the doctrine of intelligence(s), which allowed analogies to develop from here-and-now mortal life to other times, places, and beings. It opened cultural hierarchies by virtue of a comprehensive being. Intelligence(s) allowed humanity to become the "origo of abduction," one might say, the launch pad of speculative reasoning, because whatever matter-substance this term referred to could

sustain projection from the grammatical category of PERSONAL noun as well as scurry up the ladder into abstraction. Might altered grammatical scaffolding for reasoning result from a different metaphysic, one with mind either wholly distinct or at least the essential part of man, rather than an equal to the body? I have already argued that such a metaphysic was emerging among Mormonism after 1890. How do cultural doctrines relate to grammatical structure, and how do they interact? Mormonism by 1900 would experience a shift in cultural ontology that provoked revised renderings of theologically relevant nouns; and indeed, a far more restricted, hierarchically distinguished, conservative theology followed.

Chapter Eight

Nouns made ideas hard to think

This chapter continues a history of Mormon theology. It surveys in the following order the work of five leading figures of the LDS Church: James Talmage, Brigham H. Roberts, John A. Widtsoe, Joseph Fielding Smith and Bruce R. McConkie. Not only do they differ in portrayals of intelligence(s), but as we saw from last chapter, this leads to different positions on the Holy Ghost/Spirit, and on the gods in general. A clear trend toward mind-body dualism informs their collective work, which canvasses the first half of the twentieth century. The final writers read dualism through Mormon cosmology. Theological terms were thus refitted after Mormonism took on a dualistic metaphysics in order to preach polygamy but not practice it. Definite consequences resulted from uptake of and rationalization of this dualism, for deity became abstract, and as a result, hard to think.

Articles of Faith

At the suggestion of his California railroad pals, Joseph F. Smith had the Articles of Faith, a creed of sorts presumably written by Joseph Smith in 1842, read before the congregation at the October 1890 General Conference (see chapter five). Its reading immediately preceded presentation of Woodruff's Manifesto which advised members to refrain from creating illegal marriages. Three years later at Latter-day Saints University, a geology professor gave a series of theological lectures on the newly important Articles of Faith. In 1898, just two years after Utah statehood, James Talmage was asked by the

First Presidency of the Church to write his lectures for church-wide distribution (Alexander 1986).

In this same year the election of polygamist Brigham H. Roberts to the U.S. Congress was challenged on the grounds of his violation of the law. Roberts, who had earlier advised Joseph F. Smith that the leadership should tell the nation to “go to hell,” was also a member of the Presidency of the Quorum of the Seventy, a body just below the Apostles in Church hierarchy. Amid the Roberts controversy, 1899 saw the publication of Talmage’s lectures, titled *Articles of Faith: A Series of Lectures on the Principle Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Here the LDS Church was given a more recognizably Christian grounding, one perhaps taken in part as a result of political heat brought by the Roberts situation.

The original Articles of Faith were written by Joseph Smith, though these followed closely an earlier work by Orson Pratt. Smith sent the Articles to a newspaper editor in 1842. The Articles of Faith consist of twelve creedal statements, each beginning with “We Believe...,” such as, “in God the Eternal Father, in His son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.” The twelfth article, the one given emphasis in 1890, announced that “We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, magistrates, in obeying, honoring and sustaining the law.” By subscription to these statements one was now “of the Faith,” that is to say, of a church in the familiar Protestant cut, a community of believers. Like the Apostle’s Creed, belief was central, holding priority over some list of practices to which one submitted. That one spoke with a “We” when reciting an article is also significant; it marked the movement of the LDS Church into the realm of public

faiths predicated on beliefs united by creed.²⁷ One must not forget that the original Articles of Faith were sent to a newspaper editor just prior to Joseph Smith's run for the U.S. presidency (in 1844), and likely aimed at staunching anti-Mormon fervor in surrounding areas. The Articles of Faith were, in short, designed for non-Mormon readers, and only by 1890 would non-Mormon and Mormon readers overlap enough to allow the LDS Church to take the Articles of Faith as a creed.

Talmage begins his exposition of the Articles of Faith with a common assertion about the materiality of God, and that the LDS Church “asserts its belief in and allegiance to the true and living God of scripture” (Talmage 1977:44). This god had body, parts, and passions, but was he the same as described by earlier Mormons? “Faith in God constitutes the foundation of religious belief and practice,” Talmage began, “a knowledge of the attributes and character of Deity is essential to an intelligent exercise of faith in Him” (ibid.:26). This claim came directly from Lecture One of the *Lectures on Faith*, the 1835 text previously examined. Talmage seems to move back to pre-Young, pre-Pratt theology, and makes the return by way of faith. He makes it clear that, “The predominating sense in which the term faith is used throughout the scriptures is that of full confidence and trust in the being, purposes, and words of God.” Faith removes doubt, according to Talmage, it produces a “feeling of trust,” though it may be little more than a “feeble belief, scarcely free from hesitation and fear,” it could also be a “strength of abiding confidence that sets doubt and sophistry at defiance” (ibid.:86). *Faith* and *belief* could be regarded as synonyms, though faith was active while belief could remain passive. Faith implied “confidence and conviction as will impel to action,” while faith in

²⁷ It should be noted that recitation of the creed is not necessary in order to join the LDS Church; rather, the creed is more often treated as rhetorical backing for theological discussion, and thus, acts as a sort of *de facto* creed of belief.

Christ “comprises belief in Him, combined with trust in Him” (ibid.:87). Faith is “of the heart,” and founded “on intuition” (ibid.:89). Though faith was the foundation of religious belief and practice, it had as its foundation “a sincere belief in or knowledge of Him,” and is “preceded by sincerity of disposition and humility of soul” (ibid.:92, 97). Faith was clearly not a call for unseen assistance, nor an animate attribute that moved through the cosmos, but a mental act, not unlike passive belief. Faith is a “living application” of belief, the means by which “all things are wrought,” and a “motive principle” or “impelling force” that is “indispensable to salvation.”

Faith thus replaced *intelligence(s)* as a foundation for modern Mormon cosmology. *Intelligence* does not appear in Talmage’s work, with the exception of synonyms glossed as “wise direction.” Now sincere belief in God was what opened the door to salvation. (Whether Talmage believed this is, of course, unknown.) With a heavy debt to the *Lectures on Faith*, Talmage managed to reset Mormon cosmology to its 1835 form, with a god who occupied mental regions and who was accessible through mental exertion. What traits did this god have? God is omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, Talmage unhesitatingly affirms. With an anti-anthropomorphic deity, however, one is limited to saying little more than, as Talmage did, that God’s “power and wisdom alike are incomprehensible to man” (ibid.:39).

Talmage wrote after Brigham Young and Orson Pratt, along with Joseph Smith and others, had preached that gods have bodies. How could God be everywhere and embodied? Through “the medium of the Spirit” the Godhead is in constant communication with all creation (ibid.:38). This Spirit, however, is not the Holy Ghost, who Talmage asserted, following his reading of scripture, had a spirit body. He speaks,

reproves for sin, searches and investigates, knows all things, teaches, guides, and testifies of the Father and the Son. He is no “mere force or essence,” but possesses “perfect powers and affections,” which “attributes exist in Him in perfection” (ibid.:144). Talmage referenced his claims regarding the attributes of the Holy Ghost to scriptural statements from the “standard works” of the LDS Church: the *KJV bible*, the *Book of Mormon*, the *Doctrine & Covenants*, and the *Pearl of Great Price*. In these texts the Holy Ghost was sometimes referred to, according to Talmage, as “Spirit,” the “Spirit of Truth,” and the “Spirit of God” (ibid.:38).

Talmage’s proof-texting was not without definite puzzles, however, for each sacred book made very different statements regarding the Holy Spirit/Holy Ghost (and other ostensible pseudonyms). Was it a he or he an it, material or man, omnipresent or embodied? The problem involved one many philosophers and theologians have wrestled with: occult influence. Talmage resolved this by dividing the labor of the referent of *the Spirit* into “forces of life,” such as electricity and gravitation, which serve the Holy Ghost, the embodied personage localized in spacetime referred to by the same term, *Holy Spirit* (ibid.:145-6). Here was an abduction which eventually rebounds through all Mormon cosmology. The term Holy Spirit linked cultural ontology and hierarchy, and its shift rippled through the grammatical cosmos, as it were, inverting ontology to a hierarchy of beings. An animate element of being became an emanation or influence from a being. All mortals could feel “some measure of His power,” and indeed, the entire universe was in some non-explicated way shot through with spiritual influence, presumably by way of the emanating Holy Spirit substance. Only a select few have “actual companionship” with the personage referred to by *Holy Ghost*.

Talmage's exposition of the new creed of faith took a different stance on Mormon cosmology, and did so with a method that for Mormons was rather unique in its time. The Articles of Faith which Talmage explicated were timeless rather than historically positioned, and applied to every reader in the same fashion, "We believe...." Talmage also cited scripture as proof rather than his own reasoning, reckoning and revelations, as Young and Pratt would do. The interpretation of scripture was seemingly straightforward, however, not problematic; no baby stories or trickery about it. God was God, traditionally omniscient and so on, as well as incomprehensible. One does not get a sense that this god visits friends on other planets, plants seeds, copulates, builds mansions, or wrestles with demons. The Holy Ghost retained the same qualities as God, but also, as expected, was linked in some way to the spirit force, now discriminated by the mass noun *Holy Spirit*. Whether this Spirit was itself animate is unclear, though by Talmage's usage it seemed to be an inert substance that followed the beck and call of the Holy Ghost. Talmage did not describe it as moving, communicating, etc., but as a medium like electricity or ether. It was given "in some measure" to mortals to guide them, and was the means of God's omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence. Because the ur-element was not humanlike, but inert, nor God personal (though He had a body), Talmage was left with no origo of abduction, no bridge of analogy, from which he could explicate mythical history or deity. Why did his work differ so much from the speculative theology of previous decades?

While it is true that his *Articles of Faith* was not designed as a speculative text, it was nonetheless given as lectures to a theology class at LDS University. Whether Orson Pratt, mathematician extraordinaire, linguist, poet, chemist, and philosopher Apostle,

would have called it the sort of pap that Mormons in their sloth settled for, to be spoon fed in “diapers and bibs,” is not answerable, of course. Talmage takes advantage of the grammatical slipperiness of *Holy Spirit*, and makes fractions refer to both a person-like being (also less ambiguously called the *Holy Ghost*), as well as a substance, akin to water, that invisibly fills the universe and carries communication to the localized spirit. The divided referents of *Holy Spirit* were required by virtue of Talmage’s reliance on *Lectures on Faith* as a tool to explicate the *Articles of Faith*. The work was caught between times, with the frontier anthropomorphism of earlier days running against the philosophical mystification of the earliest days of Mormonism (when it was still awash in Christian influence). Lest one forget the work’s political implications, I should point out that it was clearly suited to its task: presenting Mormonism to an American public often outraged by Mormon doctrines and practices. A series of Christian beliefs spoken by some *We* could calm it in large measure. Lost in the fray were polygamy, communalism, and theocracy as God became approachable only through mental events. What effects did the work, with its rendering of living element into deity, have on Mormon theology?

The Great Synthesizer

Perhaps the most influential, and certainly the most prolific writer in Mormonism, Brigham H. Roberts authored historical, theological and scientific treatises for the Church until his death in 1933. In a work that marked a new dialogue between Mormons and Christians, Roberts and Reverend C. Van Der Donckt debated theology in 1901 across serially published articles in the Church owned *Improvement Era* magazine. The debate was compiled into a book in 1903, with Roberts adding material of his own as well as statements by earlier leaders. He argued that the great stumbling block of Christianity

was their rejection of “plain anthropomorphism” for a “false philosophy-created God, immaterial and passionless” (1903:preface). From the man who voted to tell the nation to “go to hell,” this opening salvo planted Roberts firmly in the nineteenth century camp of theology. The work begins in telling fashion, aping the style of the Articles of Faith:

We believe that God is a being with a body in form like man’s...that in a word, God is an exalted, perfected man. Second, we believe in a plurality of Gods. Third, we believe that somewhere and sometime in the ages to come, through development, through enlargement, through purification until perfection is attained, man at last, may become like God—a God (ibid.:11).

Such a rendering of deity in time allows texts to be read as “local revelations only,” as pertaining to this world, this temporal cycle (or “eternity”), and, according to Roberts, not as having any relation to earlier creations by gods long since moved on in the universe. Making god historical, and a category of perfect humans, as we have seen, allowed for great innovation; Greek mythology (like nineteenth century Mormonism), after all, did not gain traction by working with a Christian God. Homer, after all, differs from Aristotle in more ways than one. Against the innovative potency of a man-God theology, Roberts compared and mocked Christian worship of mystery and universalism, and cited Hebert Spencer and Fichte in support (ibid.:105). Roberts continued the almost nationalistic tradition set by Young and Pratt, writing that though these doctrines no doubt offended Christians, Mormons “not only admit the variances but glory in them” (ibid.:69).

Roberts explained to Van Der Donckt the Mormon doctrine of the Holy Ghost. He wrote that this Spirit “permeates all space,” not in any figurative sense, but in two different ways. First, the same as light emanates from stars, the physical-spiritual force of God fills the universe as a more refined substance. Roberts followed Talmage’s distinction between the Holy Spirit and Holy Ghost, and assigned this filling effect to the

former. He also quoted Joseph F. Smith, who developed Talmage's theology, by making *Holy Ghost* a personal noun, with *Holy Spirit* semantically expanded to be synonymous with the scriptural "Light of Christ." This light was also like an undiminished substance, and was imparted to all when born into mortality. The distinction between persons and inanimate substances was being read back into scripture by way of abstraction. Hence the difference between substance and person, one that harkened to Orson Pratt's attributes and tabernacles, became official doctrine. Moreover, as concerned the Holy Ghost, "as we dwell in him, so, too, dwells he in us," according to Roberts (quoting Orson Pratt), just as man obeys the will of the Father, he along with other "intelligent beings are all parts of God" (ibid.:162-6). Gods and men are one through acting on the same principles, "and govern their worlds and world-systems by the same spirit" (ibid.:168). Though he cited Pratt, who was quoting a revelation to Joseph Smith, Roberts did not take Pratt's position on the attributes as a fetish of worship. Instead, he worked more with a personalized cosmos on the order of that taught by Brigham Young.

Roberts's cosmology generally resembled Brigham Young's, despite the new doctrine regarding the Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit. Indeed, he defended Young's Adam-Michael-God teaching, which had like plural marriage been removed from public space by 1900 (ibid.:42-3). Unlike Young, however, he allowed a distinction between persons and independently effective substances, between the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit. As noted, Young described the former as a personage of spirit, and the latter as the material which made up the entire cosmos, including the personages of spirit. The distinction between the two only marked phases of cosmic evolution. When Roberts accepted the difference between Holy Ghost and Spirit promoted by Talmage, he inadvertently

positioned his cosmology in the now dualistic Mormon culture. Hierarchy replaced, indeed, became ontology as the necessary ground for linking gods, spirits, and so on, namely Holy Spirit, was divided into a synonym for deity and a name for its influence. As a result, some aspects of Roberts's cosmology became rather complicated.

In later work, *A Seventy's Course in Theology* (1907-11), Roberts quotes Orson Pratt on the nature of substances and qualities. Pratt quoted Isaac Newton, and inferred that whatever quality the Holy Spirit was, it must be housed in some substance. Alternately, Roberts quotes Talmage on the personage of the Holy Ghost, and remarks that scriptures use the personal pronoun "he" in reference to this deity. The Holy Ghost, however, Roberts admitted, also "is represented by the neuter pronoun 'It' and 'Itself'" (5:60-2). "How the doctrine of the personality of the Holy Ghost, in the sense of spirit-personage, in the form of man, is to be made compatible with the idea of the Holy Ghost [that] operates simultaneously upon the minds of many persons, in fact becomes an indwelling influence and power in them," Roberts confessed, is not altogether clear. He took Orson Pratt's path of official uncertainty: "Happily the task does not devolve upon the writer to advance a positive theory with reference to this difficulty. Frankly he confesses himself inadequate to such a task" (ibid.). Unlike Pratt, however, Roberts gave it a shot.

He resolved the problem by moving toward a cosmos more in line with Brigham Young's person-oriented model. The Holy Ghost, Roberts suggested, exercises influence over other intelligences, which may then act in harmony with this influence, and on a universal scale, the power of the Holy Ghost could effect an aggregation of individual intelligences into a Holy Spirit, a Cosmic Mind (5:61-5). This Mind was akin to Pratt's

One God. The reach of the Holy Ghost is explained not by some occult substance, but by the collective actions of entities: if they conform to the will of the Holy Ghost, they could be said to be one with him. Just how this worked to bring about an actual united material, however, Roberts confessed, was as the wind, “ye know not whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit” (5:65).

Though Roberts benefited from a turn back to Young’s model, he eventually developed Orson Pratt’s world of animate substances. Pratt’s work on intelligences became a means for Roberts to account for the occult action of the Holy Spirit. Borrowing from Parley Pratt on the transmission of the Holy Spirit, Roberts claimed that when granted to another person, an “impure spirit of such a one will repulse the pure influence, upon the natural laws of sympathetic affinity, or of attraction and repulsion” (5:96). This embrace of animate substance, as a way to account for the omnipresence of otherwise embodied gods, would continue through Roberts’ work until his death.

Rationalizing Intelligences

Whether intelligence differed from intelligences, and how, was not entirely clear in Roberts’s early work. Writing after Talmage, Roberts mapped the person-substance distinction from the grammatically mediating deity, *Holy Ghost*, onto the ur-element, *intelligence(s)*, by way of more ambivalent *Holy Spirit*. Person-substance dualism was drawn by analogy from the heavens across the primal material. Its expansion was made possibly by the cultural ontology engendered by the term *Spirit* as rendered by Talmage: even as it presupposed unity, it created divisions. Within this framework, his most extensive treatment of intelligences emerged. It appeared in a series of manuals designed for use in local Sunday services and was called *A Seventies Course in Theology*.

This five volume work marked Roberts's attempt to give Mormons training not only in LDS theology, but also in the history of religion and theology of Christianity. Roberts implicitly used grammatical classes as the ground of his argument about intelligences. "There is in that complex thing we call man," Roberts affirmed, "an intelligent entity, uncreated, self existent, indestructible." Pronouns matter, for "that entity is 'he,' not 'it,'" and this personal noun is "of the same kind of substance or essence with deity," though of lesser development. So far Roberts seems to match nineteenth century doctrines. "He is called *an 'intelligence,'*" Roberts clarified, "and this I believe is descriptive of him. That is, *intelligence* is the entity's chief characteristic." With this characteristic nature, "intelligent entities [not *intelligences*] perceive the truth, are conscious of the truth..." (2:8-9). Treating intelligence as both attribute and entity, Roberts replicates the dual reading given earlier to *Holy Spirit*. In both cases the form of the word granted it grammatical license to be used referentially in several distinct ways. Roberts uses *entity* to clarify the referentially ambiguous *intelligence*, which referent has the quality of intelligence. Assigning the entities this quality oriented their fundamental animate order, in a way allowing analogy from personal nouns of similar "notional" cores.

Roberts's work perfects the doctrine of intelligences, and is as much a treatise on their nature as Pratt's and Young's work perfected speculations about cosmological history, other worlds, and culture heroes. How was Roberts able to delve into the abstract realm of intelligent intelligences? He read *intelligences* as a personal noun but worked as if the physical structure of these entities was abstract idea. He claims intelligences,

are both self-conscious and conscious of an external universe not self...have the power to generalize...can perceive the existence of certain *a priori* principles that are incontrovertible—necessary truths—which form a basis of knowledge...possess a power

of imagination or imaginative memory by which they hold pictures of sense perceptions before the mind and may form from them new combinations of thought and consciousness...have the power to reason (ratiocination), to deliberate, to form judgments...have volition, physical, mental and moral, within certain limitations—a power both to will and to do (4:5).

It is no coincidence that Roberts cites William James as assisting his thinking about intelligences. They were preeminently mental entities, psychology made cosmology. By exercise of will intelligences progressed from unorganized strata, to birth into spirit bodies, to spirit bodies born in mortal tabernacles, finally to perfect embodiment of spirit-flesh in a resurrected soul. The overall scheme seems to accord with Pratt and Young. Though Roberts used the same term to refer to animate ur-element, thus making God and humanity beings of the same material, Roberts, in fact, as his doctrine of the Holy Ghost makes clear, built on a dualistic universe.

Roberts aimed to reconcile a person-centered cosmos with a dualistic model of matter and mind, and his doctrine of the Holy Ghost, always the test of any Mormon cosmology, makes clear his dilemma. “If any affirm a ‘universal intelligence,’ or ‘Cosmic Mind,’ or ‘Over Soul,’ in the universe,” Roberts explained, “it is an influence, a power proceeding either from an individual intelligence or from harmonized individual intelligences, a mind atmosphere proceeding from them” (4:9). This mind-atmosphere, akin to Talmage’s *Holy Spirit*, was a “projection of their mind power into the universe, as the sun and all suns, project light and warmth into the universe” (ibid.). Because he, like Orson Pratt, implicitly accepted a divide between mind and matter, entity and attribute, he struggled to make discrete entities into an all-pervading occult medium. The line is too distinct, and hence he relies on metaphors from the natural world, rather than draws from human experience (as did Young) in order to orient physical-spiritual worlds.

Though Roberts recognized the importance of human-god similarity, because he worked in a far more mindful environment, he eventually projected not man's sexual practices, his eating, play, and love for music onto the heavens, but that which had been isolated as mental, which had formerly been separated in the Christian metaphysic of spirit-flesh. Mormon deity would be reworked, often in direct dialogue with Catholic and Protestant ministers, into less a comprehensive image of humanity, and more into a rendering of what was essential and pure about humanity: minds. Intelligence simply was perfected mind, which animated flesh not itself intelligent. Roberts's crowning work most fully developed a dualistic cosmology. It remained unpublished during his life because a Church committee headed by Joseph Fielding Smith (son of Joseph F. Smith) thought some of Roberts's claims non-doctrinal (only several decades after the author's death was it published as *The Truth, The Way, The Life*).

Roberts begins with Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man*, "How can we reason but from what we know," as his method. Certainly Brigham Young would agree. What had changed by the time of this reasoned work was the "what we know" aspect of human experience. The mind as an explorable space, with experimental tools similar to those used in natural science, by philosophical self-reflection, or by interactive experiments, had by 1930 become accepted by Americans and Mormons at large. The anthropomorphism remained in Roberts's work, what had changed was what exactly "anthropos" was, at bottom, what in essence was most eternal and divine. In this final work Roberts fully implements a mind-body distinction into the speculative machinery of Mormon theology. The universe was composed of things and "intelligences that cognize them...perhaps to control them, dominate them, and through them work out a sovereign

will” (1994:15). This cognized matter shades into energy and drifts back into matter, leaving Roberts “wondering if in the last analysis of things it will not be found that matter and energy are really one—spirit?” (ibid.:17). This spirit was not the same as Young’s ur-element, however similar the word used. It was not “mind-element,” “for we still hold here that there is a distinction between mind and matter,” Roberts clarified, and mind can sense beauty, grace, mercy, while matter, of which bodies are composed, merely reacts mechanically (ibid.:76, 37). Material things followed laws rather than exhibiting volition; these laws Roberts identified as coming from a “universal mind, proceeding from all harmonized, divine intelligences, the very ‘Spirit of God,’ everywhere present and present with power” (ibid.:42). Hereafter Roberts united the Spirit of God with animate, agentive substance, and projected the mental capacity of humanity-god onto this material.

Roberts worked with both *intelligence* and *intelligences*, though unlike Young’s use of the former term, with Roberts it referred to a trait or attribute of intelligences. When united, intelligences formed a “mind-force” through the cosmos. With the entire cosmos acting as one, or at least enough intelligences harmonized to “give the sense of oneness to all that is” (ibid.:88), Pratt’s One God would seemingly conform to Young’s personal gods. Roberts used their work to create a cosmology subtly different: mind was not matter (contra Young), despite the link effected by intelligences; while intelligence was simply an attribute, one decidedly unlike Pratt’s attributes whose function, to enable an omni-God, had been replaced in the cosmos by intelligences. Roberts seemed to reconcile Young and Pratt, though at the expense of cloaking Young’s personalized, monistic cosmos with a dualistic world made of mental and physical material. He

replaced Pratt's attributes as a substance that effected oneness, by virtue of in-filling, with intelligences that acted as one. Why did not Roberts actually synthesize Young and Pratt?

Roberts was like Pratt and Young, and unlike Talmage, a polygamist; the last polygamist-politician-pastor-poet of Mormonism. His dying breed worked during a radical revolution of American culture which turned from idealism and romanticism toward scientism, materialism, and, eventually, strict positivism. Bestride the horses of the twentieth and nineteenth centuries, Roberts seems to run in two directions, within two times. He speculated about interplanetary visitations from angels and gods who literally moved through space and performed "missionary and social service work throughout the vast cosmos"; among these efforts was a repopulating of earth by Adam and Eve, on a planet whose pre-Adamic inhabitants were wasted in a global catastrophe. With his histories and philosophies, Roberts sought to unite science with religion, evolution with Adam-God, and the approach (to reconcile) was itself utterly nineteenth century. Mormons had long ago rejected creationism, and Pratt, Young, and Roberts, no doubt along with the geologist James Talmage, saw their religion taking higher ground as a result of its seeming affinity with evolution and relativity.

That ground was situated, however, on an underlying fissure between mind and body which Pratt flirted with, and which the events of the 1880s eventually brought to surface. Belief and practice could be distinguished, just as mind and body could be separate, and church and state divided in their respective realms of authority. Dualism could not be reconciled with monism. Roberts relied on a post-Manifesto rendering of Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit, borrowed from Talmage's work on the Articles of Faith. By

rending the heavens into animate and inanimate orders, into spirits and matter, people and reacting material, the effects of distinguishing between practicing and believing in polygamy, or, at a more widespread plane, between reporting speech as speech or as thought, cascaded through Mormon cosmology.

Of like Minds

I now track a turn to the mind as forming the link between god and man as found in the work of Roberts's protégé, John A. Widtsoe. In his slim treatise *Rational Theology* (1997 [1915]), Widtsoe aimed to bridge an increasingly wide sea between theology and science. Like Roberts's work, it was designed as a manual for use in church schools. The text was published in the interim between Widtsoe's service as president of Utah Agricultural College and subsequent post at the University of Utah.

Theology is "derived from the invariable laws of the universe," Widtsoe began, which universe is composed of eternal material. Knowledge of the universe is "derived from the direct action of the senses," he argued, and thus eternal laws may be derived from eternal matter (convertible though it be into different substances). By understanding matter, one gains insight in the mind of God, who "because of his great knowledge, knows how to use the elements, already existing, for the building of whatever he may have in mind" (ibid.:2-12). Because all matter is of the same kind, spiritual or physical, the unseen realm may be known by examining the visible world. "This simply carries onward the logic of things earthly," Widtsoe explained, "and conforms with the doctrine that whatever is on this earth is simply a representation of spiritual conditions of deeper meaning than we can here fathom" (ibid.:69). That last clause is significant, it seems, for it posits a necessity of mystery about the spiritual realm which, importantly,

are matters of “deeper meaning.” Widtsoe carries to a conclusion a thread that Roberts and Pratt started, and wove it into established discursive practices of modern Mormonism.

Like matter, “man has existed ‘from the beginning,’ and...from the beginning, he has possessed distinct individuality impossible of confusion with any other individuality among the hosts of intelligent beings” (ibid:15). These beings, however, were of a potentially distinct order from matter. “That a degree of intelligence is possessed by every particle of energized matter cannot be said,” Widtsoe cautioned, “nor is it important.” It may be, according to Widtsoe, that “matter and intelligence, rather than matter and energy, are the two fundamentals of the universe!” (ibid.:13-14). There was a clear division between beings that possessed intelligence and the matter which they encountered; moreover, matter did not really matter, for it was the force, the invariable laws, the most abstracted feature about matter, which man needed to learn if he was to progress. Hence Widtsoe made his formal, rational method into a cosmology, fitting theory with analytic in order to make knowledge possible.

In this cosmos there are not intelligences, but beings with intelligence, and the greatest of these, from our local perspective, is the being we call God. Possibly alluding to Young’s Adam-Michael-God doctrine (“the only God with whom we have to do”), Widtsoe described God as “the being of highest intelligence with whom we deal” (ibid.:66). By his “will and words” God used the forces of the universe to create a world, and on this world appeared Adam and Eve. Humans labor with God in the same universe, and only because we are of the same order with God can we know anything of him. This is a “comforting thought” for Widtsoe, that because God was once human his

justice and mercy are tempered by “his own divine memory” of an earlier struggle in mortality (ibid.:25-29). As Malinowski long ago noted, mythology “codes” categories. Can a shift in categories revise mythology?

While God in the abstract was supremely a mental being, particular gods or god-like beings were less thinkable. Widtsoe admitted that the statement that Adam was created from dust was figurative, but “the exact process whereby man was placed upon earth is not known with certainty, nor is it vital to a satisfactory understanding of the plan of salvation” (ibid.:50-51). While mythical history might be shrouded in metaphor and uncertainty, the future held out promise of greater knowledge of natural laws. When man and woman are resurrected in an exalted state, they take on “celestial bodies,” which importantly for this future-oriented dualistic cosmos, “connect the intelligence of man with all parts of the universe, and become mighty helps in the endless search for truth” (ibid.:33). This connection with all parts of the universe was not discussed in depth, as one found with Pratt and Roberts, and Widtsoe remained silent as to whether this connection was related to the Holy Spirit.

Given Widtsoe’s dualism the Holy Ghost occupied a rather ambiguous position. Widtsoe followed Talmage’s distinction between Holy Spirit and Holy Ghost, and made the former a “chief agent employed by God” which “permeates all the things of universe, material and spiritual” (ibid.:42-43). It (and he used “it”) is the “will of God radio-transmitted, as it were,” and works by vibrating with intelligence, taking up the word and will of God and transmitting the message “to the remotest parts of space.” Like electricity (earlier used as a metaphor for the Holy Spirit), Widtsoe’s *Holy Spirit* was an animate substance, and like Pratt’s attributes, it could be spread without diminution or

change. It was now, however, the animate *ur*-element of all being. It was an abstraction made useful by the will of God, a sort of force that moved things here and there. By its obedience to his will universal laws were actualized. “Such a law,” Widtsoe remarked, results in “faith, which in its simple, universal meaning, is man’s certainty that in the universe is found everything he may desire for his upbuilding and advancement.” Widtsoe could write of the Holy Ghost only that he “possesses special functions,” and these have “not yet been clearly revealed” (ibid.:68).

Like the ontological link between God and man, faith was mental. It “enables man to understand the universe in part, and to establish a philosophy of life that conforms to every known law of nature” (ibid.:94). This philosophy of life so conceived resulted in progression toward godhood, for the forces of nature manifested the will and mind of God. It was by this will and knowledge, rather than by faith as the Lectures propounded, that God has “infinite power over the forces of the universe” (ibid.:25).

The rationalization of the heavens to fit a now solidly dualistic theology was effectively completed by Widtsoe’s *Rational Theology*. Removed from the public sphere were interplanetary visitations to friends, gods copulating and gorging on fruit to change their bodies, and all manner of speculation. What happened? The major shift was a realization of mind as a real space, and the valorization of its exegesis to the American public. Though humanity and the gods were still of the same order in Mormonism, humanity lost their flesh, as it were, and took on the mind as their link with deity. The hierarchy did not shift so much as the ontology that established the order. This shift and revised analogical base altered interlocking doctrines regarding matter, intelligence, and the Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit. Matter became dumb, intelligence an abstract attribute of

mind, an idea rather than material substance, while the Holy Ghost, like Adam's manner of arrival on earth, became uncertain and unrevealed. A holdover of the former animated, pantheistic, unified cosmos of nineteenth century Mormonism, the Holy Spirit became explicable only in terms of modern communication technology. Whether "it" was a substance animate or animated only by will was left unresolved by Widtsoe, however. Presumably within the more mental and divided cosmos of modern Mormonism its mysterious metaphysics were best left alone, like an ancient fetish with power rooted in the past.

The Mystery of the Word

I conclude by assaying the work of two of the most influential LDS writers of the twentieth century. Joseph Fielding Smith was ordained an apostle at the age of 33 by his father in 1910, the year the Church began investigating and excommunicating post-Manifesto polygamists. He was president of the Quorum of Apostles for twenty years while he waited for Church President David O. McKay to pass through mortality. In 1970 Smith became President of the Church. He was 93, and died eighteen months later. Just months after Smith's death his son-in-law, Bruce R. McConkie, was ordained an apostle at the age of fifty-seven after serving in the Quorum of the Seventy for nearly thirty years.

In Smith's five volume, definitively titled *Answers to Gospel Questions* (1979 [1957-66]), he compiled responses to "inquiries" concerning doctrinal points formerly published in a Church magazine. As editor of the *Improvement Era* he succeeded his father, Joseph F. Smith, who similarly used his editorials as material for a work titled, no less definitively, *Gospel Doctrine*. In *Answers* there was as much emphasis on doctrine

as there was on the sorts of people who ask particular kinds of questions. That is to say, speech used appropriately or not became a means of characterizing questioners' spirituality. McConkie took similar positions as Fielding Smith, though his work, allusively titled *Mormon Doctrine* (1966), was divided into topics: "Adam," "Faith," "Belief," "God." Anyone with a question as to what "intelligence" was or is, could simply look it up, an even easier method than Fielding Smith presented in his question-answer format. Let us see how Fielding Smith and McConkie present their cosmos, with the usual players: intelligence(s), Adam, the Holy Ghost/Spirit. I will then conclude by addressing their construal of faith, and hint at effects on historiography that result therefrom (which are taken up in following chapters).

"If God is all powerful," one question begins, "why is he not able to create intelligence?" To this Smith responds, "Perhaps the time will not come while mortality endures that questions of this kind will not be propounded. The first thought that comes is that such questions should be ignored....Did the Lord create time or space? How foolish such a question appears" (3:124-5). Smith dismisses the question with, "if the Lord declares that intelligence, something which we do not fully understand, was co-eternal with him and always existed, there is no argument that we can or should present to contradict it." "Some of our writers," Smith writes in response to another question on intelligence, "have endeavored to explain what intelligence is, but do to so is futile, for we have never been given any insight into this matter beyond what the Lord has fragmentarily revealed" (4:126). Intelligence was eternal, he elaborated, and "is the real eternal part of man which was not created nor made." Indeed, McConkie affirms in his *Mormon Doctrine*, "Intelligence...meaning that spirit element, 'the intelligence of

spirits,' the substance from which they were created as entities, has always existed and is as eternal as God himself" (1966:77). Intelligence was simply a "synonym for spirit element," McConkie elaborates, an inert substance (ibid.:387). It was also called "the light of truth," McConkie clarifies (ibid.:751). If Intelligence is a substance, an element also called *the light of truth* and *spirit element*, what are intelligences?

"There are many things," Smith begins in answer to a question on intelligences, "that the Lord, for a wise purpose, has not revealed to mortal man, evidently because in mortality man is unable to comprehend them." He then quotes his own work: "In *The Progress of Man*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, page eleven, the following is quoted." The text quotes from *Doctrine and Covenants* 93 (which is partially quoted at the beginning of chapter seven in this dissertation). He then states, "This intelligence combined with the spirit constitutes a spiritual identity or individual" (4:126). These individual spirits, with new identities, are called "intelligences," Smith clarifies.

Indeed, McConkie writes, if intelligence is simply spirit element, and spirit is matter, *intelligences* refers to spirits born in the spirit world. "Portions of the self-existent spirit element are born as spirit children," McConkie continues, nevertheless, the term "has reference to that body of teachings in the speculative field, those things which the Lord has not revealed in plainness in this day" (1966:524). "It is to these things," McConkie warns, "that reference is made when the elders are counseled to leave the mysteries alone." Despite this warning, McConkie had introduced a relatively new model of spirit creation, one clearly denied in earlier Mormonism. Fielding Smith agrees with McConkie's caution that "There are so many things in the gospel which are essential for us to know and observe, that we need not bother about the mysteries which have

never been revealed” (4:126). He counseled patience about understanding intelligences, for “there are many things that we will know when we receive the resurrection,” things “which we cannot understand in this mortal state even if they were revealed to us.” With that assertion in mind, what was revealed about the Holy Ghost?

“How do you account for the Holy Ghost being a Spirit and a member of the Godhead,” one Mormon asked Smith. “There is so much in relation to the gospel that we are required to do and so many commandments to observe,” Smith replied (one can almost hear him sigh), “that we should have no time to enter into speculation in relation to the Holy Ghost” (2:145). While speculating about the third member of the godhead may be pointless, Smith suggested that Mormons “should so live that we may have his companionship and thus have our minds quickened....Without this companionship,” Smith warned, “we are nothing.”

McConkie explained the Holy Ghost is a “Personage of Spirit, a Spirit Person, a Spirit Man, a Spirit entity” (1966:358). The expansive synonymic license granted McConkie allowed him to build from analogy of “personage of spirit,” as if “cup of water” were the same formulation. The personage is filled with spirit (element), just as water fills a cup. The cup, just as the person, was not more eternal than the in-filling substance. McConkie would add, “The Spirit of Christ, or the Spirit of the Lord, of the Light of truth, or the Light of Christ—all of which expressions are synonymous,” is given in some portion to every person, and this is what animates matter with conscience. Humans were reduced to inert, mindless compositions of spirit element given will, agency, and consciences by a Supreme Being.

We saw a version of the above dualism, with inert matter and animate essence-personhood, originally formalized by James Talmage in his doctrine of the Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit. Both Fielding Smith and McConkie quote some version or another of Talmage's statement (though Smith wrote that his father originally drew the distinction). This dualism was then applied to intelligences/intelligence (by Roberts and Widtsoe) to rationalize the cosmos. McConkie and Fielding Smith, moreover, made intelligence inert, and for the first time (at least since the Lectures on Faith era) declared that human identity did not always exist (in some form) but was created at spirit birth from spirit element. Intelligence was organized in some fashion when spirits were born, and at this point one's personal, individual identity was created. Not even the mind of man was eternal anymore, unlike the stuff of which he was made. McConkie and Fielding Smith simply read back into the pre-mortal existence the standard creationist doctrine of humanity created by God. The intellectual link with God argued by Widtsoe was gone, and now man depended completely on his creator, and there were some things which the creator did not care to reveal. The reflexively positioned Holy Spirit, when cast as both personage and influence, inverted ontology and hierarchy. There was no animate, pervasive element which joined heaven and earth; that link was now provided by a being. One can see at this point why appropriate speech became indexical of one's spirituality: to seek the mysteries was to attempt to usurp the position of deity (or his representatives) to dispense doctrine and identity as he will.

Smith and McConkie similarly cleared up apparent misunderstandings about Adam. An inquiry is presented to Smith from a fictive speaker: "These people [ambiguous referent, but probably not positively characterized] say that Brigham Young

states that Adam was brought from another planet, with a mortal body, and that the Savior came with a resurrected body...” Fielding Smith has an answer ready at hand: “He was Michael, a prince, and a son of God....In the pre-existent state he was a spirit like the others of our Father’s children” (1:4). Smith cites the authoritative Genesis account, “We are told that Adam obtained his body from the dust of the earth.” He later explained that it was “the dust of this earth” (5:170). Clearly he had Young’s teachings in sight. When asked about Young’s teaching that the Father in the Garden of Eden was the father of the physical body of Jesus (identified by Young as Adam), Smith explained, under the heading, “Statement easily explained,” that “the expression that God is the ‘first of the human family’ ...[W]as taught by Joseph Smith. It is a fundamental doctrine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” (5:121-3). This does not sound controversial, but “I maintain that President Young was not referring to Adam, but to God the Father, who created Adam, for he was in the Garden of Eden.” Smith threw caution to wind, continuing, “I am bold to say that President Brigham Young was not inconsistent in his teaching of this doctrine. The very expression in question...contradicts the thought that he meant Adam [was the father].” This conclusion is inevitable, and “Surely we must give President Brigham Young credit for at least ordinary intelligence....If he meant to convey the thought that the character who was in the Garden of Eden, and ‘who is our Father in Heaven,’ was Adam, then it would mean that this expression was in conflict with all else that he taught concerning God the Father.”

Under the entry, “Adam,” McConkie writes that Adam was obedient and diligent in heaven, and then quotes a statement on the origin of man issued in 1916 by Joseph F.

Smith, though oddly cites Joseph Fielding Smith's essay against evolution, *Man His Origin and Destiny*, as the source of the quote. The 1916 statement made what was at best an ambivalent dismissal of Young's claims about Adam "as his opinion," yet when tied to Joseph Fielding Smith's reworking in *Origin and Destiny*, a seamless development of doctrines was read onto the past. Adam (as Michael) was a spirit like any other person, God made him a body from the dust of this earth, and then Adam fell. Lest anyone misunderstand Young's claims about Adam (made over the course of twenty-five years of his presidency), McConkie warned, "Cultists and other enemies of the restored truth, for their own peculiar purposes, try to make it appear that Latter-day Saints worship Adam as their Father in Heaven. In support of their false assumptions, they quote such statements as that of President Brigham Young to the effect that Adam is our father and our god and the only god with whom we have to do" (1966:18). McConkie explained, "this statement, and others of a similar nature, is perfectly consistent and rational, when viewed in full gospel perspective...Full and detailed explanations of all important teachings on these points are readily available."

He cited Joseph Fielding Smith's *Doctrines of Salvation*, and continued by characterizing orthodox Saints: "Faithful members of the Church worship the Father, in the name of the Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and view Adam in his proper high place as the pre-existent Michael." "There is a sense, of course," he clarified, "in which Adam is a god. But so also, in the same sense, are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Moses and all the ancient prophets," he continued the list to down to "all the righteous saints of all ages." Thus Adam was removed from his place in a past order of the gods, though in the future he would take up that position. Brigham Young's teaching, which could not be

more explicit that Michael was and is a god, the father of human spirits, was fit into the creationist paradigm; made into a body of dust filled by a spirit called Michael at the behest of God. And just what sort of God was this, did he visit friends, wrestle, travel, or ponder the laws of the universe?

McConkie quotes *Lectures on Faith*. In the Lectures “is to be found some of the best lesson material ever prepared on the Godhead...They can be studied with great profit by all gospel scholars” (1966:263). He was apparently unaware that the reason the Lectures were removed from the Doctrine and Covenants was by act of a committee in 1917, on which sat James Talmage and Joseph Fielding Smith. The Lectures were removed for the reason that they taught, from an unidentified source, not entirely approved doctrines about God and the Holy Ghost. According to the Lectures, then, God was “from everlasting and will be so to everlasting,” “He changes not,” “He is a God of truth, and cannot lie,” and “He is love.” Note that these descriptions of God are all abstract, with the exception of his obligation to tell the truth (thus making speech a mirror of belief, as per a courtroom oath). These were credal beliefs for McConkie, without which faith could not result, at least, not “true faith.” And thus, “those who suppose there is a power or being greater than God (a necessary corollary of the false notion that God is gaining new knowledge or new truth or new power), cannot have full faith in God” (ibid.:261-3). *Faith* here meant the sort of mental object described in *Lectures on Faith*. “Faith is belief, and belief is faith” as McConkie clarified under the entry “Belief” (ibid.:78).

As McConkie continues to explain belief he cites Brigham Young. In this passage is a collapse of speaking with believing, though of course, Young does not make speaking into believing. McConkie quotes Young as teaching about belief:

No man can say that this book [the Bible] is true...and at the same time say, that the Book of Mormon is untrue....There is not a person on the face of the earth...that can say that one is true, and the other false. No Latter-day Saint, no man or woman, can say the Book of Mormon is true, and at the same time say that the Bible is untrue...And no man on the earth can say that Jesus lives, and deny, at the same time, my assertion about the Prophet Joseph (quoted in McConkie 1966:79).

No where did Young use a verb of thinking in this passage, though for McConkie his statements enlighten the nature of belief. It may seem a minor matter to make speaking into a reflection of belief, though after reading the previous chapters it is hoped that this would seem like a very great matter: nothing can be hidden, kept back, be concealed or further considered when consciousness is transparent on the page.

With God unable to lie, certainly his mouthpiece would fall under the same obligation, and Woodruff's Manifesto can be read without equivocation. It is as if all speaking is done under courtroom oath. As McConkie frames the Manifesto, "It is a revelation in the sense that the Lord both commanded President Woodruff to write it and told him what to write." He then quotes Woodruff, who was speaking to a congregation which apparently evidenced concerns about the Manifesto a year after it was issued. As McConkie renders Woodruff's speech (with my emendation noted with brackets),

'He [the Lord] told me [Woodruff] exactly what to do....I saw exactly what would come to pass if there was not something done.[...] I should have gone to prison myself and let every other man go there, had not the Lord commanded me to do what I did do; and when the hour came that I was commanded to do that, it was all clear to me. I went before the Lord, and I wrote what the Lord told me to write' (quoted in McConkie 1966:466).

Woodruff drew a fine distinction between the act of speaking and the content, and taught that both were done at the command of the Lord. He never, however, said that he and the

Lord believed what it said to be true, that it made an accurate statement of the world, of Woodruff's "intention," or required discontinuation of plural marriages. When the Manifesto and Brigham Young's teachings, however, were reported as matters of thought, there could be no negotiation within the text, for concepts brook no further investigation like words might.

Conclusion

One need only look in a dictionary for what *faith*, *intelligence*, and *truth* mean, right? These are abstract nouns, and as such take on very different qualities, very different referents, depending on the time of usage and their utterer. Is faith an ability to call on unseen assistance, an attribute, a law, or a sincere disposition to believe in God? Is it a speech or mental event, and are mental events physically interactive or distinct and separate? Answers to these questions require subtle, careful reading with tools enabling linguistic analysis. Unlike concepts, words cannot be stripped of placement in grammatical categories and relations with other words. Faith and intelligence are not ideas or concepts after all; this is merely a manner of presenting them, like reporting speech as thought. Though they are not ideas, anymore than a statement is a belief, or a sentence a complete thought, Mormon theologians writing after Widtsoe, and after religion had parted ways with science as a result of seeming conflicts over origin myths, as amateur historians would rewrite Mormon doctrinal history as a seamless development of an idea unfolding in the minds of inspired men. What is lost in a history of ideas?

Early Mormons theology, the first generation of work by Orson and Parley Pratt and Brigham Young, worked in the same language as later writers. The culture in which they spoke, however, was a good deal less divided than twentieth century American

(Protestant) culture. The world was animate, either by nature of the animate matter that filled all space, or because forms were filled with animate, material attributes. Ontology provided the basis for reckoning cultural hierarchies. Truth and Beauty were real materials for the Pratts, while Young taught that all was comprised of intelligence, that even death manifests its operation. Though they worked from different renderings of *Intelligence(s)*, both clearly analogized the referent of their preferred term from the category of personal nouns, from humans. With humans as their origo of abduction, their point of analogy, even abstract nouns took on human-like traits, with will, volition, communication, among the delimited set.

With Talmage's work, written while plural marriage and theocracy were still subjects of considerable consternation, a materialist universe gave way to a divided material-personal cosmos. He revised the absolutely key doctrine of the Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit, positioned as it is between elements and beings, both on the grammatical hierarchy as well as a posited referent. Here the reflexive effects of usage altered the cultural hierarchy and ontology. I pointed to claims about the Holy Ghost as the simplest location to look for dualistic or monistic models of the universe, with Young's human-like being who, built from intelligence, influenced listeners; and Parley Pratt's identification of the Holy Ghost as refined matter, Holy Spirit; and Orson Pratt's refusal to place the term's referent in either person or attribute categories. These claims evidenced that doctrines of the Holy Ghost exposed a model's true nature; it was tied to cultural frameworks and grammatical categories in ways more possibly effective than other terms. With Talmage's abduction between the person referred to as *Holy Ghost* and the power, ultimately separable from such person, *Holy Spirit*, he wrote mind-body

dualism into the heavens. God became a little more difficult to think when the mediating figure of the Holy Ghost became primarily mind, and Holy Spirit was rendered an emanation of mind rather than a uniting element of the cosmos.

B.H. Roberts and John A. Widtsoe continued to the trend toward analogizing from the mind rather than from mind-bodies acting with others. With Roberts, a sort of Noachic figure between nineteenth and twentieth century Mormonism, God still went on interplanetary visits, though he rendered *intelligence* an attribute of intelligences, and a decidedly mental one at that (and cited William James in his discussions). While Pratt rendered *intelligence* an attribute also, he did it within an exclusively anthropomorphic universe in which the attributes had affinity and sympathy, could move toward and fill tabernacles attracting similar attributes. Roberts' intelligence was a trait, smarts, I.Q., etc., and this became the link between man and god. Widtsoe's work completes the rationalization of intelligence/intelligences and Holy Spirit/Holy Ghost, rendering two points with the same distinction. (The stage was set for their synonymization by McConkie and Smith.) From here abductions were generated about unknowns, such as mythical history, unseen worlds, or deity, as mental agents distinct from abstract material substances. How could one think about God, tell stories about other worlds, or fill in gaps in scriptural accounts when one was restricted to dealing with abstract nouns non-anthropomorphized?

This loss of a firm origo of abduction, resulting from movement of *intelligence* and *Holy Ghost* into more abstract orders, likely produced the shift which culminates in the work of McConkie and Joseph Fielding Smith. By 1950 Mormon theology had become more or less Protestant, with some slight adjustments, such as creation of

humanity on a spirit world, and matter not being created by God. God was no longer thinkable, because he was thought and not really flesh, and so of course Adam-Michael fell from the pantheon, flesh that he was. Thus humans depended on God, but dust did not. Moreover, these writers not only spent a great deal of time commenting on appropriate questions, but also characterized speakers according to questions asked. Saints by this time did not have a thinkable framework from which to work, even if they wished to produce innovative doctrines on the scale of Young and Pratt. Hence a position valorizing mystery was taken which was so often scourged in the nineteenth century as the stumbling block of Christianity. God, intelligence, and Holy Spirit were too abstract, and importantly, remained so because man and God were not “coeval,” nor “co-laborers,” and certainly not friends.

It is telling that a collection of essays on Mormon doctrine, *Line Upon Line* (1989), has chapters entitled, “Defining the Mormon Concept of God,” “The Earliest Mormon Concept of God,” “The Development of the Concept of the Holy Ghost in Mormon Theology,” “The Mormon Concept of a Mother in Heaven,” “The Origin of the Human Spirit in Early Mormon Thought,” and “The Idea of Preexistence in Mormon Thought.” The work is published by an often flagrantly unorthodox press which prides itself on independence and liberalness of mind. At bottom its presuppositions differ little from LDS orthodoxy. The introductory essay, “Speculative Theology: Key to Dynamic Faith,” explains the abandonment of “radical thought” by contemporary Mormons as resulting from, “a lack of faith in the soundness of individual initiative, discussion, and decision regarding theological matters.” Just what is this faith made of by which radical, speculative thought might return to Mormonism? “The concepts embraced by

speculative theology,” the author explains, “are reason, experience, authority, intuition, and imagination. In one way or another these structures and methods are products of the mind and conscience” (Shoemaker 1989:3).

A rather different explanation privileges grammar, writing, and culture. The heavens became unthinkable as a result of referential shifts and analogical cordoning; keeping one’s eyes on tasks immediately present was all one was left to do. Faithful Saints were to study already revealed doctrines, and if they had questions, expected to take them to priesthood leaders such as Joseph Fielding Smith. Faith followed suit, as it were, and became exclusively synonymous with belief, for only in this way, through the mind, could one hope to convince God of one’s sincerity. Finally, a position was taken on the absolute independence of God and His separation from man, and ontology was subordinated to doctrines regarding cultural hierarchy.

As a result of this reordering of the speculative framework a method of reading historical and scriptural texts gained ground. Troubling doctrines were rendered into metaphor, phrases were made synonymous in meaning (*Light of Christ, Holy Spirit, God* meant *Father*, etc.). Joseph Fielding Smith, working this tactic, was asked about Revelation 19:7, which speaks of the marriage of the Lamb. He responded, “The scriptural passage under question is in the nature of symbolic language which is not to be taken literally as a marriage between a man and a woman....This prophecy of the marriage of the Lamb is a figure of speech, having reference to the second coming of our savior and the feast, or supper, that the righteous shall receive at his coming” (1:25). He then cited verses from Matthew in which Jesus refers to himself as the Bridegroom after the parable of the ten virgins. Orson Pratt might agree that it did not refer to a marriage

between a man and woman, though he taught that it did refer to a wedding feast celebrated as five princesses married the returned Messiah.

We have covered vast territory in the history of “ideas” in Mormonism, or better, in the history of how a history of ideas becomes possible in Mormonism (rather than a history of discursively rendered claims about the cosmos). The important shift was a move toward projecting a mentalist essence of humanity onto the heavens. This shift in cultural ontology preserved the hierarchy of being, but eliminated from consideration certain analogies; namely those dealing with matters of the flesh. Once the home that entertained admittedly brash speculations, sacred history became similarly reconstructed in terms of concepts, beliefs, thoughts.

Just as polygamy was erased from public space, rendered a matter of belief, so did transitions in theology get veiled when history was told as a development of ideas. I later tackle the institutionalization of this method of misreading and metaphorizing of history, called in the LDS Church “Correlation.” I now turn to Mormons who enacted an alternate history, one focused on bodies, secrecy, and priesthood: Mormon Fundamentalists.

Chapter Nine

Fundamentalism and the Rationalization of Culture

In this chapter I trace out the “on the ground” transition of Mormonism, that is to say, the changes in discourse, its uses and interpretative heuristics, among Saints. I turn back to 1903, when some leaders of the Church still apparently maintained a policy of doublespeak in league with members “in the know.” While continuing to denounce plural marriage publicly, private guidance to select Saints directed otherwise. The chapter describes the sorting of two distinct discursive norms between distinct groups, the monogamists and polygamists. Of great import in this sorting are the “Smoot hearings,” Senate investigation into Mormon Senator Reed Smoot that spanned 1904-1907. The hearings precipitated a detangling of Mormonism, as private Mormonism was brought into contrast with its new public image (monogamous, patriotic, etc.). The hearings again presented to Americans that Mormons could not be trusted, and Mormons wondered whether their leaders always spoke the truth. Many leaders responded with assurances that polygamy was as dead as secrecy. Simply teaching that polygamy was now forbidden, for real this time, however, failed to convince the now solid underground which valorized secrecy, oaths, and gaming the public. As Smoot was seated, and the country threatened constitutional amendments against Mormons in general, church leaders took up the charge to eliminate new polygamists from their ranks.

After considering the Smoot hearings, I take up in the final section the interactions between leaders and several polygamists in order to survey the discursive field of Mormonism ca. 1910. Discord, suspicion, and discursive strategy marked the

initial sorting of new polygamists out of their beloved church.

Inner Circles

The recent cold spell broke and spring seemed near when the Quorum of Apostles met at the Salt Lake Temple in 1903. A letter was read from a Saint living in Orderville, a remnant of nineteenth century communal economics (called the “United Order”). In this red rock and cedar town an hour east from present day Zion’s National Park there circulated rumors, the writer suggested, that plural marriages were authorized by approval of the First Presidency. Given Woodruff’s Manifesto issued some thirteen years previous, and subsequent declarations by LDS leaders denouncing rumors that the Saints had not lived up to their bargain with the nation and continued to wink at, or perhaps even approve of, “new polygamy,” the reports were causing “some commotion” among Orderville Saints. Foundationless, President Joseph F. Smith belittled the rumors, “as you brethren know, the First Presidency has not authorized plural marriages since 1890” (Rudger Clawson 2.19.1903).

President of the LDS Church since 1901, Joseph F. Smith was the crown prince of Mormonism, the son of Hyrum Smith who was martyred with his prophet brother Joseph Smith in 1844. The Prophet’s nephew now led the Church, and he inherited the problems that culminated in the death of the Smith brothers: plural marriage, covert nation building, secrecy, all within a Protestant nation. The Church was by its own report now monogamous, bipartisan, and a friend of capitalists; its past was to remain comfortably a century away. Others in Utah, however, told a different tale, and hinted that yet again what was public talk befogged secret practices that could again threaten modern, civilized society. In light of these threats and rumors, President Smith instructed apostles Mathias

F. Cowley and George Teasdale to head south to Orderville, “and endeavor to correct any wrong impression in the minds of the people” (ibid.).

Teasdale and Cowley were an interesting pair to send. Evidence suggests that both had not only performed plural marriages in the past decade for other Mormons, but also had taken wives since 1890 (Van Wagoner 1992, Quinn 1985, Hardy 1992). What exactly the apostles taught is unrecorded. By April of 1903 the two returned to report on their trip and discuss recent events (Clawson 4.1.1903). Teasdale warned of round dances at Brigham Young Academy, which “exerted a bad influence over the mind,” and referred to the recent election of fellow apostle Reed Smoot to the U.S. Senate. Smoot’s presence there, Teasdale affirmed, would allow him to “represent Utah affairs as they are,” rather than as the Tribune colored them. The present agitation over Smoot’s election, Cowley pointed out to the Quorum, would result in good, for the hand of the Lord was certainly involved. Teasdale then confessed that while ill in Europe many years ago, the one and only thing that worried him was his failure to enter into the Principle. No longer was that a concern. Cowley followed, and recalled that while in southern Utah he preached on the principle of plural marriage, defending it to the people. This he did, the Quorum was told, because a “rich outpouring of the Holy Spirit” guided him to chasten the fault finding and complaining against church leaders which had infected the people. Rumors of inner circles and secret practices made the apostles appear less sincere among some Saints. Cowley cautioned the apostles that though they must sustain the policies of the Church, the revelations of God regarding plural marriage could not be abrogated, and plural marriage must withstand the nation’s anger. The nation had seethed for some time, however, at the Mormons’ apparent hypocrisy.

The LDS Church did not sanction plural marriage after October 1890. Members of the Church, however, continued to contract polygamous unions; many involved apostles, with suggestive evidence that even Woodruff again married a year before his death in 1898. His rumored “sealing” with “Madam Mountford,” may have skirted the prohibition he set in 1890, however. Instead the union with the exotic woman may have been based on granting her “concubine” status, of which almost nothing has been written or said in Mormonism. Just before their rumored union, Woodruff and George Q. Cannon privately discussed concubinage, performed under a solemn covenant, as an alternative to plural marriage when state’s laws forbade polygamy (Hardy 1992, Abraham Cannon journal 1894). The continued hints, and often good evidence, of dedication to polygamy among Mormon leaders haunted the Church after 1890.

Rumors culminated initially in the election of Brigham H. Roberts to the House. With overwhelming support in the 1898 election the Democrat took to Washington and was promptly denied his seat. The nation, aghast over the audacity of Utah sending Roberts, sent American flags inscribed with seven million signatures of protest. The American people had shouted, and Roberts quickly exited, being officially expelled in 1900 on the grounds of his dedication to the Mormon Church, unlawful cohabitation, and, perhaps, for taking another wife in 1897. Utah’s new senator for the new century, Reed Smoot, on the other hand, was a confirmed monogamist, a vigilant Republican, and knew better than to confront the nation. His election in 1902, however, came with no less protestation (Flake 2004).

Storm clouds gathered over the election of Smoot, with women’s groups, religious organizations, temperance societies, and Democrats looking to strike. Victory

over Roberts and Mormon Utah was easy enough, and Smoot was, moreover, an apostle of the Church. He claimed to be a monogamist, but as editorials had established for decades, one could not trust a Mormon leader. The Senate was holding hearings over seating Reed Smoot, and these promised to investigate not only Smoot, but the Church as well: its involvement in politics in the West, its public betrayals, and business interests. In council Joseph F. Smith harkened to the underground days, and cited the policy of John Taylor. Though Taylor “felt to meet the enemy on his own ground and fight,” Smith explained, “when the storm broke with such fury and violence as it did [in 1885], he concluded that it would be wisdom to round up his shoulders (which he usually illustrated with a shrug) and receive unmoved the brunt of the tempest” (Clawson 5.21.03). With this the president of the LDS Church suggested the apostles pull up their collars and face the storm. “We are not in a position,” Joseph F. Smith warned the apostles, “legally, or in a popular sense, to assert our rights. We can pray to the Lord and petition governments for or rights, but cannot force our way” (ibid.).

Fall of 1903 the apostles again met for a church-wide general conference. Marriner W. Merrill, President of the Logan Temple during the underground days, enjoined the younger apostles to “lay the foundation for their kingdoms in their youth and not wait until old age comes on.” “Brethren,” he warned, “do not neglect your opportunities; otherwise you may fail in securing a kingdom” (Clawson 10.1.03). Ten days later, Rudger Clawson, one of those younger apostles, approached his wife Lydia, “in relation to the subject of plural marriage,” he records in his diary. Lydia accepted his proposal for another wife, though he must not, she insisted, take the step to secure his kingdom without first advising her (Clawson 10.10.03).

Opportunities for the younger apostles to take plural wives were significantly diminished by the agitation over Smoot's election, with its coincident avalanche of revelations from various anti-Mormon papers that yet again Mormon leaders were not sincere in their public denunciations of new polygamy. As Smoot wrote to Jesse N. Smith, "We have not as a people, at all times, lived strictly to our agreements with the government, and this lack of sincerity on our part goes farther to condemn us in the eyes of the public men of the nation than the mere fact of a few new polygamy cases, or a polygamist before the Manifesto living in the state of unlawful cohabitation" (Van Wagoner 1992:244). For Smoot, underground discursive practices, as Church leaders had employed for some time, were simply deceptive. It did not matter to whom one spoke, Smoot argued, one was obligated to give an honest answer. This rebuke from a turn-of-the-century American businessman turned politician, really the silver lining on a storm of protest and condemnation from citizens, editors, and politicians, did lead the apostles to discuss polygamy. They were "cautioned not to exercise the keys of sealing in plural marriage at present," and warned to be "wise and prudent in all their doings." (Clawson 1.5.04).

Smoot and Smith in Washington

The Senate met in 1904 to hear arguments over the seating of Reed Smoot. After it was clear that no evidence supported the claim that Smoot was a polygamist in disguise the eye of the government turned to exposing the LDS Church. Mormonism was spreading, and its "Oriental influence," from Washington's perspective, must be stayed. In particular its priesthood (which then referred to the leadership) was to the senators a theocratic, heavy-handed business enterprise that commanded fealty, forced oaths in

secret temple rites, swore vengeance on the nation, and continued to sanction “white slavery,” or polygamy in the Intermountain West, Mexico, and Canada. The Senate hearings lasted several years, generated over three thousand pages of testimony, and put Mormonism, with a rather darkly drawn face, on the front page again.

Church leaders, however, spoke hopefully of a chance to testify of the truth of the gospel before Senate; they walked into an ambush. Of great interest was the testimony of Church president Joseph F. Smith, who admitted Woodruff’s Manifesto deserved the status of revelation, but that he as president did not actually adhere to it. His responses, the best of which were published far and wide with accompanying cartoons and editorials aghast at Mormon prevarication, were at times contradictory or evasive, others naïve enunciations and sulking whispers. The collars of leaders went up amid the storm. Apostles called to testify invoked the 1880s strategy of forgetting, with some requiring leading questions to recall birthdays, employment records, wives and wedding dates. At times it seemed fit for an Abbot and Costello routine, laughable, pitiable, miserable, tedious, mercurial. During the debacle Smoot’s personal secretary, Rodney Badger, lamented to a friend,

I hope our people will look at this matter in its true light; we have got to learn our lessons, and instead of shouting about the opportunity which we have had of teaching our faith to the world, we ought to dot down the unpleasant but obvious fact, that the lesson which the world is learning from the testimony thus far given is, that we have failed to keep our word. I wish our people could come to the conclusion that this investigation has not been wholly creditable to us (Van Wagoner 1992:251).

The hearings were in every way a disaster for Mormonism (and no high point in American politics). Enough LDS leaders, however, looked altogether too foolish to plot the overthrow of the mighty United States, and Americans’ sense of pity overcame their anger. Eventually Smoot took his seat (due to assistance from Teddy Roosevelt), and the

Mormons, like chastened youth caught pinching melons, bickered at private meetings to cover a collective shame.

The Smoot hearings made it plain that Mormon leaders gave flatly contradictory testimony, sometimes within the same response, regarding plural marriage. As Smoot's secretary noted dryly to his diary, "We have thought that there is something higher than honesty, and behold our confusion" (Van Wagoner 1992:266). If there was an inner circle which continued to take plural wives, build family kingdoms, and did so under covenants of strict secrecy, the possibility of this inner circle was now presented to the world. Mormons, faithful or opportunistic, took note; those who had heard rumor of secret marriages found in the Smoot hearings fuel to fire a surge of new unions. The Senate investigation, in short, can be identified as catalyzing two shifts in the LDS Church.

First, the Church took great pains thereafter to appear sincere in its renunciations of polygamy. Joseph F. Smith read a prepared statement in April 1904 that restated Woodruff's policy, and announced that excommunication would follow new polygamists (that is to say, if caught and charged by another member). Smith's declaration, called the Second Manifesto, was also a public relations tactic designed to shore up faith in the leadership among "Young Utah" and its monogamous parents. With Smith's declaration there was no distinction in the text between LDS and non-LDS addressees. It was not so singly interpreted, however. The Tribune, ever skeptical of Mormon declarations of adherence to law, echoed the doubts of the nation, though perhaps, with characteristic over-zeal. Ever ready to strike back at the now Republican-fellowshipping Church, Democrats also clamored for a constitutional amendment banning polygamy. They over-

estimated the nation's fury, however, when they called for general disfranchisement of all Latter-day Saints. Who then, took Smith's declaration, and public utterances of other leaders denouncing new polygamy, at face value? Monogamous Saints, untrained in the gymnastic hermeneutics of underground discourse and distrustful of seemingly anti-Mormon newspapers, forgave their leadership its foibles in Washington. They hoped sincerity characterized public statements. The Church's Deseret News, moreover, did a fine job editing out the most glaring testimony.

What differed in 1905 from 1885 with regard to the effect of public statements on the Church was the value monogamous Mormons placed on secret polygamy. During the 1880s raids they helped conceal aunts or brothers-in-law. As a result of their complicity and direct interaction with Undergrounders (which interaction was essential to training in underground etiquette), monogamists had real evidence that not only was speech to be carefully controlled and sensitively construed, but also that Undergrounders often held high status positions in the Church. By 1905, however, monogamous Saints read public declarations as sincere, and had no reason to do otherwise, for new polygamists did not rely on their complicity. Many were exiled in Mexico, and had little intercourse with American Saints. Thus, new polygamists became persona in defiance of not only the nation, but also appeared to defy leaders and their seeming sincere intent. Interpretations that monogamists placed on public utterance differed by 1905, for belief was increasingly publicly accessible through sincere expression; hence, why should one doubt declarations by church authorities?

With the public presentation of the Smoot hearings, moreover, the underground etiquette of decades past revived like a terrible phoenix among a select group of Saints.

This revival was the second, only apparently contradictory, effect of the Smoot hearings. Rumors were widespread, and hardly private, and the Tribune frequently reported new marriages. Public utterances could be discounted yet again, including Smith's Second Manifesto, if one could gain private audience with apostles in-the-know, or if one encountered reliable rumor that gainsaid it. This was a different underground, however, than that discussed in earlier chapters.

First, while unlawful cohabitation remained illegal, it was rarely prosecuted. Second, as mentioned above, the new underground not only veiled itself from America, but also from members of the LDS Church, including some apostles, it seems. Third, the purpose of hiding plural unions, indeed, was not so much to protect oneself, as it was to protect the Church from further action initiated by the federal government. This protection meant that men and women involved in plural marriages after 1890 were placed under strict oaths of confidentiality, and failing this, marriages were purportedly performed by men in masks or behind curtains so that no knowledge of the officiator could be pulled from any participant. Indeed, bride and groom were enjoined to forget the date of their wedding along with any other details that might incriminate the Church. Even Church presidents, such as Woodruff, his successor Lorenzo Snow, and eventually Joseph F. Smith, reportedly approved of new unions, and continued directing applicants for plural marriages to apostles. This they did so they could honestly state they had no knowledge of nor had given authorization for any plural marriages, and thus, they could maintain that the Church did not sanction polygamy after 1890. Individual apostles, however, did, and this fact was represented by whispers, rumor and editorials throughout the first decade of the century.

Polygamists, and those raised with an ear underground, neither accepted public declarations as transparent descriptions of the world nor treated these as outright deceptions. Again speech was a tool, for recruitment, evasion, guidance, oath-taking, and betrayal. This it was, indeed, for those equipped with underground ears, who recognized that more than speaker considerations matter when contextualizing utterances: one must also consider utterance accessibility and space of circulation (“public” or “private”), which necessarily call up concerns over addressee (trusted or not). Public denunciations of new polygamy by leaders, in response to federal threats to destroy the Church, to deny its members immigration and to take away the vote, encountered this newly revitalized underground framework. That monogamous members of the Church no longer worked in tandem to conceal Undergrounders, and indeed, took leaders’ statements as honest portrayals of reality, forebode a division in the Church. After the Smoot debacle the interpretive divide between newly polygamous and young monogamous Mormons would become one that determined right to leadership position, and, by 1910, right to remain in the Church as a recognized member. The overall second effect, then, of the Smoot hearings encouraged new polygamists while shuffling them nearer the borderland of publicly presented Mormonism, the sort accepted by monogamous Saints. The Church was divided interpretively, leading to divergent portrayals of social persona and evaluations of discourse. Hence the Smoot hearings, which presented to the widest public evidence of contrary statements by church authorities, precipitated a cultural divide founded on assumptions about language, a divide which mirrored marital practices and often followed kinship descent lines. That divide is now traced more closely.

Public supplants Private

As the monogamists gave their allegiance to the public sphere, their voice became all that was heard, or rather, their beliefs all that were encountered as the decade wore on. The public Church was erasing the secret one; or so it seemed. The public representation of Mormonism worked its way into private correspondences of church elites. After Smith's 1904 Manifesto, and the fumbling testimony of leaders laid bare on page after page of daily papers, leaders sought to close the gap between private and public Mormonism. This they did not only in public sphere utterance, but also they took care to establish this policy in the realm of private discourse. A month after the Second Manifesto, Francis Lyman cautioned his fellow apostle now visiting the Mexican colonies, John W. Taylor (son of the deceased Church president), regarding the new policy. He cited Smith's "official declaration on the subject of plural marriages," and asked for his "hearty cooperation in emphasizing the same in your private conversations and counsels as well as your public utterances, to the end that no misunderstanding may exist among our people concerning its scope and meaning" (Lyman to Taylor, 5.5.04). Lyman warned that "infractions of the law in regard to plural marriage are transgressions against the Church," and thus, "punishable by excommunication."

At the fall meeting of the apostles in 1904 Lyman again emphasized the official policy, which he had been at pains to teach to local leaders as well. "The enemy is on the alert," he warned, "and the brethren should be careful in their public utterances at the coming conferences and in the stakes of Zion" (Clawson 10.4.04). While this caution about public speech was surely familiar policy, the next day the apostles were rebuked by Smith for writing too many details of their meetings in personal diaries. Diaries could

provide evidence in the Smoot hearings which would condemn the LDS Church. Leaders were to unite publicly, and erase all evidence of private conversations and divisions. Smith's counselors endorsed this strategy in light of recent investigations, and according to one of the last entries of the Clawson diary, "moved that it be the sense and feeling of the council that the brethren should not write in their journals that which took place in the council meetings" (Clawson 10.5.04). The underground thereafter would be exclusively oral, leaving only wisps of written evidence.

In early 1906 apostles John Henry Smith and Reed Smoot visited with various senators about the Senate hearings. The senators doubted the Church's sincerity, and suggested the Church remove John W. Taylor and Mathias F. Cowley from the Quorum of Apostles. Friends since childhood, Taylor and Cowley refused to submit to examination by the Senate. Their insubordination to the Senate, however, translated into resistance to the Church president, who embarrassingly had to admit that he had no power to compel them to Washington, and indeed, was not even certain where the men were. Other apostles refused to testify as well, but Cowley and Taylor (the latter was during the 1880 raids arrested for treason as a result of an anti-America sermon), were the healthiest, youngest, and displayed the most overt resistance to the United States. They led the next generation of, one might say, old school Mormonism. Their removal from the Quorum would be difficult, however, for Taylor was the son of a beloved Church president, handsome and charismatic, and called "The Prophet of the Quorum" and "The People's Apostle." Cowley's removal along with Taylor would only make the case more difficult and plainly more politically motivated. In the fall 1906 conference, however, the Saints were notified that Taylor and Cowley "resigned" from the Quorum as a result of

their “disharmony” with fellow apostles. Their resignations had been in Smith’s desk for some time, and when Smoot’s fortune looked bleak but alterable, the men were sacrificed (Hardy 1992).

Anthony Ivins, leader in the Mexican colonies, warned Heber J. Grant that their removal “might be all right if it were going to deceive anyone except ourselves. We will be the only ones fooled.” (Van Wagoner 1992:258). Indeed, Orson Whitney remarked that the Saint’s were not even fooled, and considered Taylor and Cowley sacrificial lambs (Van Wagoner 1992:260). Mormons no doubt took notice that a sacrificed apostle was more significant than one truly out of harmony, for it indicated that action was now required in the face of American threats. Indeed for some Saints, as the following materials suggest, their removal was read as simply more of the same underground strategy. The act, however, satisfied Congress somewhat, for even if it did not demonstrate that the Saints were sincere, indeed, may have been entirely insincere, it at least evidenced that apostles could be sanctioned by government order. The Church would play by the nation’s rules. Surely Smoot’s and Smith’s submission to politicians, and the removed apostles’ submission to the First Presidency, suggested that Mormons might indeed be governable. Smoot took his seat in the Senate soon thereafter, and the U.S. government had an apostle, the Mormons a senator.

The greatest resistance to leaders’ public portrayals of the new Mormonism was found in the Mexican colonies. Hither Undergrounders fled in 1885 in order to live the principle without U.S. interference. It was in the colonies that post-Manifesto polygamy grew most soundly, if secretly. Here they were accustomed to U.S. policy and Mexican Mormon policy being slightly at odds, and this tradition frustrated Lyman and other

leaders aiming to make redress for their performances in Washington. Following the announcement of Cowley's and Taylor's resignations, Joseph F. Smith and Francis Lyman called a special meeting among the Mexican Saints. Smith warned that, "If a man comes to you and tells you that things are being done in the dark, that we are dealing unfairly with the world, you tell them they lie. No man is authorized to solemnize plural marriages, and if any man comes to you and says this is for the world & not for you, it is false. It is for you as well as for the world" (Ivins 4.9.06). Lyman followed, and asserted that contrary to rumor, his hard-line approach to new polygamy was not in disharmony with Smith or other apostles. Smith's counselor, John Winder, argued against rumors that the 1904 Manifesto "was done simply for effect and was not intended to be enforced." He asserted, "There is no inner circle...There is no inner circle and this policy [of double-reading] is sapping the faith of young people in the Church." At this Smith interjected, "you are speaking for all of us," and continued to chasten the Saints. "This whispering which has been so prevalent," he warned, "and which has brought down some of our brethren is wrong." Smith then addressed the real problem: "Every sensible man ought to know that when we make public assertions that we mean it, and when men come around whispering that there are other counsels, that there is an inner circle other than they have received, and some of them have not received what they merited [i.e., polygamy]," the Saints were told, these claims are not in harmony with the Church. Moreover, Smith declared, "the talk about Reed Smoot being the cause of this trouble is ridiculous nonsense" (Ivins 4.09.06).

John W. Taylor taught otherwise in a meeting in Mexico with John Henry Smith. According to Smith's record, Taylor "displayed considerable emotion" regarding his

resignation, defended himself, and “spoke about the spirit of cowardice manifested by the brethren” (Smith 12.10.06). Their behavior during the Smoot hearings, and kowtowing afterwards further disgusted Taylor, whose father had died on the underground. Now Lyman and other leaders relied on spies and spotters in the Church as they implemented American policy among their own people. Taylor continued to criticize in private meetings the course of church leaders, and accused Mexican colonies leader Anthony Ivins of connecting him with a recent case of new polygamy, saying, in Ivins’s report, that “I wanted to make capitol with the present Quorum of Apostles by going to President Smith with the story” (Ivins 9.02.07). The “Prophet of the Quorum” surely found Ivins’s calling to the apostleship a month later somewhat disconcerting. With Taylor’s replacement, however, a wedge between private and public Mormonism was also dislodged. Modern Mormonism would be public, opening itself for scrutiny by newspapers and politicians, as the Church turned from practices that maintained the older Mormonism and its rumors of inner circles.

Official Removal of Interpreters of Private Utterance

With continued rumors, printed or otherwise, that new polygamy was, if not authorized, neither punished, the Church got serious about the problem. It formed a committee. Chairing the 1909 committee commissioned to root out new polygamy were Francis Lyman, Heber J. Grant, and John Henry Smith. They met with other apostles first, “and examined ourselves as to our action” regarding plural marriage. All appropriately stated they advised against new polygamy, according to Smith’s report (Smith 7.14.09). They again met in July of 1909 to discuss a brother Higgs, who rumor had it had taken a wife recently. Higgs was Grant’s personal secretary. The committee called in men associated

with the case, and each promptly refused to betray his brother by answering their questions. Higgs was publicly sanctioned by the Church, as was another up-and-coming Mormon, Joseph W. Musser. The latter fellow was thereafter sent with the blessing of Lyman on a Church mission to India, to return only after the Tribune ceased printing his name (Bradley 1993:25).

As new polygamists ended up before the committee, Reed Smoot was devising punitive schemes with fellow senators. He advised Lyman and Joseph F. Smith that all Mormons entering plural marriages after 1904 should be excommunicated, while those between 1890 and 1904 should simply be removed from serving in church offices (or “disfellowshipped,” a lesser penalty than excommunication which prohibits public acts, such a praying or preaching). Smoot caught wind of Smith’s candidate for appointment to the Quorum of the Seventy, Ben E. Rich, and argued stridently against it. Appointing Rich, a post-manifesto polygamist, would send a message to Congress, and “bring trouble on the Church sure,” Smoot warned Smith (Smoot 9.14.09). Smoot’s punitive policy was taken up by the committee, which began 1910 with a mandate to “handle” new polygamists.

Smoot’s policy extended only so far as the committee, however. Anthony Ivins traveled to his beloved Mexican colonies in January 1910 to oversee the case of Miles Romney. The defendant admitted he had wed a plural wife in Utah recently, but explained that he was married to her three years previous in Mexico. The unnamed officiator of his wedding reportedly warned Romney and bride to wait until “the matter blew over” before attending to a temple marriage (“sealing”) ceremony (Ivins 1.19.10). It was surely difficult for Ivins to disfellowship the man, for although Ivins was a

monogamist (as far as I can tell), he had performed nearly thirty post-Manifesto ceremonies in the colonies (Hardy 1992). Surely Romney was simply following suit, but happened to have his life trotted out on the pages of the Tribune. Whether Romney was “handled” for marrying again, or for acting in a way to bring his marriage under public scrutiny is difficult to decide. Again the Mexican colonies followed a different, more lenient policy, though perhaps only because the Mexican Saints were often beyond the purview of Utah newspapers.

Speaking as Doing or Thinking

At the heart of the new excommunication hearings (called “Church courts,” or more recently, “Councils of Love”) were disputes over the binding nature of speech acts (such as oaths), the value of secrecy, and what constituted betrayal. I now turn to transcripts of these hearings to see how language, and positions about its appropriate use, became the means of indexing different, temporally anchored, Mormon persona.

Israel Barlow was called before the Quorum of Apostles in January 1910. After refusing to answer their questions, Apostle Rudger Clawson (who had spent nearly four years in the pen during the 1880s) revealed his mind to Barlow. “I feel Brother Barlow can be perfectly safe in trusting his case to this council,” Clawson declared, and “I believe we could give it full consideration in all its phases” (Barlow hearing, 1.7.10). Clawson continued to state his beliefs regarding the courtesies attending answers to the Quorum’s inquiries, and asserted that “Brother Barlow understands that the desire of this council and the President of the Church is to get this matter stopped, and the only way is by making inquiries when any case comes to the notice of the brethren” (ibid.). Clawson seemed simply to be going through the motions, and seemed to protect Barlow by voicing

his state of knowledge. Barlow was concerned, however, that some apostles could not be trusted with his answers, and could not hold their tongues, particularly if called before a grand jury. "I would like to know," Barlow asserted, "if they [the hearing minutes] would go any farther." "We could not tie our hands," Apostle Orson Whitney admitted, "and say that they would not go to the President of the Church." While many marriages were apparently performed by apostles in a way to keep the president, according to his own policy, unaware, these apostles now could not give their word that Smith would not receive report of Barlow's hearing. Before any decision was given, John Henry Smith interjected, "Some first thought that the Manifesto did not apply to the Church outside of the United States and some of the apostles of the Church thought the same" (ibid.). "This no doubt," he continued, "led to the prohibition of President Smith." "This prohibition he [President Smith] thought was absolute," John Henry inferred, "no one could mistake his words." "Some do not understand that," Barlow countered. Rather than dwell on the thoughts of the addressee's of Smith's 1904 manifesto, the hearing delved into the mind of Barlow in order to gain a personal history of the movement of individual Saints into post-Manifesto polygamy. Hyrum Smith, son of Joseph F. Smith and vanguard of the young monogamists in leadership positions began.

Hyrum Smith: Have you a general idea or impression that plural marriages are performed now?

Barlow: Yes sir.

Hyrum Smith: Was it your general understanding and was it your knowledge of the general conditions that we opposed all new plural marriages?

Barlow: My general understanding was for several years after the Manifesto [of 1890] there were no more plural marriages but condition[s] since that time have changed me.

H Smith: Hearing rumors you changed your mind. What steps did you ever take to find out if it was right?

Barlow: Apostle Woodruff changed my opinion.

At this John Henry Smith interrupted, and asked if Barlow believed the brethren were “not in harmony” on the issue. Barlow was silent, and Hyrum Smith took up his investigation again.

H Smith: Did Brother Woodruff ever advise you to take a plural wife?

Barlow: Yes.

H Smith: Did you ever take one?

Barlow: I do not care to state.

Hyrum Smith acted nonplussed at this admission that A.O. Woodruff (son of Wilford Woodruff who died in 1904 at the age of 31) would sanction plural marriage, confessing, “I have always understood that plural marriages were against the law of the Church. The Church has taken a stand against this and someone is going about saying it can be done.” For the young Hyrum Smith there was no distinction between the Church and its members, public presentations or private act, and this included the apostles. No priesthood circle acted independently of the Church, it seemed, and thus it was unthinkable for him that apostles might gainsay policies of the Church. “Such men should be known,” Smith continued, “so that this thing can be stopped for the honor of the Church and faith of the people.” “My impression is that Brother Barlow does not trust us,” Smith concluded, and the meeting was adjourned for lunch.

The hearing resumed, but rather than plumb Barlow’s mind, the apostles generated a metadiscourse on the nature of linguistic betrayal. Discourse, its use and capacity to make rather than simply reflect reality, was at the heart of the disputes over new polygamy. Hyrum Smith again started, “I have only one desire and that is to arrive

at the truth and make an impression upon him to always respect the counsel of the Twelve. It is a very serious thing for one to treat with contempt the counsel of those who preside over him. I think when a man would rather lose his right hand than divulge a compact he is wrong when the compact is against the Church.” Here Smith admitted the value of oaths of secrecy, except when its breach was requested by the Church. “Where a man goes wrong and does things against the counsel of the Church, he is against the Church whether he thinks so or not, and the responsibility should be placed where it belongs,” he concluded. At this Francis Lyman took the reins of the meeting.

Lyman: Now after President’s Smith declaration [of 1904] I want to know if you think it would be alright , do you think you should enter that now?

Barlow: I think not.

Lyman: Do you feel it would be wrong for a man to take a step of that kind now in view of the action of the Church?

Barlow: I think it would from what you men say. Of course I feel confident men have gone into it since the Manifesto was published.

After asking if Barlow had talked with others about the Principle, Lyman built his argument regarding betrayal and oaths of secrecy.

Lyman: If there is a ceremony someone has done it and you can tell who it is. I want to advise you that it is not a betrayal of a brother if a man has advised you to do wrong. I do not consider it a betrayal of Brother Woodruff for you to say what you have said. What I would understand as a betrayal of a brother would be where a brother is in danger of losing his life or liberty and is innocent and you could turn him over to his enemies. To betray a man into the hands of his enemies. It is never a betrayal where a wrong has occurred.

Barlow: Suppose I believe someone had gone into the principle since the Manifesto. Would I be betraying them?

Lyman. No

Barlow: Would I be betraying Brother Ivins if I told anything of that kind, or would it be considered a betrayal of confidence?

Lyman: No, if you have any information of that kind.

Ivins interrupted with a cough, and drew a fine distinction: “If you were asked any question by these brethren about me I would consider it only proper for you to answer. There is a difference between a tattler and being asked a question and answering it.”

Lyman clarified,

It would be my duty to answer all questions asked of me by one in authority and tell the truth all the truth and nothing but the truth. And I would advise you to do this. The brethren we have asked on this question have said they would rather lose their right arm than betray a brother. The betrayal is on the Church and the effect is on the Church. The brethren have all sat by and defended the man guilty of this offence and we want you to do better.

Barlow remained silent. Now another young addition to the Quorum, David O. McKay, spoke, and asked if, hypothetically, the Lord told Barlow to tell the Quorum the name of the man who performed the ceremony, whether he would tell. Barlow admitted, “I do not know whether I would do so or not.” McKay was incredulous, though he continued his line of arguing that the President of the Church asked the Quorum to get the names of men performing ceremonies, which was as if the Lord himself required it. Apostle Richards invoked scripture to get Barlow to divulge the name of the man performing ceremonies, and threatened him with the possibility of excommunication. Now membership in the Church was at stake, not because of his marriage, which he all but admitted, but because Barlow refused to “betray his brother” who had performed the ceremony. The Quorum insisted that if the action was wrong, there existed no more oath to bind one to secrecy. Barlow seemed to doubt not only this rationalization of betrayal, but also whether his marriage was a sin. This the Quorum again aimed to establish, and used their recent action as evidence of the Church’s disapproval.

Heber J. Grant: Was it not enough of a notice to you when brothers Taylor and Cowley lost their position in the Apostleship that it was wrong? Could there be any stronger

evidence that it was not right?

Barlow: They were not deprived of their priesthood and Apostleship.

Grant: I asked was that sufficient evidence that it was not right.

Barlow did not answer, and his counter that the removed apostles were not deprived of priesthood (their right to administer in rituals, blessings, marriages, and so forth) irked Grant, who restated his question as if Barlow did not provide “sufficient evidence.” Grant then declared as the meeting concluded that Barlow “is in a very dangerous condition today.”

Indeed Barlow was in a precarious spot. He stated apostles had led him to believe plural marriages continued to be solemnized, with a hint that Ivins was involved at some point. He had by report taken an oath never to divulge the name of the officiator at his secret wedding, and this oath was linked to the priesthood power of the officiator, not to the Church. The rationale behind refusal was simple. Just as Taylor and Cowley might be removed for public effect, with no change on their ability to bind heaven and earth, so might the Church act in public, as a public body, while its real power remained hidden in the priesthood. For this reason Barlow could not be convinced that he was betraying the Church; moreover, there may have been apostles present, who by interaction or by rumor, seemed to Barlow involved in administering these oaths of secrecy. To reveal a name would be to break an oath to a man possessing superior priesthood. Perhaps they were just testing him, after which he might enter the “inner circle”? This resistance, however, was portrayed as “betrayal to the Church,” that Barlow “betrayed Christ” and President Smith by not divulging. The men argued from the authority of the Church, and threatened Barlow with an exit pass from it, precisely because he refused to act as if the Church and the priesthood, the power to authorize and remove binding oaths, were the

same. He was notified of his disfellowship later that day, on the grounds of “refusing, persistently, to answer the questions propounded”; as a result he was “prohibited from exercising the priesthood or enjoying any of the privileges of the gospel” until their next meeting (Lyman to Barlow, 1.7.10).

Two days before Barlow met again with the Quorum he wrote Anthon Lund, a church leader in Salt Lake. Barlow recounted his recent ventures before the men, totaling over six hours, and explained why, if indeed he had, he entered polygamy after the 1890 Manifesto. His reasons are telling, and likely were those of a great many new mid-rank polygamists. He wrote that he was “forced to believe” that “some of my file leaders and some of the best men in our communities were entering that principle” (Barlow to Lund 2.8.10). Then Barlow recounted a local conference where one of the presidents of the Quorum of the Seventy was asked about men entering the order of polygamous marriage. Barlow reports the answer as, “Has any of his file leaders or the presiding authorities proffered any charge or filed any complaint against him?” The response, of course, was, “Not that I am aware of.” If no leaders complain, let those below remain silent, Barlow recalled this president as teaching. Barlow then told Lund that as a result of this answer he began fasting and praying for guidance, and told no one of his concern, “not even my wife.” After some period of seeking for divine inspiration on the matter, he was approached by “one of the leading authorities,” (later identified as Apostle Marriner Merrill) who probed, “You have been praying to know whether plural marriage is true or not and your duty in the matter?” “Yes, sir,” Barlow responded, and was told his “duty [was] to seek out some good girls and embrace that Principle.” The leading authority, according to Barlow, later told him that the guidance was divine, stating “God revealed it

to me and I would have been under condemnation had I failed to tell you.” Barlow recounted another instance of divine guidance dispensed from another President of the Seventy, who confided that “I have felt impressed for some time to tell you it was your duty to get some wives.” Scriptures were cited to Lund by Barlow in support of his position, who pleaded, “What is a man to do?” It was a classic case of damned if you do, damned if you don’t. Barlow then reported the contradictory teachings on the matter of plural marriage, writing that “some say the Manifesto is a revelation, others say not.” As a result of these contradictions, and “not having access to the inner councils of the priesthood, [men] have been at a loss sometimes to discern just what were the policies of the Church and what to do to be in harmony.” He reminded Lund of the imprisonment of women during the 1880s raids, women held in honor by the Church for not betraying their spouses. Barlow then affirmed that were he to divulge the name of the man who might have sealed him, “I feel the Apostles would be among the first to despise and disown me were I to betray my brethren by conceding to their requests.” This is significant, for it makes the hearing a potential initiation into an “inner circle” if one could hold one’s tongue throughout. He described years of unpaid church service and devotion, and concluded, “I would rather lose my life than my standing in the Church.”

Barlow’s letter made its way to Lyman, who wrote questions in pencil, such as “Who was that president [of the Seventy]?” who spoke so freely during the local conference. The following Thursday the apostles met with Barlow again (Barlow trial 2.17.10). Now defending his membership in the Church, Barlow began by recounting his justifications earlier written to Lund. “I thought I could read between the lines,” Barlow recounted, after hearing one of the Presidents of the Seventy warning men to remain

silent. Thus we find a presumed return to the underground interpretive method, whereby addressees recontextualize signs as if designed for concealment from the masses. By so reading “between the lines” one stepped into the persona of an elite for whom the higher, secret order was revealed. More than a discursive method was required, however, for these Mormons to enter into a practice which was now officially forbidden: they needed authorization from a holder of priesthood. While the interpretive method could be arrived at individually merely by weighing contradictory public utterances stretched over time, priesthood authority was not so widely distributed. After Barlow recounted his path to polygamy, Lyman restated the purpose of the meeting: to get the name of the man who performed the ceremony, to trace the use of priesthood to particular men. Barlow responded that he would refuse on account of the possibility of legal investigations, but agreed to “tell you what I have done but I am not willing to go any further.” The apostles were not satisfied.

John Henry Smith: That is not what we want. We don't want to know what you have done particularly but we want to find out who is doing this and stop it. We want the people to understand that there is only one person in the Church today who can solemnize such action and that person has declared against it. No one without the President's permission can exercise these rights. Your fear of betrayal is wrong. Your action and the action of those men who solemnized that ordinance is the betrayal....

Barlow: I do not want to betray the Church.

The investigating committee had shown its hand too early, that its interest was in the officiator of the ceremony, and Barlow refused to divulge his name by invoking the very defense, that oaths are binding and real, which “leading figures” used two decades earlier. The Quorum was getting desperate. Always sympathetic to those in difficult situations, McKay suggested Barlow could “run over a number of names which you have in your mind who could probably perform that ceremony. There could be no violation of a

covenant in doing that.” Grant, however, again raised the question of hierarchy: did the man who placed the binding oath on Barlow have a higher priesthood? To this Barlow disclaimed knowledge, and Grant retorted, “Then you are protecting a man who is presuming to represent the Priesthood [leadership] and administer in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost and you admit he has no authority.” After more pleadings by apostles, Lyman again directed the meeting.

Lyman: There is no reason why he should not help us out of this matter and he will be blessed for it. ...We want to know, Brother Barlow, whether you will tell us the truth or decline to do it. It has been made perfectly clear and plain what is right to do in this matter. I have never prayed about it but accepted the word of the Lord through the Priesthood [leadership] and when you were praying about it you were praying for something that was wrong. We want you to do just exactly what is right.

Barlow: I would like a little more time.

Lyman: You have had time and could tell us the truth now.

Barlow: Brethren I do not want to be in contempt or be cut off the Church. I would rather die than to lose my membership in the Church, but there are other people who I think should tell you what you want other than me. I do not want to betray my brethren.

John Henry Smith: The position and the liberty of the Church are at stake on this question, and we must know who is doing this and put a stop to it. When I was east recently, the [U.S.] President said to me that this must be stopped or he would stop it, if he found we were not playing true. The virtue of our young maidens would be at stake and we must protect them.”

Barlow agreed the situation was serious, and promised he would attempt to “get released from my pledge.” Lyman concluded the meeting oddly by asking Barlow to admit “before these brethren that I was good to you yesterday [during a private meeting].” The Quorum agreed to meet with Barlow in two weeks.

Barlow arrived on the twenty-fourth with evidence of a pre-Second-Manifesto marriage (Barlow trial 2.24.10). He claimed that Apostle Owen Woodruff married him in 1904, and that Ivins could corroborate this date. Ivins, however, was absent, and so the Quorum scrutinized his story and evidence. The letter was from Woodruff and dated

1904. The writer addressed the planting of some cherry trees, and asked Barlow to send some his way. In the post-script was a typically underground admonition: “I do not care to have it known where I have gone. Keep your own affairs to yourself, and send the other party to Mexico” (Woodruff to Barlow 4.10.04). Lyman asked what was meant by sending “the other party to Mexico,” which Barlow explained meant the girl he had recently married. Grant examined the letter, and asked Barlow if he added the post-script. He denied it, and disclaimed knowing whether his cousin, a secretary at a local firm, added the text when she made the copy they now examined. Grant persisted interrogating Barlow about the post-script, and said he “cannot believe that the last line was not written in by someone other than Owen Woodruff.” Grant and Hyrum Smith hurried down to interview the secretary, while Lyman admitted that the evidence “kind of took the wind out of our sails as we thought the marriage was performed this last summer.” Then Orson Whitney related a rumor that he had been recently married because he was spotted carrying the valise of women near the temple.

All seemed to be cleared up, a simple misunderstanding, until Grant and Hyrum Smith returned. “He has committed a forgery on the honor a dead member of this Quorum!” Grant thundered. The secretary reportedly admitted that she added the lines, on both the original and the copy. Barlow confessed this was true, but that the lines were on a scrap of paper, handwritten, which was now lost. The hand of the Lord was in the deception’s unveiling, Grant declared. “Where is the girl now,” Lyman demanded.

Barlow: North

Lyman: At Logan?

Barlow: I think so, that is where she has been stopping.

McKay: Is it not a fact that she left Logan a few weeks ago?

Barlow: I don't know.

At this point various apostles declared they had no confidence in Barlow's story, and gave him their version of his history. Ruder Clawson defended Barlow, however, on the grounds of the "sacred trust" which bound him to silence. "I am willing to take him at his word," Clawson declared. Grant objected to Clawson's defense, calling his remarks entirely out of place. Hyrum Smith recounted that Barlow, as he staffed the Church's new information booth for visitors to Temple Square, said the Church did not allow the practice of plural marriage. "But notwithstanding this statement you were practicing it yourself," Hyrum criticized Barlow's general inconsistency. Barlow explained that Joseph Smith made a similar declaration denying plural marriage, now published as a revelation in the Church's *Doctrine & Covenants*, all the while secretly practicing it. At this defense Hyrum Smith was incensed, and noted that Barlow had looked up some things carefully, but could not recall what they wanted to know. John Henry Smith warned again that the liberties of this people are at stake.

The Quorum continued to press Barlow for an interview with his wife, when Grant announced he no longer wished to fellowship with Barlow and was calling for his excommunication. Immediately Clawson defended Barlow, and tried to persuade him to let his wife testify. Finally Barlow consented to their interviewing her, though he would not tell them where she lived, and delay was necessary for she was quarantined with smallpox. The meeting ended without any official action taken on Barlow's membership. Barlow's brother-in-law later wrote to Lyman about his sister's recent marriage, and argued that it was solemnized in 1809, after which Barlow's membership in the Church hung by a thread suspended on the silence of the ceremony's participants. No positive

proof could condemn him, and the case, which eventually was decided against Barlow, posed his word, when it could be extracted, against others.

Barlow's case presented the apostles with evidence that not only would they be obstructed by oaths of silence in their investigation of new polygamy, but that language might also be used to mislead or obstruct them. After Barlow each new oath-taking polygamist testified under a shadow of doubt. The committee's efforts to stamp out new polygamy, and present its death to the altar of the public sphere, divided not only the Quorum, but also bishops against apostles, husbands against wives, and fathers against sons. For his defense of Barlow, Clawson was exiled to England to head the Church's missionary efforts.

Guiding the committee were rumors: the more public, the more of concern. In April 1910 the Tribune, which published over one hundred articles through the year detailing new polygamy (Hardy 1992:288), announced that Charles Woolfenden, local leader in southern Utah, had taken another wife. The Woolfenden case provides rich detail regarding the problems, and solutions, the committee faced when it turned to local leadership to enforce policy. Local leaders could not entirely be certain the committee was not simply designed for "public consumption," particularly since they investigated only men whose names recently appeared in the Tribune. Were they actually expected to prosecute cases, or simply slap the wrists of new polygamists? In April 1910 Lyman wrote to Beaver Stake President²⁸ John Tolton regarding Woolfenden's case. Apparently Woolfenden had been to Salt Lake after the Tribune announced his marriage, and tried to gain an interview with Joseph F. Smith. Woolfenden reported to Lyman that Smith's

²⁸ Stakes are local administrative units comprised of ten or so "wards" or congregations. Stake Presidents preside over stakes, while bishops preside over wards.

secretary had sent a letter advising him not to obstruct men holding the apostleship charged with investigating new polygamy. At this Woolfenden confessed that though he did not live with his plural wife until 1909, he was married by Owen Woodruff in 1903 (Woolfenden to Lyman 5.1.10). His entry into the “patriarchal order of marriage” was, he recalled, eased by an apostle’s wife. His new mother-in-law, wife of late Apostle George Reynolds, had told him that Taylor, Cowley, and others were authorized by Wilford Woodruff to perform secret marriages. The privilege was then conferred on Woolfenden, he reported, though not without an oath. He was asked to shoulder the responsibility of the illegal union, and to shield the Church if need be. Some confusion in dating the ceremony resulted, he admitted, for Woolfenden was requested to forget the date and officiator.

Three weeks after Woolfenden wrote to Lyman, Bishop Parkinson of the local congregation also wrote in defense of Woolfenden. He told the same story as Woolfenden (Parkinson to Lyman 5.22.10). Lyman let Woolfenden sweat it out for a month, and responded with accusations of deception. “We have been led to believe that you married Miss Reynolds about the time that Bro. Matthias F. Cowley was with you in Beaver, about January, 1909. That you were married by Patriarch²⁹ Tolman of Davis County. That since that time the child was begotten and born. We do not believe your answers about Bro. A.O. Woodruff perform[ing] the ceremony in the fall of 1903” (Lyman to Woolfenden, 6.27.10). Lyman claimed that Patriarch Tolman confessed that Woolfenden was married by him in the past year. “We have had another brother before

²⁹ The office of Patriarch in the Church is a local leadership position. Patriarchs give blessings to Mormons, which suggest direction for life, spouse, employment, education, and other religious matters. During the underground President John Taylor admitted under oath, for what its worth, that he had given authority to seal plural marriages to patriarchs. Judson Tolman, however, did not claim this line of authority, as later transcripts of his trial indicate.

us in the same condition you are in as near as we can learn,” Lyman warned, “who is trying to free himself as you are. His defense is by lying and forgery. We believe you are trying to deceive us.” Lyman wrote substantially the same letter to Bishop Parkinson, and ordered him to try the case. “We must not be deceived by lying,” Lyman warned.

As it became obvious to Woolfenden that Lyman was investigating the case in earnest, he sent a letter from his sister in support of his 1903 claim. Her evidence is of the sort that juries used to convict men on in the 1880s, with suggestive reference to a 1903 dance attended by Miss Reynolds, escorted by Woolfenden, as the primary exhibit. She also wrote that Miss Reynolds’ mother suggested Woolfenden could take a wife. Woolfenden’s first wife would never allow it, the sister countered. “She need never know,” the mother-in-law reportedly said. Woolfenden’s letter accompanied the evidence, and explained the claim that his first wife did not know of the actual date of the marriage, for “I have not at any time been enabled to fully confide in my wife lest in her periods of unwisdom she should betray to others that which I had held sacred and secret” (Woolfenden to Lyman, 6.30.10). There seemed to be no proof on either side; it was one word against another.

Bishop Parkinson wrote Lyman a month later regarding the case. He claimed that none could be found who would enter a complaint against Woolfenden, and thus, “How can you expect us to handle a case without a complaint and how on earth can we summon him to appear under such circumstances?” (Parkinson to Lyman 8.1.10). The bishop was altogether too frank, however, in admitting that “we feel that a great injustice has been done Brother Woolfenden in as much as his case has become one of public notoriety through the unwise course some have taken in exposing the case....[A]nd state at this

time that we believe there is no person in our community who would testify against him.” The bishop concluded, “And we believe that in a short time he will be able to adjust his family affairs satisfactorily and in all probability public sentiment will die out.” The old underground tactics were recalled, though it was the Church they were deployed against.

Lyman fired back that Woolfenden’s first wife had taken the case to the First Presidency (thus confirming her husband’s suspicions), and could file the complaint (Lyman to Parkinson, 8.5.10). He admitted these cases were difficult, but necessary, in order to “vindicate the Church” rather than merely to punish the guilty. Lyman then wrote to the Stake President, John Tolton, in order to bring a little pressure on the bishop (who serves under the local president) (Lyman to Tolton 8.13.10). He also informed the president that another man, Doctor MacGregor, was “about in the same condition” as Woolfenden. MacGregor, it turns out, was a counselor to Bishop Parkinson, and by threatening his removal, Lyman effectively turned the leadership against each other. Lyman also asked whether plural marriage continued to be enjoined on the men in the area, given the two cases.

Tolton replied that action was being taken on the Woolfenden case, and traced the new marriages “to the door of Elder Cowley” (Tolton to Lyman 8.18.10). He also mentioned a “Brother Woolley” recently in the area, who “was guilty of such teachings while here, and was very bold in the matter.” Two weeks later Tolton informed Lyman that Woolfenden was excommunicated “by a narrow margin” of votes from the local High Council (Tolton to Lyman 9.2.10). Among the reasons cited for the punishment:

He has brought criticism and censure upon the Church by placing facts and arguments in the hands of our enemies tending to prove our disloyalty and faithlessness to the Government in the solemn compacts made with it. His action casts reflection upon the leaders of the Church in that it makes them parties to the crime in the eyes of the world....At home it has caused many of our young people to doubt the sincerity of our

leading brethren and to shatter their faith in the Church.

To this note Lyman responded by urging Tolton to publish in the local paper a notice of Woolfenden's excommunication, "so that all may understand" the Church's position (Lyman to Tolton, 9.7.10). Woolfenden appealed the case, and wrote to Lyman that "should wisdom suggest I would willingly move to any section of any country" (Woolfenden to Lyman 9.22.10). Lyman ignored the request to renew the underground, then suggested to Tolton that MacGregor suffer the same punishment.

Bishop Parkinson, however, issued a "recommend for removal" to MacGregor, a document given when a Mormon moved to a new congregation. The tactic placed the doctor beyond the jurisdiction of the bishop (Tanner to Lyman 9.29.10). The Stake President, meanwhile, had urgent business in the East, leaving the matter for his counselors to sort out. The entire Beaver Stake was divided on the issue, and a counselor frantically wrote to Lyman that rumors abounded that President Tolton fled to avoid being "voted down," (denied his office by popular vote) at the next stake conference (Tanner to Lyman 10.4.10 and 10.10.10). Lyman attended the conference, and shored up and sounded out the file leaders for sympathies. Once he departed, however, the local leadership took up earlier grievances. Stake President Tolton was accused of causing the removal of the earlier stake president (a polygamist), and local leaders who sat on ecclesiastical courts refused to hear the MacGregor case (Tolton to Lyman 12.5.10).

What most bothered Lyman, however, was Tolton's persistent use of "your policy" in reference to recent punishments. Lyman corrected Tolton: "You will appreciate the correction I suggest in your letter, which I return to you that you may see them and then send it to me again. I freely make suggestions to you and you should use

them as your own without reference to me” (Lyman to Tolton 12.7.10). Tolton retyped the letter, back dated it, and sent it to replace the earlier letter. Now “Church discipline” replaced “the policy you have established” and its variants, thus remaking history to match Lyman’s “corrections” (Tolton to Lyman 12.5.10). MacGregor was eventually excommunicated as well.

The Woolfenden and MacGregor cases show how contested new polygamy was, even as late as 1910. None could be certain apostles investigating the case were not simply doing so as a sort of public harrumph, to satisfy Smoot and his cronies in Washington, or whether they really meant it this time (*wink wink*). Even the excommunication notice given to Woolfenden could be gaming those not familiar with Church discipline. It stated that “he be excommunicated,” potentially interpreted as “at some future date,” which Lyman rewrote as “he is hereby...,” thus changing a potential inconsequential statement of some future action indefinitely delayed into a performance of the punishment (“An Address to the High Council,” enclosed in Tolton to Lyman, 9.5.10). None could be certain whether Lyman really wanted new polygamists “handled,” or whether one should simply go along with the game; at least such confusion marked initial investigations. What one said could not be taken simply at face value, whenever plural marriage was involved. Lyman himself relied on interpretive license in presenting evidence. In Lyman’s initial charge against Woolfenden he claimed Patriarch Tolman confessed to marrying the man to a plural wife in 1909. Tolman, however, in transcripts of hearings before the Quorum of Apostles, denied marrying Woolfenden. Lyman was not in a mood to trust new polygamists, though, and used the denial as proof of action. He suspected all polygamists of lying (though he had himself three wives, wed

before 1890), and would use any evidence against them, even the familiar “it is said” which sent so many Mormons to the pen in the 1880s. Silence could grant one access to inner circles, or push one from the Church if the public voice was allowed to speak.

Conclusion

In a letter from Emily Crane Watson one glimpses what decades of double-talk about polygamy was doing to Mormon families. “It seems impossible for me,” she confessed,

To convince my children that those they know and loved so well could be influenced to take such steps without the knowledge and sanction of those in high authority. They say unkind things of those over us and do not believe that our Father wishes principles practiced or advocated that cannot be preached and taught openly to all the children of men (Watson to Lyman 7.10.10).

Unfamiliar with the ways of church authorities during the nineteenth century, Young Utah could not construe sensitively the seeming contradictory statements of leaders. What were they thinking, how could one tell? The children advocated, according to Crane, absolute transparency in act and word; failing this, characterizations of speaker as *dishonest* followed as a way to resolve public-private disparities. Lyman answered that indeed polygamy was now forbidden, and that it was his duty to see to it that Church rules were observed. “Now I have been candid with you,” he noted, “Please give me the names of the brethren in Parowan Stake who think it is all right to take all with wives they can take care of” (Lyman to Watson 8.13.10).

Watson answered quickly: “You ask me of names of those believing it right to make polygamous marriages now, this will make no one any trouble, but may possibly prevent it, not to individuals only, but our stake and church in general. Hence I submit the following...”(Watson to Lyman 9.2.10). She listed former and current bishops, as well as various stake-level officers. “I would not be an informer for anything but the

betterment of our people, the young people in particular who are becoming skeptical too fast on account of the over zealousness of some our finest brethren.” “Of course,” she hinted, “I am convinced my name will not be used in anyway.” With that list Lyman could begin hearings on local leaders “out of harmony” with “church discipline.”

As Watson sought for private confirmation of what was now emphatically declared in public, she provided the means for the separation of men drawing careful distinctions between what leaders stated in public, in newspapers or at the pulpit, and that suggested, rumored, or whispered in private conversation. Other sincere requests for clarification no doubt provided similar “pointers” for the punishment of secret seekers, as new polygamists became fringe social persona. Through the fall of 1910 the rationalization of Mormonism into a transparently public institution, with members taking for granted the sincerity of public utterance and leaders representing in public their private acts (thoughts, feelings, beliefs, discipline), modern Mormonism crept in like a thief in the night to supplant a silent older culture. By 1911 Mormons who attended to the contexts of speaking, as if speech events were discursive material rather than mental reflections, found themselves publicly flogged and shown the door. In their departure was the public erasure of the private sphere as a domain for transmitting secret doctrines and subversive Mormon culture. The home would become a unit of the Church. In the following chapter I further address the interactions which led to the departure of the private sphere as polygamists were sent packing. Leading figures of the Church were shown the door. Questions remained during these years whether one’s priesthood power also departed with one’s exit from the Church.

Chapter Ten

Final Scourges of the Private Sphere

Prior chapters described general cultural shifts. These large scale processes, however, required “on the ground” work, interactionally anchored. Larger transitions built on, then, the removal of a remnant of the nineteenth century discursive fabric, of men and women who drew fine distinctions between honesty, trust, and truth. These Saints taught that what happened in public could conceal what was done in secret, and language could be used to cloak and protect the domestic sphere, the site of transmission of a Mormonism which occasionally organized into an underground resistance. These generally polygamous Saints approached the same public utterances as their monogamous brothers and sisters, but could make the text reveal hidden messages designed for elite ears only. As the rationalization of Mormonism reached its apex in the early decades of the twentieth century, these interpreters of the mysteries found the Church publicly hostile to their discursive methods and the practices which followed.

To be thoroughly modern, Mormonism had at least represent to itself that what it said to outsiders, as circulated in an open access public sphere, defined the ideal for private activity by authentic Mormons. To be modern is to speak of oneself to oneself, as for example, the subconscious might to the conscious mind. Transparency of the sort designed to be effected by psychoanalysis was the ideal for the modern person. This semiotic arrangement meant, for Mormonism, either waiting for the natural removal of anti-modern Mormons (by death), all the while silencing their transmission of culture in all spaces; or designating them social persona beyond the pale of the Church. In this

chapter I consider how men who spoke of language as a tool to cloak, rather than simply to open, access to the private spheres of mind, family, and home were moved out of the folds of the Church. While initial stirrings of this process were covered last chapter, as the excommunications allowed these new polygamists to create a new identity historically situated. By so doing they claimed to enact, often explicitly, the role of 1880s Undergrounders; the Church, through the representation of its leaders, aligned itself as an investigating and punitive organization cut in the cloth of its former persecutors, the U.S. courts and Senate. The Quorum explicitly declared in one excommunication hearing that it deserved the same treatment expected by Smoot's Senate investigation. This chapter recounts how a discursive practice, of finding "secret" meanings in public utterances, provided not only a path to departure from the LDS Church, but also, importantly, became a way to enact historicized, elite social persona among a newly organized group. New "Undergrounders" were now outside the Church, but they could summon authority by inhabiting the role of "old Mormons."

Creating the role of rebel polygamist

Though the fall of 1910 Smoot continued to urge the excommunication of new polygamists, for as he warned Joseph F. Smith, this "must be done to prove we are sincere in our opposition to new polygamy" (Smoot 9.28.10). That same day the Quorum met to reconsider the case of Israel Barlow and his claim to a 1903 marriage. Barlow failed to appear, and was seen heading for Mexico, thus removing himself from the Utah culture physically as he had been made to be discursively. Barlow's brother-in-law, who had written to Lyman some time earlier, witnessed against Barlow. He claimed that his sister was married in July 1909, though she denied it by his own account. The brother

noted that he did not now know where his sister lived, nor if she was “in the family way,” though he was sure she wed Barlow recently. Indeed, Apostle Cowley had offered to marry his sister in 1903, the brother stated, the very year that Barlow claimed Cowley directed him to Marriner Merrill who sent him to Owen Woodruff to be sealed plurally. The Quorum, absent Clawson, voted unanimously to excommunicate Barlow for marrying “in defiance of Church discipline and for lying and forgery and for treating this council with contempt.” Since little evidence was proffered that indeed Barlow wed in 1909, he was “cast out” for lying, seemingly, and these lies coupled with silence allowed others to speak about his life. The modern monogamous Mormon Church gained ground day by day as their counterparts grew silent and moved away.

10 October 1910 the Tribune published a blistering article that listed over 250 new polygamous unions, with men holding offices ranging from apostle to ward clerk flagellated on its pages. It mocked the efforts of Francis Lyman as mere blustering of the sort expected of Mormon leaders, and spurred the new committee’s efforts to demonstrate its sincerity on the sacrificed memberships of new polygamists. Upon hearing rumors of a rogue patriarch who performed polygamous sealings, the committee called Patriarch Judson Tolman before them. As he walked to the circle of chairs occupied by the Priesthood of the Lord, Lyman warned that the Quorum wanted the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. “You are getting old,” Lyman noted, “and should have a clear conscience.” A poor, frail old man with a mind easily confused, Tolman admitted that he first performed a sealing ceremony for a bishop named Dan Muir, “seven or eight years ago,” to a “sister Babbitt.” When asked why he sealed them, Tolman recounted the following story:

I told you before that sister Babbitt came to me and wanted me to marry her before Muir

came to me, and I told her I could not, but concluded to go to [stake] President [Joseph] Grant [brother of Heber J. Grant], and he said, why didn't you do it, and I went to her and would have married her but she had changed her mind and that is all to that. That is all the authority I had.

Lyman: You have not been authorized or directed to do it anyone else, by Brother Taylor or Brother Cowley?

Tolman: No one.

Lyman: How did you come to it without someone's advice?

Tolman: I thought President Grant had given me the privilege.

Lyman: With regard to that woman?

Tolman: No, I thought with any one.

Tolman's memory seemingly failed when asked about names, dates, and other unions. He did, however, report hearing Lyman say "he would cut every man off the Church who had taken a plural wife since the Manifesto," and recalled, "I think I heard the declaration of President Smith and Brother Lyman's resolution of 1905." "Have you done any marrying since that time?" Lyman asked. Tolman admitted he had, and gave as his justification "What Brother Grant said. That is what I thought." Like other polygamists, Tolman read between the lines, as if utterances, in particular public ones, were designed to conceal meaning. Asked if he believed President Smith "actually meant what he said, that it was wrong," Tolman confessed, "I thought he was willing if they were willing to take the consequences." One could render any statement, when underground presumptions were applied, to mean the opposite.

Presuming official concealment seemed to mark one's entrance into new polygamy. Tolman's own marriage, he stated, was performed by a man in mask, though Tolman stated later that Apostle Marriner Merrill wore it. "How did Brother Merrill," Lyman inquired, "start you out in this business if he is the one who married you?"

Tolman revealed that “He said they could only give a hint and that is all he said...I took what everybody said on that subject as encouragement.” Supplicants for Tolman’s sealing services came by night, some claimed “the Lord had sent them,” while others affirmed seeing the old patriarch in vision in answer to their prayers. “I think now,” Tolman conceded, “it must have been a lie.” Tolman was excused and Dan Muir, whom Tolman claimed to marry, was called before the Quorum of Apostles.

Muir cautioned that “I won’t tell you any lies, but I may not tell you all the truth” (Muir trial 10.1.1910). Muir was no cowering Saint and aggressively asserted his position. Asked how he came to plural marriage after the 1904 declaration, Muir argued, “there has been a great deal of talk throughout the Church that things were not meant as they seemed to be from the outside and this has been going on for some time.” “I think,” he confided, “the Church officially on the outside, Brother Lyman, got a misunderstanding of this [policy] and that the Manifesto was only a sham and it has been followed down to the present time.” When asked why he thought so, he explained that none were handled for new polygamy. Now they seemed serious, he admitted. Muir blamed the movement on Taylor and Cowley, though he thought they worked as they did because the other apostles did not want to know about new marriages. Hence Taylor and Cowley gained increased authority among some groups of Saints as a result of their resignation, for by their removal, the rumor went, new marriages could be authorized and sealed without involving the Church. They still held the priesthood, many noted, and that was all one needed for a sanctioned union. Muir was excused, and like Tolman later excommunicated, though he asked if excommunicates “could use a little grafting wax and become members of the Church again.” Many would return to the Church after officially

repenting, that is to say, publicly recanting their new unions.

The Church increasingly took up the role enacted by the U.S. government in 1885, while their targets recanted or, increasingly, took up the persona of an underground Saint versed in dexterous interpretive strategies. Joseph Summerhays was among those who, once bound by secrecy, opened his mouth when brought before the Quorum for a second hearing (Summerhays trial 10.12.10). President Joseph F. Smith, he said, had “unsealed his lips” so he could tell his tale. It was during a visit some years ago to the Mexican colonies with Smith that Summerhays first encountered post-1904 polygamy. An unfamiliar man called on President Smith, who met him in the garden for a quiet conversation. Later while visiting Anthony Ivins, Summerhays said that President Smith called him to a private room in Ivins’s home, and “he told me this man whom he had met in the garden was married but had no children and had made all arrangements before the President’s declaration to marry a girl and he said, ‘I don’t know how this can be done, but if you know how it can be done you have it done, you say it can be done.’” Summerhays spoke with Ivins about Smith’s cryptic remark, and reported to the Quorum (including Ivins) that “[Ivins] said that he had been told by President Smith on a previous occasion that unless a bigger man than he [Ivins] came along that he was not to marry anyone unless so instructed by this ‘bigger man.’” Ivins let Summerhays see the marriage ceremony, and the unfamiliar man from the garden soon had his new wife. The story involved Smith and Ivins, and this could pose definite problems for the defendant.

Smoot was suspicious of the involvement of Smith after the Senate investigations. “There is no man,” Summerhays declared, “I love more than President Smith, and if he should tell me to do this thing today I would go and do it and suffer the consequences.”

Moreover, Summerhays indicated, “If I were summoned before a civil court, I could swear that President Smith never told me to do that, but I construed his words to indicate that this should be done.” Indeed, though Summerhays admitted that Smith likely preached against new plural marriage while visiting the colonies, his private guidance silently indicated otherwise. “I believed,” Summerhays recounted, “that I had special authority given me in this case. I think in his heart President Smith wanted it done but didn’t want to know about it.” Now in the Quorums’ good graces as a result of Lyman’s and Ivins’ silent confirmation of the tale, Summerhays named four men guilty of solemnizing plural marriages: Taylor, Cowley, Owen Woodruff, and Anthony Ivins. The Quorum ignored the last name, and prompted him for details on Taylor and Cowley. Summerhays demurred knowledge of their activities, and wisely pinned the new marriages on Patriarch Tolman, a man known to have been excommunicated recently, and certainly not in a state of mind to defend the accusation.

Lyman concluded the hearing by describing an earlier conversation with President Smith, who reportedly denied giving authority to Summerhays. “I stay by the president,” Lyman declared, “that he has not authorized anyone to do this thing.” Summerhays, who had said that Smith could indeed deny explicitly extending authority, was excused, and the Quorum decided against excommunication. Lyman noted, though, “it is clear and certain that he received no authority from President Joseph F. Smith to solemnize a plural marriage, he fully believed that he was justified in doing so in this one and only case.” Moreover, he had “frankly answered the questions put to him in relation to these and kindred subjects,” and so they punished him by removal from “any auxiliary board with which he is now associated.”

By pinning the one marriage he admitted to performing on Smith and Ivins, and others known by rumor on Tolman, Summerhays hid behind the general, unspoken suspicion that not all marriages were done by rogue members. Smith and Ivins were rumored to be involved in at least some sealings, indirectly or not, and none of the apostles present cared to explore their involvement (aside from Lyman's affirmation that Smith gave no authority). As Summerhays noted, though Smith did not explicitly authorize the sealing, more was gleaned from the conversation than was merely said; a familiar tactic which certainly the older apostles recognized. With Lyman's ritual defense of Smith, the apostles could distance Smith from the sealing, though certainly if they doubted Summerhays' story he would have been excommunicated for impugning the honor of the "living oracle." Tolman, Cowley and Taylor would stand in as the official instigators of the "new polygamy craze," leaving Ivins, President Joseph F. Smith, and other apostles innocent. Cowley and Taylor lent the movement priesthood authority, had already resigned from the Quorum as a result of their "disharmony," and the committee speculated, led cottage meetings and advised faithful, trustworthy men to take plural wives. Old man Tolman could be blamed for performing all other unions. The official version of the history of new polygamy was nearly complete. Lyman's cousin, Henry S. Tanner, was picked to be the man in this tale who led overzealous Saints from the advice of Cowley and Taylor into the sealing hands of Tolman.

Tanner was called before the Quorum in November. His defense was rather sound. Tanner denied taking plural wives after 1904, and claimed he never advised a soul to enter the Principle (Tanner trial 11.8.10). He argued that his post-Manifesto marriage was sanctioned by Wilford Woodruff in 1897. Tanner asserted he asked

Woodruff in the presence of Joseph F. Smith if he could take another wife. Woodruff directed Smith to send Tanner to George Q. Cannon, who advised him to wait because these girls were not for him. After a few years, Tanner found another apostle willing to unite him with a newly betrothed. When asked the apostle's name by the Quorum, Tanner faltered and said he was placed under oath to never reveal it. "I have not even told my wife," Tanner objected. Now in a corner, Tanner was confronted by Ivins, "Do you understand that is it right to bind yourself against the Church and against the Priesthood [i.e., the apostles]?" "I never felt I made a covenant against the Church or against the Priesthood," Tanner argued, "I understand it was for the purpose of protecting the party and protecting the Church." At this the apostles bristled, and declared that he was against the Church, and the oath of silence was taken to protect the rogue apostle. When new polygamists refused to speak, others spoke for them, and they gave a version of new polygamy which made it clear that the Church was not involved, but rather, a few bad apples were causing problems.

Lyman informed his cousin Tanner that President Snow's declaration in 1900 made the act unauthorized and against the rules of the Church. Tanner protested, "Brother Lyman you told me when I was here before that everything was alright up to 1904." "No sir," Lyman countered, "No one has heard me say that. Has anyone here ever heard me say that?" Hence the official history could be remade on the back of literal readings of statements, with a coincident denial of underground discursive practices. Just as President Smith could hint he authorized an illegal union, but his addressee could deny in court that he said anything about marriage, so now could the entire underground framework be denied its place in the discursive repertoire of Mormonism. Lyman likely

did not say what Tanner reported he heard, at least explicitly; and this strategy of implicitly teaching about new polygamy became the means of later denying its official sanction when offenders were brought to report the speech acts that led to their deviant unions. The official strategy, then, placed the onus of new polygamy on the interpreters, and denied any suggestive hinting came from church leadership or a confusing tradition.

After Tanner continued to refuse to divulge the name of the apostle, Lyman probed, “If you were called to Washington as I was, and your conduct was inquired into as mine was, and you were required to answer as I was, what you say on this question?” Tanner said he would refuse to answer, a response which Lyman likely took as criticism. Lyman ended the meeting and asked Tanner to free himself from the oath before their next meeting. The Quorum decided that his case should be handled with care, and that they “should not be a tyrannical body condemning without evidence and answering the Tribune clamor” (John H. Smith diary, 11.8.10).

As Henry S. Tanner was again before them, and refused to break his covenant with the apostle. The Quorum responded by discussing the nature of betrayal of oaths (Tanner trial 11.16.10). Higher priesthood leaders could loose what was once bound, they argued, just as the Lord could command one act then countermand it. Tanner refused again to follow this new argument, but remarked he was willing to sacrifice for the good of the Church. “There was a time,” Lyman noted, “when you could have protected the Church, you were well advised, well read and scholarly, but in spite of all of that you decided to take a stand against the Church, until today you have become to be looked upon as the most influential and best informed individual involving this trouble.” “I thought I was on the inside and had inside information,” Tanner confessed. After

some discussion of rumors that implicated Tanner in various sealings (such as Woolfenden's) all of which Tanner denied, the Quorum moved to the heart of the issue: right to compel or conceal answers.

Ivins: This council corresponds to the law making body of the nation and therefore Brother Tanner has no right to claim a privileged question before this body.

Tanner: Our constitution provides certain things as privileged questions. It is also one of the constitutional rights of the members of the Church, and the Church as well as the law of the land should protect men in their constitutional rights. [Tanner then read from section 98 of the *Doctrine and Covenants* in support of this position.]

Joseph Fielding Smith: Do you think when the brethren were before the Congressional Committee in the Smoot case that the committee had no right to ask the questions they did, or the brethren could have refused to answer them.

Tanner: They have a right to ask questions and to enforce their answers.

Still Tanner refused to answer, a silent critique of the performance of church leaders before the Senate. As Tanner played the role the apostles should have before the Senate, a younger apostle reset the stage and outlined the norms for modern Mormons. Hyrum M. Smith stated, "The feeling exists in the world today and among some of the Church members that the leaders of the Church are two-faced, still brother Tanner appears to prefer that the Church shall bear this load in order to protect the one man who is doing wrong, he prefers to put the leading brethren of the Church in a false light before the people in order to protect this man." "If it were me," Hyrum Smith continued, "I would go to the man and tell him that I was going to tell all I knew and not lose my standing in the Church." At this admonition the hearing was closed. While priesthood power was diffuse and abstract, church membership was concrete. Tanner could not visibly be stripped of priesthood, but he could be removed from the Church. These hearings were the seeds of the reorganization of priesthood and Church that culminated in a Fundamentalist schism, and later, in the LDS Church's Correlation movement. By 1930

the loss of priesthood would seem to follow from loss of membership.

Tanner quickly wrote his “Dear Brother” (presumably to whom he was oath-bound to protect) that “I have been before the Brethren again and they certainly appear to be in dead-earnest. I can’t understand the present activity unless some outside pressure is making inroads – in addition to the complaints of disaffection within the church” (Tanner to Dear Brother, 11.16.10) Tanner, a trained lawyer who had more than once defended Mormons against charges of unlawful cohabitation, assessed,

I feel that we are certainly facing the most critical crises the Church has known, and that nothing but the guidance of Divine Providence can deliver us. The attacks against the Church are coming from Church people as well as from outsiders. At present the cry is against plural marriage, but is it anything to be against the truth...I believe they will come back at the Church with double strength to destroy its functions and the effectiveness of the Priesthood.

He then warned, “Rumors are current that the brethren are going to get after you, but we can’t always depend upon community gossip...Everybody seems to be talking and the more they talk, the harder it is for us or anyone else to get at the facts.” “I believe,” Tanner confessed, “that if you were here you could soon clean the slate,” indicating that John W. Taylor was indeed his “dear Brother.” Tanner was later excommunicated, and Taylor’s day of reckoning beckoned.

Final Matters: Cowley and Taylor

“This letter is private and confidential,” Anthony Ivins wrote to Nora Cowley (Ivins to Cowley 10.13.10). Ivins informed her that “I shall not insist on an answer to my questions, but will tell you what I wish and leave you to answer or not as you choose, but think a truthful reply will be to your advantage.” He wrote at the direction of the Quorum of Apostles regarding her recent marriage to Matthias Cowley, the seeming non-harmonious apostle. “You will remember,” Ivins cued her, “that while I was in Mexico

recently you talked with me and if I understood you correctly you were married in Logan by Bro. Merrill, or under his direction. Is this correct?" A marriage by Merrill would protect her and Matthias from excommunication, as Merrill died in early 1906, and was not physically active after 1904. Ivins then asked for the exact date, urging and consoling her, "I judge from our interview at Juarez that you have no reason for concealing the truth." Ivins sent the same letter to her father, Ernest L. Taylor (not to be confused with John W. Taylor), just in case Nora failed to catch the hint.

Taylor replied for his daughter, "so that she could not be accused" of exposing her husband (E.L. Taylor to Ivins 10.26.10). Taylor informed Ivins that "Bro. C[owley] has told her repeatedly that in case you should ask her when she was married, to tell you March 4th, 1904, when the fact of the matter is she was going to school here at that time, and had not yet graduated, which your girls well know." While Ernest Taylor did not contradict the dating, he certainly failed to preserve Matthias Cowley from suspicion. Taylor then made a great mistake, writing, "You are a little mistaken about your talk with Nora in regard to Apostle Merrill. She says you didn't talk to her about that matter while you were here....So they were not married by Bro Merrill nor under his direction, neither were they married in Utah." Her father had reason for not protecting Apostle Cowley, for his daughter reportedly felt "great injustice was done her" in the union, that Matthias Cowley all but compelled her to marry. Ernest Taylor's turn against the apostle was a sign of unfaithfulness, however, that he was not willing to stand by the priesthood when family relations pulled the other way. This turn did not endear Ernest Taylor to the Quorum.

Nora finally wrote Ivins the next month, confessing her father's letter was a

strategy, “so that if Bro. C[owley] asked me if had given the information I could say no, honestly (?) Of course I gave the desired information as much as tho’ I had written, but I am using Bro. Cowley’s method of getting out of things” (N.Cowley to Ivins 11.14.10). Her letter contained no new information (except that Matthias had written her about the recent general conference, which saw frequent denunciation of plural marriage), but at least confirmed that she did not wish to use Ivins’s story regarding her marriage. As soon as Nora’s and her father’s letters were received, Francis Lyman wrote a letter to Ernest Taylor’s stake president in Mexico.

Lyman ordered Stake President Junius Romney to act on the case of Ernest L. Taylor, for it was rumored he had taken a plural wife in April of 1910 (Lyman to Romney 11.1.10). Enclosed Lyman provided a statement from the doorkeeper of the Logan temple which affirmed that Taylor and Rosalie Alexander were admitted to the temple with recommends signed by Romney, and another claim from the temple recorder who dated their sealing to April. They claimed an earlier legal wedding in El Paso, Texas, according to the recorder, and so the temple sealing was not out of order. “We wonder if those recommends were genuine? May they not have been forgeries?” Lyman asked. Moreover, he inquired, “I wonder if they really got married at El Paso, Texas, March 26th?...Did they get a license? Their movements make us suspicious.” “Did Bishop Bentley and Prest. Romney,” Lyman probed, “know they were coming to marry when they issued those recommends?” It is unclear how Lyman got word of Ernest Taylor’s marriage, though the latter’s failure to work with Ivins, and exposure of Cowley, either out of foolishness, honesty, or spite, likely provoked Ivins to cease protecting him from the Quorum.

Romney updated Lyman on Ernest Taylor's recent Church court. Taylor admitted he was guilty, "and freely gave all information desired by the Council," Romney wrote (Romney to Lyman 11.20.10). Taylor was wed in El Paso, and then in Logan, Utah, though, Romney clarified, "The recommends were genuine and were signed by B[isho]p.Bently and President Romney, but not for use for any such purposes, as they had no thought that there was any intention to so use them." It would be surprising indeed if these local leaders issued temple recommends (which vouch for worthiness to attend temple ceremonies) to both parties without assuming they were going to be sealed. Taylor was excommunicated "from the Church as directed by you," Romney reported.

Lyman then wrote to Ivins, who visited the colonies the next month. After directing Ivins to collect a note, with twenty percent interest from a member in Mexico ("At least one half of the interest you collect shall be yours," he tempted), he informed Ivins of the Ernest Taylor case, which results surely pained Ivins. Lyman also responded to Romney's update with some dissatisfaction, for the Mexican Colony's stake president seemed slightly out of harmony (Lyman to Romney 12.7.10). "In handling all such cases," Lyman directed, "it is business that belongs to you and your Counselors and the High Council without reference to us who may assist you with advice or information." "To illustrate my thought I quote from your letter," he continued, and suggested that "as directed by you" should be removed from the text.

"I did not realize the importance of such careful wording," Romney apologized, and elaborately described how the decision to excommunicate was their own, and that the leadership in Mexico was "in harmony with your views" (Romney to Lyman 12.13.10). "I assure you," Romney continued, "that while the position into which we have been

forced, by whatever cause, in connection with the principle of plural marriage, has been a bitter pill to many of us in this stake, still, if we know ourselves, our hearts beat now in perfect accord with our brethren.” A new letter was sent to replace the offending text. Ivins continued to investigate Mathias Cowley’s activities even as Ernest Taylor was excommunicated.

Ivins called on Nora Cowley in January in Juarez, and recorded in his diary that she told him a dying patriarch married her in Canada. “He spoke in a voice so low that she could not hear a word he said,” Ivins wrote, “Bro. Cowley told her when to say yes” (Ivins 1.25.11). Nora told Ivins it was a “singular way to get married,” and argued “she had made no covenants and called attention to the fact that she did not hear a word of what he said – the patriarch.” Though Ivins failed to note the year, on this evidence and speculations based on non-denied accusations and rumor, Matthias Cowley was called before the Quorum to defend his membership. The apostle without a quorum avoided his summons for several months, and finally appeared in May 1911.

Cowley was “at the forefront and has been the cause of more people entering into this condition of plural marriage than any one else,” Lyman affirmed, who was more than a little stung by Cowley’s apparent betrayal (Cowley trial 5.1911). “I believe I was entitled to his confidence,” Lyman admitted, “and that he should have approached me in preference to any other man because I took him a little under my wing and we were quite confidential with each other.” Since 1904, however, Cowley spurned Lyman’s confidence, and “he has taken his stand contrary to the Church, he has not advised with me as he should have done because he knew of my views on the question.” Lyman had a list of names to ask Cowley about, which included Ernest L. Taylor, Charles

Woolfenden, and Doctor MacGregor; at the top of the list was Cowley's childhood pal, John W. Taylor.

Cowley admitted that the first marriage he performed was in 1898, under the direction of George Q. Cannon. Moreover, Joseph F. Smith, Cowley recalled, "told me on two occasions that Brother Cannon had the authority and President Woodruff didn't want to be known in it." Cowley denied any activity after 1904, either sealing or advising such. He explained his reticence to counsel with Lyman as a result of it being "given to me to understand that I should consult no one. I was told to keep my own counsel and was severely censured one time by Brother Cannon for consulting someone else regarding a certain marriage." Moreover, Cowley fired back, "Brother [Charles] Penrose [former editor of the Deseret News, who was present and now an apostle] told me once in the City of Mexico that he had written the Manifesto and it was gotten up so that it did not mean anything, and President Smith had told me the same." None denied this accusation.

Cowley explained that his actions and interpretations resulted from the discursive environment in which the leading brethren spoke. "We have always been taught," Cowley reminded, "that when the brethren were in a tight place that it would not be amiss to lie to help them out. One of the presidency of the Church made the statement some years ago when I was in the presidency of one of the Stakes in Idaho that he would lie like hell to help his brethren." Inner circles within circles, it seemed after Cowley's testimony; who could be sure he, or anyone, was not employing the "tight spot" method now? Cowley even admitted that "I believe President Woodruff married a wife a year before he died, Madam Mountford, of course I don't know, I can't prove it." (Her status

was discussed last chapter.) Now collected and assured of his course, Cowley assented, “I do not feel it is right to put all these responsibilities on me, but if it were before the world I would be willing to bear them.”

After covering the list of names, the Quorum asked, “has it ever been discussed or thought that John W. Taylor would ever become President of the Church and it was the proper thing to get into line and stand in defense of the principle of plural marriage?” Lyman was next in line for the Church presidency, and would not countenance a rival to power, particularly from the popular Taylor. Cowley admitting sealing Taylor to two sisters prior to 1904, though now the once fast friends seemed distant. “I have heard the idea,” Cowley affirmed, “that some time John W. Taylor would preside over the Church but not in connection with plural marriage.” Cowley offered to do anything to make amends, and lamented like others that he would rather die than be cut off from the Church. He left a parting suggestion as the hearing concluded: “I want you brethren in considering my case to prove John W. Taylor a false prophet when he said that I would be excommunicated from the Church.” Taylor had decades before uncannily predicted that Cowley would become an apostle, just as he had suspected Ivins would take up apostleship.

Cowley was disfellowshipped, deprived of exercising his priesthood, and severely chastened. John W. Taylor was embroiled in far fewer rumored sealings than Cowley, and never tied to any man brought before the Quorum; but his potential power to rend the Church and the Quorum was far more disconcerting. He had, like other apostles, disregarded official manifestos and taken plural wives, even after his resignation from the Quorum. The charismatic son of a much loved prophet was summoned in February 1911.

Taylor stormed into John Henry Smith's office two days before the hearing, ordered other men out, and demanded a hearing with Joseph F. Smith. "He was quite wild," John H. Smith recounted, who with Taylor had performed over ninety weddings on a trip to Mexico in 1897 (JH Smith diary 2.18.11; and Taylor hearing 2.22.11). After cursing John Henry's son George Albert (who thereafter remained in poor health), Taylor demanded that President Joseph F. Smith call on the "Council of Fifty" to protect him from the Twelve Apostles. This Council, to explain briefly, was an absolutely covert political and para-military body headed by select leaders in the nineteenth century; it had disappeared from the historical record after the 1880s (Hansen 1967). John Taylor, Church President from 1880 to 1887, frequently met with the "Ytfif" to discuss political schemes, Church policies, and other matters related to the literal "Kingdom of God." Now his own son called on the "Fifty" to save him from the Quorum of Apostles. No hand was offered Taylor, and he faced his accusers alone in the Salt Lake temple.

The once "Prophet of the Quorum" read a statement to open his defense. He affirmed belief in all the revelations on plural marriage, and declared his attempt to live in harmony with "certain interpretations of the rules of the Church with regard to these matters." He denied involvement in plural marriages after his 1906 resignation from the Quorum. Taylor was loosely linked to Cowley's dying Canadian patriarch, however, and this opened the door to other issues. "I do not think," Taylor cautioned, "it would be wise for me to even speak about that here. I would rather assume the responsibility than talk upon such a delicate point." An anti-polygamy law recently passed in Canada, and Taylor hinted that stirring up the polygamy issue could result in confiscation of people's property. He spun a cryptic warning, significant no doubt only to certain men present: "I

don't believe I could tell you the whole truth without implicating others which I don't think it would be well to do and I think it would be well to allow the thing to rest as at present and I will assume the whole responsibility." Like Cowley he volunteered to bear the burden for the sake of the Church and its leaders.

Taylor continued, "There is one thing that is much more serious in my mind than polygamy and I am not mentioning it to aid me in my case at all. When the Enabling Act [for statehood] was passed there were two things that we promised: one thing was that polygamy would be stopped and the other that Church influence would not be used in politics." Regarding the first matter, he referred to and read a "revelation which however was never presented to the Church," an oracle his father received while President of the Church in 1886. The full text was read, though here only the most significant passages are quoted: "All those who would enter into my glory must and shall obey my law and have I not commanded men, that if they were Abraham's seed and would enter into my glory they must do the works of Abraham [i.e., plural marriage]? I have not revoked this law nor will I, for it is everlasting and those who will enter into my glory must obey the conditions thereof."

"There are two things I am drawing to your attention," Taylor remarked. The revelation is either true or it is false; and second, Taylor pointed out, many in the West are outraged at the Church's involvement in politics. "My own opinion," he offered, "is that the difficulties this people are experiencing is through using Church influence in politics." Polygamy would matter little if not for the politicking by church leaders, Taylor seemed to suggest, and its continued practice would be possible only if the Church would stay its influence. This position is significant in light of Taylor's previous call for

help from the Council of Fifty, an ecclesiastico-political machine which ran Utah Territory until the 1880s. The Council was, however, not exclusively comprised of Mormons, and this feature may have been important to Taylor. After speaking of politics, he inquired of Lyman about his thoughts regarding the revelation to his father.

Lyman: If you ask me if I believe in the plurality of wives, I would say that I believe it is true and will always be so, but the Lord may suspend the practice of it and how much of the responsibility remains with the people and with the government, I don't know...Have you been authorized since President Snow's presidency [1898-1901] to perform or authorize any plural marriages?

Taylor: That I would prefer not to answer, as it would lead to something else. My view is that the Lord was anxious to put everybody upon his own responsibility and take the responsibility from the Church.

Lyman: That is what the people have done and rejected the law of plural marriage. Up to the issuance of the Manifesto it was never thought it would be given up, I didn't think it would for a minute, still I believe the manifesto of President Woodruff was from the Lord. The law will stand forever but the practice was discontinued.

Taylor: I believe that President Smith could stop this today and tomorrow he could change it. I do not want to sew up the mouth of the Lord, so to speak.

Lyman: I believe the Lord expects us to keep our word with the government and with the people.

When asked about his interpretation of the 1886 revelation, Taylor remarked that it referred to individuals, and placed the responsibility on them to obey. His demeanor seems to have won over the Quorum, with even Hyrum M. Smith apologizing to Taylor for speaking poorly of him. While Taylor could not be traced to any marriage after 1906, his 1909 marriage was not easily overlooked, particularly by the local papers. The "People's Apostle" was excommunicated from the LDS Church the following month, with notice sent by the man, Lyman, who had sealed him to his second wife not a week after Woodruff's 1890 Manifesto.

Conclusion

The history of plural marriage in the LDS Church will always remain impossible to get

completely accurate. One can, however, give a general sketch of the effects of punishing post-Manifesto polygamists. Mormons who persisted in reading public sphere statements issued by church leaders as secretly encoding deeper meaning, and who acted on this reading by taking another wife through one route or another, no longer figured into the transmission of Mormonism to the next generation. There was no defense for misinterpretation: what a leading authority said was what he meant, what he believed. Whether this sentence actually describes the state of affairs in the first decades of the twentieth century LDS Church matters little. The statement describes how Mormons interpreted utterances of leaders, and thus, no secret inner circle existed in the semiotic environment of the popular church after 1910. Removal of polygamists, however, did more than simply reduce fertility rates in the Church. Polygamists during the 1880s held a particular view of discourse, as effective in its own right: to establish social relations, make oaths, conceal reality, shape the future. There were Mormons who no doubt carried this view into the 1900s from the days of the first underground raids; more importantly, however, for cultural change were the folks who realized, by their own reasoning, the underground practices that shaped discourse. That speaking could conceal as much as it explicitly revealed, and could index special status for interpreters who uncovered secret meaning, entailed that an interpretive habit aggregated among a marriage-marked class. This sorting effect allowed the LDS Church to grow in the American public sphere with little regard for secret practices, for men who delved into the mysteries of discourse, bestride the vagaries of meaning were soon shown the door. Often their exit was quite public, and was the sacrifice required for a modern Mormonism.

The American public sphere would have no capacity to funnel a mass

transmission of culture if every sign was recognized for its multiplicity of meanings, for being potentially designed to produce some strategic effect, for being reality rather than merely reflecting it (try to imagine a postmodern public sphere as anything other than anarchy). Reading discourse as effective, rather than simply referential, exposes its polysemy, and sets up speaker-addressee relations as necessary considerations for interpreting meaning. These relations attend every speech event, and when attended to as matters pertaining to contextualization some sign's meaning, a great many more interpretations follow than one expects would from seemingly simple semantic readings. Earlier I documented the problems that followed from this as I investigated the underground and its effects on social relations. Imagined communities cannot be built when all imagine words contain secrets concealed just for them.

I make no claim that leaders sought to wash from the LDS Church men who worked with a language ideology antithetical to the modern public sphere. The sorting effect followed, however, in Mormonism from the fact that Saints with a particular interpretive scheme, and who acted as if that scheme were authentic, found themselves on the margins if not outside the culture. This rationalization of culture, importantly, developed at a time when the mind was increasingly represented as a real entity, explorable by various means. When discourse as a speech event was written out of Mormonism, a competing perspective on language, a metadiscourse on the substitutability of mind and language, gained the day. Speech was treated as simply reflecting belief, and whatever belief was metaphysically, it was the reality that really mattered. To say it another way: the reality of the sign as a mutually constituted, contextually dependent and next-sign leveraging agent was replaced by an individual

mind which expressed, felt, thought, believed, intended, and did so through language.

The public sphere became possible for Mormons when mind became acceptable as a ground for interaction. In order for this to happen, discourse as a pragmatic tool to shape reality was, as an interpretive consideration, jettisoned. This statement describes the transition of Mormonism, and, I am confident would bear out historical scrutiny for other cultures engulfed by modernity (Robbins 2001). Discourse becomes replaced by some metadiscursive framing that dislodges context-dependent signs from matters treating meaning, and gives an illusory framing of one-word-one-meaning. The embrace of mind was certainly most effective in this regard, though dictionaries, public education, and writing in general no doubt all could claim responsibility for modernity.

This arrangement in Mormonism did not come about through pure happenstance; it was not, perhaps, the entelechy of English grammatical structure. I traced modernity's imposition on Mormonism to a Supreme Court ruling in 1879, which designated practice as distinguishable from belief. Built on Protestant dualism, with man and God widely divided and united only by disparaging the flesh (with the entelechy being Christ's crucifixion), the nation required that dualism be written across all institutions. Newspapers took up the call to modernize as they substituted verbs of thinking for verbs of speaking. On the same pages Latter-day Saints tried to convince the nation of their sincere rejection of the practice of plural marriage, and yet held fast that belief in polygamy marked true Latter-day Saints. By 1910 the only way to demonstrate sincerity, that transparent one-to-one relation between word and meaning, was to excommunicate faithful members of the Church, including apostles who acted no more rebelliously than many of the leaders who remained and are hailed today as emblems of Mormon

patriotism. As Ivins well noted, only the Saints were fooled.

The Saints could reject or accept plural marriage; but they could not serve both an ancient Man-God and modern mammon. In trying, as the phrase went, to “beat the devil at his own game,” the Saints gamed themselves and rewrote the natural histories of the players in the great cosmic drama, including that of their own church. The rising generation, Young Utah, accepted the public version as the real Mormonism, and over a generation this version indeed became, as far as is discoverable, the actual LDS Church. In the next chapter I address the overt rejection of modern Mormonism among nascent, self-proclaimed Fundamentalists between 1910 and 1933. Here we find that though these Mormons rejected modernity of some kind, they could not, in their dialogic response, utterly sever its presumptions. These Saints reached into a new, initially oral history, one built on separable priesthood and church and sustained by rumors of a secret revelation given to John Taylor in 1886. The secret revelation, it was whispered, required true Saints to “do the works of Abraham.”

Chapter Eleven

Secrecy and the Fetishism thereof

This chapter traces the growth of Mormon Fundamentalism from 1910 to 1935. It recounts first how priesthood authority was ambiguously reckoned by Latter-day Saints around 1910, with attendant confusion about the relationship of *the priesthood* (organization), *the Priesthood* (the Quorum of Apostles), *priesthood* (power to act as a representative of the heavens), and the Church. The LDS Church began to define the relationship among the referents of these terms only after Fundamentalism emerged. The Church's definition was tied to its branding as renegades men and women who took on discursive strategies that formerly were restricted to "inner circles," whereby utterances were reinterpreted or "read between the lines." The Church designated as no longer welcome in the fold a group of quite committed Saints. They were still around, however, usually devoted to the Mormon gospel, and I take up their organization of a self-described Fundamentalism here. The chapter then traces the social life of the group's charter myth, a story that piggybacked on a secret 1886 revelation to John Taylor. Throughout the history traced here I give special attention to the replacement of semiotic habits diffusely and heterogeneously distributed with explicit and easy-to-read diagrams, as it were, reflexive models that clearly indexed what power was, who held it, and what was expected of them. I conclude by describing the uptake of a model of a church among excommunicated Mormons, complete with baptism, sacrament, tithing, and, importantly, a Priesthood leadership body. By 1935 Mormon Fundamentalist leadership was speaking for the Lord to a chosen flock, retelling Mormon history, and positioning itself as inheritor of secret tradition and sacred practices.

Abducting Culture From Ambiguity

With LDS leaders looking confused, arrogant, venerable, benign, and devious before the Senate, the Tribune published an account it affirmed came straight from a young Mormon girl (Salt Lake Tribune 3.10.1905). Its theme addresses the general confusion among Mormons regarding authority and authenticity. The article tells how an unnamed maiden heard from a fellow girl that indeed plural marriages were still sanctioned. She flits home “with a song singing in her soul,” for she has her eye on an already wed Mormon. The Trib continues,

One day brother N. comes up to Mary, ‘O, Sister Mary, if I could only dare to tell you something what has been revealed to me in prayer circle.’ ‘Tell me, Brother N., what is it?’ And his hand touches hers, as in an honest love story, and he replies: ‘O, you perfect woman! If I could only make you know what Apostle X. made me know in the prayer circle, that the mightiest gifts await upon those who will obey the sacred marriage principle, and that the Manifesto was given only to deceive a wicked world. If I could only make you know that you could be married to me, if you would, by the most sacred of all ties, and by the sanction of the prophet of God.’ And the poor, trembling child says, ‘Yes.’

Some days later the couple walks alone down a side street, through an orchard, and happens upon a “strange man, covered in a cowl, who utters strange words which she cannot understand, because Brother N. does all the whispering in her ear.” The paper then asks, “Is she his wife or mistress?” A rather serious problem, for “She did not see the ceremony...She does not even know the place where the ceremony occurred. She only knows that he was a man in concealment, that he kept a shroud about his face, and that he was vulgarly dressed in some woman’s robe.” Indeed, what constitutes a marriage was a question not yet entirely resolved by Latter-day Saints. There were rumors of concubines, secret polygamy, and special dispensations concealed by oaths of silence. What made a union sanctioned in the eyes of God, what “felicity conditions” authorized this contract between persons? The girl’s father was similarly concerned, we

are told, until shown a letter from “Apostle X, and this keeps him quiet.” Quiet, that is, until leaders testified during the Smoot hearings that plural marriages performed after 1890 are illegal and unauthorized. “The old man’s blood boils” at this admission, and he storms into a church meeting, “What in the name of God does this mean? The Church itself here testifies that this kind of a marriage is no marriage at all, not even in the Church. If my daughter is not a wife by the law of the Church any more than she is by the law of the land, she is this man’s mistress.” “Out upon it all,” he demands. “Hush,” the Tribune reports his leaders whispering, “Make no disturbance in this matter. You are liable to stir up other things and make trouble.” Which statement is true, and which a “blind”? Who is deceived, and who hearing the real story, the Tribune asks. When is a marriage secretly authorized, and when is one “married by some false priest with a pretended letter, standing behind a screen, or hiding the malign face of an unauthorized libertine behind a cowl, in order to help a fellow libertine to ruin a virtuous girl?” Indeed, who had real authority, who faked it, and how could one ever tell?

Mormonism from 1904 to 1910 was working out in public and private just what constituted authority, and how one could find it reliably; this involved positioning members with different interpretive habits as Mormons with varying claim to the religion. By 1910 the LDS Church made its case before the American people: Mormons engaging in new polygamous unions would be excommunicated from the Church. Evidence was presented of such action taken in private councils. All unions thereafter not performed with Church approval (whatever that meant) were illegitimate for Mormons to enter. But were leaders serious this time, or would secret marriages again be sanctioned by apostolic authority once the Trib, Congress, and others turned to exposing

some other evil? If priesthood power could be held by individual men, what role did the Church play in marriage if those men were ambiguously related to the Church? The power of priesthood was abstract, ineffable, and verifying its presence or loss in some Saint was far more difficult than simply addressing his status in the LDS Church. Over the following decades these questions would be answered, though from different, and increasingly dogmatic, perspectives.

Specific Lines of Authority Emerge

A year after Taylor and Cowley, the disreputable apostles, were ostensibly stripped of their priesthood, an old face emerged from the dark past with a secret. Lorin C. Woolley, bodyguard of President John Taylor during the underground raids of the 1880s, began telling select polygamists of a secret council held in 1886. Rumor mentioned a hidden revelation to Taylor in 1886, and when Taylor's son presented a copy of it before the Quorum in 1911, the apostles did not deny its authenticity. The 1886 revelation declared that "Celestial Marriage" was an eternal principle, and could not be revoked as a law for the Lord's people. Around this text Lorin Woolley built a history, and eventually, a new church made of self-described Fundamentalist Mormons. Woolley whispered that the 1886 revelation came in response to leading men of the Church pressing Taylor for a manifesto to cease practicing plural marriage. Woolley was guarding Taylor one autumn night on the underground home of John W. Woolley (Lorin's father), rumored had it, when he "heard a voice of another man engaged in conversation with President Taylor, and [he] observed a very brilliant light was illuminating the room occupied by the president" (Collier 1996:23). Panicked, Lorin Woolley searched outside the compound for marshals, though he was comforted by an impression that the being conversing with

Taylor would do him no harm. By morning the house stirred with wonder, “when President Taylor came into the room...[H]e remarked, ‘I had a very pleasant conversation all night with the Prophet Joseph.’” Taylor declared as a result of the returned prophet’s council that he would suffer his right to be cut off before he would sign any manifesto. A few months later Taylor reportedly married his nurse (Quinn 1985), a sign of renewed commitment to plural marriage.

Why did the story of a secret 1886 council matter? Lorin Woolley positioned the story as gainsaying the Church’s claims regarding the Woodruff Manifesto of 1890 and other subsequent public statements. As John W. Taylor suggested in his hearing before the apostles, the 1886 revelation was true or false, and which assessment mattered a great deal with regard to one’s eternal rewards. By itself, however, Woolley’s 1912 story only adds that the Prophet Joseph was involved in rejecting earlier proposals; an important claim which ties anti-manifesto positions to the deceased founding prophet. Lorin Woolley, moreover, would narrate more details over the next decade as an audience for the tale’s reception grew.

Lorin’s father John was ordained a patriarch in 1911 to replace Judson Tolman, recently excommunicated and blamed for performing numerous plural marriages. A year before, in 1910, John Woolley wed a third wife (Collier 1996:51). Long a dependable Saint who gave much to hide Mormon leaders on the underground, John Woolley worked in the Salt Lake temple. Here apparently he too began secretly performing plural marriages (just when he began is impossible to determine). He too would be drawn into anti-polygamy efforts. On 13 January 1914 the Quorum of Apostles met to consider the case of a recent polygamist. The man confessed that John Woolley performed the

ceremony in the temple, and the apostles were sent to question Woolley. Anthony Ivins (a former sheriff) reported that Woolley told him Matthias Cowley instructed, “If any good man comes to you don’t turn them down” (Ivins affidavit 1.13.14). Woolley took this as authorization from President Joseph F. Smith, he told Ivins. The old patriarch was soon thereafter excommunicated for performing plural marriages. This would seem to be the waning days of Mormon polygamy; how could anyone mistake the denunciations and excommunications made in public, deny punishment reported on the pages of local papers?

The First Presidency of the LDS Church as a result of the Woolley affair again issued a statement decrying new polygamy. “Having reason to believe,” it declared, “that some members of the Church are secretly engaged advising and encouraging others to enter into unauthorized and unlawful marriages,” the First Presidency again restated the Church’s position that plural marriages were no longer sanctioned. The declaration referred to a letter circulated to local leaders in October 1910. The 1910 statement quoted Joseph F. Smith’s 1904 resolution (which referred to Woodruff’s 1890 declaration), and restated that excommunication would follow polygamous unions. It buried the history of a discursive underground in a chain of speech events whose original ambiguity and cascade of interpretations were no longer allowed to contextualize public utterances by leaders. Public statements meant just what they said, it now seemed; yet Church authorities continued to face new polygamy, and devoted much of a 1918 general conference to yet again denouncing the principle.

Throughout the conference leaders maintained the now common practice of not mentioning polygamy or plural marriage, at least explicitly. Charles Penrose was given

the task of condemning new polygamy; during the 1880 raids he was chief editor of the Deseret News. Rumor had it that Penrose wrote the 1890 Manifesto because his writing had the unique virtue of writing much while actually saying nothing. Penrose now explained that polygamous sealings required special authorization, and that the keys for these unions were no longer in operation. “Celestial Marriages” continued to be performed, he said, only when a man and woman were monogamously joined in a temple ceremony. His redefinition of the phrase that harkened to a scheme promoted by Penrose and others during the 1880s, a plan to make polygamy illegal in the state constitution while leaving “celestial marriage” (then plural marriage) unmentioned and under church control. Now “celestial marriage” referred to monogamous marriage in the temple by authorized sealers, with “other orders” no longer operative. Did they protest too much, or leave out from their condemnation sanctioned polygamous “celestial marriage,” an omission which only the truly faithful could interpret? There was always someone willing to read between the lines.

A New History of Priesthood

23 January 1914, just a week after Ivins met with John Woolley, the latter signed a written confession. Like Woodruff’s Manifesto, it was addressed, “To whom it may concern,” (and its concerned addresses would emerge later). Woolley the patriarch admitted he was “sick and weak in body, depressed in spirit, and my memory somewhat impaired” when he blamed Cowley for authorizing his performance of sealings. Woolley now recanted the confession, and denied that Cowley authorized any sealings. “What I have done,” he wrote, “has been done entirely upon my own responsibility.” Lorin Woolley’s signature followed as a witness. The declaration is important, for it not only

absolves Cowley of misdeeds, but also makes mysterious whence exactly John Woolley presumed authority to perform the unions. If Cowley was not involved, who spurred the old patriarch to seal polygamous unions? His son Lorin would in 1922 provide an answer which both cleared John Woolley's name and opened a new perspective into Mormon history.

By 1922 some Saints involved in post-Manifesto, or post-1904 polygamous unions, were excommunicated, while others, though silent with wives hidden, remained in the LDS Church. In August a group of excommunicated Mormons met in a Bountiful, Utah home to discuss their plight. The special guest was Lorin Woolley, invited to give details regarding the underground council of 1886. He told far more, and simply applied underground presumptions to public statements issued by church leaders. Lorin affirmed that indeed the 1890 Manifesto was "got up" by "financial men" in and out of the Church for the purpose of misleading America and for lining their own pockets, and thus, was not binding on true Saints. The 1904 statement from Joseph F. Smith was, in fact, the "work of Francis M. Lyman," Lorin Woolley explained. Moreover, he recalled now, President John Taylor prophesied that in the "day of the seventh president of the Church, the Church would come into bondage, both temporally and spiritually." At this time, Woolley announced, the "One Mighty and Strong" would appear to "set in order the House of God," as "spoken of in the 85th section of the Doctrine and Covenants."³⁰ Woolley affirmed that the day was not far off, for new Church president Heber J. Grant opened the day of the seventh president. President Taylor also cautioned Lorin, he

³⁰ The passage from D&C is construed in many ways. Many Mormons claimed the status of this preliminary messiah who was to take control of the Church and prepare it for the coming of the Lord. The official LDS position is that no such figure exists or is needed, for the House of God, now meaning the Church, will not be "out of order." I am told that not a month goes by without seeing a new Mighty and Strong reformer among Fundamentalists.

recalled, that in that day some leading brethren would be “handled and ostracized,” imprisoned and even perhaps martyred for plural marriage. Their own fellow Saints would lead this raid, Lorin warned. All these sayings Woolley anchored to a meeting held after Taylor receiving the 1886 revelation. Immediately John T. Clark stood and testified that though he had been ostracized from the Church and denied membership for seventeen years, he had nevertheless been visited by the Father and the Son five times, as well as by Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, Joseph F. Smith, and other deceased leaders. Clark was unchurched previously in 1905 for writing about the “One Mighty and Strong”; he would soon claim this mythic title.

The meeting was marked by a definite zeal and fervor for the Millennium, and an unspoken sense that those attending, though excommunicated, were playing a central role in its coming to pass. They met the next day at another home in Salt Lake City (in order to confuse any spies), and invited Daniel R. Bateman to confirm Lorin Woolley’s story. Also a guard for John Taylor in the 1880s, Bateman agreed that indeed Taylor refused to sign any manifesto that autumn day in 1886. Moreover, Taylor prophesied that one half, and one half of that half, would apostatize from the true gospel. Surely its fulfillment was nigh at hand. Lorin Woolley again told the story of the 1886 meeting, and added that he heard another voice conversing with Taylor. When asked who also visited him, Taylor responded, according to Woolley, that “It was your Lord, Brother Lorin.” Woolley then recalled that Taylor put them under oath to continue plural marriage to the end, and commissioned them with a special dispensation to authorize plural marriages among the Saints. Lorin and his father, among three others, were ordained apostles at this point, with a resurrected Joseph Smith “being present and directing.” Now the true

source of John Woolley's authority was revealed (though John Woolley was not himself present), and with his son they made possible the continuation of plural marriage without even the barest hints of authorization by present church leaders.

Creative interpretations of public utterance were no longer required, for an alternate priesthood line of authority had arrived. Bateman later signed an affidavit confirming that while Lorin Woolley's story was "correct in every detail," he "was not present when the five spoken of by Brother Woolley were set apart for special work." Woolley continued to expound on the schemes that provoked the 1890 Manifesto, and related more prophecies from Taylor about church-wide apostasy (a falling away from God and loss of authority to conduct affairs with approval of the heavens).³¹ These themes continued through subsequent meetings, as the Manifesto was reduced to political speech and the 1886 revelation raised to replace Woodruff's text. Dreams of divine approval were related by attendees, as were frequent commentaries on the degraded status of Latter-day Saints. Their "worldliness" was the real sin: debt, fashion, disregard for polygamy.

With the 1922 meetings a few texts began to cohere into a foundation for a movement. With apostle status granted to Lorin and John Woolley, and the sealing keys reportedly given them by John Taylor, finding evidence of apostasy in the corpus of official LDS statements became a simple affair. The Church's leadership was either still faking it, or if sincere, fallen. In either case the new Fundamentalists were on the side of right. One needed only assume Lorin Woolley accurately reported statements and events,

³¹ The LDS Church maintains that like earlier groups, the early Christians fell into apostasy, and their fall necessitated the restoration of the Church in 1830. The historical cycle of restoration of truth and priesthood, fall into apostasy and ignorance, and eventual restoration is said not to apply to the LDS Church, however.

and that the 1886 text produced during the secret council was authentic. The “charter myth” of the new movement would, like any other myth, have important claims which remained unverifiable or unfalsifiable, claims tied to other empirically demonstrable facts: there was an 1886 manuscript in the hand of John Taylor which could circulate in copies. On it Lorin Woolley’s story piggybacked.

From Rumor to Dialogue

Lorin Woolley was excommunicated in 1924, and not for taking plural wives. There are only rumors that he married plurally, and he never claimed as much, hinting that his family relations were too sacred to discuss; instead he was unchurched for “pernicious falsehoods.” Woolley continued to teach the mysteries to scattered groups of Latter-day Saints. They would by 1929 create a leadership body, among whom Joseph W. Musser became seminal in organizing a lasting movement. Musser was himself excommunicated in 1921, a full decade after he was disciplined for taking post-Manifesto wives and sent on a proselytizing mission to India. Like many Fundamentalists, Musser reported first-hand experience with authorized, post-Manifesto polygamy. He claimed Lorenzo Snow, Church president in 1899, sent word that he was to enter the Patriarchal Order of Marriage (another name for plural marriage), despite the 1890 Manifesto.

In late 1928 Musser opened a letter from Joseph Fielding Smith, son of Joseph F. whose death a decade earlier marked the end of an era. Just a month earlier current LDS Church President Heber J. Grant himself warned Musser that his sort should not only be excommunicated, but incarcerated. Rumor now had it that indeed the LDS Church was pressuring the state to renew the anti-polygamy raids in order to make clear its sincere declarations that plural marriages were not authorized by the Church. The

correspondence between Musser and Fielding Smith solidified a divide marked by irreconcilable positions on what counted as legitimate historical fact, and thus, as authority to speak and act with divine power.

Joseph Fielding Smith wrote “in kindness” and “for your own good,” reprimanding Musser for partaking of the sacrament of bread and water at a recent LDS meeting (Joseph F. Smith, jr. to Musser 12.31.1928). Smith saw him do so, and since Musser was not in fellowship with the Church, it was wrong for him to eat and drink the emblems of the Savior’s sacrificed body and blood. Musser thanked Smith for caring enough to correct his action, but “I feel you are laboring under a misunderstanding,” he explained, one regarding Musser’s right to participate in rituals of the Church (Musser to JFSjr. 1.15.29). Musser agreed that “The Savior wants no hypocrisy [sic]. He wants no one to lie to Him” and take the sacrament when in “open rebellion to the truth.” “You assume that I have trespassed in such a manner,” Musser inferred, “as to render me unworthy of the privilege of the Sacrament.” Excommunication, Musser argued, “does not convince me that I am ineligible for the Sacrament.” Musser then directed his defense to a delicate spot: Joseph F. Smith’s admissions during the Smoot hearings. In practicing plural marriage, “I am guilty of an infraction of the rule of the Church,” Musser admitted, “but so was your venerable father, whom I loved as a father, and who gave me much encouragement in my chosen life.” Yet none “questioned his worthiness to partake of the Sacrament,” Musser noted. In the letter Musser aligned himself with older, deceased Saints, and claimed to continue their practices, unlike members of the modern church. Moreover, “You must know that the action of the Church in this direction has been inconsistent,” Musser asserted, and even so, “men cannot annul the

laws of God.” Musser than called up the 1886 revelation to John Taylor as support. “I ask you for enlightenment,” Musser stated, regarding how to regain fellowship with the Church.

Joseph Fielding Smith wasted no time, responding the next day (JFSjr. to Musser 1.16.29). “I am not convinced of your sincerity” Smith admitted, “and cannot help but feel that you know you are in the dark.” Regarding worthiness to take the Sacrament, “It matters not how righteous you feel, you are out of the Church.” He denied the analogy drawn between Musser and Joseph F. Smith, asserting they were no more similar than vice and virtue. Even if the principle was still enjoined, Smith continued, the one man who holds the power (unnamed by Smith but presumed to be Grant) says he has not given permission, and “His predecessor [Smith’s father] said he did not give it to any man.” By Fielding Smith’s argument, since at least as early as 1901 no plural marriage had been performed by the authority of the head of the Church. “You think there is comfort and endorsement,” Smith inferred, “in a statement which is said to be a revelation to President John Taylor....” Whether a revelation or not, Smith argued, “it is not found in the archives of the Church or in any of the records – it does not help your case.” While the Lord did not revoke the law of plural marriage, Smith explained, he “did not say, however, that he could not, or would not, suspend the practice of plural marriage.” Thus Smith draws a by now common distinction, that though the law of plural marriage was eternal, its practice was no longer necessary for exaltation. One could “believe in” it and attain the same rewards. Smith concluded with this advice: “Cease fighting the Priesthood of God.” By this phrase Fielding Smith indicates that Musser is in conflict with the Quorum of Apostles. In short, following an “eternal law” was superseded by

following leaders of the Church, called The Priesthood, who now seemed to possess, in Smith's argument, exclusive right to determine who was authorized to exercise and enjoy priesthood power.

Musser responded to the man who once labored with his father, Amos Musser, as a church historian: "I had hoped that we might come nearer to a unity of the faith" (Musser to JFSjr. 1.23.29). A simple reproof from Smith was growing into a debate that argued far greater issues by these sons of church leaders, and once youthful friends. The letters increasingly ventured into narratives of the states of mind, the sincerity, and feelings of addressees. Musser admitted he may be wrong, but took offense at Smith's characterization of his text as insincere. "I am honest in my convictions" Musser declared, and if "I wounded your feelings I trust you will pardon me." While it may be true, he argued, that Joseph F. Smith did not take a plural wife after the 1890 Manifesto, "if you infer that he gave no encouragement to others who were desirous of receiving wives in the plural marriage relation...and that after the Manifesto, and in direct violation of its purported meaning and of the laws of the Church and the State, I must take issue with you, for I know better..." Musser then retold the history of the Church's movement toward concession with the government, calling the 1890 Manifesto "a document gotten up by a committee comprising members of the Church assisted by men outside the Church, at that time our enemies." And despite Church presidents decrying new polygamy from 1890 to 1914, marriages "continued to be solemnized under divine authority....And so the deception went on," Musser argued, while local "judiciary bodies in different localities adopted different dates beyond which a plural marriage was deemed an adulterous marriage." Musser railed at the inconsistency of such actions, warning, "It

is difficult to seriously consider this situation without the feeling that the prophet Isaiah had reference to this very day when he spoke of the people having made ‘a covenant with death, and with Hell we are at agreement....for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves.’” Now the argument turned on the authenticity of the LDS Church, the honesty of its leaders, and its claim as the only true church and source of divine priesthood power.

As a result of its wayward course, Musser explained, the Church “could not by any power it possessed prevent its members from receiving a special dispensation from the Lord. This was done in ancient times....And this is just what has occurred.” “If you do not know it,” Musser scoffed, “I am surprised.” He concluded the defense with quotes from every president of the Church on the importance of plural marriage. These speakers could not be countered in their authority to proclaim the principle’s divinity. Yet, “Not in one of the Manifestos officially adopted by the Church is there to be found a – ‘Thus saith the Lord’. Those documents do not have the earmarks of a revelation. They were not so considered at the time.” Musser concluded by returning to the original dispute, asserting that though he is no longer in the Church, he is right with God.

At the heart of the new Fundamentalist movement was the resolution of the problem of identifying legitimate holders of priesthood power. The story Lorin Woolley told of the ’86 meeting made one’s ability to report being a link in a chain of reported speech about the ’86 meeting also an index of one’s priesthood. Priesthood was to be located and transmitted alongside chains of secret speech events which only a select few were privileged to encounter. By stepping into the secret tradition one embraced a secret priesthood, in an elite movement with the power to bind heaven and earth, ancient times

with those contemporary. Ordinations were still required, but by so submitting to ordination from a man reporting his real link to the 1886 council one assented to the tale's veracity. Alternately, as recounted in following chapters, the LDS Church soon grounded priesthood power in the organization referred to by the same name, thus easing identification of power by locating it in members of an organization. This grounding of hard to pinpoint power in a concrete organization of bodies ensured that transmission of priesthood power and its continuation in the LDS Church would transcend time, death, change, and, importantly, schism. While the organization called *The Priesthood* became the exclusive reservoir of power for the LDS Church, the Fundamentalists turned to history initially to locate priesthood power.

Fielding Smith was incensed at Musser's refusal to repent. "You were excommunicated from the Church," Smith restated in a short letter, and this makes one ineligible for the Sacrament (JFSjr to Musser 1.23.29). In addition, "You maintain that each president of the Church since John Taylor has been in error; moreover, that they are liars and hypocrites. This is all the more reason why you should not partake of the sacrament." Damnation would result for Musser, Smith warned, for LDS Church leaders "cannot be defied and their counsels set at naught without judgments following."

Like Smith, Musser again wrote that further communication was without purpose, though he similarly continued to argue his position. He denied calling leaders "liars and hypocrites," and the letter descended into vitriol and attack. "Joseph Fielding, I am amazed at your charge," Musser feigned, and "You show a lamentable lack of understanding in the matter." He then turned Smith's warning about denying the guidance of the Lord's anointed against the LDS Church. Whose guidance was being

neglected; which statement on plural marriage was right? “As a servant of the Lord,” Musser thundered, “I call upon you to repent, and make restitution for the wrong you are doing those brethren and sisters [engaging in new plural marriages].” Musser railed that Smith and his sort were like the “Missouri and Illinois mobocrats who in the early days [of the LDS Church, the 1830s and 1840s] sought to brand your parents and my parents with living lustful and wicked lives.” This role reversal certainly would have stunned and angered Joseph Fielding Smith, grand nephew of Joseph Smith and confirmed monogamist. Musser would leave his case with the head of the Church, Jesus Christ, and hoped its mortal leadership would attend to other concerns.

“Dear Friend,” Joseph Fielding again replied, “If I may still call you friend after the letter you sent to me written yesterday in extreme anger. However, I repeat that I have nothing in my heart but the desire to do you good, not evil.” “I had to speak plainly,” Smith explained, “in order to make you understand.” Regarding Musser’s denial of calling church leaders liars and hypocrites (which Musser did not write, but was voiced as doing so by Smith), “If that is not what you said, then words have not meaning.” The argument turned into a rejection of mutual ground for interpreting language, and led into dogmatic positions established by characterizations of the other as insincere, hypocritical, and guilty of non-customary use of language. “Permit me to say in all kindness,” Smith retorted, “that for you to claim to be able to speak as ‘a servant of the living God’ to me and call me to repentance, is wonderful absurdity and presumption....I am convinced you know better! If not, what has happened to your intelligence?”

Musser's response denied that Smith wrote out of kindness (Musser to JFSjr 2.14.29). Furthermore, Musser reported a conversation between Joseph F. Smith and a visiting non-Mormon who happened also to be practicing polygamy. Here was another secret tradition. Musser claimed Smith said the man would obtain a higher reward in the hereafter than many a Saint, for he lived a higher law, regardless of the authority to seal his marriages. This reported conversation Joseph Fielding Smith dismissed as a simple lie, like any other which lustful men and polygamists might use to defend a position; it was "certainly not manly" to so speak for the defenseless dead (JFSjr to Musser 2.15.29). Musser countered by noting the irony of the present circumstance: "It seems strange to me that men whose parents were driven out of the United States in order that they might worship God according to the dictates of their conscience, should within so short a time after such a terrible experience, turn with the same spirit of intolerance against those now claiming the same right, and wish them in the penitentiary."

Neither party could leave well enough alone. Again Smith wrote denying he had any further purpose but to protest certain claims (JFS jr to Musser 2.15.29). He like Musser reviewed their correspondence, and recast utterances as lies actually motivated by bitterness, self-justification, and resentment. The two positions were irreconcilable: either one lost priesthood power, and thus, eternal reward, by virtue of excommunication; or, the Church lost its priesthood authority by virtue of abandoning the practice of polygamy. Either LDS Church membership indexed priesthood, or the practice of polygamy indexed it. Musser's final letter again reviewed and recast statements and insincere, fatuous, or cruel (Musser to Smith 2.27.29). Regarding the reported conversation between Joseph F. Smith and the unnamed non-Mormon polygamist of

whose life the elder Smith apparently approved, Musser offered to furnish “proof of the same, if you care for it. The party who was present and heard the conversation is prepared at any time to affirm the same...he is a man of undoubted veracity, and is known far and near as a man of truth and honor.” (The man was Lorin Woolley, according to Musser’s diary, 2.27.29.) “If you really want to know the truth,” Musser conceded, he would present it to Smith. “The statement of any man who confesses that he is living in adultery [sic] and glories in it,” Fielding Smith wrote in a short, final note, “you can hardly expect any self-respecting person to believe” (JFS jr. to Musser 3.2.29). Nineteenth century Americans could not have said it so clearly.

The argument was a victory for both sides. Smith simply restated that excommunication made one ineligible for the blessings and exercise of priesthood, and prevented one from speaking truthfully. Musser continued to assert that inconsistency made the Church and its spokesmen ineligible to dictate the terms of salvation. In this correspondence both sides inscribed the divergent paths of Mormonism over the following decades. Smith, a young monogamist apostle and church historian (at least officially), disregarded Musser’s claims about Mormon history, and simply branded Musser a liar for calling LDS leaders “liars and hypocrites.” What mattered for Smith during this argument was that the Church excommunicated Musser; it had spoken through its local leadership council and this removed priesthood and salvation from Musser. The Church transcended its own history, and the Priesthood (referring to the leading men of the Church) reserved the power to act in the name of God for members of the Church. Withdrawal of fellowship removed power. This position made identical one’s affiliation with the priesthood organization of the Church with holding the power

bestowed on members of the organization. It was non-negotiable in the face of Fundamentalists' claims to sunder priesthood power and church. By 1960 this position, as detailed in following chapters, was written into the organizational structure of the Church as a result of Correlation. Its champion, Harold B. Lee, was during the 1930s a stake president in Salt Lake and presided over excommunication hearings of Fundamentalists.

Joseph White Musser, the polygamist son of a church historian whose personal experience led him to doubt the Church leadership's public expressions of sincerity, now argued that the Church itself was in apostasy. It had swallowed its own snake oil, as it were, became a publicly traded entity, and it could not prevent men from following the Lord's approved pattern of marriage. He like other Fundamentalists told a somewhat contradictory story: the leaders of the Church lied about polygamy, but the Church was in apostasy as a result of these lies (though the lying itself was not the cause). The argument, unresolved and vitriolic despite declarations of kindness and brotherhood, rested on the problem of identifying authentic priesthood authority. The problem was the same as described in the earlier chapters on spying, on interpretation of overtly misleading discourse, and on theological matters. When abstractions become the basis for defining culturally appropriate action, different actors will appoint indexes that link abstraction with particular signs (e.g., Church membership; polygamy). Each linkage was an abduction, a guess, which led each group to revise their history accordingly. Pure power came into play: What and where was priesthood, faith, sincerity? While different effects followed, respectively, from the abductions discussed previously, here the argument rested on even higher order abductions. The very power to define, to provide

indexes for discovering instances of abstractions, was itself under debate. One party claimed power which his interlocutor also claimed: to point to divine authority whereby one established right and wrong. Hierarchical order was granted the right to declare ontological statuses.

Because the two groups remained tied to the same historical sequence, both in reality and in their positioning on history, neither could simply ignore the other. In their dialogue both sides were changed as they became distinct. Musser led a group that claimed to replicate older, authentic Mormon tradition. They enacted history in bodily practice, and the persecution they suffered only pointed to their links with nineteenth century Mormonism. The LDS Church stepped into the role of antagonist of the polygamists. Was the Fundamentalists' turn to oral history, and the excavation of its secrets, in any way entailed by the historical process detailed in prior chapters? That is to say, was Woolley's story actually related to historical events (even though referentially inaccurate)?

In short, the organization of a fundamentalist group presupposed the cultural transition toward mind-body dualism. As with the LDS Church's "Americanization" (further taken up in following chapters), this transition makes the cultural movement possible and necessarily remains concealed from Fundamentalists as it was written back into their sacred history. Secrecy was necessary when discussing or practicing polygamy. Secrecy was practiced by Undergrounders for basically the same reasons. The discursive practices of Undergrounders entailed the Fundamentalists, for these obligated hearers to recover concealed signs. As part of this discursive tradition Mormon leaders spoke of a distinction between belief and practice. This distinction divided mind and body, heaven

and earth, in Mormon theology. The LDS Church took up belief and mental phenomenon as its sphere, and this allowed statements to be read by Latter-day Saints as sincere declarations of belief. When denunciations of polygamy were issued, however, Fundamentalists could treat these as instances of underground discourse, and thus, as secret encouragement of their course; or as evidence of sincere denial of polygamy as a practice required of Mormons. Fundamentalists could pick a discursive framework for construing public utterances. Secrecy, however, as a metadiscursive marker, did not brook such selection for it marked authenticity by virtue of being tied, both semantically (in content, as when telling about the 1886 revelation) and pragmatically (as indexically linked to the 1880s Underground practice), to a space of unquestioned legitimacy.

Acceptance of these overlaying indexical signs (e.g., “I was at the 1886 meeting,” “This is a secret...,” “We are persecuted like our fathers for the sake of polygamy”) into which Lorin Woolley and other excommunicated Mormons stepped, suggested a clear abduction: Fundamentalist Mormons were the legitimate heirs to tradition, authority, and history. In the concluding section I recount how this abduction was taken up and made into cultural reality.

The New Power of Tradition

In 1929 Musser reported his ordination as “High Priest Apostle” by an unnamed and similarly titled man, with yet another admonition to perform plural marriages. The day Musser records this ordination in his autobiography (14 May 1929), he met with Lorin Woolley at his office. Lorin Woolley, after reading over the Musser-Smith correspondences, declared through “eyes welded with tears and [while] his frame shook,” that Musser was “an instrument in the hands of the Lord.” He was now a chosen vessel

to reveal the Lord's word, and a flock would soon follow. Woolley taught Musser that John Taylor once prophesied that a president of the LDS Church would be chosen who was not a member of the Quorum of Apostles (every president of the LDS Church was previously the senior member of the Quorum). Whether Woolley hinted that Musser would be this man remains unrecorded.

On the fall equinox of 1929 Musser reviewed some historical pieces on Mormon history, and with his "blood all afire over the outrages heaped up on the Saints by the agents of Satan," he met with a few select men to discuss "how ignominiously we [the LDS Church?] have laid down and surrendered to our enemies." Musser and six others turned to discuss the 1886 secret meeting. He collected a statement from Daniel Bateman, and wrote the fullest account of meeting as reported by Lorin Woolley. "It was a glorious occasion," Musser wrote, "and gave me great comfort of mind and spirit." Now Woolley's tale of the 1886 admonition would circulate far more broadly than any version restricted to oral transmission. Moreover, as the mode of presentation of the charter myth moved from the realm of secrecy, it now included explicit details of ordinations of the Woolleys and others (now dead) by Taylor and Joseph Smith, along with directives to continue the practice of plural marriage until the Messiah returns. The overt declaration of authority attributed to John Taylor, and anchored to the Woolleys, now provided a diagram of sorts, as a recruitment tool, for the reckoning of historical authority. The interpretive gymnastics used to recast utterances of church leaders into encouragement to practice the principle would no longer be necessary, for one needed only believe in a chain of ordinations in order to find the priesthood power necessary to practice polygamy.

The organizational catalyst moved from interpretive practices rooted in underground practices to a codified manifesto of authority, and a movement was underway. The claim of ordination in 1886 substituted for a less homogeneously spread, and thus, less reliable interpretive tactic increasingly difficult to sustain in the face of constant and clear pressure from the LDS Church targeting polygamy. Now a chosen few with shared interpretive tactics could proselyte and recruit those willing to believe Lorin Woolley's report of decades old discourse (as reported to them). These newcomers needed not share the interpretive strategy which twisted semantics, such as condemnations against polygamy, into meaning the opposite; indeed, the movement could not grow or sustain itself solely on such practices. We saw this dilemma of organization in the earlier underground of the 1880s, which failed, in part, because Undergrounders were obligated to speak mostly with fellow Undergrounders trained in reading between the lines to regiment semantic meaning.

Who could ever be certain of a friend, of a plan, of the accuracy of some statement when nearly everyone interacted with did so under a taint of suspicion, and presumably designed their utterances, with this assumption? With the Lorin Woolley story, however, the new group could sustain itself among people who took as necessarily true the version of history initially presented by Lorin Woolley. A new organization could grow into his history, but as it did so it required that Woolley become utterly unassailable with respect to the truth of the words he spoke. By writing his story the problem of oral transmission (which likely resulted in innovations codified into the written 1929 version) was circumvented, and the burden of truth rested solely on Woolley. In short, Lorin Woolley became a prophet with a modern following.

Lorin Woolley's dreams and advice were dutifully recorded by Musser. He told of recent visits from Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, and claimed the latter secretly ordained him an apostle while a teenager in the 1870s. Woolley's ordination by Taylor in 1886, he now explained, was to a "Council of Friends" made of seven faithful men who held authority above that of an apostle. By 1929, with the recent death of John Woolley, Lorin restored this council by ordaining six new men (among them Joseph Musser). As part of this new council's founding charter, Woolley related a dream given to Joseph F. Smith around 1910, during which the Church president returned his leadership rights to heaven. The interpretation placed by Woolley on the reported dream was important, for it entailed that Heber J. Grant had no authority from heaven to act as president of the Church. Hence only the Council of Friends retained the priesthood power on the earth, though they were warned this did not entail authority to run the Lord's Church. The 1929 group was clear on this matter, that they were not to establish a counter church, but were to hold the keys of the priesthood until the One Mighty and Strong returned to set the House of God in order, and led the Church and the Priesthood.

A frequent visitor to Musser's office, John T. Clark, now claimed to be that prophesied redeemer. Musser accompanied Clark to a cave in Alpine, Utah (thirty miles south of Salt Lake City), where he told of visits from sacrificed Mexican maidens and treasure guarding serpents. Clark claimed to see these through a seer stone, a technology long known to have been used by Joseph Smith during his prophetic career. Musser wrote of his doubts, however, regarding Clark. "He is certainly sincere in his belief," Musser wrote, "and has had a remarkable career to date." That "career" consisted of predicting the location of, among other (unrecovered) treasures like ancient records, the

location, depth, and magnitude of oil wells (Musser 5.16.30). Clark frequently advised Musser, who managed and founded an oil company (Musser was an entrepreneur with apparent expertise in many fields, and once worked on a re-election campaign for Reed Smoot). During one consultation, Clark was accompanied by another unnamed man; in the course of their meeting the man proceeded to anoint Clark the One Mighty and Strong. Musser allowed this rite to be performed in his office, though admitted he “remains unconvinced” of Clark’s claims. In 1932 John T. Clark passed out of this world before the Messiah returned, leading Musser to eulogize, “it appears he was misled by the spirit he followed” (Musser Diary 9.16.32).

That same month the Council of Friends began holding regular meetings, assembling every Thursday at this “School of the Prophets” to discuss matters of religion.³² Their day and time of gathering coincided with the meeting of the LDS apostles in the same Salt Lake City. Though these two opposed quorums met simultaneously, the Fundamentalists aimed to move into the ancient past. During the meeting the friends would administer the sacrament in the same manner as the apostles in the LDS Church, importantly substituting wine for water (as the ordinance was done in the nineteenth century and as biblically described) and unleavened for yeast-risen bread (drawn from the Jewish Passover meal). Their discussions are unrecorded through 1933, though by the end of the year, with Lorin Woolley ailing, they would record his teachings from the early years. Woolley designated, “through revelation (as he explained afterwards),” that Leslie Broadbent was to hold the keys in partnership with Woolley, replicating “the same manner as they had first been held jointly by Joseph Smith and

³² The original School of Prophets was initiated by Joseph Smith in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1832. From it the Lectures on Faith issued, a text discussed in previous chapters. The LDS Church’s School of the Prophets continued sporadically until the death of John Taylor, thereafter no records evidence its existence.

Oliver Cowdery,” back in 1830 (*Brief History*, p.1). Their homes, and only their two homes, were sanctified for visits from the Lord and his wives (*Brief History*, p.8). Woolley was the *de facto* Lord’s Mouthpiece, and his teachings were taken quite seriously by the Council.

Woolley ranged much further than any recorded teachings by Latter-day Saints during the period. He taught that Joseph Smith was resurrected in 1847, and led the Saints to the Salt Lake Valley. Moreover, Woolley suggested that Smith was himself a god, just as were Adam and others. Woolley named three of Adam’s wives, and five of Jesus’s, and stipulated that in order for one to hold high positions in the heavens one required at least five wives. Some teachings he would report hearing from Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, or another leader, while others were not given any sources. Woolley explored the ancient days, teaching that biblical figures Seth began the pyramids and Shem completed them. These buildings were perfect chronometers, which if read properly predicted the exact day of the Messiah’s return. His teachings covered the history of the world, and poised the council as its entelechy. Now at the end of history, Woolley divided the kingdom of God into three separate branches: the Kingdom, the Presidency of the Church, and the Patriarchal Order. He now held the keys to rule and administer the Kingdom and the Patriarchal Order, was given them by his father John Woolley, who obtained them from prior leaders of the Church. (As mentioned earlier, Woolley explained that the keys to rule the Church were delivered back to heaven in 1918, and would be restored by the One Mighty and Strong.)

As the Kingdom was again organized with seven Friends, the last days were upon the world. An Indian prophet was working in the Yucatan, while three Jewish prophets

labored among their people in order to prepare them for the second coming. The temple at New Jerusalem, he prophesied, would be built by 1936, thus ushering in the end of time. As a member of the Grand Council of the Kingdom of God, Woolley recounted, he was privileged to attend sacred meetings in the company of Disraeli, Bonaparte, and Teddy Roosevelt. T.R., Woolley reported, was a member of the Council and accepted the Patriarchal Order of Marriage. Did the Friends raise objections, even silently, about Woolley's breathtaking range of insights? The head of the Kingdom of God assured them that leaders of the Priesthood could not be misled by Satan, at least not anymore.

In February 1934 the Council gathered and recorded all of Woolley's teachings which they could remember. Note that like the LDS Church by mid-century, there are no doctrinal innovations introduced here. Lorin Woolley added some historical details, all of which referred to mortal life (rather than spirit world affairs). He did not, according to these minutes, speculate as did earlier Mormon leaders, on the nature of the life of the gods, humanity's spirit recreation, or the creation of the world. He like members of the LDS Church in which he was once held in so high a favor, lost the ability to speculate, to philosophize, to guess about other worlds and beings. This was a movement firmly placed in the here-and-now, though it looked to the past as a better age, rather than to a distinct and separate, more spiritual world.

Rather than transcend it, the Council of Friends aimed to turn back time like a snake consuming its tail. To do so they aimed to replicate the forms of older practices. The "symbolism" or meaning of sacred rites, the default mode of assessment for members of the LDS Church today, mattered little for Fundamentalists in relation to the preservation of formal practices. The LDS Church, Fundamentalists frequently pointed

out, recently changed the ordinances and clothing of the temple rites, and this was regarded as yet more evidence of the Church's fall into apostasy. The Church could justify these modifications as still preserving the meaning and symbolism of the rites and clothing, as mere alterations of inconsequential forms, as changes in procedure but not in "meaning" (thus relying on the interpretation of some sacred sign to remain unchanged even while an altered, embodied signifier was introduced). The Church's semiotic position is obviously quite modern, almost postmodern. Fundamentalists opted for anti-modern semiotic practices, usually involved overtly with the flesh.

Obviously the most important practice was plural marriage, though the path the marital practice traveled before ending up among self-described Fundamentalists granted a definite logic to the new movement. Plural marriage was regarded as an ancient practice, and now anti-modern, private, and secret; and practices similarly characterized would take on the same value as polygamy. A metadiscursive value generated a practical register. The (limited) circulation of some practice mattered most with respect to its value, for secrecy functioned as a mark of authentic ancientness in this very public, modern time. The Council's concern was not with the meaning of some practice or term, for "meanings" would simply be reenacted and preserved in the sign form. Its concern was with antiquity itself, and only the forms of things preserved this temporality.

It was for Fundamentalists the seeming ancientness of some practice or sign that made it worthwhile; the forms of history became the ground of the new movement's authority. As part of this effort to resurrect past practices, Lorin Woolley instituted in the Council of Friends the ordinance of "washing of feet," replicating the initiation ceremony of the 1830s School of the Prophets (which followed the account of Jesus's washing of

the apostles' feet in the New Testament). Behind the enactment was the assumption that history could be renewed, the millennial reign begins, when ordinances were properly, formally observed. "This sacred ordinance (feet washing) being completed," Musser records, "the brethren all *felt* to rejoice and praise the Lord for His wonderous [sic] blessings." He continues, "They *felt* a complete fellowship with each other, with a love that only God could inspire" (Brief History p.2, italics added). In Musser's description one can see a kernel of the logic of Mormon Fundamentalism. There is in the preceding quote an important distinction in usage of the verb *feel*. The first use is followed by two verbs of speaking, *rejoice* and *praise*, inflected in the *to*-infinitive; and as a result of the verb-verb complement structure the phrase takes on an archaic sense (it is in fact borrowed from the bible and appears in LDS scripture). It is also significant that this quasi-archaic phrasing employs verbs of speaking, rather than verbs of thinking, to describe what *the brethren all felt*. The second usage, however, is followed by the now more common direct object, *a complete fellowship*, paralleled with *a love*. These terms describe the feelings of the group (as referred to by a noun), rather than directly observable acts of expression, as if this usage paralleled the more ancient phrasing. An interesting feature of Musser's recording of the meeting, but is it also trivial?

The passage allows us to see how Mormon Fundamentalism developed as a modern response to modernity. Certain signs had a patina—a phrase structure, a marital practice, a form of dress—and these became meaningful as a result of their being out of contemporary time. However, fundamentalist polygamy and attendant practices also differed from early Mormon practices because these were enacted now in order to hark back to older ages amid an American society which looked ever forward to a better

future. Their value was not because they linked heaven and earth, necessarily, but because they linked now with then. Time was possibly preserved, restored, turned back for Fundamentalists by practices which fell out of favor in modern society and its public sphere. Because polygamy was rejected, by the Church and America, it could function as a marker of dissent, and not merely as a social organizational device. To put it perhaps too simply, Fundamentalists embraced forms, while Latter-day Saints sought for substances or meanings; the former relied on bodies, the latter on minds, as vehicles for moving nearer the divine.

A New Mormonism

The LDS Church did not react to the small but growing movement in a way which challenged the basic claims of Fundamentalists. Indeed, Mormons either believed one side or the other, for each presented a version of history utterly irreconcilable. Did the Church retain the authority of the priesthood or did the Council of Friends alone possess the power to bind heaven and earth? Any answer required taking some Saint's word on history, for evidence did not totally favor either version. Each history was founded on eliminating certain aspects of the contexts in which the actual historical process occurred. For the LDS Church it would, as detailed in following chapters, write out of historical texts, by way of framing speaking as thinking, interpreters who read "between the lines." The mind of the speaker was what truly mattered thereafter, and there were no lines there. A leader's intention made the text, and one need not read look deeper into texts to capture the thought of the speaker-writer. Fundamentalists, on the other hand, circulated a story originally told orally, which reported secret councils that gave advice contrary to that of Church leaders. One could not doubt the veracity of the chain of reported speech without

assenting to their claims of preeminent priesthood. The speaker, be it Lorin Woolley or some other figure, need not even be sincere in their reporting, only accurately preserving formal details. To continue the dichotomy, Fundamentalists relied on the very discursiveness of their charter myth as the central indicator of their movement's anti-modernity; they dealt with words and ritual rather than thoughts and meanings.

The movement was winning converts slowly, and by 1933 the LDS Church leadership again addressed new polygamy. A letter published in local papers and read at local congregations denounced Fundamentalism. The 1933 statement was written by a cousin of Lorin Woolley, former Ambassador to Mexico (which provided refuge for polygamists a few decades ago) J. Rueben Clark. Its author admitted that the reason the Church again had to address new polygamy was because "old birds are saying the Church is not in earnest about the matter, and were winking at the situation" (Van Wagoner 1992:284). Attacking the end point of all the rumors, the First Presidency declared the 1886 Revelation a "pretended revelation," so classed because the

Archives of the Church contain no such revelation; nor any evidence justifying a belief that any such revelation was ever given. From the personal knowledge of some of us, from the uniform and common recollection of the presiding quorums of the Church, from the absence in the Church archives of any evidence whatsoever justifying any belief that such a revelation was given, we are justified in affirming that no such revelation exists (Van Wagoner 1992:280).

The Church thus presented its case for reality, drawn on account of collective memory and presence in archives. As we have seen, only beliefs were real enough to sustain the Church's version of "faithful" history.

The Church was indeed earnest this time around. As part of the Church's attempt to again demonstrate its sincerity in abandoning plural marriage, its leadership administered loyalty oaths to members, which required in part that members deny

rumoring that Church leaders lived double lives. Clark and Ivins also organized a program for spying on and infiltrating Fundamentalist meetings, and gave the information to local police who began arresting, yet again, Mormons for unlawful cohabitation. By 1935, moreover, U.C. was made a felony punishable by up to five years in prison. The author of the U.C. bill was Hugh B. Brown, later of the LDS Church's First Presidency (Bradley 1993:17). From this time forward no one could seriously doubt that the LDS Church was strictly for monogamists.

For their part the Council of Friends was slow to organize a solid religious group, though they were certain the Church was no longer engaging in doubletalk, but was now apostate. How could they form a semi-open organization when secrecy was required, and indeed, conferred a measure of ancientness to these anti-moderns? They had a sacred history, now they required indicators that the heavens identified them as holding the ineffable priesthood. The group sought a way to make explicit their claim of authority being direct from God. Over the course of their meetings through 1934 they sought divine approbation. Now washed and pronounced clean of sin as a result of the washing of feet, Lorin Woolley charged the Council of Friends to "wrestle with the Lord" for his approval.

The men fasted, abstaining from food for days on end, and resisted sex for even longer stretches. They gathered into prayer circles every meeting to implore the heavens for manifestation of approval of their course and affirmation of their calling as heads of the Priesthood. During these gatherings the men would study the *Lectures on Faith* (addressed in an earlier chapter, and in 1921 removed from LDS scriptures), a text which moved them back to the 1830s, though with a theology not entirely consonant with other

doctrines they held as fundamental (a version of Adam-God being one of these essentials). Again one sees the trend of picking up dated texts and practices, and giving them new life, though one not entirely faithful to the original context and setting. Making old things new was a fairly simple process; securing evidence of their authority which could be read by other Saints was fraught with far more knotty problems. And whether wanted or not, the Council of Friends was the *de facto* leadership for a growing body of polygamous Mormons.

Many Mormons implored the men to perform various blessings and to administer the sacrament at their homes. After some consideration, the men reluctantly approved the performance of blessings on others outside the Council's circle, and sanctioned their administration of sacrament in homes, so long as the meeting was closed to uninvited snoopers (Minutes 2.23.1934). The following week the Council decided to accept tithes from generous Saints, and continued to beseech the heavens for confirmation of authority. They called on John Woolley to intercede for them in heavenly councils; they fasted, they abstained from sex (Minutes 3.1.1934). Still no answer came. This lack of heavenly manifestation they did not discuss outside the group, however.

Their growing flock now requested them to perform baptisms, arguing that the Church's baptism just got them wet (Minutes 3.8.34). Lorin Woolley approved this as a temporary measure, explaining that the rite must be performed in secret, with record of it to be presented to the Church "at the proper time." (The Church now had a policy of prohibiting baptisms of children of polygamous parents.) After this discussion the Council again prayed for confirmation of their calling, and faced the Salt Lake Temple in order to secure the attention of the gods, who yet again, apparently, remained silent. By

June the Council resorted to a local canyon to better supplicate the heavens. The friends fasted, testified of the gospel and of their calling, read scripture and the *Lectures on Faith*, and retired to individual tents. Though the day was a “spiritual feast,” that night, as Musser records, “the Powers of darkness sought to overcome us. We could not sleep but very little, it affected all three of us. Bro. Barlow said three evil spirits had bothered him” (Musser 6.24.34). Still no response came, and the Council continued sporadic fasts and prayers in order to obtain confirmation of their priesthood status.

By September 1934 the often ill Lorin Woolley finally succumbed and passed away. With their sole direct link to the past gone, and no sign of heavenly approbation, the group declined to hold worship services for any others beside the Council. The movement seemed on its last legs. They told fellow polygamists to “mingle and associate” with LDS congregations for the present in order to “leaven the loaf” (Minutes 10.5.34). The year ended with the Council blessing homes and children, and baptizing folks into the Kingdom of God, which seemed at this point purely a spiritual phenomenon. Fundamentalism seemed drained of vitality. The new year, however, brought the new anti-polygamy bill before the state legislature, and threatened to put the council in the pen for several years.

The men met with other concerned Fundamentalists in March 1935 in order to fast and pray in protest of the proposed bill, and to condemn an “Apostate priesthood [that is] against God and the Laws of Heaven” (3.21.35). Here the Council moved to form an organization, loose and made only of Mormons concerned about the Church’s action against their marriages, but a group nonetheless opposed to the “apostate priesthood” of the LDS Church. From here they would form a church.

The following week the Council of Friends approved the organization of another “School of the Prophets” comprised of promising polygamists, and by April they agreed to hold more “cottage meetings” in response to the action of the Church. The Church’s attempt to imprison polygamists spurred the group to become a religious organization, administering the same ordinances and rites as the LDS Church, and replicating its organizational structure and ritual practice among often kin-related cohorts of excommunicated Mormons. Whether a manifestation of divine imprimatur was received by the Council of Friends is never recorded in their meeting minutes, but the combined pressure of the LDS Church and the supplications for a church-like organization among fellow Fundamentalists led them to act as if they indeed were the Lord’s anointed. The frequent discussion of dreams, visions, and spiritual impressions that accompanied these gatherings no doubt secured the Council’s position among other Fundamentalists.

By the time he became the real power of the Council, Joseph Musser had been dismissed from his management position at Diamond Drilling, and devoted himself, per Lorin Woolley’s suggestion, to apologetic writing. With the Council’s approval in April 1935 of more or less open worship services among Fundamentalists, Musser also secured commitment to fund a monthly publication called *Truth* (no simple feat during the Depression). As editor and primary contributor to *Truth*, Musser effectively became the spokesman for Mormon Fundamentalism. The periodical was funded by subscription (one dollar a year) and supplemented with tithing donations (a dollar here and there gleaned from impoverished Saints). Its first issue in June 1935 secured the movement’s position in Mormonism for generations. Now the Lorin Woolley story could be recirculated with contextualizing quotes from earlier Mormon leaders about the necessity

of plural marriage. Fit into sacred history, the text would present an alternate version of that history, and frame the LDS Church as derailed from the path scoped by its founding prophets. Aside from the obligatory article on polygamy, the text contained nothing unfamiliar or offensive to the average Latter-day Saint. Like other popular magazines of the time it would have inspiring or thought provoking poems and quotes, and snappy phrases attributed to historical and contemporary figures outside Mormonism. Unlike other magazines, and unlike the LDS Church, it would reprint in full sermons from nineteenth century leaders. *Truth* was a watershed for modern Fundamentalism: open access, written, funded by a market of subscribers; but also explicitly decrying modernity, its sexual excesses, its lascivious fashions, prodigal economics, and overt individualism. They were using modern tools to turn time against itself; could this tactic work?

Speaking for the Priesthood

A new group of serious polygamists was organizing along the border of Arizona and Utah during 1934, on red rock land predicted by John T. Clark to yield ten times the harvest and stretch over hidden sources of underground water. Lorin Woolley declared the area hallowed ground, and said the true Saints would gather here before the Millennium. It was called Short Creek, and is now Colorado City, perhaps the most well-known polygamist town in the country due to recent events involving Fundamentalist leadership.³³ The group was led by Price Johnson, who looked to the Council of Friends for priesthood authority and administrative guidance.

³³ FLDS leader Warren Jeffs was indicted for stealing funds from the community trust (the United Effort Plan), and Jeffs responded by moving the most faithful to a newly built temple in west Texas. He finally was arrested outside of Las Vegas with a bundle of cash (around \$50,000), cell phones, laptops, letters from

To Johnson Musser directed an “epistle” in June 1935; the text demonstrates a significant shift in Musser’s enactment of authority. “TO OUR BRETHERN IN THE COVENANT OF CHRIST,” it began,

Having permission from the priesthood, I feel impressed, as a servant of the Lord, to address you, under the direction of the Lord. His work is advancing and the efforts of Satan to defeat the righteousness is [sic] being redoubled. Never before in the world’s history have the powers of darkness made such a determined effort to defeat the will of Heaven as is now the case; and never was the valiancy of the servants of the Lord put to greater test....Men are being forced on one side or the other. (Musser to Brethren 6.18.1935)

After speaking about the trials to come, he chastened his Brethren: “Already the spirit of discontent is beginning to manifest itself among some of the brethren. Mild but unjust criticism is being registered in such a subtle way as to create prejudice and ill-feeling; and thus Satan is gaining some foothold in the hearts of the Saints. The Lord is not pleased with this spirit and unless it is quickly checked calamities will come upon this people.” Rumor had it that so-and-so squirreled away cash, or bought a new pair of pants while others went in homespun or threadbare hand-me-downs. They were to live communally, or at least prepare for it, but none had experience in this type of community. Musser warned them to “Never listen to unconfirmed rumor” and to “Never indulge in gossip—idle gossip.” Gossip and rumor were as much a part of nineteenth century polygamy as was sex, and the “devil’s handmaiden” was again doing its work among Fundamentalists.

Musser then administered to his flock “The true covenant of brotherhood” in order to staunch rumor-mongering. It reads, in part, “I will now covenant with you before God, that I will not listen to nor credit any derogatory report against any of you,

his flock. He and another woman were being chauffeured in a 2007 Lincoln Navigator, a marked improvement over the wagons used by John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff when they fled the law.

nor condemn you upon any testimony beneath the heavens, short of that testimony which is infallible, until I can see you face to face and know of surety; and I do place unremitted confidence in your word, for I believe you to be men of truth.” He warned of impending calamity, that mountains would be “swept by the carnage of death until men’s hearts sicken.” “And no flesh,” he declared, “can hope to be saved except throu[gh] the prayers and actions of the Priesthood of Almighty God.” While rumors were the problem, the Priesthood offered hope. Did he refer to the power of god or to the Council of Friends? “Know this,” Musser echoed the leadership of the LDS Church, “God will never allow his Priesthood to lead his people astray.” He concluded with offerings of love and well-wishing, even as the flock was chastened by the other hand.

The response of Price Johnson, leader of the Short Creek group, demonstrates how quickly Musser’s prophetic discourse and assertion of authority found receptive ears. The community was nearly starving in the desert, while the Council of Friends disbursed a few dollars of tithing as charity alongside more faithful to swell the ranks of the needy. Johnson wrote the local brethren “appreciate [the letter’s counsel] beyond power to express” (Johnson to Musser and Barlow, 6.24.1935). “If I am not out of place,” he continued tentatively, “I would like to make a few suggestions that might assist in promoting harmony among the brethren. We have a local organization and council of the Priesthood. I believe if the local problems were left for these men to work out with the advice and counsel of the leading brethren it would remove one cause for complaint.” This move would “please them and let them know they have the respect and confidence of the presiding brethren.” Johnson again apologized if “out of place,” for “any decision you make as a body of the Priesthood we will consider as from the Lord, and every ounce

of strength or power from the Lord given us will be used to carry it out.” He concluded with zeal tempered by a touch of melancholy: “We have begun on a journey on the path of which in our judgment, will lead us to eternal glory and exaltation. We have burned all bridges behind us. We cannot and will not retreat. We have not lost confidence in the Lord nor in his servants, and we want you to know we are with you one hundred percent.”

Short Creek leaders requested permission to live the United Order, a form of economic communalism, yet Musser and the Council suggested they live it “in spirit” for the present time. This advice no doubt led to murmuring that the Salt Lake brethren lived like kings while others starved, and animosity ran high. The Short Creek group nevertheless began living a version of the United Order despite Musser’s direction; he was, after all, their leader only when he led to places they wished to go. In a decade the Fundamentalist movement would split, with Johnson and other members of the Council of Friends leading the Short Creek brethren, while Musser and others remained in Salt Lake City. Just as fractured relations marked the 1880s underground, schisms would mark Fundamentalism thereafter.

Conclusion: New Wine in Old Bottles

Was there a link between the 1880s Underground and 1930s Fundamentalism? It was evident after the Smoot hearings in the early 1900s, to people not even part of this covert discursive community, that public and private utterances and practices of church leaders did not necessarily coincide. There was then, in Mormonism, widespread recognition of a negative space where creative interpretation of leader-uttered signs was possible. As

the Church moved to close the “credibility” or sincerity gap after 1905, cultivators of this space were given definite characterizations as unorthodox.

For the LDS Church, which increasingly relied on public sphere tactics through the early 1900s (film, radio, press, open access tours of sacred grounds), Mormons who plumbed the vagaries of public sermons and sought in private hushed hints were renegades, overzealous fanatics devoted to a practice no longer sanctioned by the leadership. This was the first step for the LDS Church in creating a version of history utterly shorn of speaking, and established in the public thoughts of leaders (as carried in texts). For those inhabiting the ambiguous space that became Fundamentalism, however, the discursive possibilities of reinterpreting history as being driven by secret traditions and covert meetings framed the world as utterly malleable. There was no secure foundation for reading some text, for intentions could be masked by speech. With this method of recasting public utterance as meaning something other than common interpretations rendered, excommunicated Saints sets out to recreate history and the world. No postmodern ennui set in, however, for secret authentic meanings could be found by the truly blessed. Indeed, for those in the negative space left by the Church’s abandonment of the private sphere after 1910, their own elite status was indexed whenever they read between the lines. No matter what the church leadership said of them and their discursive habits, these utterances could be taken as implicit approbation of their course.

The method of recasting condemnation as approbation enabled wider circulation of the Lorin Woolley story of secret ordinations and prophecies in 1886, but as the story gained ground the interpretive method fell into disuse. One could doubt church leaders’

sincerity, but in order for a discursive habit to become a culture, the tale had to encounter folks who did not also doubt the accuracy of reported speech in Woolley's story. As the story moved and collected readers outside the circle of original Fundamentalists, the transition began from orality to writing. This provided sure foundation for the new culture. As an organizational feature this meant that the group could grow while claiming unchanged status in its core narrative. This reading, however, required that meaning become a good deal more fixed than it was for polygamists from 1885 to 1910. There could be no "secret meanings" to the Woolley tale, it was either true or false.

Thus by 1935 the group retained its capacity to reframe statements by LDS leaders as either "pure subterfuge" or evidence of apostasy. One needed only believe in Woolley's story, a classic Malinowskian charter myth, and an entirely different apparatus for producing eternal rewards appeared, complete with rites, leaders, and history. The Council of Friends, as "The Priesthood," was tied to Woolley through ordination, and thus, their fate was bound with his story. Once inside Fundamentalist circles as a result of faith in Woolley's tale, one was met with nearly the same organization as the LDS Church. The difference between the two (and this reading was found only among believers in the secret tradition) was that polygamists seemed to preserve history in practice: first orally and then sexually, and eventually (and only briefly), economically (with a revival of a version of the United Order in 1935) as well as, later, in austere fashion and diets consisting of "natural food" (e.g., cheese, butter, milk, fruit, rather than processed or mechanically canned food) that today remain part of the practical register of Fundamentalism. Anti-modern practices thus aggregated around plural marriage. So long as the law and the Church were opposed to plural marriage, secrecy continued to

mark these practices, and in many ways, sustained the movement itself as discursively founded.

Founding a culture on discursive tactics and bodily practices overtly opposed to modernity, would, however, give Fundamentalism a rather unstable base. No group could get too large without risking publicity. Present estimates place around 50,000 “independent” Fundamentalists in the Intermountain West, a number far greater than that counted among organized groups. Secret revelations and Ones Mighty and Strong were and are common, and if secret traditions were a way of stepping out of modernity and back into the past, that was nothing but encouragement for each person to break apart and become his or her own prophet, utterly private, hermetically concealed, and inconsequential to American society.

Excursus on Church and Priesthood

1939 witnessed publication of John A. Widtsoe's *Priesthood and Church Government*. The text brought into a single format many statements topically anchored to priesthood, and was widely used in LDS Church education until phased out in the 1960s. It strings together quotes sometimes a century apart, with only occasional commentary. The text reprints older as well as presents more recent renderings of *the priesthood*.³⁴ Its publication was likely spurred by Fundamentalist Mormons, who claimed to retain priesthood power despite excommunication from the LDS Church. I am less interested in the text as a reflection of ideas (from a sample individual) than as a marker and instigator of transition. In this brief excursus I examine Widtsoe's work in order to draw attention to the relatively new construal given the relationship between LDS Church and Priesthood authority. In short, prior to 1930 LDS writers drew no necessary relation between priesthood power and membership in the LDS Church. Following the Fundamentalist emergence, however, just such a relation was formulated. Hence, lack of membership in the LDS Church indexed of lack of power to act as a representative of heaven, to perform ceremonies (such as baptism and sacrament), to bless the sick, and so on. In following chapters I recount how this new indexical relation opened the door for radical innovations in the LDS Church's administrative structure.

³⁴ The LDS Church distributes the Priesthood across two ranked "orders," the lower Aaronic, and the Melchizedek. Initiates in the lower order, who are usually aged twelve to eighteen, are restricted to performing ordinances like administration of the sacraments during weekly meetings, and baptism. These functions are directly tied to the operation of the LDS Church. Initiates of the higher order function in temples, bless the sick, exorcise demons, and conduct other affairs outside the immediate operation of services tied to the LDS Church. Since 1978 ordination to the priesthood has been available to "all worthy males" over the age of twelve. From priesthood "holders" lay clergy are selected. They preside voluntarily, with the exception of the highest ranking Church figures, called *General Authorities* (such as Seventies, Apostles, members of the First Presidency) who may receive remuneration, for what is full-time work, either directly as a small stipend or indirectly through membership on boards of the numerous and profitable Church-owned corporations.

Priesthood and Church Government opens with a preface written by Rudger Clawson, a convicted polygamist during the 1880s who was now president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The preface explains, “Literature of the Church has been examined carefully for references to Priesthood. From among the thousands found, those contained in this volume have been selected as being representative of the most authoritative thought in the Church. Lack of space compelled the exclusion of the many excellent statements—many more than included—supporting the views herein presented” (Widtsoe 1939:viii). These thoughts and views were “arranged to meet the needs of *Priesthood quorums* and *Church officers*, into three parts: 1. The Meaning of Priesthood; 2. The Priesthood and Church Government; and 3. Church Administration: Priesthood in Action. Each division in turn has been divided into chapters, each dealing with a vital Priesthood subject” (ibid., italics added). “Priesthood Quorums” here refers to local bodies comprised of men who hold the priesthood power and who meet weekly for instruction. In later usage this referent and that of *Church Officers* was covered by *the priesthood*, a term which during Clawson’s day referred to the governing authorities of the LDS Church, such as apostles. Clawson’s terminology preserves a nineteenth century configuration of the role of priesthood power in the Church.

The first four chapters of the work are titled, “The Course of the Priesthood on Earth,” “What is Priesthood,” “The Powers of the Priesthood,” and “Priesthood and the Church.” The first chapter treats the historical transmission of the priesthood from the ancient days of Adam, to Noah and Abraham, to Moses and John the Baptist, and finally to the Restoration of ca. 1830. As mentioned previously, Mormonism presents itself as ancient religion restored. It quotes mostly LDS scripture to piece together this history.

The next three chapters are of most interest here. Chapter two explains the nature of priesthood. Of twenty-one citations, thirteen are dated before 1900. In chapter three eighteen quotes are attributed to pre-1900 sources, with only six afterward. This distribution is not surprising, since the pre-1900 period was roughly twice as long as the time from 1900 to 1938. Chapter four, however, does not follow this distribution. Only seven of seventeen quotes come from pre-1900 sources. This chapter addresses the relation between priesthood and church. Indeed, only two quotes by my count from chapters two and three make any mention of a relation between church and priesthood, and these come from John A Widtsoe’s work published only a few years before his compilation.

<u>Chapter</u> <i>Quotes from</i>	<u>Two: What is</u> Priesthood?	<u>Three: The powers of the</u> Priesthood	<u>Four: Priesthood and</u> the Church
<i>Pre-1900</i>	13	18	7
<i>Post-1900</i>	7	6	10

Of the important quotes from chapter four, I report the following (Widtsoe cites his source, which I further describe in brackets). “In short, then, the power of the Priesthood, as committed to man in these latter days, possesses the power to perform every task necessary for the establishment, by authoritative means, of the Church of Christ and of bringing to pass the righteousness of God among the children of men.—*PC* 129 [*Program of the Church*, by Widtsoe].”(ibid:44). In the same vein:

The life and vitality of the Church are drawn from the Priesthood with which the Church has been endowed. Auxiliary organizations and all similar helps can give but feeble service if the power of the Priesthood be withdrawn from them. Even so with the Welfare Program, the progress of which depends upon the exercise of the power of the Priesthood. As men use the Priesthood conferred upon them, so will the Church and all its activities prosper. When the men of the Church holding the Priesthood perform their duties, the Church is always secure. The Church can not rise above its body of Priesthood. No law is more clearly set forth in sacred history.—*IE*, [*Improvement Era*] April 1939, p. 203 (ibid.).

These quotes seem to make the Church dependent on the Priesthood. The phrase, “The Church cannot rise above its body of Priesthood,” uses a common English construction. “Body of Priesthood” is similar in form to “cup of water,” in that each relies on a count noun (*body*, *cup*) to give form to a mass noun (*Priesthood*, *water*). This very minor detail entails semiotic processes which I track over the next two chapters.

The following quote from Joseph F. Smith makes explicit the Church’s dependence on priesthood power:

The student of the true science of theology will readily comprehend the necessity of its [priesthood’s] existence among men, for the reason that true theology, or the Church of Jesus Christ, cannot exist without it. It lies at the foundation of the Church, it is the authority by which the Church is established or organized, built up and governed, and by which the Gospel is preached, and all the ordinances thereof designed for the salvation of mankind are administered or solemnized (ibid.:45).

Another quote from Widtsoe’s work elaborates on this relation: “The Church itself is a product of Priesthood. Therefore, whenever the Church of Christ is upon earth the Priesthood is a part of it. The Church is the instrument through which Priesthood operates. Men may then obtain the Priesthood through the Church and in no other way.—*PC* 130 [*Program of the Church*, by Widtsoe]” (ibid.). Note in this short passage how “priesthood” produces the Church and is its instrument, and that “the Priesthood” can be obtained only through the Church. I can find no statements prior to 1930 which claim that priesthood power is exercised only by virtue of membership in the Church.

While earlier writers were clear that the Church cannot function without priesthood authority, by the 1930s the Church was made explicitly the sole dispenser of the priesthood. Widtsoe again claims, “The authority to act for God is committed to the Church, as the organized community of believers, and, indeed, authority is a distinguishing characteristic of the Church. Some form of authority from God is necessary in all our work, and the earthly source of God’s authority is the Church, organized by the supreme, intelligent God.—*RT* 92 [*Rational Theology*, by Widtsoe]” (ibid.:47). Chapter two, “What is the Priesthood,” ends with a quote that reads,

The organization of the Church begins with the Priesthood, available to every righteous man in the Church; for every objective, activity, and division of the Church is drawn from the authority of the Priesthood. Priesthood is the authority received from God by man to act officially in the accomplishment of the Plan of Salvation. Those who hold the Priesthood, and they only, may perform the sacred ordinances of the Plan of Salvation, whether in their own behalf or as officers of the organized Church of Christ. Whenever the Church of Christ is upon earth, the Priesthood is centered in the Church and does not operate outside of the Church. Members of the Church who sin sufficiently to be severed from the Church, lose by that act the Priesthood which formerly may have been bestowed upon them.—*PC* 126 [*Program of the Church*, by Widtsoe] (ibid.:35).

This quote comes from Widtsoe’s 1938 work, and gives a new condition by which one might lose priesthood: one could lose (the) priesthood by losing membership in the Church.

Did earlier writers simply take the interdependence for granted, or did they speak of the relation between Church and (the) Priesthood as if the only former depended upon the latter? From John Taylor, Widtsoe quotes,

What is Priesthood? It is the government of God, whether on the earth or in the heavens, for it is by that power, agency, or principle that all things are governed on the earth and in the heavens, and by that power that all things are upheld and sustained. It governs all things—it directs all things—it sustains all things—and has to do with all things that God and truth are associated with. It is the power of God delegated to intelligences in the heavens and to man on the earth.—*MS* 9:321, *John Taylor* (ibid.:30).

From Brigham Young, whose work Widtsoe edited into another compilation: “The Priesthood of the Son of God is the law by which the worlds are, were and will continue forever and ever. It is that system which brings worlds into existence and peoples them, gives them their revolutions, their days, weeks, months, years, their seasons and times and by which they ... go into a higher state of existence.—D 130” (ibid.:33). From Joseph Smith, whose work was compiled and edited by Joseph Fielding Smith: “The Priesthood is an everlasting principle, and existed with God from eternity, and will to eternity, without beginning of days or end of years. The keys have to be brought from heaven whenever the Gospel is sent.—T157” (ibid.:34).

The priesthood for earlier Saints was plainly more than administrative or ceremonial authority, and no claims are made which circumscribe its exercise exclusively to members of the LDS Church. It was the source of God’s power, by which He created (or “organized”) worlds and brought humanity up to divinity; it was similar to Orson Pratt’s “attributes,” independently existing but certainly an essential attribute of God.

Claims regarding necessary interdependence come around only after Fundamentalist Mormons used the earlier reading of priesthood—as power which animates the Church but which is not itself dependent on that which it animates—as justification for practicing polygamy despite excommunication. *Priesthood* was rendered by Fundamentalists in the form-substance, mind-body dualism into which Mormon theology waded as a result of distinguishing between belief and practice. This reading grew from the construction found in “the body of the priesthood” and similar phrases, which led “the priesthood” to be analogized as a substance akin to water, wood, or spirit. Fundamentalists worked after Mormonism divided belief and practice, moreover, which

reduced priesthood to an abstract substance. This reduction, however, allowed them to claim that priesthood could be extracted from the Church. And when extracted, according to Fundamentalists, it would leave the Church a corpse. Their assertions that the LDS Church was “in apostasy” cast the Church as spiritually dead because the power, priesthood, had been withdrawn by God when polygamy was abandoned. Fundamentalists, however, traced their power through Lorin Woolley back to John Taylor, when the Church still authorized plural marriage.

Not so, countered LDS authorities, who positioned the Church as the house, as it were, of the priesthood; without membership in it the power does not function. The power was the foundation of the Church, as both groups proposed. Whether the foundation could be removed, why, and how, were central questions of the early decades of the twentieth century. Only after Mormon Fundamentalism emerged did leaders of the LDS Church circumscribe the power to the Church. This circumscription formed the basis of a covertly new entity called *the priesthood*.

The term *the priesthood* up to the 1930s referred to the power, to the Quorum of Apostles and to the First Presidency, the ruling bodies of the LDS Church. By the 1960s, however, *the priesthood* was extended referentially, and by usage summoned a new organization in the Church to which male members belonged who had been ordained to exercise priesthood. This new organization was, as noted above, previously referred to as “the body of the priesthood,” “the quorums of the priesthood,” or with some similar construction. What significance is this expansion of referents of *the priesthood*, from elite leaders to also local quorums?

The following chapters offer an initial explanation of how discursive slippage and referential ambiguity allowed for radical reconfiguration of the LDS Church. Prior chapters describe the conditions of this reconfiguration. *Holy Spirit* was construed to refer to a personage and a power, and the animate ur-element was made an influence emitted by deity. When complete, this new foundation ranked orders of being according to dependence on what was grammatically presupposed by any given term, thereby making humans dependent for their existence on higher order entities. In short, cultural hierarchy became the foundation for reckoning cultural ontology. The vagueness of usage and the cosmological placement of *the priesthood* were akin to that of *Holy Spirit*, and indexing the existence of its referent was the center of the 1930 schism. The divide between man and god, body and mind, belief and practice made possible the arguments made by Fundamentalists regarding removal of the priesthood from the Church (both as a sign of “apostasy” or upon excommunication of a polygamist). The LDS Church responded, as seen here, by making membership a necessary condition of holding the power. Both sides drew an abduction about priesthood power which rendered its presence indexically clearer (e.g., “*This* person has *that* power because he was given it by *that* man,” or, “*This* person cannot have *that* power because he is not a member of the LDS Church.”). Extending this abduction regarding the nature of the relationship of priesthood power and the Church was accomplished by an administrative re-alignment called “Priesthood Correlation.” It began in the LDS Church in 1960, and its history is recounted in the following chapter.

Chapter Twelve

Correlation and Priesthood

By the 1950s Mormon writers portrayed deity as basically a mental phenomenon utterly removed from any platform of analogical reasoning (see chapters seven and eight). The basic nouns of Mormon theology, *intelligence*, *Holy Spirit*, *faith*, were rendered abstractly, and their abstractedness made speculations (by analogy) rather difficult. God was omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, timeless, changeless, as analogized from abstract and personal nouns. The heavens were quite unthinkable by 1950 as a result of disfellowship from ordinary anthropomorphic reasoning. Despite this sundering, the mediating link between this mental deity and carnal man remained the Holy Spirit, which by this time was made referentially distinct from, though still functionally similar to, Holy Spirit. Thus persons were sundered from innate power and instead were made to possess power when some other authority assented to its use.

The authority to act in the name of God, the source of power that links heaven and earth, in Mormonism is called *the Priesthood*. This has been the case since the very earliest days of the Church. The term is now used to refer to a power, local and general groups of men ordained to hold the power, and to an administrative department of the LDS Church. This chapter recounts how theological innovations of circa 1950s Mormonism were written into the administrative structure of the LDS Church after 1960.

Doctrines about priesthood, tied as it was to God and his relation to man, shifted alongside, and fit more clearly, other doctrinal transitions described previously. A shift in what might be called the theory of priesthood power coincided with radical

consolidation of bureaucratic power in Mormonism. Called “Priesthood Correlation,” it began with a small committee in 1960 and became an administrative department through which all LDS Church publications passed for approval, including, apparently, public utterances by the presiding authorities of the Church. Correlation wrote 1950s Mormonism into the administrative structure itself, and justified this move by pointing to the priesthood, the organization whose members held authority to act in the name of God.

This chapter follows the introduction of Correlation in 1961, traces its development through the decade, and then considers how this committee/process began to write its own history after 1965. The following chapter further addresses the writing, by Correlation committees, of contemporary doctrines about priesthood, god, and the cosmos, into Mormon history.

To Simplify and Reduce

An “All-Church Coordinating Council” (ACCC) was formed as a result of a letter from the First Presidency to the General Priesthood Committee in March 1960. Similar committees were formed in 1912, 1920, and 1938. Each was directed to reduce expenditure by cutting programs or by remapping their coverage. The last day of September 1961 saw the first public presentation of the work of this council. Wedged between meetings of the Church that comprised its semi-annual General Conference, at a Saturday night General Priesthood meeting (ideally watched or heard by all boys and men ordained into the priesthood) LDS Church President David O. McKay introduced the speakers for that evening (*CR* October 1961:76). It was their task to present “the correlation of our studies, Melchizedek, Aaronic, and auxiliary,” McKay noted, and declared this effort “is one of the greatest undertakings that have yet been presented to

the Priesthood.” (McKay here uses “the Priesthood” to refer to the governing authorities of the Church.) The theme of correlation for the church-wide meeting came to McKay as an impression a few weeks earlier (Prince and Wright 2005:150).

Apostle Harold B. Lee spoke first, confessing his “tremendous feeling of inadequacy” (CR 1961:77-81). “I should like to introduce the thoughts,” he revealed, “which I shall express by reading a text that to me has particular significance.” He quoted from Paul, who was “speaking of the different organizations of the Church within what he called ‘the body of Christ,’ by which he meant the Church.” With this clarification Lee ventured into his audience’s mind, saying in the bureaucratic register of the day, “As you think about those scriptures, they were given to impress the need for constant and continued consultations and correlations of the various subdivisions, the priesthood quorums and the auxiliaries and all other units within the kingdom of God.” There were from Paul’s epistle, according to Lee, “four reasons” justifying constant need for revision. First, “each organization was to have its specific function”; second, “each sub-division is of equal importance in the work of salvation,” third, “that all may be edified or educated together,” and fourth, “that the system may be kept perfect,” all so that the “Church will perform as a perfectly organized human body, with every member functioning as it was intended” (ibid.). Members and the various sub-groups to which they belonged were to the wider church as toes, fingers, and eyes were to a human body. The body was far more concrete than mind by 1960, and it provided the analogical base for institutionalizing the post-polygamy relation of priesthood to church. Relying on anthropomorphic reasoning allowed Lee to create the bureaucratic equivalent of Pratt’s

speculative theology. Both became expansive by way of analogy with humanity. The Coordinating Council would facilitate this organization of the body.

Lee continued to explain to the men, “if you will just stop to think for a moment,” correlation of all church materials becomes more pressing as a result of expected growth in membership numbers. Internal studies predicted ten million members by 2000 (this number was exceeded by two million on official tallies), and Utah would no longer be the residence of the majority of Saints. Lee declared that the key to handling growth came in a letter from the First Presidency, which taught that “the home was the basis of a righteous life.” The Council was charged in this March 1960 letter with correlating by topic various teaching manuals produced by church organizations. McKay’s letter only initiated the Coordinating Council and simply advised that the General Priesthood Committee review manuals with consideration of topic in order to reduce and simplify texts in order to facilitate global circulation.

Lee seems to have had a much larger vision of what would follow from the All-Church Coordinating Council. The new charge to correlate manuals evidenced for Lee that, “We see the hand of the Lord moving to do things, and this I construe to be a consolidation of the forces of the Lord under the direction of the prophet, just as in an army, in order to meet a superior force of the enemy in numbers, the forces of our opposition to the forces of evil must be consolidated in order to give them the most effective possible defense” (ibid.). Lee concluding by quoting the Ninth Article of Faith, which states, “We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the

Kingdom of God." Lee tied the correlation work of the new ACCC to McKay's letter, thus framing its work as initiated by the man called "the prophet."

That man, McKay, stood and thanked Lee for his "emphatic presentation of this great new plan for correlating the work and studies of the Church." Apostle Richard L. Evans followed with a short talk that spoke equally well of correlation. He concluded with a prayer that "it may go forward for the simplification, the elimination of all duplications and competition and unessentials, and the enriching of all that is essential in every life, everywhere" (ibid.:83). Indeed, the process of correlating curriculum would soon be extended seemingly everywhere.

Following Evans, Hugh B. Brown rose and confessed, "I think...I have never felt more humble than I do tonight." He reluctantly drew an analogy between the Church and an army, though, "In the army too frequently we refer to fitness as only physical fitness. Tonight we are calling upon all of you officers of the Church to be fit and ready, physically, mentally, morally, and spiritually, for the war that lies ahead because the enemy is determined to destroy all that we hold dear." He continued, "We come to you tonight to challenge you, to warn you that there is a war now being waged, the most dangerous and devastating—I am not only speaking of a war with arms—I am speaking of an ideological war, a spiritual war, a war in which the enemy is endeavoring to enslave the bodies and minds and souls of men, and for this we must be prepared" (ibid.:84-86). Brown's martial analogy fit well with Lee's announcement that coordination of curriculum was a consolidation of forces under McKay, though Brown never actually endorsed the program. His was more of a warning that war was upon the Saints.

Henry D. Moyle followed Brown, and tied the latter's sermon to Lee's talk on correlation, thereby clarifying what the battle was about. "My dear brethren," he declared, "I am sure that one of the purposes for which this great correlation program is organized and one of the great results which will be accomplished by it, will be the elimination, so far as that is possible, of sin and transgression within the Church" (ibid.:87-89). The speaker then gave some specific battles, of which "sex deviates among teenagers" was the most pressing.

President McKay concluded the meeting with a talk that made seamless the transition from topical correlation of manuals to elimination of sexual misdeeds by teens. As he listened to the speakers, he admitted to the congregation, "I thought what is the end and purpose of all this?" (ibid.:89-93). He responded, "'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,' we have the answer to the end and purpose of this great plan—to have our boys and our girls realize that there is a higher purpose in life than yielding to the pleasures and temptations of the flesh." Things were getting very corporate, as it were, for the Church was like a body, but one's body was to be resisted, for only by its subjection could the Spirit be encountered. He quoted Peter, and explained that the apostle "realized what it means to be in touch with the spiritual, to rise above the temporal, the sensual, and partake of the divine Spirit of God.... Fellow men of the priesthood, that is the purpose of making us more capable of responding to the Spirit and subduing the sensual" (ibid.). Subordinating the flesh to the spirit (left ambiguously referring potentially to the world of Spirit element, the Holy Spirit(s), or ones' individual spiritual self) was possible when the Church acted as one body. What was the role of

priesthood, as a power or an organization, in all this? McKay concluded with another analogy drawn from the writing of John Dryden:

Our minds have been led to visualize the opportunities of the priesthood, and to be true to the priesthood, to be loyal to it, that we might in our own little way, give to the world the spiritual message of the gospel of Christ. Your responsibility and mine, of everyone who holds the priesthood of God, is the responsibility of letting men see that light which is to the spirit what the vital sun is to the old earth, 'not as borrowed beams of moon and stars,' but as the sunlight of the Spirit.

The meeting ended on a high note with McKay proclaiming, "I think this has been a glorious meeting—one of the best, if not the best, ever held in the Church. There is a glorious future."

Correlation of Spirit and Priesthood

There was by 1960 a referential-cosmological alignment between *the Spirit* and *the priesthood*: each referred to a divine power as well as to personages, and each mediated humanity's relation with deity. *The priesthood* as a power could perhaps flow more freely when the flesh was subjected to the spirit. Certainly *the priesthood* as an organization of men ordained to hold this power could better manage this flow when the organization was the head that governed the body of the Church. Analogies were drawn from earth to heaven, and now church was likened to body, priesthood to spirit/mind. Spirit was to body as the Priesthood was to the Church, the more pure and divine governing the more carnal. The Coordinating Council would figure prominently in the streamlining of spiritual power and authority in the body of the Church.

The Correlation Executive Committee (the new name of the ACCC) met in January of 1962 to codify the basic guidelines of Correlation. The first goal was to "produce individuals who understand and live the gospel"; second, "all activities and instruction" should be "correlated and integrated"; third, "the family should be

considered the integral unit of the Church” (Cannon 1971). The Church was described as relying on the family to fulfill its lofty goals, and so the home was rendered a unit of the Church. All this was to insure the production of righteous individuals who could fill the ranks of God’s army. How did Correlation link “the family” with the Church?

Far from being merely an editing and curriculum planning body, the Correlation Committee soon reached into every aspect of the Church, including the home. Apostle Marion G. Romney outlined in the fall general conference of 1962 the new correlation plan, which was to be fully implemented by January 1964. As part of Correlation, the Priesthood (local organizations of its bearers) would be asked to visit, through a representative companionship, all members of the local congregation once a month. This was called “Priesthood Home Teaching,” and was designed to allow the Priesthood access to the home in order “to familiarize themselves with the spiritual status of each member in every family assigned to them” (*CR* October 1962:77). Priesthood holders were to preside over their own homes, asked to fellowship lost sheep (“inactive members”), and to befriend converts and new arrivals to the neighborhood. This program would be part of “Priesthood Correlation,” as it came to be called by 1964. Correlation could be many things to many people, and this it did by virtue of its eponymous nature: anything related to another could be glossed as “correlation,” and indeed, over the following decades, almost anything was.

Harold B. Lee followed Romney with another rousing endorsement of Correlation, which was “unmistakable evidence of divine direction” (*ibid.*:79). “It is now becoming increasingly clear,” Lee revealed, “that not only the ‘what’ to teach in the curricula of the Church is important in the coordinating of courses of study and the

activity programs of the Church, but it is just as important, and, in fact, going hand in hand must be the ‘how’ of leadership training in stakes and missions.” By linking “how” leadership was taught with “what” was taught in church meetings and services, Lee placed the dissemination of doctrine and truth among local congregations squarely under leadership pulled from holders of the priesthood. This proposed change was quite radical.

Prior to the movement for correlation, local congregations were comprised of several semi-independent entities: *Priesthood Quorums* for men (divided into age grades whose members are now called collectively *the priesthood*); *Relief Society* for women; *Sunday School* for all adults; a youth organization called *Mutual Improvement Society*; and *Primary* for children (the latter four are “auxiliaries”). Local members of these groups would meet throughout the week and on Sundays, and congregate in a chapel as a single “ward” for Sunday worship services, hearing sermons and “talks,” and, most importantly, “partaking of the sacrament” of bread and water. Each local organization had its own budgets, raised its own funds, used its own curriculum written at the general church level, printed its own materials, held its own conferences, and was in virtually every way independent from the other organizations in the LDS Church. Their leadership served by virtue of a calling from the First Presidency, it is true, but once called they were quite autonomous. There were, as one correlation manager stated, “five churches” in each congregation. One can think of them as acting like pillars, and on the foundation of the First Presidency these five columns supported congregations of the Church. At local levels the case was the same: while the Bishop was the congregation leader, he had little to do with what was taught in organizations outside the Priesthood quorums, and

nothing to do with budgets and planning except as it involved local quorums. The radical reorganization of auxiliaries and Priesthood quorums makes understandable the almost obsessive use of flow charts by Lee in his correlation discourses, charts which Lee had hidden up until their proper time to come forth, a time when Lee was finally a senior apostle (Prince and Wright 2005:146).

After Correlation all local operations would fall under the Bishop, who answered to the Stake Presidency, and so on up the chain of command to the Quorum of Apostles. The General Auxiliary Boards (Relief Society, Mutual Improvement, Sunday School and Primary) now had to answer to Priesthood leaders, as the Church correlated gender relations with those expected at home. Men of the priesthood were not to dominate, but neither were they to abdicate authority. For Lee this consolidation of power – to write, print, publish, plan – under Priesthood leadership was of great significance. “Don't you ever let anybody tell you,” he advised, “that the Lord is not today revealing and directing and developing plans which are needed to concentrate the entire forces of this Church to meet the challenge of the insidious forces at work to thwart and to tear down and to undermine the Church and kingdom of God” (CR 1962:80). McKay and his fellow counselors in the First Presidency, however, held private reservations about the expanding power of the new Correlation Committee.

Private Cautions

In McKay's diary he reports meeting with Hugh B. Brown and Henry D. Moyle a few weeks before Lee unveiled his plans in the '62 conference (McKay diary, 9.18.1962; also in Prince and Wright 2005:151). Asked by Moyle whether Correlation “has to do primarily with the class work in the various organizations,” or encompassed broader

organizational alignment, McKay reports, “I said that the Correlation work affects primarily the duplication of courses of study; and that it should not affect the organization of the Church.” They then apparently recited, spontaneously and with telling unity, a verse of scripture. McKay writes,

President Brown said that the Prophet [Joseph Smith] had a wonderful sense of propriety and of revelation when he said that that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men when they get a little authority as they suppose to extend it, and to reach out for more and more. I quoted: ‘Hence, many are called but few are chosen. Why are they not chosen? Because they have not learned this one lesson, etc.’ President Moyle added, ‘That no power or influence can or ought to be maintained.’ And I quoted, ‘Only upon the principle of righteousness.’

This scripture in its full text describes, and is the only verse to do so that I know of, how one may forfeit priesthood power. It is worth presenting here, and in part reads:

Many are called but few are chosen; and why are they not chosen? Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson—That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness. That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves, the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man (D&C 121:34-37).

The scripture refers to priesthood as a power which is conferred but which also may be withheld. Why should they discuss the removal of priesthood authority in relation to Priesthood Correlation?

The men continued discussing Correlation, and its apparent growth, the following morning. The topic abruptly turned to discussion of “apostasy,” which in Mormon doctrine indicates that a church has become alienated from deity, and with this, lost priesthood authority. (The LDS Church maintains that like earlier groups, the early Christians fell into apostasy, and their fall necessitated the restoration of the Church in

1830. The historical cycle of restoration of truth and priesthood, fall into apostasy and ignorance, and eventual restoration is said not to apply to the LDS Church, however.) Regarding Correlation, McKay warned, “It is easy to understand how the Apostasy took place in the early days [of Christianity]. President Brown added, ‘Take the heads away, and you are done. President Moyle said, ‘Leave this alone, and you get something contrary to the Church. That is the way the Roman branch of the Church took precedence” (McKay 9.19.1962). McKay then affirmed, “This correlation work is applicable to courses of study of priesthood and auxiliaries to avoid duplication. That is the purpose of the correlation work. That is the heart of it, and further than that as it affects the organization of the Church, we will have to decide and tell them so.” As Lee announced the following month, the work of correlating curriculum grew into organizational realignment. The record omits whether Lee was ever advised to limit his committee’s reach.

Nearly ninety and often weak, McKay again spoke with his counselors a week later regarding the extent of Correlation’s activities. He advised them to instruct Lee so that “this will enable the entire Priesthood to get the Correlation of the courses of study; that there will be no change in church Government, and that now is a good time to get that clearly defined” (McKay 9.28.1962). McKay’s concerns about Correlation (he apparently mockingly referred to it as a “Super Priesthood Committee or Board”), as it extended into organizational aspects, may have had something to do with the verse quoted in counsel with Brown and Moyle. The priesthood was a power, and an organization only so termed for convenience of reference to a group of men individually ordained to hold this power. Through these men the power of God was to guide and

protect the Church, to “bless the lives of others,” to serve and prepare its members for the hereafter and the millennial kingdom. This power abandoned men who, among other acts, exercised “compulsion” over the souls of others in their stewardship. To regiment lower ranks by virtue of status in the priesthood was a grave sin. The First Presidency applied this axiom in their position over Lee, the original Organization Man a quarter of a century younger than McKay.

Lee seems to have taken their inaction as approval of his course. He presented the program as a revelation designed to save the Church from demise as it met the vicious world in the following decades; the Priesthood (leadership and power) was to play the central role in this battle. For Lee that meant the General Priesthood Committee was to call members to the Correlation Committee, which was to oversee curriculum that would disseminate through the more efficiently streamlined administrative organization. It was the movement of administration from the hands of the First Presidency into the General Priesthood Committee, and its subordinate Correlation Committee, that seemed most disconcerting to McKay and his counselors.

Unrestrained Priesthood Correlation

Six months after McKay warned his counselors about Correlation, the Church met for April General Conference. Lee again addressed via radio and television the Priesthood (all ordained men in the Church) on what was now officially called “The Correlation Program” (CR April 1963:79). With this title, and its seeming revelatory source, came a history. Lee quoted Wilford Woodruff on the obligations incumbent on men using the Holy Priesthood, and cited Joseph F. Smith on the importance of every man learning his duty in the Church. Lee again quoted the charge to make the home the basis of righteous

life, and quoted at length the letter from the First Presidency (dated 24 March 1960), addressed to the General Priesthood Committee (it initiated correlation of manuals). I quote here some of this text as Lee presented it:

We of the First Presidency have over the years felt the need of a correlation between and among the courses of study put out by the General Priesthood Committee and by the responsible heads of the other Committees of the General Authorities for the instruction of the Priesthood of the Church. We have also felt the very urgent need of a correlation of studies among the Auxiliaries of the Church....We have sometimes been led to wonder whether there was a proper observance of the field of a particular Auxiliary of what might be termed its jurisdiction. The question has not been absent from our minds that there might be a concept entertained by some of them including within their jurisdiction the entire scope of Church activity, and with their members the whole Church membership.

The letter simply addressed editing of manuals used to teach members. Note the verbs and nouns of thinking/feeling. The mind was clearly by this time a public phenomenon. Indeed, it was a historical phenomenon also, as Lee indicated, “We found in our study, that in 1912 and again in 1920 since President McKay became one of the General Authorities, he was a member of a committee of the Twelve by whom similar studies were undertaken. This means that for a matter of forty years at least, this subject of correlation had been close to the President's mind and in his thoughts as something very essential and desirable.” Perhaps Lee was shoring up his new program by rooting it in McKay’s now aged mind. The thought was to revise curriculum, but in order to do that, the Priesthood Committee wrested the rights to produce the material from the independent auxiliary organizations, and as part of this reorganization, the vaguely defined Priesthood was placed at the head of the body of the Church: no longer merely to call leaders to other auxiliary boards, but to oversee their work as well. The home was also to be presided over by priesthood holders, and in this was the link between church and home. Priesthood leadership was to the Church as fathers were to the home, these

were as the head was to the body. Analogies ran amok. *Correlation* was itself a reflexive, meta-semiotic term applicable to any relationship. It was an abstract noun defined merely by some similarity created or discovered. The graphs Lee used to illustrate these relations in church bureaucracy are elaborate. With a streamlined bureaucracy the battle for souls might be won by the Church.

McKay and the First Presidency perhaps realized by fall of '64 that Correlation, if it was to eliminate transgression, purify the youth, indicate the hand of the Lord, and evidence revelation to the Prophet, would require impressive administrative machinery. McKay wrote of a meeting held in advance of the fall general conference (McKay 9.8.64). He asked if his counselors

know what the Correlation Committee is doing and said that it is a matter that should be handled very carefully or it will get out of hand; that at present it is too indefinite for the Church as a whole. President Tanner commented that he thinks he knows what they are trying to do, but that he had some fear that we are organizing this to a point where it would be somewhat in the nature of regimentation, and that he thinks the program should be very carefully checked before we go forward. I agreed implicitly, and said that the Correlation Program must be carefully checked before we go any further.

Whether this checking was done is unknown, though McKay did assign Lee the general conference topic of teaching the gospel in the home. Lee, of course, spoke on correlation of church with home.

The Priesthood, which by 1964 also meant the General Priesthood Committee (which oversaw Correlation), called members who served on four committees at the general level. Correlation was to be implemented at local levels the next year, and marked an extension of the church-wide reorganization. Several new committees were formed in each congregation as mirrors of the general organization. A "Priesthood Missionary Committee" was to fellowship converts and proselyte on a limited scale in local neighborhoods; the "Priesthood Welfare Committee" was to oversee welfare

expenditures and investigate and recommend families in need of assistance (food, clothing, cash, housing, etc.); the “Priesthood Home Teaching Committee” was to oversee home teaching of ward families by priesthood holders, while the “Priesthood Genealogical Committee” was to assist in gathering names of ancestors for vicarious ordinance work in temples. The process was simple: attach “priesthood” before any new (or old) program, and it became part of the Correlation process, which also did not escape from the legitimacy added by the modifier. Lee also managed to make “Family Home Evening,” long a neglected program of the Church, into yet another aspect of Priesthood Correlation. Lessons were to be taught by Priesthood holders in the home (e.g., fathers), and the lessons were to be delivered each month by Priesthood Home Teachers. During this visit the Home Teachers were to inquire about the nature of the family’s worship habits, their prayers, scripture reading, as well as to address temporal concerns like relocations, employment, and welfare assistance.

By 1965 Correlation spread through the Church; local wards were consolidated around local Priesthood leaders, who would soon labor under newly called “Regional Representatives.” This important title was given in response to seeming reluctance among auxiliary leadership to bend to the guidance of Correlation committee members. As a memo dated 16 May 1967 put it, “Sometimes auxiliary instructions were in defiance and in contradiction to instructions contained in priesthood committee handbooks” (McKay 5.30.1967). Local resistance to re-alignment of organizations under local priesthood leadership was blocking reception of Priesthood Correlation. The new ecclesiastical office of Regional Representative would, according to Lee, “give us in the field at all times, a working force of competent men with priesthood authority...to see

that all programs of the Church are carried out as instructed by the General Authorities through handbooks, and in face to face seminars with General Authorities” (ibid.). Being called by the Quorum of Apostles, Lee surmised, would grant authority needed to implement changes in regions where auxiliaries refused to yield territory. Regional Representatives were aligned in a clear hierarchy to the Quorum of the Apostles, and worked directly under the Correlation Committee. With them the priesthood as a power operated through and mirrored the organization, and its power flowed through the Church to the home. Soon Correlation would begin corralling other texts and organizations affiliated with the LDS Church.

In 1967 the Correlation Committee, now administrating as Regional Representatives, discussed correlating more than curriculum. Their minutes summarize, “Discussion on correlation of magazines; possible climate now to consider combination of magazines” (Cannon 1971:22). During this time each organization had its own magazines, for which its members sold subscriptions which supplied a large part of each group’s budget. To combine these, as was eventually done, into *Ensign* (for adults), *New Era* (teens), and *The Friend* (children), and pool their finances under accounting governed by Priesthood leadership, was to take each of the five organizational pillars and stack them end on end under the Priesthood organization. These organizations now had no means of generating independent funds.

The Committee also started a research program investigating religion courses taught to LDS college students at “Institute” (where Mormon students at non-Mormon schools could gather and take a course or two each semester to supplement secular education; these are similar to Newman Centers for Catholic students). In November of

'68 Lee proposed routing through Correlation all religious materials used in Institute and Seminary (a similar program for instructing high school youth), as well as those used at Church-owned universities. This would make Correlation the gateway for all church publications disseminated to Mormons under thirty years old. The Church under Correlation began to reach out to “young adults” throughout the week in order to guard them against a tormented and ruined world (meaning Hippies and Pinko Commies). Ward libraries were enrolled in this process, and individual congregations were given “recommended publications” for use in libraries. The concern was not merely about overlap and topical coverage, but increasingly about doctrinal accuracy. Liberal times were these, and if communists could infiltrate the government, one could never be certain about who might try to teach LDS youth.

By May 1970 Lee, according to summarized meeting minutes, “noted the need of bringing in other programs, such as church education, publications, communications, public relations” under the single eye of Correlation. As part of this editorial coup manuals used in any church setting were thereafter written by anonymous committees, and published by the First Presidency of the Church. Whereas before the Relief Society might request some well-known Mormon writer or apostle to write a manual (such James Talmage, John A. Widtsoe, or B.H. Roberts), now there was no identified writer, though the Church clearly stamped its approval. In gainsaying a text one did not simply argue against some author, but now spoke ill of the First Presidency, of prophets. The key to the entire process was formal similarity and committee driven anonymity: manual covers were to be similar, organizational structure at local levels was to follow general patterns, and teachings were to be repeated, as Lee emphasized, “year after year if they are to be

effective” (Cannon 1971:26-32). In unity, repetition, and sameness history and culture could be transcended, it seemed.

Now under Correlation, in 1971 the LDS Church began a new era of seeming openness. Its historical archives were opened (briefly) to professional researchers, a professionally trained historian (Leonard Arrington) was finally taken on as Church Historian. The services of elite consulting firms (Cresap, McCormack, and Paget of New York, and Safeway Stores, Inc. of Oakland) were secured. At their suggestion the Quorum of Apostles and other General Authorities were advised to concern themselves less with day-to-day matters so that they could manage the overall operation of the Church. At the firms’ advice a new department was created in 1972: Internal Communications Department. It took over the functions of the temporary All-Church Coordinating Council and Correlation Committees. The ICD (later to become the Correlation Department) would oversee all communications from the Church, including public relations as well as publications and other media sent to members around the world. With its christening the discursive shift of Mormonism into American culture was complete.

The organizational structure and surveillance apparatus was in place; now the messages had to be governed. Preserving “purity of doctrine” became the primary concern of the newly formed Correlation Department. All official writing on sacred history, scripture, and other topics had to run its gauntlet. In the *Church News* (ironically the only Church publication free from Correlation’s eye) a Correlation spokesman described the department as “a means by which the First Presidency and the Twelve help Church members worldwide incorporate the gospel into their lives” (Church News

12.29.1990). The article explained that “the inspiration of the Lord” along with “much prayer and fasting” go into producing correlated materials. Indeed, this spiritual preparation lends a special authority to Church materials, and thus as a Correlation secretary explained, “It is very important that teachers teach the concepts outlined in the approved curriculum.” As another Priesthood leader admonished in the same piece, “Don’t use extraneous [non-correlated] sources when teaching courses in the Church. When you do, you have just said, ‘I’m thankful for the Lord’s given me but it’s not good enough. I have a better idea.’”

The Correlation Committee became by the 1990s more than an editorial body; its priority was controlling the dissemination of truth. In a flyer distributed by the Correlation Department in 1993 to employees and Church leaders, Correlation’s role was made quite explicit (Correlation Department 1993). “What is Church Correlation?” it asks and, catechism like, answers that Correlation is “centered in efforts to maintain purity of doctrine, compliance with approved policies and procedures, simplicity of programs and materials.” Why Correlate? Because the Lord said, “if ye are not one ye are not mine,” according to the flyer, and thus Correlation “distinguishes the peaceable followers of Christ and his Church from the uncorrelated and confused groups and organizations of the world.” In answer to who is involved, it responds that the First Presidency and Quorum of Apostles are the “Correlation Committee,” though “This committee relies upon...Correlation Executive Committee, Executive Directors of Correlation Department, Correlation Evaluation Division, and church service departments.” How does Correlation work?

Before originators [of texts] submit proposals to the Correlation Department, they are to apply the ‘goodness test’...The test consists of six questions: Are the proposed materials or programs scripturally and doctrinally sound? Is the proposal within established church

policy? Is the proposal in harmony with the basic principles of priesthood correlation? Is the proposal absolutely essential and intended to meet the real needs of the Saints in all parts of the world? Is the proposal in harmony with efforts to simplify materials and reduce costs to church members? Will the proposal lead people toward making and keeping covenants? (In other words, will it help people come unto Christ?)

If yes to all, then “it is channeled through executive councils, Correlation Evaluation, the Correlation Executive Committee and the Correlation Committee for review and approval or rejection. No item is approved for church publication and distribution until it is approved by the Council of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve.” It concludes, “Throughout the process, self-discipline is preferable to imposed discipline.” Given the elaborate process, one might ask, where does Correlation begin? “Correlation begins in the minds of originators,” it affirms, and cites as examples of correlated processes the “correlation of grace and works,” and that for a husband and wife to be “one flesh [is] to be ‘perfectly correlated.’” Correlation was everywhere, it seemed, even in the bedroom and the heavens.

Mind written into Church

How does one account for the radical transformation that resulted from McKay’s charge (in the letter sent in 1960) to the General Priesthood Committee to revise curriculum? There was not, it seems, some grand scheme, or as some have called Correlation, a “power grab”; the process was entirely improvised, and taken up church-wide. (To claim that Lee’s power could restructure the church is to presuppose the streamlining effects of correlation, rather than to explain its emergence.) Lee worked with semiotic material, and it is there that I look for an explanation.

As happened with the scheme for statehood, several concerns of Church leaders coalesced around a project that promised church-wide redemption. Rather than statehood the rallying point was the abstract term *correlation*. Leadership had concerns motivated

by financial problems the Church had not faced for half a century; and there was the problem of teenagers. Certainly communism, rock and roll, sexual and drug experimentation, and hippies did not help alleviate the fright. One need not look far for reasons to deploy martial or bodily metaphors. If taught the gospel enough times, more than one leader advised, the Saints might stand a chance against the forces of evil that seemed everywhere during this era. In order to reach the teens, their organization, the Mutual Youth Improvement Society, had to be subordinated, and the entire curriculum of the Church reorganized. It was as if a clear flow chart of power in the organization of the Church, emanating from Priesthood leadership, would result in a clear flow of spiritual (priesthood) power to individuals, and this would lead to ascent through the spiritual hierarchy of the Church. The process was, appropriately enough, driven by metaphors and analogy, for Correlation was, like the 1960s Mormon heavens, exemplary in abstractedness. At a certain level anything could be rendered like anything else. Indeed, the metaphors are important for our explanation regarding transmutation from curriculum revision to church-wide reorganization and growth of a committee which oversees all LDS Church productions.

The mind had by 1950 been sundered from the body; at least as far as public utterances went. God was to be approached through belief and faith. The body was the literal problem as well as the analogical solution that Correlation addressed. Just as the mind/spirit was to govern the body, so God was to govern humanity, and to scale the analogical principle down, so was the Priesthood was a power to govern the Church, and Church through priesthood leadership was to govern the home, which was the ideal site of bodily subjection and learning. Each was in relation of more to less abstract, more

spiritual to more fleshy and concrete. The home was thus “the foundation” of it all. Correlation from 1960 to 1970 simply allocated the priesthood (power) mediatory function, drawn on an analogy from the contemporary doctrines of the Holy Spirit, to each entity now referred to by *the priesthood*. Just as the Holy Spirit mediated man and god, not only in the grammatical categories but also in the cosmos, so was the Priesthood, as an organization of men, a committee, and a leadership body with this power, to mediate heaven and earth, more over less abstract. Cultural hierarchy literally became the ground for reckoning and re-ordering cultural ontology. Priesthood power was thus firmly ensconced in the Church bureaucracy, and was made derivative of the organization which now exercised authority over local congregations and across the entire LDS Church.

A Correlated History

Analogical work made the phenomenon of Correlation possible, but one cannot account for its widespread uptake on the basis of analogy. Correlation’s power resided not simply in referential ambiguity and grammatical analogy, but also in its ability to rewrite sacred history, and insert itself as necessary to such. (Alongside these matters there was simple regimentation by Regional Representatives who oversaw implementation of Correlation.) As Correlation was written into church history it grew in practical power. General conference of April 1967 saw a number of talks praising Correlation. Correlation’s great sponsor, Harold B. Lee again spoke and developed its history more fully. He quoted the letter of March 1960, then read “another prophetic statement” made by Joseph F. Smith in 1906. It reads in part,

We expect to see the day, if we live long enough...when every council of the Priesthood in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will understand its duty; will assume its

own responsibility, will magnify its calling, and fill its place in the Church, to the uttermost, according to the intelligence and ability possessed by it (CR April 1967:98).

Lee filled in the ellipses in Joseph F. Smith's counsel: the place of the Priesthood (note that Smith calls it "council of the Priesthood") was at the head. This statement found fulfillment, according to Lee, in the Correlation Program. It was the entelechy of sacred history. As Lee put it, "The first step that was made was to place the priesthood in the place where the Lord had placed it: to watch over the Church." Now in its proper place (thanks to Lee), the Priesthood could also observe the Home. As Lee clarified, the relationship between Church, Priesthood, and Home was not new.

Greater emphasis on the teaching of the children in the home by the parents was brought forth in what we call the family home evening program. This was not new. Fifty years ago it was given emphasis; and as we went back into history, we found that in the last epistle written to the Church by President Brigham Young and his counselors, it was urged that parents bring their children together and teach them the gospel in the home frequently. So family home evening has been urged ever since the Church was established in this dispensation.

Families had always been taught in the home, it seems, and thus Family Home Evening as a featured program of Correlation too had been around; it took only Correlation to place it in its place. This folk history employed a specific method for grounding Correlation: by finding similarities, no matter how abstracted from some text, or writing them on names of programs of the Church, a small editorial committee gained vast power to shape Mormonism.

One can see this new history of Correlation develop through the 1960s. From 1964 to 1971 the LDS Church distributed manuals introducing Correlation as it was to be applied in local congregations.³⁵ Their failure to implement Lee's program resulted in

³⁵ See "Priesthood Correlation Program" n.d., also "Priesthood Correlation," Lewiston Stake Manual, n.d. (1971?); "Priesthood Correlation," BYU Sixth Stake, 1965; "Priesthood Correlation," BYU Fourth Stake, 1971

the calling of Regional Representatives (discussed earlier), who traveled about advertising the merits of Correlation as espoused in the new manuals. The manuals compile statements topically oriented around the program taught in the text. Correlation was called “The Battle Plan,” and on the opening pages rested a series of quotations from Priesthood leaders. First was a statement by Apostle Thomas S. Monson: “The battle plan whereby we fight to save the souls of men is not our own. It was provided by our leader, even President David O. McKay, by the inspiration and revelation of the Lord. YES I SPEAK OF THAT PLAN WHICH WILL BRING US VICTORY; EVEN THE CORRELATION PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH.” Just as with statehood the plan was attributed to higher powers, which powers seemed at best ambivalent about the enterprise. There followed some quotes regarding the “establishment of Zion,” attributed to various leaders past and present.

For nineteenth century Saints, to introduce briefly the doctrine, Zion was to be a perfect society founded on communal economics, plural marriage, and theocracy; and when created, it was to usher in the millennium. Zion was located in Missouri, and its center point was the city of New Jerusalem. Here Christ and his stewards, after descending from heaven, would govern as kings for a thousand years, and Old Jerusalem would be renewed as well. What did Zion have to do with Correlation? “The correlation program is NOT a man-made innovation or program wrought for the convenience of human administration,” the manual declared, “It is a divinely revealed plan designed to augment the building of Zion and prepare a people for the coming of Jesus Christ. The following testimonies are supportive of that fact.” It quoted supporting statements by Harold B. Lee and others (from recent General Priesthood meetings).

Correlation was presented as the very means of building Zion, and its rejection augured doom. Church manuals on Correlation contained a time-line extending back six thousand years. In each thousand year “dispensation” the Lord’s people tried to build Zion. “As with former dispensations,” the manual warned, “few have grasped the eternal scope and significance of this program.” Only one group actually succeeded in building Zion, and this was a city founded and governed by the mysterious Biblical figure Enoch (who according to the bible, walked with God). As further described in Mormon scripture, Enoch’s city (also called Zion) was taken off the earth before the Great Deluge; it was a haven for the righteous, and left the earth with a promise to return when New Jerusalem, the Zion of the “the last dispensation of the fullness of times,” was built before the Second Coming of the Messiah.

Correlation was to be the keystone of the new Zion. In support of its claims, the Correlation manual quoted a talk by Paul Royal, an executive secretary of Correlation Committee, addressed to Brigham Young University students. He would later train many of the Regional Representatives on the intricacies of Correlation. “But do you know why the City of Enoch was translated [perfected and removed from the earth]?” Royal inquired and answered, “It was because they had the correlation program of the Priesthood...THE CORRELATION PROGRAM WILL DO THE SAME FOR YOU...THAT’S EXACTLY WHAT THE CORRELATION PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO DO.” The talk continues,

I want to bear you my witness, brothers and sisters, that David O. McKay is a prophet of God...But, oh, I knew it more so as I sat under his voice in a correlation meeting and heard that prophet unfold the correlation program. ...He stood there talking to us about the priesthood correlation program without even opening the book. Then he said, ‘brethren, if this is what the book contains, it is the will of the Lord.’

Given McKay's apparent reticence about the organizational changes wrought by Correlation, one wonders whether McKay's qualifier was more significant than Royal realized. Other writers touted Correlation to Mormon college students. A monograph by Dale C. Mouritsen, written originally for a course at Brigham Young University that also introduced the Correlation Program, describes Correlation as "A fully developed program of priesthood correlation [which] will develop members of the Church to the point where they are pure in heart. The society of Zion can be established, and Latter-day Saints can be prepared for an exaltation in God's Kingdom" (Mouritsen 1972:36). That Correlation was involved with the priesthood of some sort was significant, for, "The priesthood correlation program is designed to provide spiritual and temporal security and to prepare the Saints for the trials and tests of the latter days through the application of priesthood powers and principles" (ibid.:72). In the ambiguity of reference *the priesthood* and *correlation* could overlap, justify the actions of the other, and altogether cast a wide reach across the Church. Regional representatives could further regiment local ambiguities in the application of the program. Correlation provided the method of grounding a committee and its texts in sacred history, while the priesthood, now often used as an adjective, sealed the argument. Both made powerful processes into names of organizations which together governed the Church.

One does not hear such talk of Correlation anymore, nor indeed, hear much about Correlation, or New Jerusalem, at all. These claims, however, served a definite function during their day. The process of correlating all published materials and all organizations and bureaucratic departments of the LDS Church was unprecedented in its revisions. Lesser recommendations from the 1920 committee were rejected for this very reason.

Tying these changes to a letter from David O. McKay, President of the Church, was far less effective, in exclusion, than was shrewdly taking Correlation deeper into history. Correlation was doubly effective, moreover, as it turned to (de)historicizing other texts.

By reading itself back through history, it gave a method for reading at a level of abstraction which rendered contextualized differences invisible. The term was meta-semiotic, referred to relations broadly construed, and thus could be evidenced nearly everywhere one looked. Such readings were couched in the abstract realm of ideas, concepts, and so forth which now were valorized as more pure and spiritual. Utterances could be correlated by virtue of use of formally similar terms, or by terms or “concepts” which had similar “meanings.” Mormon scriptures contain nothing on Correlation, let alone cast it as the basis of Zion, but they do define Zion as “the pure in heart,” which was discussed as an effect of Correlation. Brigham Young said children should be taught at home, and so Family Home Evening, which became a Correlation product, had been by this reading in the Church from Young’s time. Correlated history was made possible by non-literal renderings of terms, and failing that, by second or third degree relationships of similarity. It was analogy and metaphor made into method, and this allowed it to smooth out Mormon history. I examine this method more fully next chapter. Just as spies were everywhere in 1885, so was Correlation ubiquitous in its time.

The program’s historical circularity, then, consisted of revising the past as a series of conceptual relationships in which Correlation figured prominently, and through it all texts would then be regimented into topic-based “conceptualized” readings of Mormon history. This process allowed the program to reset Mormonism to a more standardized, contemporary, dualistic time. I explore this feature at length in the following chapter as it

was applied to the life and teachings of John Taylor. For now one need only recognize that Correlation worked within the mind-body-heaven-earth dualism, and developed a method for investigating the now abstracted heavens. The program was presented as the way of reversing history, of bringing together all temporal dispensations into one, of erasing history. Indeed, that is precisely what Correlation did, though not exactly with the predicted outcome.

Conclusion

As an *Ensign* (a church-owned magazine) editorial made clear in its description of the process of publication, “Concept approval is authorized” first, and then the text that reflects the concept moves along bureaucratic conveyor belts for inspection. Correlation Committees simply oversee the process, it declares, which begins “in the minds” of members. The realm of the mind, regardless of time, was far less contextualized than was the world of discourse, and this made Correlation possible. The mind was publicly accessible, language merely reflected mind, and so the concepts that Brigham Young had in mind when speaking on teaching children at home of course had the same meaning as those said/thought in 1965. Culture did not figure into the comparison. The historical fact that Young’s ideal home was polygamously produced, tethered Church with State, filled in for an absent public education, and was the center of economic production apparently had little bearing on the correlated topic involved. A society perfectly united in mind, doctrine, and history, acting as one body, was perfectly correlated, and hence, perfectly followed Correlation.

An abstraction that ventured into the world of flesh to redeem it from history, Correlation drew on confusions about what the priesthood referred to: was it a power, the

organization of men ordained with power, or a select leadership in this organization? Again the reasoning around these confusing usages seemed to order it along a hierarchy of more to less abstract, mirroring the theology of the Holy Spirit which similarly functioned to mediate heaven and earth, and which had a spiritual body as well as an occult power. The highest point of heaven was most abstract by 1960 (see chapter eight), pure anti-body mind, non-anthropomorphized. And this dualistic theology made Priesthood Correlation possible, while the response to Fundamentalism made the priesthood a church institution. Discursive confusion was clarified by analogy, and every instance of analogy was evidence of Correlation.

The primary dispenser of the Spirit became, as a result of correlation, the Priesthood leadership that held the power that linked heaven and earth. And yet we saw that the First Presidency seemed reluctant to embrace much of Lee's plans. Did McKay and Lee have different understandings regarding the role priesthood should play in the organization? I conclude with a brief turn to a talk by McKay in 1965. Titled "The Right and Authority of the Priesthood," here McKay put together a text which could be innocuous or cryptically critical, depending on how one reads words he used to explain priesthood.

He taught that "Priesthood is inherent in the Godhead. It is authority and power which has its source only in the Eternal Father and his Son Jesus Christ" (CR October 1965). He turned to analogies from the world of business and government to describe the process by which authority is granted to act in an author's name. He then declared, "There is no man living, or who has lived, who has the right to assume the right and authority of the priesthood." This presumably included himself and Harold B. Lee. The

president then stepped back somewhat and explained, “In seeking the source of the priesthood, however, we can conceive of no condition beyond God himself. In him it centers. From him it must emanate.” After locating the priesthood power in God, McKay warned, “There never has been a human being in the world who had the right to arrogate to himself the power and authority of the priesthood. There have been some who would arrogate to themselves that right, but the Lord has never recognized it.” Then he drew an intriguing analogy: “As an ambassador from any government exercises only that authority which has been given him by his government, so a man who is authorized to represent Deity does so only by virtue of the powers and rights delegated to him.” McKay carefully recounted the relation of power, “which we can conceive of...as being potentially existent as an impounded reservoir of water,” which “strictly speaking, priesthood as delegated power is an individual acquirement,” for “men who are appointed to serve in particular offices of the priesthood [who] unite in quorums.” The power was likened to water, a similar mass or substance noun. “Thus, this power,” McKay indicated, “finds expression through groups as well as in individuals.” Throughout the talk McKay is careful to use “[the] priesthood” to refer to the power, and “quorums” or “Brethren holding the priesthood” in reference to the collective power. He warned, “The priesthood, though, may be given to those who disregard it, who fail to be true representatives; and when such is the case, ‘...Amen to the priesthood or authority of that man. Behold, ere he is aware, he is left unto himself, to kick against the pricks, to persecute the saints, and to fight against God’ (D&C 121:37-38), and,” McKay added, “to apostatize from the Church.” After warning of the danger of apostasy, he concluded with the following sentence which could be read in several ways: “The only way *we* can keep

the priesthood and keep in touch with the Holy Spirit, the only way *we* can be true representatives, is to live up to the ideals of the Church which bears his name.” Whether *we* referred to the collective body of bearers (an older reading), or to individual (enumerable) members produces very different readings. McKay ended either innocuously or cryptically, noting “and when it [priesthood] is rightly delegated you will be able to go to the source, which is God, in whom is inherent the authority of the Holy Priesthood.” With priesthood one could open the heavens and converse with deity, McKay seems to suggest in echo of Mormon scripture; without it, the heavens would remain silent, hidden, unapproachable.

A year and half later the First Presidency met to discuss Correlation and its new branding as the way to create Zion. The meeting followed Lee’s endorsement of calling Regional Representatives to implement Correlation. “President Brown stated,” McKay records that

It seemed evident that the First Presidency is losing its grip on the activities that are going forward, and that more and more we are being regulated and ruled by committees....He felt that the First Presidency is taking rather a second place to the committees in these matters....He said that he would like to pull back into the hands of the First Presidency some of the things that seem to be slipping from them (McKay 5.30.67).

Two days later, Brown warned McKay that, “he considered the program rather revolutionary and wondered if it should not have been given more consideration....[T]hat is it something of a new system” (McKay 6.1.67). Brown suggested dividing governance of auxiliary organizations among the First Presidency, as the men now did “very little so far as the operation of the Church from day to day is concerned.” Two months later the Correlation Executive Committee met with McKay in his hotel apartment. Not only was the president ill, but radical groups had threatened him with assassination if he appeared

in public. The Correlation Committee provided him with letters to sign that authorized the calling of Regional Representatives. Under their guidance the “new system” was brought to fullness. It was hailed in 1971 by Lee after the deaths of McKay and Brown. He listed its vast accomplishments at a meeting of Church authorities, and concluded, “So we go on and on, and all of this under the direction of the Twelve” (quoted in Wright and Prince 2005:157).

Chapter Thirteen

Thoughts on and in History

This chapter concludes the dissertation and completes the analysis of the effects of Correlation. It examines a work overseen by the Correlation Department, *Teachings of the Presidents of the Church: John Taylor* (2001), recounts its production, and concludes with analysis of the final product. I argue that the method of correlation, which matches abstract nouns or features of events represented in some text with those in some other text, ties together a Mormon history on the pattern of the present. Correlation's penchant for finding similarities across vast stretches of time and space not only allowed it to be written into sacred history, but also gave it purchase over future histories published by the Church. These later works would follow Correlation's historiographical method and make history a series of timeless thoughts, recoverable from any text, thinkable by any mind. Correlation gave a method, almost mystical in its randomness, of approaching the by 1950 cognified God who resided in a far less corporeal, analogically abstract, realm. As part of Correlation the Priesthood leadership, at general and local levels, was to govern the Church, directing it with spiritual guidance as necessary. In the following analysis it is evident that Mormon history is now represented, in its most pure form, as a way to discern the workings of a distant, mentalized, deity, of which "priesthood leaders," as they are now called, became the most ideal representation.

Preparations: a new manual

In June 1999 the LDS Church's Curriculum Department, overseen by the Correlation Department, called members of the Church to a writing committee. These seven lay members would, under the direction of a curriculum manager (employed by the Church),

produce a manual used church-wide. Over 4.5 million copies were planned for free distribution to teachers of ward priesthood quorums and Relief Society cohorts, and members who attended these classes on Sunday were also to be given a copy of the manual. The text would serve as the primary resource from which a year of religious teaching and discussion drew. The Taylor manual was scheduled for use in 2001. Its projected cost was over nine million dollars. Fourth in a series titled *Teachings of the Presidents of the Church*, it was to cover the work of John Taylor, President of the Church from 1880 to his underground death in 1887. The committee was bound to secrecy, for the series presented prophets non-chronologically, and there were concerns that enterprising Latter-day Saints might write biographies or produce compilations covering the president discussed in any particular year. Rather than risk Saints “feeling obligated” to purchase these texts, the president treated would remain a secret until the manuals were distributed to members for the upcoming year.

With the pavement of Salt Lake City still hot and showing no signs of cooling from the desert sun, members of the new Writing Committee arrived at the Church Office Building. Rising just east of the Salt Lake Temple, and at twenty-nine stories the tallest building between Denver and the Bay Area, here labored in the Corbusier-influenced modernist block completed in the early 1970s the administrative personnel of a twelve-million member, multinational church (with its extensive business interests).³⁶ The building seems nearly as sturdy as the far shorter, but far more elaborate temple completed in 1893, and is itself dwarfed by the granite mountains whence the temple’s blocks were cut. The sun would be baking the city for a few more hours as the members

³⁶ Some writers place the Church’s wealth at second only to the Roman Catholic Church, though the LDS Church releases no financial figures.

of the new committee boarded air-conditioned elevators heading for the twenty third floor. Now seated in a conference room, handshakes and hellos were exchanged, and a prayer was offered for the sake of guidance and gratitude. As the members settled in, parking passes were distributed and between bites of soup and sandwiches prepared by the building's cafeteria staff introductions were exchanged. Four men and three women served on the committee, which was chaired by a priesthood holder who served under the Curriculum Manager. All members resided along the Wasatch Front within fifty miles of Salt Lake City, and those who worked earned their way in business, construction, education—typical jobs for Utahns. The Church like to call everyday members to these writing committees, for their sort would be reading the text as well.

The agenda for that day, 3 August 1999, records that “Ray” and “Jess” presented an overview of the project, summarized their meetings with the Priesthood Executive Committee, and introduced some of the vast resources available in the Church History Library and Archives. The committee was advised, “We know the Lord will bless you and your family as you assume this responsibility. You will assist in the development of approved materials to help teach the doctrines of the gospel, build faith, and strengthen testimonies in the lives of men and women throughout the Church.” (Jensen to Committee 6.21.99). A heavy burden for the committee—whose members had no professional training in either reading or writing history—set to produce work used by millions. The eternal trajectory of souls could be altered by their presentation of the “gospel teachings” of John Taylor. They were not to innovate or explain his teachings, simply to select passages for the edification of Latter-day Saints. “John Taylor will help you in your work,” the group was told, and this was because “It’s the doctrine that’s

important. The book should present the gospel of Jesus Christ as taught by the prophet [Taylor]. Avoid the tendency to put in too much history.” The contextual framework applied to history would be supplied by the method sanctified by Correlation. They were to work according to abstract topic, and in this way seemingly escape history and present the pure gospel of Christ.

After a brief “testimony” offered by a member of a prior writing committee, they were asked to develop individually a list of twenty-eight topics before writing or reading. This list they would shape over the next four months; drafts of completed chapters were to be submitted for final approval by February 2000. Each member was to write three or four chapters. To guide their effort, Ray distributed a “Research Report.”

Written “at the request of the Curriculum Department, the Research Information Division [RID] conducted a study of the content, design, implementation, and perceived effectiveness” of the Teachings of the Presidents series “implemented in 1998” (Research Report 2.1999). The text of that year presented Brigham Young’s teachings, and it was criticized for its silence regarding the marriages of perhaps the most famous polygamist in the Nation’s history. It was not designed to be history, curriculum mangers retorted, only a compilation and introduction to Young’s teachings intended for worldwide reading (*Church News* 3.15.1998). It was this manual and its use that the RID investigated through a barrage of methods: a series of telephone interviews (approximately 1700) with local leaders in the US, Canada, and Mexico; “group interviews” in thirty wards from Seattle to Nashville; and “in-class observations” of some twenty-five Sunday classes. This work was designed to answer five questions regarding the new curriculum’s “objectives.” The committee was told to pay special attention to the research findings.

The report began the list of eleven findings by affirming that, “There is more doctrinal substance in instruction and greater emphasis on the teachings of the latter-day prophets, **but**, instructors are using the scriptures less when teaching from the Brigham Young book.” It asked, did the curriculum “strengthen the work of the quorums and Relief Society?” It answered, while “Many priesthood leaders felt the flexibility...strengthened their groups[,] impact on the Relief Society was unclear.” Regarding “Feelings about new curriculum,” RID found that “Most members were very thankful for the ‘new materials,’” and also, “Members are gaining a testimony of and love for Brigham Young, and an appreciation for the accomplishment of early Saints.” “Almost universally,” the report claimed, “respondents felt the new material provided greater gospel depth,” though “some expressed concerns the new materials were too deep for new converts or investigators.” Among the positive findings: “Many teachers lead discussions rather than lecture”; “Respondents appreciated the book’s solid binding”; “Some respondents enjoyed the pictures in the book.” Finally they found that “Men and women process the lessons very differently, men taking a more cognitive approach, and women sharing more personal experiences on point with the lesson.” It concluded in the appropriate register that “Although the study did discover some areas where the program did not function completely as anticipated or desired, this is not atypical of many new programs which any large organization tries to implement.”

The report was produced by the Church’s research body, comprised of some twenty professionally trained scientists drawn heavily from psychology, sociology and education. What is most relevant in the report is the narrative position taken. Among other facts, it reports the feelings, appreciations, and excitement levels of nearly two

thousand “respondents.” Most telling is the gender divide between the men’s “cognitive approach” and the women’s “sharing more personal experiences.” Note that while the minds of men are apparently open, the experiences of women are shared by speaking. Here we find the classic dualism mapped onto gender relations, with the male cognitive mind and sharing female body represented. It is entirely fair to ask, Could interviews and observations assess how gendered members “process the lessons”?

Researchers had only public signs to work from (i.e., language, gesture), and mental processing does not usually fit this condition, at least for mortals. Presumably the report means that men made comments tied to the text (framed by “I think...”), while women related experiences through language in relation to some topic in the text. These are indeed customs one could find at any LDS congregation in the U.S. This report presupposes, in order to discover this dual processing, that language merely reflects some preexisting reality. By making language a mere reflection of thought, which can be processed internally or shared bodily, researchers need only overhear statements in order to approach “cognition.” It makes no difference to this report that men and women are segregated in classes during which these lessons are to be “processed,” and that as such there are no doubt genres of gendered speaking, discourses which perform gender norms and teach such to members in earshot. It may also be relevant that these local leaders were asked to respond to questions launched from the Church Office Building, and that criticism of church materials is not generally a way to index, enact or perform, one’s righteousness. Language is not viewed in the report as a creative tool by which social personas are created, but instead is made to reflect transparent cognition and feelings. Without this language ideology the research of the RID—based as it is on linguistic acts

performed over telephones, during interviews, and interactionally observed—is not possible. How can one say so-and-so felt, anticipated, strengthened a testimony, if its evidence is discourse in response to a question?

This report was read to the new committee members. As evidenced in the following analysis, the committee produced a text perfectly designed with the reigning language ideology in mind. Of special emphasis in this meeting was the need for more class discussion (sharing of mind and experiences) and the use of scripture (the “standard works” of the LDS Church: the *Book of Mormon*, *Pearl of Great Price*, *Doctrine and Covenants*, and the Bible). These emphases would allow for assessment of feelings, thoughts, and emotions through publicly presented linguistic acts. Hence there was a planned circularity in the research question, its object investigated, and the retooling of future objects fit for analysis and discussion. As the meeting concluded, the seven Mormons were asked to come in two weeks with a list of topics for consideration in the manual.

Preparation: A List of Ideas

The seventeenth of August the group again met. They were introduced to the Church’s robust computerized database, which members used to post and search quotes for selection in the text. They then, according to the meeting agenda, outlined the manual and proceeded to “pass out ideas” and “organize ideas.” These “ideas” were the lists of topics submitted by each member, with an average of fifteen topics per list. These the group collated into a master list of thirty-seven. Among the topics were “Agency,” “Family,” “Gospel Teachings,” “Prayer,” alongside others (ill-fated) such as “Celestial

Marriage,” “Eternalism,” “Patriarchal Order,” and “Science and Religion.” That the manual began with “ideas” pulled from a brainstorming session was quite significant.

After this meeting one member emailed the chair, “What a great meeting!...I think we all felt that we are certainly on our way! Thanks for all your work in keeping us going! This is going to be a great year!!” (Karla to Richard 8.19.1999). The committee was excited to work for the Lord, to help strengthen testimonies, and often reported “feeling the Spirit” as they set about the daunting labor of writing by committee a two-hundred page faith-building work. Confronted with this task, their egos, as one said, were to be “checked at the door,” and egalitarian and non-confrontational interactions marked their meetings. There was indeed little to debate, for most shared the same “ideas.”

The following week the committee “distilled” the list of topics to a lean twenty-two. As the Chair explained to the Curriculum Manager, despite this list, “We need to be flexible enough to make changes in the future if the Spirit dictates” (Rich to Josiah 8.25.1999). The manager axed “Eternalism” and “The Patriarchal Order,” and lumped several others under “Agency.” This master list was then divided among the committee, with each assigned to develop four or five subtopics. One member wrote by email that “The list is great! As I read through it, I get so excited for this assignment. We are so blessed to be able to write about President Taylor and learn so much about him” (Karla to Rich 8.26.1999). Another member, however, held reservations about working up a final list of topics so early in the project. John writes, “I must confess that I feel that we are a little ‘early’ on deciding topics and subtopics” (John to Rich 8.28.1999). He suggested they should be “reading and discussing unique and powerful teachings of Pres. Taylor

and exploring potential topics rather than rushing ahead prematurely.” His concern was that the committee was not familiar with the content, and so creating a topic list with which to carry into the readings may not do justice to Taylor’s work. It is absolutely essential, however, for a correlated history that the topics were generated before a single page of text was read by the committee. The chair thanked John for his reply, and “recognize[d] the concern about selecting a topic list too early” (Rich to John 8.28.1999). He assured the committee member, “My experience has been that a tentative list is needed to get us focused. I do not look at the list as being set in concrete, but rather providing guidelines on which to focus our efforts.” This preliminary list of “ideas” ensured that no reader would be pulled into history, for their method of reading simply would be to find examples of Taylor’s teaching on some abstract topic.

Topics were generated by “brainstorming” from one’s knowledge of “the gospel.” This gospel, by 1999, had been under Correlation for nearly four decades, and most of the committee members were raised in this post-Correlation Mormonism. With the exception of a few fringe topics, the items on any particular list were replicated in others: Family, Missionary Work, Obedience, Atonement. The final master list had no real inner consistency but that the terms (most of which were either abstract: *Truth, Education, Accountability*; or sustained historically shifting meaning, *Patriarchal Order, Kingdom of God, Holy Ghost*) had something to do with Mormonism, that is to say, were frequently uttered by Mormons in recognizably Mormon spaces (church buildings, conferences, books). This core list, comprised of a register drawn from rituals, doctrines, and favorite subjects of general conference talks, allowed John Taylor’s “gospel teachings” to be read through correlated eyes. For a committee with virtually zero experience reading Taylor’s

work, a framework was much needed lest they fall into the historical texts themselves. With this master topic list as their guide, the committee turned to comparing it with the “Curriculum Planning Worksheet” (CPW). Its importance in the production of a manual designed to transcend history cannot be overstated.

Preparation: Topics as Shields against History

The CPW consists of nine standard size pages. The worksheet apparently covers every topic the Church is obligated to teach; it is The Master List of all topics relevant to Latter-day Saints today. On the left of each page is a column of numbered phrases, with point one being “Home and Family Relationships.” This is developed into twenty-seven categories, such as “Managing family finances,” “Maintaining a Spiritual atmosphere in the home,” and “Respecting property.” Some of these are further developed into sub-sub categories, such as “Having regular family prayers.” Point two is “Gospel Principles and Doctrines,” with “Faith,” “Service,” and “Apostasy” among the abundant subcategories. Each phrase almost always begins with a verb in the present tense and imperfect, continuous aspect, as if “Effective Planning” (#7.20) were ongoing, and thus, could be addressed at any time. All other topics consisted of single nouns, “Miracles,” “Dance,” “Zion,” whose meaning is, as with every lonely noun, essentially vague. Their semiotic vacuum combined with the timeless phrases gives the worksheet timeless applicability to any production designed by the Church; against it any text could be measured for coverage of gospel themes.

Cross checking the new topic list (produced by the writing committee) against the curriculum worksheet ensured that the manual would meet the prerogative of Correlation: to see that topics are used appropriately, with adequate coverage, and that the gospel is

taught correctly. The right side of the worksheet breaks into four columns, each made into two sub-columns. Each of the four columns represents a manual in the *Teachings* series, with Brigham Young, Joseph F. Smith, Harold B. Lee titles already covered. Where the columns crossed the rows of categories a check and number might be found, indicating that, for example, chapter twenty-eight of Young “secondarily” treated “Pure and uplifting language,” or that chapter nine of Lee addressed “primarily” “Gaining an understanding of the priesthood.” The following diagram is a facsimile of the CPW.

Presidents of the Church with “primary” and “secondary” treatment of topic marked by an X in the column and appropriate chapter number

<i>Topic List</i>	<i>B. Young</i>		<i>J.F. Smith</i>		<i>H.B. Lee</i>	
1.0 Home and Family Relationships	X 23					
1.0.1 Managing Finances			X 18			
1.0.4 Respecting Property						X 3
1.0.4.2 Having Family Prayer						
2.0 Gospel Principles and Doctrines		X			X 5	
2.1 Faith				X 11		
2.2.3 Apostasy						

The list of topics runs to nine full pages

Against the topic list they developed, the Taylor committee was to cross-reference the worksheet to ensure adequate coverage of important topics, and hedge against overlap of less important categories. Here the effortless discovery of abstract affinity that marks the post-Correlated church went to work. The Taylor committee correlated “Kingdom of God” (from their list) for instance, with several points, among them point 2.3.2.9, “Obedience, enduring to the end”; 2.3.2.18 “Revelation”; 2.3.2.51 “The kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God”; and 2.3.3 “The Millennium.” (The numbers refer to placement on the CPW outline, thus 2.4.3 refers to category two, sub-category four, point three.) “Agency,” an abstract noun unsurprisingly matched with ten points, ranging from “Understanding oneself and developing self esteem” (2.2.4.1), and “Lucifer in the Premortal world,” (2.3.1.3), to “The consequences of sin” (2.3.2.58). “Liberty and Personal Freedom” alone did not find a match on the CPW.

By anchoring the topic list developed for the Taylor manual to the CPW, the original work of Lee’s All-Church Coordinating Committee was again set in motion. Their first task was to ensure coverage of the gospel, reduce redundancy, and simplify the curriculum of the Church. But there is more going on than simplification and efficiency. The planning sheet provides a contemporarily contrived diagram of sorts for the framing of every manual produced. There is a definite looseness to the cross referencing of committee topic with CPW curriculum categories. This looseness facilitates quote-pulling by topic. If one could not find an appropriate quote for “revelation,” one could turn to the Worksheet and find related topics to search in Taylor’s works. Ideas could move back and forth. As part of this process, phrases in the Curriculum Planning Worksheet filled out the abstract topic and subtopic lists generated by the Taylor

committee (e.g., “Our Eternal Missionary Calling” from CPW linked to committee’s “Setting a Good Example”). A sort of timeless pastiche emerges which is taken to Taylor’s historical utterances. Moreover, by matching the committee’s master list to the CPW, one could extract related single-noun categories, like “Revelation,” which was correlated to manual topic “The Gospel,” or when CPW category “The Sacrament” was matched to Taylor committee topic “Gathering of Zion.” The sheer randomness of much of the cross-listing is staggering, and it ensures that the manual will be read by contemporary eyes, whose view of Taylor is as a timeless idea himself.

By oscillating between abstract noun and timeless phrase—as drawn from the master list CPW—and tying these to the manual outline, the writing committee created a net, as it were, to capture the right size and species of quotes from Taylor. Moreover, this net functions as an interpretive diagram, a contextual framework for historical passages eventually plugged into the chapters grown from the topic list. The framework invoked correlation at two points: the CPW worksheet itself was produced by the Curriculum Department under the eye of Correlation, and the topic lists developed by members of the writing committee grew from themes filtered down to rank-and-file over the past decades. All texts come through Correlation, have done so for three decades, and so texts now presuppose its work as well.

The Mind and Correlation

The method of cross-referencing the topic list developed by the committee, with the Correlation-devised Curriculum Worksheet, is further implicated in the transition to mind-body dualism. As traced in the prior chapters, doctrines trended toward abstraction, with unthinkable analogies resulting. Though beauty, the gods, and humanity were for

nineteenth century Saints all of the same material, *spirit* or *intelligence*, and thus could be analogized from the here-and-now, by the mid-twentieth century God (as title made being) had become separate from and largely unthinkable for man. God like his world and works resided in the realm of pure abstraction: God is light, love, truth, etc. After the transition to mind-body dualism all Mormons had to work with, if they were to philosophize about the heavens or times other than now, were abstract concepts likened unto other abstractions.

Correlation fortunately devised a method for finding similarities between abstractions: Zion was like the Correlation program because they had some connection with “the pure in heart,” while Brigham Young was made to teach Family Home Evening because he asked Mormons to teach their children. What Correlation achieved, and wrote into its Curriculum Worksheet, was a codification of the dualism into which Mormonism fell, with a new doctrinal platform based on finding similarities between words (made into “concepts”). Hence, with the Curriculum Worksheet matched against the topic list, obedience relates to revelation, proselytizing missions to setting a good example, or love of neighbor with Brotherhood or Sisterhood. None of these terms is located in a thinkable metaphysic, for after Correlation codified the dualism they could only be placed in relations of synonymy, as with Mormon theologian McConkie’s rendering of spirit and intelligence. The timelessness of the terms used in the CWP and topic list, moreover, motivated a highly “conceptualized” reading of the words of Taylor, as if he too worked with, or conceptualized, correlated topics. In effect, the vagueness of the CPW allows the committee’s “list of ideas” to generate historically contrived, but

presently acceptable, seemingly historically rooted manuals. History could thus be made familiarized, and change erased.

Preparation: Refined Ideas

Following the cross-referencing meeting, the Chair emailed the group, asking them to “come with ideas regarding two additional chapters. Develop potential subtopics for those ideas if possible” (Rich to Committee 9.8.1999). He then confessed, “I am still impressed with the concept of Personal Accountability....Think about that concept and any others that might be included...” He concluded, “This is a great cause with which we have been entrusted.” Perhaps catching the implications of the Chair being “impressed” with the “concept of Personal Accountability,” one member replied, “I am impressed with the topic temperance and/or patience.” He would ask for embodiments of this topic as he strained to read and write his assigned chapters amid waning health and increased responsibilities at work. No doubt the time volunteered for the project was vast, and some committee members were more accustomed to writing for the genre. The manual’s production was not made easier by the fact that Taylor was by leagues the most prolific writer of all church presidents.

By September 1999 the committee submitted for review outlines of twenty-four lessons. The outlines were edited by the Correlation Committee. Though the Taylor outlines begin with a note that the chapter lessons were presented alphabetically rather than sequentially, the anonymous Correlation reviewer suggested moving the chapter on “Culture,” which on the list of course followed two chapters on “the Atonement,” down to lesson number seven. The reviewer also suggested alternate words (even *alternate* was replaced by *variation*); on my copy, for example, scratching the term “godhood,” on the

subheading “Progress toward Godhood,” and writing the less suggestive (though certainly more orthodox) “exaltation,” as its replacement. The term “faith” was to replace “trust” in one subheading, and under “Economy of the Kingdom” the committee was warned to “avoid use of the term ‘United Order’” (which carries now a fundamentalist and/or communist ring to it). Most of the remarks are simply pedantic questions, such as when the reviewer asked, “Is the gospel a principle?” in response to a subheading drawn from a direct quote (unrecognized by the reviewer) of Taylor’s that called the gospel a “living, abiding, eternal, and unchangeable principle.” These criticisms were to be expected, for Correlation is known for fastidious editing, such as suggesting “enjoyed” rather than “loved” to make the sentence, “I just love Christmas,” conform to their rule that only humans and God can be the object of love. Indeed, some Mormons in the know joke that the Second Coming of Christ would have happened long ago, but the Lord has not been able to get it through Correlation. The writing committee’s proposed topic list, however, was given rather insignificant scrutiny, for the topics were already arrayed according to the correlated Curriculum Worksheet.

December saw final approval of chapters, subheadings, and their order, with the slight alteration that chapters on Liberty and the Governments of Men “be replaced since some of the concepts presented therein may be seen as contrary to governments in some areas of the world” (“Memorandum,” Rich to Josiah and Wade 12.3.1999). In their place the committee chair recommended adding a section on “Law-abiding Citizens,” and “Sustaining Government Authority.” These chapters were to draw from quotes from Taylor that admonished Saints to not to fight government authority, to observe the laws, and just be good citizens. These new chapters were to be followed by a section on

“Religious Tolerance,” with quotes from Taylor arguing for absolute freedom of worship (implicitly including, of course, plural marriage). As we saw in the first part of this dissertation, Taylor’s recommendations for good citizenship and religious freedom were rather more complicated, more so than a few quotes can accurately portray.³⁷ Nevertheless, the work was not to be historical, rather, it was to present “the gospel” as taught by Taylor, a gospel which by 1999 had been correlated for nearly two generations of Mormons, who were taught that Truth does not change, and hence, the framework of topics could be carried to historical speech events uttered to targeted audiences.

Production: Ideas turned into texts, and vice versa

With the topic-chapter framework in place, the committee was ready to take on Taylor’s corpus and begin writing. The seemingly timeless interpretive framework that was the matched Curriculum Worksheet categories and committee-developed topic list was thus taken to discourses and writings of John Taylor in order to find instances wherein he too taught these principles, topics, ideas, concepts. Committee members were given some access to LDS Church archives, though Taylor’s private papers remained for the most part off limits. Among his published work the committee requested articles from *Times and Season*, *Millennial Star*, *The Wasp*, *Nauvoo Neighbor*, *The Mormon*, and *Deseret News* (Taylor had edited most of these periodicals at some point); as well as various pamphlets (some in French), four books written by Taylor, compilations of Taylor’s writing by more recent editors (these figure prominently in the final product), and miscellaneous talks, poems, and even, as the list indicated, copies of a “revelation” or two which are now published only by Fundamentalist presses.

³⁷ The last chapter of the published work was on “The Kingdom of God,” with an obviously more docile and future-oriented presentation than Taylor had a mind to teach the Saints.

Committee members apparently read a great deal of these articles, many more, as usual, than appeared in the final product. Most of the articles requested came from the *Journal of Discourses*, an official church publication (of twenty six volumes) that carried transcribed speeches by leaders to Saints in England from the 1850s to the 1880s. It remains to this day a relatively taboo resource, however, largely because it carries talks by Brigham Young, Orson Pratt, and other leaders teaching doctrines no longer orthodox (described in earlier chapters). (In response to Fundamentalist use of the collection to point to changes in doctrines regarding God and polygamy, the Church apparently made some efforts to destroy the *Journal of Discourses* in the 1960s and 1970s.) The committee made great use of the *Discourses*, though they were informed that references to it in the final text would be converted to refer to similar texts in the Deseret News (Wade to Rich 10.6.1999). Hence no references are found in the final manual to the *Journal of Discourses*, presumably because leaders did not want members stumbling upon non-correlated speeches in the same volume as Taylor's referenced talk.

It is faith (now meaning *belief*) that is being built by these manuals, the committee was often told, not a body of historically reconstructed materials. An introductory history of Taylor's life was included, however. The member assigned to write the chapter informed the Chair by email that, "I have dealt GENTLY with polygamy and with the anti-polygamy crusade. It seems that for a prophet who died in hiding on the underground, a fugitive from justice, who it is widely known had a price on his head...we had better deal honestly with polygamy or have no history section in our manual at all" (John to Rich, 3.16.2000). His chapter would be revised as he expected for, "ultimately this is not a question for us to decide on our level—put [sic] I have tried to GENTLY and

tastefully deal with it in an innocuous way.” The published “Historical Summary” mentioned the passage of the 1882 Edmunds Act, and gave 1885 as the year when Taylor “Receives word during a visit to California that federal officials have ordered his arrest for practicing polygamy” (TPC 2001:x). It then explains, “On 1 February, preaches his last public sermon and, in hopes of limiting the persecution against the Church by federal authorities, goes into hiding.” The next entry in the summary notes Taylor’s death. His “marriages” are noted as “important” events which the text admits it “omits.” Given the near absolute silence about polygamy in contemporary LDS circles, and its general disrepute, even this vague mention of Taylor’s plural marriages was bold. One other passage in the published text mentions polygamy in relation to Taylor: “Rather than turn away from the Lord’s instructions regarding plural marriage, President Taylor chose to go into hiding as a way to obey the Lord and hopefully decrease the persecution against the Church” (ibid.:xxiii). The action was made emblematic of the contemporary core doctrine of obedience, a generalization which veils the disobedience of fleeing from feds in order to practice plural marriage.

The committee wrote through the new year, and delivered final drafts in February 2000. They worked separately on individual chapters, and submitted these for review. The editors had a difficult task, made more so by frequent invocation of “the Spirit” as a guide in writing. The authors were called to write as a church service, and blessed by Church authorities to “have the Spirit,” who along with John Taylor would assist their work. The members I spoke with treated the production of the manual as a spiritual experience with few comparisons, and mentioned that indeed they felt inspired when writing. As the Chair wrote to the curriculum managers, “We on the committee invest

our heart and soul into these chapters and sometimes let some pride get in the way of changes. On the other hand, we have often felt a distinct closeness to the Spirit as we have made certain choices on selecting quotes, section orders, etc” (Rich to Josiah, 2.2000). Editing thus potentially became as much a commentary about one’s understanding of the gospel as it was, potentially, about one’s access to, or discernment of, divine assistance. The editors had to suggest changes with finesse and diplomacy, and failing that, invoked “The Priesthood Brethren” as the final source of suggested revision. In the end, of course, committee members recognized that theirs was a rare privilege, cumbersome though it be, and that they served, as was often mentioned, at the call of the Lord.

These seven Saints assisted in the production of a text studied by millions for a year, with no doubt good coming of their work. As the Chair put it, quoting John Taylor, “God is on our side, and as long as we maintain our position before him, I will risk the balance.” That is to say, even if the final product came up short of their ideals, the divine head of the Church, Jesus Christ, would make up the difference. Given the lack of training that characterized writing committee members, the vast reading required, bureaucratic oversight, and the enormous responsibility of producing a text read by millions as if approved by God himself, it may not be too much to call the production of the manual, on deadline no less, a miracle of sorts.

The Final Product in Analysis

I conclude this chapter with a look at the published work. As this text explicitly denies it is of the historical genre, criticism for its omissions would be misplaced. It is, however, covertly anachronistic, and this is accomplished by the poetics of the text as much as by

any quote or commentary. In this section I first address the overall structure of the book, then turn to its “suggestions for study,” and conclude with investigation into the placement of quotes. For this final part I consider how *(the) priesthood* is reframed by positioning of quotes under sub-headings and in relation to other quotes. *The Priesthood* thus shifts to fit contemporary readings.

First, one notices that no author is credited with the manual. The opening page simply is titled, “Teachings of the Presidents of the Church: John Taylor,” with the publisher “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” There is no speaker here other than John Taylor, with ventriloquational legitimacy granted by the Church. As one turns to the table of contents, there are twenty-four chapters listed. Nineteen of these were in the list of twenty four proposed by the writing committee in early September. Some lesson titles were slightly altered, as where lesson twenty-one inserted “Strengthening” before “Family,” and pluralized it. Lesson four, “Obedience, a Sacred Duty,” was originally proposed as “Obedience: The Key to Eternal Life,” while lesson twenty-three, proposed “Eternal Truths,” was published without the plural marker. Of those proposed which did not make the cut as complete chapters were, “Culture—an important part of this Life and Eternity,” “Love of Neighbor,” and two seeming politically dangerous lessons, “Liberty and Personal Freedom,” and “Laws of Land/Government of Man.” Among those chapters added to the final product were, “Integrity,” “Agency and Accountability,” “Strengthening our Relationship with God,” “Finding Joy in Life,” and “The Sabbath is a Holy Day.” These more general topics presumably drew from categories on the Curriculum Worksheet that encompassed the above omitted lessons (e.g., “Culture” and “Love of Neighbor” fall under “Finding Joy”).

The next pages introduce the manual and guide readers with its use. “This book,” it explains, “is intended to enhance each member’s understanding of gospel principles taught by President John Taylor” (ibid.:v-vi). The book could be used, according to its guide, for personal or family study, and for discussion in Sunday meetings. Teachers were requested to “focus on the content of the text and related scriptures and should apply these teachings to circumstances with which class members will be familiar.” “Sunday meetings,” it advises again, “should concentrate on gospel principles, personal examples that teach these principles, and testimonies of the truth.” The text stated it is “not necessary or recommended” that members purchase additional commentaries of reference works in order to benefit from the book. Historical reference mattered little, for the book says it “is not a history, but rather a compilation of gospel principles as taught by President John Taylor” (ibid.:vii). Despite this admission, some fourteen pages are devoted in an introductory chapter to the “Life and Ministry” of Taylor.

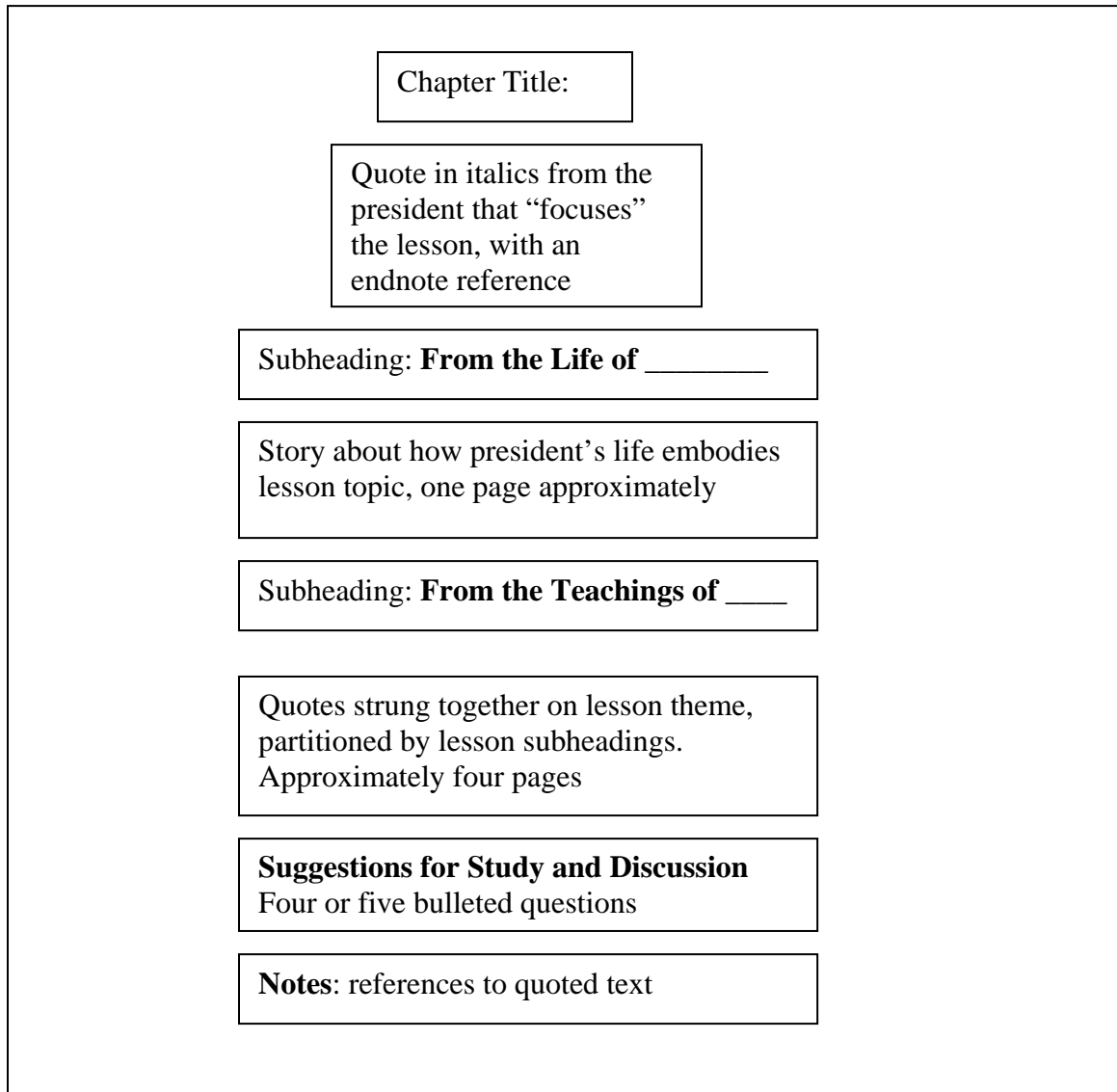
The narrative position taken in this introductory history is of the modern novelist, omniscient-narrator variety. The brief history moves between Taylor’s feelings and thoughts to his statements and actions, for example: “A deep and abiding devotion to and love for God were qualities that John Taylor developed as a child”; and in reference to a childhood vision, “Though he did not understand the prophetic nature that vision until later in his life, he continued to feel close to God throughout his teenage years”; or, “Feeling impressed that Elder Pratt was a man of God...” (ibid.:xii-xiv). The effect is to render Taylor’s heart and mind as accessible as his words and bodily deeds. This narration importantly establishes the grounding for the later quotes to come, for whether spoken or thought, the gospel principles presented here needed no further

contextualization: one cannot harbor secret thoughts, nor teach seeming contradictory doctrines or counsel in private.

The public nature of the quotes from Taylor, his sincere declarations in public of his beliefs and opinions, is further manifest in the cited references. Of a sample thirteen chapters, one hundred quotes are sourced to the *Deseret News*. These were nearly all originally read in the *Journal of Discourses*, but were converted to a safer, and more difficult to find, resource. Seventy-two references are to the work *Gospel Kingdom*, a compilation of Taylor's writings published in the 1940s, edited by then official church historian G. Homer Durham. Of the total two hundred citations, ten percent are drawn from Taylor's book, *Mediation and Atonement*, with a similar percentage pulled from B.H. Roberts's biography of Taylor. There are no private letters, diary entries, or meeting minutes cited in the book. It is a compilation of Taylor's approved teachings in public, many of which were presumably carefully edited in their day for public effect; though of course, which public, when, and where, is nowhere noted in the manual itself. The fact that these quotes were either originally spoken to some people, or written to an audience during some historical environment is of no consideration. It is not, again, a work of history, but a compilation of principles taught, decontextualized and, in their representation, correlated and synchronized with the present.

Props for Study and Discussion

Each of the twenty four chapters, as a general textual artifact, follows the format in the following schematic.



Each chapter concludes with four or five bulleted questions. A few of these are usually asked by the instructor during any lesson, and it is important, though seemingly unnecessary, to note that responses of some sort usually follow. That is to say, these questions generate public signs, rather than simply provoke thoughts in the minds of individual readers. The public signs, however, are those which represent these thoughts and acts, and lay them bare for public assessment. I present suggestions from seven chapters.

The questions posed by the text, and subsequently by the instructor using it as a course guide, are designed to pull into public that which might remain veiled. Chapter one asks, among similarly posed questions,

How does it help you to know that you are a child of God? How does this knowledge influence feelings about your own potential? In what ways does this knowledge influence your prayers?...What does it mean to you to 'contend earnestly' to fulfill your divine potential? (ibid.:9-10).

From chapter two is the following,

How can it help you to know that the gospel is eternal and unchangeable? How does this knowledge influence your beliefs and the decisions you make?...What have you done to receive a testimony of the gospel? What experiences have strengthened your testimony? What can we do to help ensure that the principles of the gospel continue to 'abide in us'? (ibid.:18-19).

Similar questions are asked in chapter four: "Why do you think the Lord desires us to be obedient?...What experiences have you had that have shown you the blessings of being obedient? Why do you think you feel better when you are obedient?" (ibid.:37). From chapter eleven: "Why do you think music is such an important part of our religious worship? How have the hymns of the Church comforted or strengthened you during times of trial?...What does it mean to you to feel 'joyful in the Lord'? What are some doctrines that bring you joy?" (ibid.:104). And from chapter twenty-two,

Reflect on your current trials. How can your attitude about your trials change the way you endure or overcome them? ...Why does the Savior fully understand our suffering? ...How can a knowledge of the Savior's suffering help us to be faithful in our trials? What can we do to more fully partake of the comfort and strength that Jesus offers? (ibid.).

That is sufficient to give a flavor of the questions posed by the manual.

What of the responses? I was not granted permission to record meetings, and so cannot give specifics, nor analyze them. I have heard enough, however, to know that the responses usually position themselves vis-à-vis the narrative footing presupposed by the

question. That is to say, answers invoke one's beliefs, attitudes, once private experiences, and deepest emotions about deity, family, and oneself. "I remember one time on my mission..." a response might begin, or, "At work the other day I had an experience that symbolized the meaning of..." Most answers are rather innocuous, though earnestly given. Only one hearer might respond, or others might also present their thoughts. There is no real dialogue, since all comments stem from one's individual mind, life, beliefs. The overall effect, then, is to bring out mind for public scrutiny in a series of soliloquies neither for gainsay nor further consideration. There is found in these discussions a seamless movement of ideas, or manifestation thereof, of timeless principles embodied in individual lives at any time.

The "suggestions for study and discussion" follow several pages of quotes from Taylor. Few questions, however, actually ask what Taylor said about the lesson theme. Typically one in five invokes Taylor's teachings. A question from chapter one quotes Taylor regarding, "our main object is to prepare ourselves, our posterity, and our progenitors for thrones, principalities and powers in the eternal worlds," and asks, "How can we remain focused on this objective as we pass through mortality?" Similarly, chapter two asks, "President Taylor taught that the gospel is intended to 'make all men free.' From what does the gospel free us? How can we help others understand that the gospel brings freedom rather than restrictions?" "What to you think President Taylor meant," chapter four asks, "when he said, 'We cannot run our own way and have the blessing of God'?" Finally, from chapter eleven, "President Taylor taught that God created the earth and its beauty for our enjoyment. What experiences have you had in which you found joy in the beauty of the earth and felt closer to the Lord?" These

questions merely presuppose that members, by rolling their eyes back, can reflect on the same concepts incidentally taught by Taylor. Each question breaks the teaching of Taylor from the man, and reinserts the phrase in the mind of the addressee. One need not wonder why this book does not even feign historicity, for the “concepts” presented therein are timeless, discoverable by anyone upon elicitation by the text.

The structure of each chapter replicates the post-Correlation overarching model of the cosmos. History is merely an emanation from an unchanging deity made mostly of thoughts. Each chapter begins with a quote, stripped of all contexts, with only an endnote indicating that someone uttered it, and then the text moves to a story involving Taylor. The story is designed, as the writing committee was informed, to “prepare the minds of readers for the topic of the chapter while simultaneously given [sic] them a feeling for his personality and character.” (Josiah to Glenn 12.15.1999). Hence just as Taylor’s life was emblematic of some abstract theme, *integrity*, *obedience*, or what have you, so the questions are designed to provoke a similar reflection in reader’s “minds.” Responses, from my experience, obligingly lay bare the private places of the readers-hearers, who furnish access to all in earshot; occasionally the mood in the room takes on the air of public confession. Thus discussion about the doctrines presented matches the narrative position taken by the text, and by the writing committee, on Taylor himself. Just as Taylor has no secret doctrines, no ironic public utterances, no “political rhetoric,” neither do the respondents, seemingly. The effect is to wrench Taylor from history and culture, and to make him little different from members today: a thinking-feeling being first, who approaches the divine mystery through mental-spiritual modes, experiencing divine principles timeless in their occurrence, and manifesting themselves only to the obedient.

That this effect follows from the questions when posed during Sunday meetings is evidenced by the findings of the Research Information Division's research report. They reported thoughts, feelings, attitudes of a large group of Mormons. Their report was made possible by the public presentation of mind and heart through the transparently reflective medium of language. Without this language ideology being written into the text, and enacted in the responses to questions posed by the text, assessment of its "implementation" and "effectiveness" could not follow. More than verbs of feeling and thinking, establishing a narrative position, however, are at work in the public presentation and apparent abolishing of secrecy in the modern LDS Church.

Pronouns of Collective Unconscious

I now address how pronouns create a similar effect of exposing collective experience and "cognitive processing." Readers may have noticed that the questions quoted above oscillate from second person (addressee) singular/plural "you" to first person (speaker-addressee inclusive) "we." In seven lesson suggestions analyzed, speaker-addressee inclusive pronouns were used fifty-four times, while addressee forms were used sixty-six times. Some questions even shifted from "you" to "we" in the same sentence, as if the speaker and the addressee were of the same mind. (Addressee-speaker exclusive forms were not nearly as common, with either *God* or *John Taylor* as typical third-person.) That English lost the marker for discriminating between singular and plural addressee pronouns (the classic T/V distinction, e.g., thou/you) no doubt plays some role in the effect of a unified audience, each being representative of the others and of the referential whole; this makes slippage to speaker-addressee "we" forms that much easier. The loose pronoun use must be placed in the language ideology which reads language as referring

to pre-existing, independently verifiable reality. Since the text has no designated author, teachers animate the text as its speaker, and step into the teachings of John Taylor along with their audience. With language merely reflecting, rather than creating, social reality, a unified mind becomes palpable.

There are other textual and cultural factors which participate in the reference to and creation of a sort of collective mind transparently open for assessment. First, these pronouns are subjects or objects of verbs of thinking or feeling, which in response to these questions makes one's feelings or beliefs just part of a larger manifestation, seemingly. Second, these responses are spoken in public, in an environment as non-confrontational as any therapy group. The mood of the questions, and their provoked responses, enables this neutralization of commentary and dialogue: Who's to say that the Atonement, for example, does not mean such-and-such to you? That is to say, the mood of the sentences allows for few wrong answers, since responses are to be pulled from one's own life, mind, experiences, rather than from the realm of agreed upon reality, the world of doctrines, facts, events. We saw this method, of running to the mind to avoid confrontation, in testimonies of women under cross-examination during polygamy trials. Here, obviously, though the form is the same, the effect differs. Rather than hide in the mind, by volunteering one's beliefs and private experiences one similarly maintains the illusion that there is nothing to hide, and certainly not through language.

Finally, there are social effects tied to responses. What one says in response to some "what do you think..." question, says more about one's spirituality, obedience, and integration in the faith than about some doctrine. Members are to replicate and embody already established timeless truth. Orthodox social persona is enacted in the endless

recirculation of similar questions and responses, for it is not the prerogative of rank-and-file to develop for public consumption new doctrines or interpretations. They are left finding examples of abstractions in their own lives. Indeed, one of the lauded effects of Correlation is the production of the same gospel everywhere one goes, regardless of congregation attended. Each meeting will be discussing the same topic, and, often, doing so in the same manner. This sameness is frequently mentioned as evidence of the gospel's, and by implication, the Church's, transcendence. It is as if the only way to approach the divine is through empty abstractions weaved into an endless sequence of similarities, with matter, bodies, the here-and-now only a place to find examples of abstractions descended. This lack of "philosophizing" about the gospel, and valorized repetition of beliefs, attitudes, and experiences has the effect of uniting the addressees with the text-speaker, for each seems to experience the same eternal verities in mundane life. The public taboo on innovation, moreover, simply makes a virtue of the unthinkable of deity and spirit which we observed in previous chapters. Modern Mormons have difficulty construing the heavens and the earth, the mind and body, in manner easy to Orson Pratt and Brigham Young, such that little discussion could continue in some realm open for disagreement.

Revising the Priesthood

Just as the manual is discussed in a manner that substantiates a dualistic cosmos (with mind more foundational than flesh), it also ventriloquates Taylor's thoughts on priesthood in a post-Correlation manner. Last chapter I argued that Correlation grounded the power of priesthood in the organization called informally, "the Priesthood." Here I explicate how this grounding occurs in the John Taylor manual used in quorums

and Relief Society meetings throughout 2001. In order to approach the manual's revision of priesthood, we must first recall some of the Correlation machinery discussed last chapter. Reading the Curriculum Planning Worksheet one notices section 3.0 is on "Priesthood and Church Government." Under this section are five subsections:

- 3.1 Gaining an understanding of the priesthood
- 3.2 Priesthood ordinances
- 3.3 Understanding general priesthood responsibilities
- 3.4 Understanding priesthood organization
- 3.5 Knowing the priesthood offices and their duties

Under 3.3 one finds the familiar list given by Harold B. Lee, announced as part of "Priesthood Correlation," with Home Teaching, Welfare, Genealogy, and other programs gathered under Lee's program now present on the CPW. 3.4 "Understanding Priesthood Organization" simply begins its sub-subsections with the smallest unit of the Church, "The family," and continues through wards, stakes, regions, to General offices. After "General offices" come priesthood departments and programs (in which Correlation would now fit), "Auxiliaries," such as Relief Society, and Church Educational System (for high school and college age Mormons). Other subsections treat priesthood similarly, with reference to aspects of church government. The Curriculum Worksheet clearly replicates post-Correlation reorganization of the priesthood as interlocked with the Church, and each point concerns some verb of continuous, timeless thinking.

Only the subtopic "The oath and covenant of the priesthood," under section 3.1, "Gaining an understanding of the Priesthood," presents priesthood operation (as power) which does not directly concern the LDS Church. The "oath and covenant of the priesthood" (the phrase comes from a revelation given to Joseph Smith) concerns one of the more mystical aspects of Mormonism, little discussed, and on the worksheet, not treated by any manual yet. Note that this alone of the subtopics under "Priesthood and

Church Government” describes a speech event. All other aspects of (the) priesthood on the CPW are directly tied to “Church government,” and concern one’s responsibility to understand it.

This is the structure against which the Taylor writing committee measured their text. They devoted two lessons to the priesthood: “Priesthood, the Government and Power of God,” and “The Responsibilities and Order of the Priesthood.” The task here is to demonstrate that a post-Correlation picture of priesthood power, as grounded in the priesthood organization of the LDS Church, is mapped onto quotes from Taylor treated in the manual. Could this mapping conceal a different representation of the priesthood with which Taylor worked? In order to answer this question I first consider a “Suggestion for study and discussion” which relies on a contemporary construal of “order.” I then turn to quotes from Taylor given the published manual to see how this construal hides more ambiguous usage of “order” by Taylor. Now that the transparency of the text is put into question, I turn to opening readings of “the priesthood.” Finally, this chapter concludes by returning to another “suggestion,” in order to see how the functioning of priesthood power is construed against Taylor’s statements.

The Priesthood Order, Order of the Priesthood, the Priesthood’s Orders

In the “Suggestions” for studying the lesson “The Responsibilities and Order of the Priesthood,” one finds the following question: “Why is it important that order exists within the priesthood? How can this order assist each of us in meeting the needs of those for whom we have responsibility?” (ibid.:136). One can find in the lesson six quotes attributed to Taylor under the subheading, “The priesthood has been organized according

to the order of God.” Perhaps one turned to the following quotes in order to answer the question:

- (1) If we perform our duties, each one of us in our proper position,
- (2) God gives us power to accomplish the object we have in view,
- (3) no matter what *it* is, or what priesthood we hold,
- (4) no matter whether *it* is the President of the Church, or the President of a stake,
- (5) a Bishop, a High Councilor, a High Priest, a Seventy, or an Elder...or Deacon;
- (6) no matter what, if *they* perform their duties with an eye single to the glory of God,
- (7) he will sustain them in their operations and administrations (ibid.:133, italics and lineation added).

This passage seems pretty easy to construe: deacons (usually twelve year old boys) will be sustained in their priesthood as much as the President of the Church would be, if both act appropriately. This is how Mormons now render “order of the Priesthood”: a hierarchical ordering of officers in the Church. Yet this simple reading relies on misconstrual of pronouns. The first use of “it” (line 3) refers to “the object we have in view,” clearly enough. The second one, following the same “no matter...,” (line 4) seems by parallelism to refer to “priesthood we hold.” But does Taylor substitute that second “it,” “priesthood we hold,” for the subsequent list of offices? This would be the post-Correlation reading; yet Taylor seems to draw a distinction between church offices, priesthood power, and duties. This reading is justified when we see Taylor retrace and repair this seeming convergence of office with power, as occurs in replicating the phrase, “no matter what,” (line 6) and following this with “if *they* perform.” This reading gives us three distinct matters mentioned by Taylor: duties, priesthood power, and church offices. Each is set off by “no matter...” (lines 3,4, and 6). Does this reading of a distinction between church offices, duties and power, which easily could be passed over and combined into one (within the LDS Church), find support in other quotes?

The above quote directly followed the subheading, “The priesthood has been organized according to the order of God.” One could read more about priesthood order by turning the page. I produce the text as found in the manual, with the exception of noted ellipses in brackets and italicized text.

You and I may violate our covenants, you and I may trample upon the principles of the Gospel and violate *the order of the Priesthood* and the commands of God, but[...]the holy angels and the ancient Priesthood that now live where God lives are all united together[...]And having thus organized, as I before stated, it is not for us to act as we may think individually, but as God shall dictate.

We have a regular *order to the Church*. You brethren, who hold the holy Priesthood, understand these things. Has God not given to every man a portion of His Spirit to profit withal? Yes. Has He not done more than this to the saints who are true and faithful? [...]But having this Spirit do we need others to guide us? Yes, all the time. Why? Because of the powers of darkness, the influence of Satan and the weakness of human nature. We need watchmen upon the towers of Zion, who are on the alert to look after the interests of Israel, and to see that God’s people do not go astray....All the officers necessary for the work of the ministry are to be found in the Church, and everything has been organized according to the *order of God* (ibid.:134-5).

Again, this quote seems unproblematic to contemporary Mormon doctrines. Violating the priesthood order means not being obedient to authorities, or attempting to usurp authority within the hierarchical order of the Church and its priesthood offices, which are organized on the pattern or order of God. One could violate this order simply by not obeying “priesthood leaders,” or by exercising authority beyond one’s office. Is another reading possible?

One must attend to how the original of this text was reformatted to the CPW and the presuppositions of Correlation. First, paragraphing was added to the original. That indentation establishes a metricized synonymy between the first “order of the priesthood” with newly indented “order to the Church.” The new paragraph ends with “order of God.” Do all these uses of *order* mean the same organizational ordering, an administrative structure, a hierarchical line of authority? Note that Taylor uses the first

“order of the priesthood” connected with “and the commands of God.” The first paragraph indeed ends with “as God shall dictate.” Is there a relationship here? Taylor was an accomplished orator, and concluding with restating the original point would have been natural. Reading this first use of “order” as a verb of speaking alters Taylor’s warning regarding the apparent sanctity of organizational boundaries of “the priesthood.”

Similarly, one could construe the last “order” as another verb of speaking: “everything has been organized according to the order of God.” Rather than an organizational pattern of “the priesthood” being an icon of the “order of God,” Taylor seems to suggest that the offices in the Church are organized by the “decree” of God. These exist so the “work of the ministry” can be done, not because they mirror the eternal administrative structure. Reading these as verbs of speaking, however, requires one to jump from the eternal realm of unchanging heavens, and work within the very much speech-event aware, oath-driven world of nineteenth century Mormonism. Only the second “order” appears to refer to the administrative structure of the Church (“order to the Church”).

By what other means does the post-Correlation view of priesthood get written into history? One sees this shift from many usages of “order” to a more streamlined, single bureaucratic referent in other stretches of quoted text. The initial quote under the above mentioned lesson subheading claims, “[The priesthood] is an order, as I understand it, that is introduced by the almighty and Him alone” (ibid.:133; brackets original). The committee inserted the brackets, which replaced the word “this” in the original *Journal of Discourses* (JD 22:7). Presupposing an earlier stretch of text, the deictic *this* referred to discussion of administrative authority, of “the various officers in the Church performing

their several duties with honor, integrity, and truthfulness before God,” as Taylor earlier put it. Each level of the Church should be able “to render an account to the Presidency of the Church; and the Presidency of the Church ought to be able at all times to render an account to their Heavenly Father.” At this point the quoted text in the manual picks up Taylor, and ends before Taylor discussed the relationship between authority in the Church and “free will,” which he called an eternal principle from God. Replacing “this” with “[The priesthood],” is only appropriate if the inserted text has the same effect on readers of the passage as the original term. In this case, “[The priesthood]” was made to stand for Taylor’s discussion of administrative authority in the Church, “the various officers” in it. Taylor seems to never use that inserted phrase to refer to officers of the Church; he uses it to refer to the power. Taylor rather was referring to an order of Church offices, a sequence of offices each responsible to account to a higher office. The inserted text changes the meaning of “order” entirely, into a stable hierarchy of priesthood leaders, rather than a sequence of accountings expected by church officers made in “order.”

One could read a similar quote a few pages earlier: “We are organized with apostles and prophets: with presidents and their counselors, with bishops and their counselors, with elders, priests, teachers and deacons. We are organized according to the order of God,” Taylor seemingly repeats, “and these very principles that look small to us emanate from God” (ibid.:132). Again, one could read this “order of God” as similar to the administrative offices in the Church, with its apostles, elders, etc. But another reading, with “order” replaced semantically by something like “decree,” reduces the heavenly image of the administrative structure of the Church, and instead grounds it in

divine decree emanating from God. The priesthood retains power nonetheless, but the administrative boundaries of the same named organization are not made to fit eternal, unchanging arrangements in heaven. A post-Correlation reading of this, however, lowers heavenly eternities onto the administrative lines of authority which Correlation reorganized.

Taylor's looser, pre-Correlation, configuration of priesthood makes it a power granted by divine decree—by “orders” from on high—rather than an organization cast in the Church in the image of the “order” of heavenly things. Taylor would not have presupposed such a divide between heaven and earth that required the Church to mirror the organization of the priesthood in the heavens.

Indeed, as seen presently, for Taylor priesthood power provided the intercourse that actually joined the two realms. The underground president described “the priesthood” as an order of beings, a class of divinely sanctioned benefactors. “The priesthood in the heavens,” Taylor taught, “*are* uniting with us to bring about these purposes [building Zion], and as *they* are governed by the same principle, that our works may agree...and that God's will (so far as we are concerned) may be done on the earth as it is done in heaven” (ibid.:122-3). Taylor's use of “are” rather than singular-subject marking “is,” sounds odd to contemporary Mormon ears. It means Taylor uses “the priesthood” here as a collective, personal noun (e.g., “The Utah Jazz *are* losing again”). Here we find another usage of “priesthood” that varies from current usage. Again Taylor explained, “in many instances the priesthood do not perform their duties, are not vigilant and faithful” (ibid.:125). Does this usage differ significantly from more modern, “the priesthood does not...is not....”?

Taylor was a careful, almost fastidious speaker, and an accomplished editor. He used in reference to “the priesthood” two grammatical forms, sometimes marking it as singular, sometimes plural. This indicates that for Taylor “the priesthood” not only referred to a power, and rarely (if ever) to the administrative authority of the LDS Church, but also to an order of beings united in some effort, like a team. His usage seems similar to current use of *the priesthood* to refer to all men ordained to exercise the power. The plurally marked usage, however, allows us to see Taylor’s third construal of the priesthood, an order of beings (similar to the Jesuit Order or Masonic Order). It is probably no coincidence that Masonry was described by Heber C. Kimball, a fellow leader of the Church with John Taylor, as “taken from priesthood, but has become degenerated” (Parley P. Pratt Papers, 6.17.1842). Construing the priesthood as an order, rather than merely having an order to it, allows to us to see how Taylor described this order as the link between heaven and earth (and not because of administrative order mirroring). The only hierarchy here was with the earthly order following the heavenly one. Each man holding the priesthood had the right to call on heavenly priesthood holders, because they were of the same order, on the same team.

If there was one governing principle for Taylor that concerned the priesthood, it was proportion. Taylor taught that priesthood is

The power of God delegated to intelligences in the heavens and to men on the earth; and when we arrive in the celestial kingdom of God, we shall find the most perfect order and harmony existing, because there is the perfect pattern, the most perfect order of government carried out, and when or wherever those principles have been developed in earth, in proportion as they have spread and been acted upon, just in that proportion have they produced blessings and salvation to the human family (ibid.:119).

Taylor explained, “the more the priesthood on earth becomes assimilated with and subject to the priesthood in the heavens the more of this power shall we possess”

(ibid.:120). With correlated eyes this passage makes perfect sense to contemporary Latter-day Saints. The administrative offices of the priesthood in the LDS Church follow the pattern of government in heaven, and this is whence blessings come; for a bishop to act in the authority of a Seventy would be to disrupt the divine order of heaven, just as much as it would for an elder to act as prophet in communing with the heavenly priesthood.

Yet, given a more independently contextualized reading (stripped from the manual's de- and re-contextualization), Taylor might also be suggesting a different arrangement between earth and heaven. It is entirely consistent, with a more careful reading, for Taylor to be stating that the power is given to men to build a kingdom for Gods here, and that as bearers of this priesthood act according to the decrees of the "ancient priesthood" now in heaven, earth becomes itself a heaven. What is drawn down is not merely an administrative structure, but the very kingdom and an ancient epoch. This power to link heaven and earth, for Taylor, is the source of life for the Church, and can run independently of it, for "to talk of a church without this [power] is to talk of a thing of naught—a dried fountain, a dead and withered tree" (ibid.:121). The potentially independent "order" of "the priesthood" gains more power as it conforms to the "orders" of the heavenly order, which orders have the effect, in part, of creating a pattern of things heavenly in things earthly. We saw in preceding chapters why an independent priesthood order is significant in pre-Correlation Mormonism: a schism and challenge to the LDS Church in the 1930s were based on claims to just an independent priesthood order.

The joining of heaven and earth which is differently ascribed to “the priesthood” was caught in the shift toward dualism that I have devoted several chapters detailing. Just as God became distant and unthinkable, “the priesthood” as a power became grounded, as it were, in the earthly structure of the Church’s administrative body. As a metaphysical principle indelibly linked to “intelligences” in the nineteenth century, priesthood power lost its place in the formerly monistic cosmos, and instead became read through the dualistic gospel of twentieth century Mormonism. This shift was codified in Correlation, whose products make discussion of priesthood authority (as power) outside the Church as unthinkable as a god with mortal consorts and interplanetary itinerary, gods who relied on power called priesthood similarly possessed by mortals.

Indeed, this shift from an Order following orders from above, to the organizational ordering that gives orders hierarchically funneled through administrative levels, can be seen in a suggestion for study. In a quote that concludes lesson fourteen (on the order of priesthood), Taylor refers to the passage from *Doctrine and Covenants* which I quoted at length last chapter, and which was a favorite of David O. McKay’s during Correlation. Taylor explains the passage, which recounts how priesthood power can be lost, thus: “But there is no priesthood of the Son of God that authorizes one man to oppress another or to intrude upon his rights in any way. There is no such thing in the category; it does not exist.” He then quotes the scriptural passage, and explains,

There is no authority associated with the Holy Priesthood except on the principle of persuasion, and no man has a right to plume himself upon any position he occupies in the Church, for he is simply a servant of God, and a servant of the people, and if any attempts to use any kind of arbitrary authority and act with any degree of unrighteousness God will hold that man to an account for it....We are here as saviors of men, not as tyrants and oppressors (ibid.:136).

How does the manual suggest one discuss this passage? Two questions are given. “What experiences have you had in which you were blessed for following the counsel of priesthood leaders, even when you didn’t understand or agree with the counsel at first?” And second, “Why does pride diminish or destroy one’s priesthood power? How can we develop the character traits of kindness, longsuffering, forbearance, and love unfeigned? In what ways can we encourage these traits among those with whom we serve in the Church?” Priesthood as a power which is misused in domination of other wills becomes, in the suggestions for discussion, misplaced only on account of one’s pride, and certainly this pride would be “exemplified” in resisting the counsel of “priesthood leaders,” a phrase John Taylor never used, by my reading.

Correlated eyes, however, read “the priesthood” as referring to both the power and the administrative body in the LDS Church, with the power limited to the administrative body, at least so far as earthly things are concerned. The heavenly pattern is already manifest in the administrative organization. Thus the organization of offices held by bearers of the priesthood is made into the mediator between man and God, heaven and earth. Membership in the LDS Church becomes tantamount to residence in the Kingdom of God, two spheres which Taylor often described as entirely distinct (but both linked to heaven). What correlation did, while calling others to write “gospel principles” rather than “history,” was covertly read back a dualistic model of the cosmos onto historical texts which were not so divided. Hence, the priesthood order (collective group of mortal and divine humans) was eliminated, and the term was made to refer to administrative order of the priesthood, while the order of God, the divine decree to man individually or collectively, was also made to refer to the organizational “order of the

priesthood.” This phrase by 1960 referred exclusively to the jurisdiction of and lines of authority among offices, such as Deacon or Seventy, in the LDS Church.

Conclusion

It was no mysterious occult force that produced these effects. The Curriculum Planning Worksheet, as we saw, develops the topic of “priesthood” only in relationship with “Church government.” As a result of matching their topic list against this worksheet, the writing committee located passages that referred to the priesthood and used the term “order” in such a way that concealed the different possible readings. Here is an intratextual phenomenon which can only be seen historically, that is to say, compared against historical contexts, evidenced in semiotic matters (e.g., grammatical features) which could easily be missed, but when seen allows a slender wedge to be inserted into Mormon history. One finds verification of this reading of Taylor’s various usages of “the priesthood” in preceding chapters. Mormon “Fundamentalists” relied on the distinction between Church and Priesthood (power), and developed their own histories around the possibility of driving a wedge between the Church, its administrative body, and priesthood power. They too, however, relied on a distinction between mind and body, heaven and earth, and turned priesthood in to a substance which could be extracted from the LDS Church, and reinserted into the priesthood (leadership) of the new Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Just one of a series of manuals used church-wide, the John Taylor manual conceals great transitions in Mormon history. Though it may not be positioned in the genre of history, it no doubt does history. Its makes history a seamless march of ideas designed for personal consumption and regurgitation. This it does through textual

apparatuses which invoke the call of Correlation and its priesthood reorganization. What allows the majority of concealments to slide by the average Latter-day Saint is the mapping of a dualistic cosmos onto the nineteenth century, as it were, monistic order. Escaping the obligation to attend to speech events, contexts of utterance, and words as slippery signs is achieved by reading history as a mental phenomenon, as at bottom about beliefs, concepts, ideas, core feelings, rather than as comprised of the means of making these representations public (i.e., signs). This modern historiographic footing is not merely unattached to historical process, however.

As recounted in earlier chapters, misreading is a product of the very history, lived by Taylor and others, whose conflict, careful discursive strategies, and recourse to the private sphere were washed out by later framing. Underground tactics were used in the public sphere to draw distinctions between belief in and practice of polygamy, while Mormon papers similarly represented in public the effectiveness of mind during trials. Believing in polygamy became enough for most Mormons, though a remnant applied Underground interpretive frameworks to cast suspicion on statements that declared the end of polygamy. These Mormons eventually provided the basis for Fundamentalism as a discursive movement. Lorin Woolley's tale of a secret 1886 meeting fit perfectly into this movement, and provided it with justification for organizing independent of the LDS Church. The Church for its part responded by claiming that the priesthood was inseparable from the LDS Church's organization called *the priesthood*.

All this schism and argument presupposed the mind-body dualism cultivated in Mormonism with the end of public declarations that enjoined the practice of plural marriage. By the time Correlation comes on the scene, all is divided, with the exception

of abstractions, and it is here that Correlation runs the table, as it were, of the LDS Church. It reconnected abstractions and made these the ontological foundation for speaking about the heavens and humanity's relation to such. Dualism and hierarchy, unthinkable abstractions, and obedience to authority were rationalized, naturalized, and mapped back onto men and women whose lives often ended while fighting for the right to disobey men's government in order to remain in fellowship with the order of heaven. As Wilford Woodruff wrote on the last day of 1885 about the value of an oath, and of the consequences of faithlessness:

This year Ends with the prison crowded with the Leading Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Because of Obeying the Celestial Law of God in the Patriarchal Order of Marriage And the presidency of the Church and Twelve Apostles & Many other Leading Men are in Exile for our Religion And we are now Approaching 1886 with the whole United States Government united at war against us including the Supreme Court President, Cabinet & both Houses of Congress seem now Determined to Mob us under the form of Law...And Nothing but the God of Heaven Can save us. But the God of Heaven will save his people and protect his Church Zion & Kingdom and Fight the battles of his Saints and Destroy our Enemies in his own time & way. He has said it & He will do it...The hour of Gods Judgment has Come. Let our Nation prepare for that which awaits Her (Woodruff 8:351).

Many Conclusions: On Modern History

John Taylor and George Q. Cannon (unseated from Congress as a result of the Edmunds Act), went into hiding immediately following a blistering sermon in February 1885. Alongside these men rode L. John Nuttall, secretary and scribe for the Mormon President. After three years of hiding, Nuttall wrote, "Many scenes have transpired since that day which will be written by the future Historian. I have done, by the blessing of the Lord, a good deal towards it." (Nuttall 2.1.1888). Cannon commented that the "proceedings of these wretches, when properly described...will furnish a terrible chapter and will bear comparison with the hideous cruelty which was shown by the Inquisition in the treatment

of its subjects.” (Cannon to Smith 5.21.1887). Indeed, a sense of history-making was palpable among the Saints: This was, perhaps, the last great trial before the millennium of peace when the Kingdom of God would destroy America.

John M. Whittaker, Assistant Church Historian wrote during the raids that “some day the history of these hectic days will be written and as the truth is revealed it will be one of the most interesting and inspiring periods of church history, if the truth is revealed as it is taking place today,” and later mining the same vein, “a great epoch, story or drama will be written by some historian that will be priceless, revealing hidden facts unknown today by the general public.” (Whittaker 2:4). As such, “it will be worth reading, and re-reading. People will hardly believe such things ever happened.” As Annie Tanner’s polygamist father stated, “We are making history” (Tanner 1983:76). Mormons during the 1880s were not only aware of history, but aimed to reverse its course and to restore human society to an era of universal peace and love. To do that they concealed much, hoping to abide the storm until a new dawn. But not all could wait, and statehood pulled the underground apart, and Mormonism was never the same.

Modern historians likewise write of the 1880s as an “axial age,” among them the late dean of Mormon History and former LDS Church Historian, Leonard Arrington, who wrote that the trial of the raids was “even greater than that of Jackson County, Far West, and Nauvoo,” sacred in Mormon memory as high-points of persecution (1993:354-56). “Under federal pressure,” he admitted, “the goal of the kingdom would have to be tragically revised, or largely abandoned.” Arrington notes that despite a seemingly insignificant sum of approximately one thousand convictions for polygamy-related crimes between 1884-1893, “these hardly measure the magnitude of the effect of the

[Edmunds] Act upon Mormon society.” Hardy agrees with others that “in the drama of Mormon transformation, our attention must be shifted backwards from 1890,” to the immediately preceding decade (1992:55). Despite these claims from contemporary historians, and the wishes of Undergrounders, the events of the 1880s remain largely veiled. Just as underground discourse, as I call it here, made interpretation very context-dependent, and thus limited the number of interpreters to a narrow few (and sometimes to no one) initiated into Underground norms, so it concealed the Underground and its effects from historians.

How did Mormonism go from a blatantly anti-American organization to one of the most ardent flag-waving institutions in half a century? The events of the 1880s opened abductive spaces, places where guesses had to be made about meaning, identity, the role of the heavens, the power of language, the value of belief. These abductions created new cultural frameworks for understanding human activity, including discourse, subjectivity, and history. At every step those abductions most widely circulated were of the sort being made by Americans as well. Mormons revised key doctrines reflexively positioned at the intersection of cultural hierarchy and cultural ontology. These revisions presupposed divisions between belief and practice, and over the first decades of the twentieth century Mormonism was rationalized, or as some have said, Americanized, at every level. The mind became the foundation of society, rather than speech.

The effects of modernization—in short, moving from speaking to thinking (and now feeling) as constituting the core of human subjectivity—remain mostly unexplored. The reason for this neglect is the same as for the neglect of the Underground. Modern language ideology foregrounds semantics and truth, making intention and sincerity the

axes of reckoning meaning. Language ideologies, as reflexive cultural ontologies that describe linguistic material, are written into history as one writes history, thus erasing their development as semiotic phenomena. Recovering the effects of modernizing abductions (and certain language ideologies constitute one very important effect), requires one to step outside, as it were, modern history and its doctrines of language. One must attend to discourse as a reflexive and creative phenomenon in its own right, for only by so doing does one reconstruct modernity at the very site of creation, and of destruction.

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