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Combining Faithfulness with Learning: Avoiding the Path of Secularization at
Brigham Young University

Joseph Gordon Daines

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

Combining Faithfulness with Learning: Avoiding the Path of Secularization at Brigham Young University

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Doctor of Education

Most research universities in the United States began as religiously affiliated institutions. Beginning in the late 19th century and continuing over the course of the 20th century, the vast majority of these institutions engaged in a process of secularization through which faith moved from the center of academic life to the periphery. This paper elucidates a conceptual framework for understanding how and why Brigham Young University did not follow the path of secularization that so many research universities, originally religious in nature, pursued. It examines the steps that the university and its sponsoring institution (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) took during the mid-1930s and 1940s to ensure that the university maintained its religious affiliation. These actions laid a firm foundation upon which the university rests today.

Keywords: secularization, church related colleges, religious education, religious factors

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I would also like to thank the administrative leadership of the Harold B. Lee Library for supporting me as I participated in my doctoral program. They generously provided time and resources to enable me to be successful. Jennifer Pastenbaugh, University Librarian, encouraged me to consider pursuing a doctorate and consistently expressed genuine interest in what I was doing. Russ Taylor, Associate University Librarian for Special Collections, has been a mentor and friend from the day that I began working in the Special Collections department. I would also like to express appreciation to my colleagues in Special Collections who put up with my occasional absences as I worked on my dissertation. They are extraordinary individuals who care deeply about their work and I am grateful for the opportunity to work with each of them.

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DESCRIPTION OF DISSERTATION CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

This manuscript is presented in the format of the hybrid dissertation. The hybrid format focuses on producing a journal-ready manuscript which is considered by the dissertation committee to be ready for submission for publication. Therefore, this dissertation does not have chapters in the traditional dissertation format. The manuscript focuses on the presentation of the scholarly article. This hybrid dissertation also includes appended materials. Appendix A includes an expanded literature review, and Appendix B includes an expanded methods section. Appendix C includes evidence of IRB approval. The required journal style format is Chicago Manual of Style (16th edition), which will be used for the journal article portion of this manuscript (see Appendix D for the required journal format style requirements). This hybrid dissertation format contains three reference lists. The first reference list contains references for citations included in the journal-ready article. The second reference list contains references for citations included in the extended literature review. The final reference list at the end of this document (see Appendix E) contains references for all citations used in the journal article and appendices.

The targeted journal for this dissertation article is the *Journal of Mormon History (JMHS)*. The *JMHS* is sponsored and published by the Mormon History Association (MHA), which is the primary professional organization for the study of Mormon history in the United States. Members of the L. Tom Perry Special Collections in the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University are active participants in MHA and are frequent presenters at their annual conference. The target audience for the *JMHS* is composed of both academics and practitioners interested in the field of Mormon history. Articles submitted to the *JMHS* are vigorously peer-reviewed. The manuscript length for submission is approximately 10,000 words, including tables

and references. The manuscript in this hybrid dissertation targeted the journal's manuscript submission length.

DISSERTATION ARTICLE

I say, then, that if a University be, from the nature of the case, a place of instruction, where universal knowledge is professed, and if in a certain University, so called, the subject of Religion is excluded, one of two conclusions is inevitable,—either, on the one hand, that the province of Religion is very barren of real knowledge, or, on the other hand, that in such University one special and important branch of knowledge is omitted. I say, the advocate of such an institution must say this, or he must say that; he must own, either that little or nothing is known about the Supreme Being, or that his seat of learning calls itself what it is not.

Cardinal John Newman, *The Idea of a University*¹

The concept of a university from its very inception has included the notion that it is a place where all branches of learning are studied—both sacred and secular. The sacred and the secular were intertwined at the great medieval universities.² This strong connection continued in the New World. American higher education has its roots in religious communities. Most American research universities began as religiously affiliated colleges whose missions were to develop Christian character and foster faith in order to prepare men for the ministry or work in the government.³ Beginning in the late nineteenth century and continuing over the course of the twentieth century, the vast majority of these research universities abandoned their religious affiliations in the pursuit of academic excellence.⁴ By the early twenty-first century, it was only possible to identify nine research universities that claimed a religious affiliation out of the 207

¹ John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1907), 21.

² For more information on medieval universities see Alan B. Cobban, *The Medieval Universities: Their Development and Organization* (London: Methuen, 1975); Lowrie J. Daly, *The Medieval University, 1200–1400* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961); and Alan B. Cobban, *The Medieval English Universities: Oxford and Cambridge to c. 1500* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

³ Frederick Rudolph, *The American College and University: A History* (Athens, GA.: The University of Georgia Press, 1990), 6.

⁴ See George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Todd C. Ream, Michael Beaty, and Larry Lion, “Faith and Learning: Toward a Typology of Faculty Views at Religious Research Universities,” *Christian Higher Education* 3, no. 4 (2004): 349–72; and Arthur M. Cohen, *The Shaping of American Higher Education: Emergence and Growth of the Contemporary System* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998).

classified as high or very high research universities using the Carnegie Classification.⁵ Brigham Young University was one of these nine institutions.⁶

In many ways Brigham Young University is an outlier. Established as Brigham Young Academy in 1875 at a time when most research universities were beginning the process of shedding their religious affiliation, Brigham Young University spent most of the twentieth century becoming “more closely tied to its affiliated church and more intentionally religious than any of the remaining religious universities.”⁷ This paper elucidates a conceptual framework for understanding how and why Brigham Young University did not follow the path of secularization that so many research universities, originally religious in nature, pursued. It examines some of the foundational steps that the university and its sponsoring institution (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) took during the mid-1930s and 1940s to ensure that the university maintained its religious affiliation.⁸ These actions laid a firm foundation upon which the university rests today. Understanding their genesis provides the university with important guidance as it continues to face pressures to secularize.

⁵ Ream, Beaty, and Lion, “Faith and Learning”; and Alan L. Wilkins and David A. Whetten, “BYU and Religious Universities in a Secular Academic World,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 51, no 3 (2012): 5–52. The other institutions were Baylor University, Boston College, the Catholic University of America, Fordham University, Georgetown University, Loyola University Chicago, Notre Dame University, and Saint Louis University.

⁶ Brigham Young University is closely affiliated with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Church has a strong belief in the power of education. For more information on the relationship between the Church and education see “Mormons and Education,” Mormon Newsroom, accessed July 31, 2018, <https://www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/mormons-and-education-an-overview>.

⁷ Wilkins and Whetten, “BYU and Religious Universities in a Secular Academic World,” 5.

⁸ While this time period is covered in both Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., *Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years*, vols. 1–4 (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1975) and Gary J. Bergera and Ronald Priddis, *Brigham Young University: A House of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1985), their focus is not on the important actions taken by the university and the Church to prevent Brigham Young University from following the path of secularization. They also do not examine closely the key role that Howard S. McDonald played in the implementation of these actions. David B. Rimington, “An Historical Appraisal of Educational Development under Howard S. McDonald at Brigham Young University, 1945–1949,” (PhD diss., University of Southern California, 1982) examines McDonald as an educational leader and focuses on his efforts to accommodate the large influx of GIs following World War II. His focus is on university administration and not avoiding secularization. This article fills a gap in the literature by examining the unique efforts of the university and the Church during this time period to avoid secularization and it highlights the important role McDonald played in these efforts.

Secularization and Higher Education

Secularization is the process through which religious faith becomes marginalized in society. It is “observed in the decline of religious contents in the arts, in philosophy, in literature, and most important of all, in the rise of science as an autonomous, thoroughly secular perspective on the world.”⁹ It is a process of de-sacralization that involves the loss of consciousness of the holiness of life, not only in social structures but also in the private sphere.¹⁰ Secularization is the movement of society from a state in which it is almost impossible not to believe in God to one in which believing in God is simply one of many options.¹¹ Ultimately, secularization is a process through which the sacred is marginalized. This marginalization has had important implications for society in general and for higher education in particular.¹²

Secularization in higher education was a historical accomplishment, an achievement of specific groups of people with a specific agenda.¹³ It is directly connected with the pursuit of academic excellence and the ideal of open-minded inquiry as inherited from the Enlightenment through the model of the European research university.¹⁴ University leadership came to believe that these key concepts were incompatible with religion. The removal of religion from the core of universities to their periphery is the heart of secularization in the academy. Marsden describes this process as “the transformation from an era when organized Christianity and explicitly

⁹ Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1967), 107.

¹⁰ Ernst Benz, “Mormonism and the Secularization of Religions in the Modern World,” in *Mormonism: A Faith for All Cultures*, ed. F. LaMond Tullis (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 282–93.

¹¹ Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).

¹² Different justifications are given for the secularization of different aspects of society. This paper focuses on the secularization of education.

¹³ Christian Smith, “Introduction: Rethinking the Secularization of American Public Life,” in *The Secular Revolution: Power, Interests, and Conflict in the Secularization of American Public Life*, ed. Christian Smith (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 1–96.

¹⁴ James Arthur, “Faith and Secularisation in Religious Colleges and Universities,” *Journal of Beliefs & Values* 29, no. 3 (2008): 197–202; Peter Gay, *Age of Enlightenment* (New York: Time Incorporated, 1966); and Rick Wade, “The Enlightenment and Belief in God,” *Probe for Answers*. Last modified May 27, 2002, <https://probe.org/the-enlightenment-and-belief-in-god/>.

Christian ideals had a major role in the leading institutions of higher education to an era when they have almost none.”¹⁵

Several different explanations for why colleges and universities disaffiliated from their founding religious traditions exist. Marsden argues that the Protestant establishment, in an effort to accommodate growing religious pluralism in the United States while maintaining its leadership role in society, reduced its religious platform to social service and individualistic character building. This made it relatively easy for Protestant colleges and universities to marginalize their founding religious traditions, which led to the disestablishment of religion at these institutions. Established nonbelief became the dominant perspective in higher education.¹⁶ Smith agrees and argues that this process was intentional. He claims that “American public life was secularized by groups of rising scientific, academic, and literary intellectuals whose upward mobility—made possible by expanding industrial capitalism and an enlarging state—was obstructed by the Protestant establishment.”¹⁷ These individuals consciously sought to displace Protestantism’s authority and to advance themselves as a new, alternative cultural authority. Their efforts marginalized religion in higher education and led to the rise of the secular university. Catholic institutions of higher education are on a similar trajectory as their Protestant peers, though on a slightly delayed schedule. Changes to the governance structure and the nature of the faculty at these institutions have led to a troubled relationship between academia and the Catholic community.¹⁸ Burtchaell, on the other hand, sees the roots of secularization in the fact that the connection between a religious tradition and its university was often one of convenience.

¹⁵ George M. Marsden, “The Soul of the American University: A Historical Overview,” in *The Secularization of the Academy*, eds. George M. Marsden and Bradley J. Longfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 4–5.

¹⁶ Marsden, *The Soul of the American University*.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁸ John Van Engen, “Catholic Higher Education: Historic Past or Distinctive Future?,” in *The Challenge and Promise of a Catholic University*, ed. Theodore M. Hesburgh (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1994), 353–69.

It was easy to sever this connection in quest of institutional prestige and its associated money (government, private industrial donors, and tuition from students interested in graduating from legitimate universities).¹⁹

Benne posits a conceptual framework that explains why some institutions of higher education have managed to keep and strengthen the connections that bind them to the religious traditions that founded them. Central to this conceptual framework are a religious vision, ethos, and mission. This foundation is augmented by a governance board, faculty, and student body who are deeply invested in the religious tradition.²⁰ Benne's conceptual framework offers a useful lens for examining the connections between The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Brigham Young University.

Research universities that remain strongly connected with their religious affiliation have the following key elements in place: 1) a vision that highlights the value and role of religion on campus, 2) a mission statement that clearly reflects that vision, 3) a governance board that rigorously defends the vision and mission, 4) university leadership committed to successfully accomplishing the institution's mission, and 5) a university culture created by university leadership, faculty, and students that values the integration of the sacred and the secular—what Benne calls ethos. Each of these elements is crucial to maintaining a strong connection between a research institution and its sponsoring religious tradition. These elements are interdependent, and the weakening of one has important implications for the others.

¹⁹ James T. Burtchaell, *The Dying of the Light: The Disengagement of Colleges and Universities from Their Christian Churches* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1998). Financial resources eventually also play a role in the story of Brigham Young University and its connection to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints but not until after the actions described in this article established a firm connection between the two institutions.

²⁰ Robert Benne, *Quality with Soul: How Six Premier Colleges and Universities Keep Faith with Their Religious Traditions* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001).

Maintaining the connectedness between the varied components that drive a university's vision, mission, and ethos is not easy. The road to secularization occurred rapidly in the United States.²¹ While there is not just one reason that research universities have disaffiliated from their founding religious traditions, there are several challenges that drive the secularization process in higher education in general. Identifying and paying attention to those challenges can help a religiously affiliated university maintain its connections with its sponsoring religious tradition. These challenges include changes in the composition of governance boards, university leadership, faculty, and student body; a push for academic excellence and the ongoing secularization of scholarship; and a desire to be more like mainstream universities.

Each of these challenges exerts pressure on the key elements that allow a research university to remain connected to its sponsoring religious tradition and nudges them in the direction of secularization. However, secularization is not a foregone conclusion.

Brigham Young University²²

Brigham Young Academy was founded in 1875 as a reaction to what Brigham Young saw as the dangers of secular education. He fully intended the new school to consciously intermix the sacred and the secular.²³ President Young advised the first full-time principal, Karl G. Maeser, to teach secular subjects with the spirit of God.²⁴ Young had a specific vision for his new school. The deed of trust establishing the school specified that “all pupils shall be instructed

²¹ Marsden, *The Soul of the American University*.

²² Studying the history of an institution such as Brigham Young University requires access to corporate records. These corporate records are governed by various access policies and it is not always possible to obtain access to all of the records that could be potentially useful to nuancing the historical story. In the case of this study, the General Church Board of Education records and the records of the governing bodies of the Church were not accessible.

²³ For more information on the early history of Brigham Young University, see Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*; Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*; and E. Vance Randall, “Educating for Eternity: Higher Education and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice* 6, no. 4 (2003): 438–56.

²⁴ A. LeGrand Richards, *Called to Teach: The Legacy of Karl G. Maeser* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 2014).

in reading, penmanship, orthography, grammar, geography, and mathematics, together with such other branches as are usually taught in an academy of learning and the Old and New Testaments, the Book of Mormon, and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants shall be read and their doctrines inculcated in the Academy.”²⁵ The deed reflected Young’s belief that education involved the “liberal arts, high moral and ethical principles, and sound factual knowledge.”²⁶

Young explained the importance of a curriculum integrating the sacred and the secular to his son, Alfales, writing that the academy would be a place “at which the children of the Latter-day Saints can receive a good education unmixed with the pernicious, atheistic influences that are to be found in so many of the higher schools of the country.”²⁷ Young further emphasized the importance of this integration, telling Karl G. Maeser “that neither the alphabet nor the multiplication table were to be taught without the Spirit of God.”²⁸

Maeser devoted his administration to laying a firm foundation for an institution that consciously bathed secular subjects in the light of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. His students acknowledged his erudition, but they focused on his humility, love, and obedience to the prophet of the Lord when they described his influence on them. Maeser played a key role in successfully establishing an institution that has as its bedrock principle the integration of the sacred and the secular.²⁹

Founded to expressly integrate the sacred and the secular, Brigham Young Academy was not immune to the influences of secular education—particularly its emphasis on academic

²⁵ Handwritten copy of the deed of trust, October 16, 1875, Brigham Young University Board of Trustees records, UA 6, Box 10, fd. 4, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Provo, Utah (hereafter Perry Special Collections), 1–3.

²⁶ James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1992), 360.

²⁷ Photocopy of a letter from Brigham Young to Alfales Young, October 20, 1875, Centennial History Committee records, UA 566, Box 17, fd. 1, Perry Special Collections.

²⁸ Brigham Young Academy building dedicatory services, 1892, UA SC 33, Perry Special Collections, 2.

²⁹ For more on Maeser’s role in the early Brigham Young Academy, see Richards, *Called to Teach*.

excellence. Maeser's successor, Benjamin Cluff Jr., was educated at the University of Michigan and was heavily influenced by conceptions of the modern university. He was particularly interested in improving the academic stature of the school. He received permission from the Board of Trustees to change the institution's name in 1903 to Brigham Young University. Cluff also worked diligently to bring many of the leading educators with whom he had interacted such as Francis Parker and John Dewey to Utah to teach the faculty at the university.³⁰

Cluff's efforts to create a modern university modeled after eastern institutions of higher education troubled Church leaders, and they spent the first half of the twentieth century struggling toward a vision for what a distinctive Latter-day Saint university should look like. They did not completely reject the modern university's emphasis on academic excellence. However, they firmly believed that the secular path being charted by these modern universities was not appropriate for a Church-sponsored school.³¹ The competing concepts of academic excellence and orthodoxy created a tension that flared up many times during the first half of the twentieth century. Church leaders' efforts to mold Brigham Young University into their vision of what a faith-based university should be began to take hold in the late 1930s and early 1940s. These efforts accelerated with the appointment of Howard S. McDonald as president of the university in 1945. It is useful to provide some brief historical context prior to delving into McDonald's administration.

The modernism crisis of 1911 was the first clash in the struggle to determine whether Brigham Young University would become a modern university in the image of its eastern peers

³⁰ Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 1:211–378; Brian Q. Cannon, “Shaping BYU: The Presidential Administration and Legacy of Benjamin Cluff Jr.,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (2009): 4–40.

³¹ Thomas W. Simpson, *American Universities and the Birth of Modern Mormonism, 1867-1940* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press), 54–91.

or a faith-based institution dedicated to academic excellence. The controversy had its roots in President George H. Brimhall's efforts to improve the quality of the faculty at Brigham Young University. President Brimhall had hired two pairs of brothers—the Chamberlains (Ralph and William) and the Petersons (Joseph and Henry)—because of their academic credentials, and he encouraged them to challenge students to think deeply about difficult issues. The Chamberlains and Petersons boasted academic degrees from Harvard, Cornell, and the University of Chicago and were steeped in the pedagogy of the modern university. They aimed to improve the academic quality of a Brigham Young University education by adapting concepts and methods in use at the universities where they had studied. They were widely regarded as excellent teachers. However, Church leaders soon began to receive complaints that they were teaching Biblical higher criticism and evolution amongst other controversial topics. These teachings challenged orthodox Church teachings, and Church leaders advised President Brimhall to ask that the Petersons and the Chamberlains stop teaching them. They were unwilling to do so, and so the Church Board of Education took matters into its own hands. They censured the faculty members and asked them to resign. Three of the four did so when they realized that President Brimhall was going to choose to support Church leaders over the faculty members' claims to academic freedom.³² This incident had a chilling effect on academic freedom and impacted the university's ability to attract qualified scholars for nearly a decade.³³

Changes in Church leadership and educational policy in the early 1920s led to a revival of efforts to make Brigham Young University a modern university—one that espoused academic

³² For more on the modernism crisis and its American context, see Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 1:418–33; Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 134–48; Simpson, *American Universities*, 69–80; Richard Sherlock, “Campus in Crisis: BYU’s earliest conflict between secular knowledge and religious belief,” *Sunstone* 10, no. 5 (1985): 30–35, and Clyde D. Ford, “Modernism and Mormonism: James E. Talmage’s Jesus the Christ and Early Twentieth-century Mormon Responses to Biblical Criticism,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 41, no. 4 (2008): 96–120, 196.

³³ Simpson, *American Universities*, 85–86.

excellence and spiritual strength. Many of these changes were the result of Latter-day Saints with advanced degrees joining the ranks of Church leadership in positions where they could impact Church policy and attitudes. These leaders included John A. Widtsoe, James E. Talmage, Joseph F. Merrill, Franklin L. West, and Richard S. Lyman—all of whom served as Commissioner of Church Education or were members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles³⁴. These leaders advocated for “Mormon students and teachers to keep abreast of broader scholarly developments in the fields of pedagogy, psychology, sociology, biblical studies, and the history of Christianity.”³⁵ They oversaw the hiring of Franklin S. Harris as president of Brigham Young University in 1921 and allowed him latitude to build an academically excellent university.

Harris was the university’s first president to hold a doctoral degree (from Cornell University), and he quickly recognized the importance of improving the academics of the institution. However, he first had to ensure the university’s survival as the Church retrenched from the educational network of schools focused on integrating religious and secular education that it had built in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1909 Brigham Young University was named as the Church Teachers’ College, and this made the institution central to the Church’s educational plans.³⁶ It did not, however, guarantee that the university would survive the Church’s move to reduce its involvement in primary, secondary, and higher education.³⁷ Harris successfully reoriented the university’s mission to produce both teachers and leaders for

³⁴ The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles is the second highest governing body of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

³⁵ Simpson, *American Universities*, 92.

³⁶ Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 1: 398-401.

³⁷ For more information on the Church’s move to reduce its focus on primary and secondary education in favor of a religious education program see, Scott C. Esplin, “Education in Transition: Church and State Relationships in Utah Education, 1888-1933” (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 2006).

the Church and its developing religious education program, and this enabled the university to survive.³⁸

Convinced that the university was not going to be closed, Harris turned his attention to academic excellence. He recognized the need to improve the physical facilities of the campus and the quality of the faculty teaching there. He submitted an ambitious plan to the Church's Commission of Education and went to work.³⁹ A new library building was completed in 1925, and the university was first accredited as a college in the 1920s.⁴⁰ In the mid-1920s and 1930s, Harris sent faculty members back east to strengthen their academic training. Many of the faculty studied religion at the University of Chicago. The concepts and ideas that they brought back to Brigham Young University began to concern many Church leaders—particularly in light of the growing secularization of the American academy and the marginalization of religious experience on college campuses. As the academic qualifications of the faculty increased, many of these faculty members felt qualified to attempt to reconcile the worlds of religion and science. Their efforts were viewed by Church leaders as attempts to move into areas of Church doctrine that were not their concern.⁴¹

Church leaders were also apprehensive because the university's pursuit of academic excellence raised the possibility that the institution might follow the path of the University of Utah. A focus on academic excellence had quickly led the school down the path of

³⁸ For more information on the changes to the Church's educational network in the 1920s, see J. Gordon Daines III, "Charting the Future of Brigham Young University: Franklin S. Harris and the Changing Landscape of the Church's Educational Network, 1921–1926," *BYU Studies Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (2006): 69–98.

³⁹ The Church Commission of Education consisted of the Commissioner of Education, his two counselors, and the Superintendent of Church schools.

⁴⁰ For more information on the Harris' efforts to get Brigham Young University accredited, see J. Gordon Daines III, "'The Vision That You Have . . . Augurs Well for the Development of Still Better Things': The Role of Accreditation in Securing the Future of Brigham Young University, 1921–1928," *BYU Studies Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (2010): 63–92.

⁴¹ For more on the university's efforts to walk the fine line between academic freedom and orthodoxy, see Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 2:262–69.

secularization.⁴² The University of Deseret's first president, John R. Park, intended to build a full-fledged university modeled after those of the east. He also staffed the university with faculty who had been educated in the east and who were familiar with those institutions. Park was firmly convinced that mixing sectarianism and public education was a bad thing, and the territorial legislature agreed that the school should remain free from sectarian teaching or control. The focus of the university was academic excellence, and this focus led it to become a secular university. Church leaders' experience with the University of Utah colored their views about academic excellence and its role in secularization.⁴³

Church leaders visited Brigham Young University on multiple occasions in the 1930s to reiterate that the university was to be an example of faithfulness to Church ideals. This emphasis concerned many faculty members who worried that academic freedom would be curtailed, and several left the university.⁴⁴ An address given by President J. Reuben Clark Jr., a member of the First Presidency of the Church, to educators in the Church's educational network also highlighted the tension between the sacred and the secular.⁴⁵ He pointed out that the primary responsibility of teachers in the Church system, including those at Brigham Young University, was to strengthen the Christian faith of the students that they interacted with.⁴⁶ This address had, and continues to have, important ramifications for institutions of higher education in the Church

⁴² Ray L. DeBoer, "A Historical Study of Mormon Education and the Influence of Its Philosophy on Public Education in Utah" (PhD diss., University of Denver, 1951). The University of Deseret is the predecessor of the University of Utah.

⁴³ For more on the secularization of the University of Utah and its impact on Church leaders, see Joseph H. Jeppson, "The Secularization of the University of Utah, to 1920," (PhD diss., University of California, 1973), 123–28 and 323–41, and Ralph V. Chamberlain, *The University of Utah: A History of Its First Hundred Years, 1850 to 1950* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1960), 133–99.

⁴⁴ Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 2:262–69.

⁴⁵ The First Presidency is the highest governing body of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and is comprised of the president of the Church and two counselors.

⁴⁶ J. Reuben Clark, Jr., *The Charted Course of the Church in Education* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1938).

Educational System.⁴⁷ It gives clear guidance on how these institutions should balance the sacred and the secular, with a clear priority on the sacred.

President Franklin S. Harris resigned as president of Brigham Young University in 1945 to become president of the Utah State Agricultural College. Church leadership appreciated his efforts to strengthen the university but also felt that the quest for academic excellence needed to be tempered by refocusing on the spiritual dimensions of education. Thomas Simpson has argued that “the success of Mormon scholars, women and men, has filled the Saints with pride, but it has also left church leaders anxious to defend their authority. In the twentieth century, fierce, protracted battles ensued over academic freedom, scientific evolution, and the historicity of Mormonism’s sacred past. As a result, education became the main battleground in the twentieth-century war to define Mormon identity, the struggle for the soul of modern Mormonism.”⁴⁸ Brigham Young University was an important site of these struggles, and many of the Church’s actions to tie the university closer to itself must be understood in this light.

Beginning in the mid-1930s and continuing through the 1940s, the university and its sponsor, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, took a number of important steps to create a situation where the university could be academically excellent and spiritually strengthening. These steps, which tied the university closer to the Church and set the university on its current course, included the following: leaders of the Church articulated a clear vision for the university; the university’s governance board came firmly under the control of the Church; the Church selected a leader in Howard S. McDonald, whom they believed would be able to

⁴⁷ S. C. Esplin, “Charting the Course: President Clark’s Charge to Religious Educators,” *Religious Educator* 7, no. 1 (2006): 103–19. The Church Educational System consists of the institutions run by the Church that provide religious and secular education for Latter-day Saint students at the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary levels. The system includes the seminary and institute program as well as the Church’s universities.

⁴⁸ Simpson, *American Universities*, 3.

carry out their vision;⁴⁹ President McDonald emphasized the importance of the faculty and their connection to the Church; the student body grew; and a strong campus culture developed that was centered on strengthening the faith of everyone involved with Brigham Young University.

A Vision for Brigham Young University

Church leaders have consistently reaffirmed the vision for Brigham Young University established by Brigham Young. This was especially true in the 1930s and 1940s, when the university and the Church strengthened their mutually beneficial connection. In an address to university students and faculty in 1937, David O. McKay, then serving as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, stated that “Brigham Young University is primarily a religious institution. It was established for the sole purpose of associating with the facts of science, art, literature, and philosophy with the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Even more specifically, its purpose is to teach the gospel as it has been revealed in this age to the Prophet Joseph Smith and other leaders who have succeeded him. . . . It is the aim of this university to make students *feel* that life is never more noble and beautiful than when it conforms to the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”⁵⁰ J. Reuben Clark Jr. re-emphasized the dual nature of Brigham Young University at the inauguration of Howard S. McDonald as the university’s fifth president in 1945. He said, “The university has a dual function, a dual aim and purpose—secular learning, the lesser value, and spiritual development, the greater.”⁵¹ He challenged McDonald to continue the university’s pursuit of academic excellence and told him that “we look confidently forward to an

⁴⁹ For more information on the circumstances of McDonald’s appointment, see Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 2:425–26; Franklin S. Harris, “The New President Howard S. McDonald,” *News and Bits from Your BYU Friends*, 1–4; and Rimington, *An Historical Appraisal*.

⁵⁰ David O. McKay, “The Church University,” in *Educating Zion*, eds. John W. Welch and Don E. Norton (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1996), 10–11; emphasis in original.

⁵¹ J. Reuben Clark, Jr., *The Mission of Brigham Young University: Inaugural Charge* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1949), 10.

increased spirituality in this school.”⁵² It was clear that the pursuit of academic excellence in an environment of faith was the expectation of Church leadership.

Clark and McKay were attempting to reset the trajectory of Brigham Young University toward a focus on the spiritual nature of education. They were concerned about the influence that secular institutions of higher education were having on Church members. They felt that faculty who had been educated at these institutions were introducing ideas and concepts that threatened the unique mission of the university.⁵³ Church leadership expected the university to model how a faith-based institution could successfully integrate the sacred and the secular.

A Mission for Brigham Young University

While the university did not have a clearly articulated mission statement when Howard S. McDonald became president, Church leadership had clear expectations for the institution.⁵⁴ These expectations were not only communicated to President McDonald, but they were also communicated to local Church leaders. In a letter to stake and mission presidents,⁵⁵ the First Presidency of the Church stated that the university’s function was to “foster education and learning in accordance with Church Standards. Its crowning purpose, of course, is to graduate men and women who have also faith in the Church, who appreciate its great purposes, and who have a personal testimony of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”⁵⁶

The university’s current mission statement, codified in 1981, captures the essence of the expectations that Church leadership had, and continue to have, for Brigham Young University.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 14.

⁵³ For more information on the uneasy relationship between the Church and eastern higher education, see Simpson, *American Universities*.

⁵⁴ The university’s first formal mission statement was drafted and approved by the Board of Trustees in 1981 under the direction of President Jeffrey R. Holland.

⁵⁵ Stakes are an organizational structure of the Church that consist of five to twelve congregations called wards or branches. Missions are an organizational structure of the Church that oversee the Church’s proselytizing efforts.

⁵⁶ The First Presidency to Presidents of Stakes and Missions, February 25, 1947, Office of the President records, UA 1087, Box 10, fd. 7, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Provo, Utah (hereafter President records).

The mission of the university is “to assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life. That assistance should provide a period of intensive learning in a stimulating setting where a commitment to excellence is expected and the full realization of human potential is pursued.”⁵⁷ The mission outlines four major educational goals for the institution: 1) all students should be taught the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, 2) students should receive a broad university education, 3) students should receive instruction in the special fields of their choice, and 4) students and faculty will be encouraged to participate in scholarly research and creative endeavors. The mission statement is often accompanied by a document titled “Aims of a BYU Education.”⁵⁸ The Aims state that a “BYU education should be 1) spiritually strengthening, 2) intellectually enlarging, and 3) character building, leading to 4) lifelong learning and service.”⁵⁹ This document articulates how the vision for the university developed by Church leaders is put into practical effect at the university. Members of the university community are expected to support the mission and work to ensure that it is successfully attained.

Having a clear vision and an accompanying mission created a strong connection between the university and its sponsoring faith-based tradition, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This connection was strengthened when the university’s governance board came under the direct control of the Church.

Governance Board

The deed establishing Brigham Young Academy named “six prominent men of Utah County as Trustees—Abraham Owen Smoot, Myron Tanner, Leonard Harrington, Harvey H.

⁵⁷ Brigham Young University, *The Mission of Brigham Young University and the Aims of a BYU Education* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 2014), 1.

⁵⁸ The Aims of a BYU Education were developed under the direction of John S. Tanner, Associate Academic Vice President for Undergraduate and International Education, and made available in 1995.

⁵⁹ Brigham Young University, *The Mission of Brigham Young University*, 5.

Cluff, Wilson Dusenberry, and William Bringhamst” and Martha Jane Knowlton Coray was to “represent women’s interests on the Board.”⁶⁰ The newly installed trustees were charged with developing an institution that integrated the sacred and the secular. They were responsible for implementing the vision of the institution as articulated by Brigham Young. The Board played an important role in guiding the growth of the institution following the death of Brigham Young in 1877. It is important to note that the Board was not formally affiliated with the Church, nor was the new school.

This changed in 1896 when the Church incorporated the Academy. The Academy had been struggling financially for several years, and the original Board of Trustees had made numerous pleas for the Church to incorporate the school and to absorb its debts. Unfortunately for the Academy, the Church was not in a position to financially do so for a number of years. In July 1896 the Church agreed to the Board’s proposal that the Academy be incorporated. The Articles of Incorporation explained the school’s financial straits and indicated that the First Presidency of the Church was willing to assume responsibility for the school. The articles also established a new Board of Trustees. The new board was composed of twelve individuals who would be appointed by the First Presidency of the Church, and the articles stipulated that “at least three of the twelve directors must be descendants of Brigham Young.”⁶¹ Board members continued to be drawn largely from Utah County. This change strengthened the ties binding the school to the Church and laid the groundwork for even greater changes down the road.

The Church moved to strengthen the ties between itself and the university in 1939, when the Board of Trustees was reorganized yet again. Church leadership had begun exploring the possibility of eliminating local boards of education and consolidating them into the General

⁶⁰ Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 1:65.

⁶¹ Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 2:245.

Board of Education in 1938. By late 1938 the decision had been made to proceed. There were two major purposes for this action: 1) economies of scale, and 2) to ensure that the institutions were complying with the vision that Church leaders had for their schools.⁶² Franklin L. West, Church Commissioner of Education, wrote to President Franklin S. Harris to let him know that “the First Presidency have now sent out letters to the Ricks College and L.D.S. Business College boards of trustees relieving them of their duties and making the General Church Board operative at those institutions. You remember Brother [Stephen L] Richards recommended, and I believe the Board approved as the logical procedure, that the B.Y.U. Board meet and officially disband, thereby closing their books.”⁶³ This would allow the First Presidency to appoint a new Board of Trustees.

Formal organization of the new board took place on February 2, 1939. The new board included “all three members of the First Presidency and seven members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.”⁶⁴ This was a significant move because it placed the leadership of the Church in firm control of the destiny of Brigham Young University. Church leadership would provide firm guidance and direction to the institution and work assiduously to ensure that it met its charge to be spiritually strengthening and academically enlightening. This important step occurred at the same time that the majority of American universities were deliberately breaking the ties that bound them to their faith-based origins.

University Leadership

In late 1944, President Harris informed the faculty of the university that he had accepted the presidency of the Utah State Agricultural College, effective July 1, 1945. Harris’s departure

⁶² Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 2:367–68.

⁶³ Franklin L. West to Franklin S. Harris, December 13, 1938, Franklin L. West papers, UA 536, Box 1, fd. 7, Perry Special Collections, Provo, Utah (hereafter the West papers).

⁶⁴ Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 2:363.

gave the Board of Trustees an opportunity to further strengthen the relationship between Brigham Young University and the Church. They asked Commissioner West to put together a list of individuals to be considered for the presidency of the university. He compiled a list that consisted of prominent LDS academicians—all of whom held doctoral degrees and had college teaching experience. Among these individuals were George Albert Smith Jr., G. ElRoy Nelson, A. C. Lambert, A. Ray Olpin,⁶⁵ Henry Eyring, and Harold Glen Clark.⁶⁶ While educational background was important, the Board of Trustees was most interested in candidates' attitudes towards the Church. This was reflective of their interest in realigning the balance of the sacred and the secular at the university. West went out of his way to gather this information for the Board of Trustees, writing letters to close associates and local Church leaders. Each letter included a variation of the question that West asked President Edward E. Drury Jr. about G. ElRoy Nelson. He wrote, "Do you know this brother, and what can you tell me concerning his attitude and loyalty to the Church, his faith in its doctrines, and his disposition to work in and affiliate with the same?"⁶⁷ West was confident that he had put together a quality pool of potential candidates who could strengthen the university spiritually and continue to build it academically. He was surprised by the decision to appoint Howard S. McDonald as the university's fifth president.

West was not the only person surprised by McDonald's appointment. McDonald himself wrote to Edgar M. Kahn in September that "the appointment to this position during the spring term came as a great surprise."⁶⁸ McDonald was a graduate of the Utah State Agricultural

⁶⁵ Olpin would go on to become president of the University of Utah.

⁶⁶ "Candidates for B.Y.U. Pres. Correspondence, 1944–1945," West papers, UA 536, Box 1, fd. 9, Perry Special Collections.

⁶⁷ Franklin L. West to Edwin E. Drury, Jr., December 22, 1944, West papers, UA 536, Box 1, fd. 9, Perry Special Collections.

⁶⁸ Howard S. McDonald to Edgar M. Kahn, September 13, 1945, President records, UA 1087, Box 2, fd. 4, Perry Special Collections.

College who had gone to California to attend the University of California at Berkeley. He began his professional career in California and had worked for the Unified School District in San Francisco for a number of years. He had recently returned to Utah as superintendent of the Salt Lake City School District in 1944. He had been in this position less than a year when he was summoned to a meeting with President J. Reuben Clark, Jr. At this meeting, President Clark informed him that “the First Presidency was looking for a man to take the Presidency of Brigham Young University. . . . He asked me to accept the position.”⁶⁹ McDonald asked for a week to think over the opportunity. He accepted the position on March 12, 1945.

Church leaders were interested in adjusting the balance between academic excellence and spirituality on campus. They were attempting to find an appropriate middle ground between the modern university and a faith-based institution.⁷⁰ McDonald was selected as president of the university because the Board of Trustees believed that his background as a stake president “could bring a strong religious emphasis to the school.”⁷¹ McDonald accepted this responsibility and worked diligently to augment the university’s spirituality.

McDonald also felt that academics were important to the university and worked to provide students with an excellent education. He wrote to members of the Salt Lake City School District that “my new position as President of Brigham Young University will not take me very far from Salt Lake City and my great ambition will be to train competent teachers for Salt Lake City and other school districts of the state.”⁷² McDonald also immediately began to work with the Board of Trustees to develop a building program that would allow the university to meet the

⁶⁹ Howard S. McDonald, *Brief Autobiography* (Los Alamitos, Calif.: Howard S. McDonald, 1969), 57.

⁷⁰ See Rimington, *An Historical Appraisal*, and Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 2:416–25.

⁷¹ Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 2:425–26.

⁷² Howard S. McDonald to fellow workers, June 2, 1945, President records, UA 1087, Box 1, fd. 1, Perry Special Collections.

needs of the expected influx of students resulting from the passage of the GI Bill in 1944. On September 12th the board authorized President McDonald to “prepare plans for the growth of the Campus.”⁷³ However, the board was still concerned about the resources being dedicated to the university, and after approving the construction of a science building, they voted in 1947 to “recommend to the Board of Trustees that the University proceed with the construction of the Science Building, doing only the minimum amount of work that would make possible occupancy of the building.”⁷⁴

McDonald’s appointment signaled the Church’s commitment to its vision that the dominant feature of Brigham Young University was to be its spiritual emphasis. They also remained committed to building a strong academic program at the university. Brigham Young University would be a hybrid of the modern university and faith-based institutions. Church leaders were determined to have an institution that integrated the sacred and the secular in meaningful ways.

Strengthening the University’s Ethos

McDonald took a number of steps to strengthen the university’s ethos. He understood that the university’s culture needed to integrate the sacred and the secular. He regularized interviews with General Authorities for faculty seeking to join the university, and he instituted moral worthiness interviews for students who wanted to study at the university. He also proposed that ecclesiastical units⁷⁵ of the Church be established on campus and strongly encouraged students and faculty to attend university devotionals. Each of these efforts was an attempt to strengthen

⁷³ Brigham Young University Board of Trustees meeting minutes, September 12, 1945, President records, UA 1087, Box 1, fd. 5, Perry Special Collections.

⁷⁴ Executive Committee of the Brigham Young University Board of Trustees meeting minutes, May 2, 1947, President records, UA 1087, Box 1, fd. 6, Perry Special Collections.

⁷⁵ These ecclesiastical units are called wards or branches depending on the size of the congregation.

the campus culture that valued the integration of the sacred and the secular. His actions were a direct response to the wishes of the Board of Trustees.

One of the most important things McDonald did was to implement procedures to better ensure that the faculty who taught at the university firmly believed in its mission to incorporate both the sacred and the secular. Elder John A. Widtsoe clearly articulated what Church leaders felt the role of faculty should be when he wrote to McDonald about potentially bringing Hugh B. Brown,⁷⁶ then president of the British Mission, to the university. He stated, “He is a good latter-day saint, who can be trusted to instill faith in the hearts of students and colleagues.”⁷⁷ In order to ensure that prospective faculty members could live up to this expectation, President McDonald began asking Church leaders to interview them and to report on their worthiness. George Albert Smith, then president of the Church, met with Robert E. Brailsford and reported that “he appears to be a man who understands what we need in our University. I was impressed with him to the extent that he answered my questions regarding what his feelings were about teaching under the influence of the spirit of the Lord. . . . The spirit he manifested while talking with him lead me to believe that he may be the kind of a man that you could employ at the B.Y.U.”⁷⁸ Albert E. Bowen, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, interviewed Brigham Madsen and reported that “my interview with him was very satisfactory and so far as his eligibility for a position on your faculty is concerned, with his faith and devotion to the Church and acceptance of its teachings, I find no criticism to offer. He ought to make you a good addition to the faculty.”⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Hugh B. Brown would become a member of the Church’s First Presidency in 1961.

⁷⁷ John A. Widtsoe to Howard S. McDonald, April 22, 1946, President records, UA 1087, Box 3, fd. 7, Perry Special Collections.

⁷⁸ George Albert Smith to Howard S. McDonald, September 10, 1947, President records, UA 1087, Box 10, fd. 6, Perry Special Collections.

⁷⁹ Albert E. Bowen to Howard S. McDonald, April 20, 1948, President records, UA 1087, Box 11, fd. 6, Perry Special Collections.

Toward the latter end of his administration, the practice of having General Authorities interview prospective faculty had become so routinized that President McDonald developed a form letter to give to prospective faculty in order to introduce them to the General Authorities who would interview them. The letter was addressed to “Dear Brother,” and a typical example read, “This is to introduce you to Mr. Robert J. Kest, whom I am considering for a position in the Speech Department at Brigham Young University. Would you please have an interview with him in regard to his testimony of the Gospel and report to me in writing how you consider him for a position here at the university?”⁸⁰ McDonald understood that faculty had a direct impact on the spiritual environment that the Board of Trustees wanted maintained at the university, and he believed that worthiness interviews were an important part in helping him to identify individuals who would spiritually and academically strengthen the campus.

McDonald further recognized that the students themselves played an important role in the spiritual environment of the campus. He tried a number of different things to ensure that students were appropriately contributing to this environment. He reported to Bishop Floyd J. Griffiths that “we have not made any specifications for scholarships for the coming year, only that those selected are worthy students and good Latter-Day Saints who will profit by a college education.”⁸¹ He also instituted worthiness interviews for prospective students. He reported to prospective student Bruce B. Peterson that “not only do we maintain that smoking and drinking should not be maintained on the campus, but all students who come to Brigham Young

⁸⁰ Howard S. McDonald to Dear Brother, May 26, 1948, President records, UA 1087, Box 14, fd. 4, Perry Special Collections.

⁸¹ Howard S. McDonald to Bishop Floyd J. Griffiths, February 25, 1946, President records, UA 1087, Box 4, fd. 6, Perry Special Collections.

University should live all the ideals of the Church. In fact, all new students must present a recommend from their bishop before they come to this Institution.”⁸²

By September 1946 McDonald had developed a character recommendation that was required for every student wishing to attend the university. He wrote Church Education Commissioner West explaining the need for the character recommendation, stating that “we want people to know that this is a Church Institution, and that the young people here have the highest of ideals. We do not want people here who have no desire to conform to the standards of the Church.”⁸³ McDonald also wrote to the Presiding Bishopric⁸⁴ asking that “when the meeting of the Bishops⁸⁵ is held at the Quarterly Conference, if it is possible I should appreciate having three or four minutes to explain this character recommendation. I feel that Bishops and Stake Presidents of the Church should feel a great responsibility in sending students to Brigham Young University. This is a Church Institution, established for the benefit of the members of the Church. We only want students here who are willing to live according to the standards of the Church.”⁸⁶

The spiritual qualifications of students were not the only thing that McDonald was interested in. He also wanted students who were academically qualified to be there. Wesley P. Lloyd, dean of students, expressed this best to Bishop Louis H. Osterich. He wrote, “We are especially interested in all young men of the Church who are making outstanding records in their high school and junior college work. We feel that Brigham Young University is an excellent place for them, and that they in turn can do much for the University and eventually for the

⁸² Howard S. McDonald to Elder Bruce B. Peterson, July 5, 1946, President records, UA 1087, Box 5, fd. 1, Perry Special Collections.

⁸³ Howard S. McDonald to Dr. Franklin L. West, September 6, 1946, President records, UA 1087, Box 6, fd. 2, Perry Special Collections.

⁸⁴ The Presiding Bishopric is one of the governing bodies of the Church.

⁸⁵ Bishops and branch presidents lead local congregations of members of the Church. Congregations led by bishops are called wards and congregations led by branch presidents are called branches.

⁸⁶ Howard S. McDonald to the Presiding Bishopric, September 6, 1946, President records, UA 1087, Box 6, fd. 1, Perry Special Collections.

Church.”⁸⁷ Lloyd reiterated this point in another letter. He wrote that “we are glad to learn that Miss Jean Wakefield, a junior in your high school is interested in attending B.Y.U. She will find here an excellent School of Commerce and a wholesome campus life. We are glad to have students with high standards and good academic training attend the university.”⁸⁸ Students interested in growing spiritually and academically were exactly the kind of students that President McDonald wanted at the university. They were also the kind of students that Church leaders wanted there. From their perspective, the point of having a university in the Church system was to provide members with opportunities to grow academically in a spiritually enriching environment.

The establishment of ecclesiastical units, or congregations referred to as wards or branches, of the Church on campus in the late 1940s was one of McDonald’s most significant accomplishments in terms of the university’s culture. In 1947 President McDonald and faculty member Golden Woolf recommended to Church leaders that “regular organized wards should be established on the campus of Brigham Young University.”⁸⁹ They wanted to provide students, especially military veterans, with opportunities to learn Church governance and to deepen their spirituality. They also hoped to strengthen the relationship between the Church and the university by creating formal organizational ties.

Church leaders were supportive of the concept but decided that organizing a branch on campus made more sense than organizing a ward. McDonald recollected that Church leaders chose to establish a branch because it provided students with leadership experience. He felt that

⁸⁷ Wesley P. Lloyd to Bishop Louis H. Osterich, March 30, 1948, President records, UA 1087, Box 16, fd. 1, Perry Special Collections.

⁸⁸ Wesley P. Lloyd to Donna Facer, April 13, 1948, President records, UA 1087, Box 15, fd. 3, Perry Special Collections.

⁸⁹ McDonald, *Brief Autobiography*, 96.

there was “something significant about that. . . . ‘We’ll give them a branch and have the Elders be Branch Presidents and counselors and so forth.’”⁹⁰ The first branch on campus was organized in June and a second branch was organized in August.⁹¹ McDonald was convinced that the experiment was a success. In an oral history with David B. Rimington he remarked that “more students were developing a religious attitude by having the branch. . . . Both branches, the unmarried students and also the married students and the little kiddies were being taught so it had a great influence.”⁹²

Church leaders saw the organization of ecclesiastical units on campus as an opportunity to accomplish a number of different things, including solidifying students’ connections to the Church, giving students leadership opportunities that would allow them to serve in the Church once they left Brigham Young University, and building the spirituality of the students. The branches also had the potential to influence the spirituality of the faculty as they interacted with students and participated in their Church activities. This connection and its importance was made explicit very early on as Golden Woolf was called to serve as president of the Provo East Stake, home to the newly created student branches.⁹³

Student participation in wards and stakes on campus has become one of the hallmarks of the Brigham Young University experience. Classrooms used for teaching secular subjects become places of worship on Sundays, and this helps to infuse the campus with a tangible connection between the sacred and secular.

⁹⁰ Howard S. McDonald, Kiefer Sauls, Leland Perry, and Karl Miller. Interview by James Clark. Personal interview. Provo, Utah. August 7–8, 1972; MSS OH 1926; Perry Special Collections.

⁹¹ Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 2:471–72.

⁹² Howard S. McDonald. Interview by David B. Rimington. Personal interview. Provo, Utah. June 13, 1979; MSS OH 1926; Perry Special Collections.

⁹³ Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 2:472.

Sunday worship is not the only sacralizing element of campus culture. University devotionals date back to the founding of the institution. Short, daily devotionals were inaugurated by Karl G. Maeser and continued by Benjamin Cluff Jr. and George H. Brimhall. Under Franklin S. Harris, devotionals went from daily to twice a week. Howard S. McDonald continued the devotional tradition. University leaders and faculty delivered the devotional addresses. Church leaders recognized the value of the devotionals and encouraged McDonald to continue holding them. ElRay L. Christiansen, president of the Logan Utah Temple, wrote that “it is a blessing that students have the opportunity to come together in devotional exercises as they do. To sing the songs of Zion, listen to something that is elevating and stimulating to them and to meet in common fellowship in a religious atmosphere.”⁹⁴ In fact, Church leaders felt so strongly about the devotionals that they often participated themselves. Christen Jensen, a faculty member, was assigned to make arrangements for the devotionals. In 1938 he wrote to Commissioner West inviting him to speak at one of the devotionals. In his letter he detailed the purposes of the devotionals and indicated some of the Church leaders who had participated. He wrote, “During the present year we are devoting these programs to a study of the leaders of our church. The addresses are both biographical and spiritual. We think it very desirable that our students should be given a knowledge of our church leaders by our General Authorities. Up to the present time President Grant, President Clark, and Elder Albert E. Bowen, and Bishop LeGrande Richards have appeared on our programs. Tomorrow Elder Melvin J. Ballard will be our speaker.”⁹⁵

⁹⁴ ElRay L. Christiansen to Howard S. McDonald, December 6, 1948, President records, UA 1087, Box 12, fd. 5, Perry Special Collections.

⁹⁵ Christen Jensen to Franklin L. West, December 13, 1938, West papers, UA 536, Box 1, fd. 7, Perry Special Collections.

President McDonald was very interested in having Church leaders participate in the devotionals. In 1946, he wrote to the Church's First Presidency that "I am most anxious that the students of Brigham Young University know the Presidency of the Church and the General Authorities. I would like them to feel your spirit and to know of your great testimony."⁹⁶ The First Presidency agreed with McDonald and spoke often to the student body and faculty. Following an address delivered by President Clark, McDonald wrote, "I wish to thank you for your presence on the Brigham Young University campus last Friday morning. It was a great pleasure to have you with us. All who were present enjoyed your remarks."⁹⁷

Today devotionals continue to be an important part of the campus culture at Brigham Young University. Church leaders, university leaders, and faculty have the opportunity to share their religious beliefs with students and to demonstrate what it means to be successful disciple-scholars.

Religion classes are another important part of campus culture. Faculty are expected to excel in their chosen disciplines and to bring gospel insights into the teaching of these secular subjects. However, Church leaders also consider it important that students learn the gospel of Jesus Christ, so classes dedicated exclusively to religious topics are a core part of the university's curriculum. These classes have a long history. University leadership and faculty were and are well aware that "parents send their young people here for a lot more than academic training. There is a fine spirit here which is desirable for any young person whether he is academically inclined or not. There is a Religious Education curriculum from which these young people can

⁹⁶ Howard S. McDonald to the First Presidency, May 3, 1946, President records, UA 1087, Box 3, fd. 5, Perry Special Collections.

⁹⁷ Howard S. McDonald to J. Reuben Clark, Jr., March 8, 1948, President records, UA 1087, Box 15, fd. 2, Perry Special Collections.

profit and most parents want their children to have the benefits of it.”⁹⁸ Church leadership views Brigham Young University primarily as an institution at which Latter-day Saint students can receive “religious instruction in LDS doctrine while receiving postsecondary education.”⁹⁹ McDonald used religion classes as a selling point to students considering studying at Brigham Young University. He told one prospective student that “here you will find an excellent offering in subjects related to your major field of interest and an opportunity to study courses in religion.”¹⁰⁰ The Dean of Students told another prospective student that “all students attending the University are expected to study courses in religion each quarter.”¹⁰¹

Branches, devotionals, and required religion courses formed the backbone of administrative efforts by President McDonald to create a campus ethos that valued the sacred and secular. Other elements of campus culture were equally important. Students actively participated in social activities and returning military veterans established an honor code to ensure that they got the education they desired by enforcing academic honesty.¹⁰² President McDonald highlighted these parts of campus culture to a prospective student. He wrote that “our assemblies, our religious services, and our rich offering of various students’ organizations and activities will

⁹⁸ Wilford D. Lee to Howard S. McDonald, January 8, 1948, President records, UA 1087, Box 11, fd. 4, Perry Special Collections.

⁹⁹ Rimington, *An Historical Appraisal*, 263.

¹⁰⁰ Howard S. McDonald to Robert G. Bennion, July 28, 1948, President records, UA 1087, Box 12, fd. 4, Perry Special Collections.

¹⁰¹ Wesley P. Lloyd to Miss Lola Armstrong, March 6, 1948, President records, UA 1087, Box 15, fd. 1, Perry Special Collections. Institutes of religion had been established in association with colleges and universities beginning in 1926, and there were only ten in operation at the time that McDonald became president of Brigham Young University. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. *By Study and Also by Faith: One Hundred Years of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2015), 603.

¹⁰² Initially established by students in 1947 to focus on academic integrity, the honor code grew to include gospel standards by 1949 (Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 2: 462, 488). The University Standards Office was created in 1960 to help administer the University's Honor Code along with the preexisting University Standards Committee and the student-run Honor Council. Brigham Young University Archives, “Brigham Young University. Standards Office,” L. Tom Perry Special Collections, accessed April 2, 2018. https://byuorg.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Brigham_Young_University_University_Standards_Office.

supplement your academic life in a way that will amply repay you for the genuine efforts which you will focus on your education.”¹⁰³

Through the creation of a campus culture, or ethos, that emphasized the importance of integrating the sacred and the secular, Howard S. McDonald was able to successfully attract faculty and students who were willing to uphold and defend the Church’s vision for the university. Their willingness to abide by Church standards and to work to integrate the sacred and the secular strengthened the university’s connection with the Church. The elements of campus culture that coalesced under President McDonald continue to be present on campus today.

While McDonald successfully accomplished many of the aims outlined by the Board of Trustees, he also came into conflict with the Board in other areas including finances. McDonald desired to facilitate the growth of the campus in order to accommodate more students and was continually pushing the Board to increase funding for the university. The Board of Trustees was extremely concerned about the state of the Church’s finances and were not willing to accede to McDonald’s requests for additional funding. These conflicts were a major part of why McDonald chose to leave the university in 1949.¹⁰⁴

Reaching into the Future

In 1975 Church President Spencer W. Kimball exhorted university leaders and faculty to remember that “we must not lose either our moorings or our sense of direction in the second century.”¹⁰⁵ This is the great challenge that confronts Brigham Young University as it faces

¹⁰³ Howard S. McDonald to Robert G. Bennion, July 28, 1948, President records, UA 1087, Box 12, fd. 4, Perry Special Collections.

¹⁰⁴ For more information, see Wilkinson, *Brigham Young University*, 2:479–82 and Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 19-22.

¹⁰⁵ Spencer W. Kimball, “Second-Century Address,” in *Educating Zion*, eds. John W. Welch and Don E. Norton (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1996), 69.

continued external and internal pressures to walk the path of secularization in order to participate in the American higher education community as an equal to its peers. This paper has shown how the actions taken by the Church and the university in the late 1930s and early 1940s provide a conceptual framework for how the university can successfully meet this challenge. At the heart of this conceptual framework is the establishment of an ethos that values the connection between the Church and the university.

Church leaders have clearly articulated the vision that they have for Brigham Young University: a place where the sacred and the secular are successfully intermingled. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, suggested when he was the president of the university that “the most conspicuous *and* fundamental reason for ‘a school Zion’ is plainly and simply because it is our theology.”¹⁰⁶ Elder Neal A. Maxwell has explained that “the infusion of gospel concepts confers a major advantage associated with being a disciple-scholar.”¹⁰⁷ It provides insights and understanding that allow individuals to better serve in the Church. This vision undergirds the stated mission of the university and reinforces the ethos that binds the university to the Church.

One of most significant actions taken by Church leaders in the late 1930s was changing the composition of the university’s Board of Trustees. The significance of the fact that the Board of Trustees continues to be composed of top Church leaders cannot be overstated. It allows them to ensure that the leadership selected for the university understands their vision and is willing to guide the university on its quest to realize this vision. President Henry B. Eyring, current Second Counselor in the First Presidency of the Church, admonished President Kevin J. Worthen at his

¹⁰⁶ Jeffrey R. Holland, “A School in Zion,” in *Educating Zion*, eds. John W. Welch and Don E. Norton (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1996), 146; emphasis in original. Education is a fundamental component of the theology of the Church.

¹⁰⁷ Neal A. Maxwell, “The Disciple-Scholar,” in *Learning in the Light of Faith: The Compatibility of Scholarship and Discipleship*, ed. Henry B. Eyring (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999), 1.

inauguration to “help move it [the university] upward on a steady path of progress that his distinguished predecessors have marked and followed.”¹⁰⁸

The leaders selected to guide the university continue to work diligently to ensure that the campus culture values the integration of the sacred and the secular. Wards and stakes have replaced branches on campus, and campus buildings continue to be the sites of religious services. Devotionals occur weekly and still feature General Authorities, university leaders, and faculty sharing their understanding of the gospel. Students actively participate in religious education and engage in a wide variety of wholesome social activities. It might seem that the university has arrived at an equilibrium that can now be easily maintained. However, this not the case. The university still faces pressures to secularize, and the careful balance created by Church and university leaders in the 1930s and 1940s continues to require constant care. Secularization pressures threaten to upset the balance between academic excellence and faith-based education that is at the heart of Brigham Young University’s educational endeavors. These pressures come from both within and without the university.

Outside pressures come from accreditation pressures to be like other universities, pressure to modify policies relative to LGBTQ students, and federal government regulations such as Title IX. The most problematic of these outside pressures are those that “might cause some to suggest that we need to fundamentally change the nature of the university in order to comply. In many instances, the concept of religious liberty will be the key to what happens.”¹⁰⁹ These pressures are recognized and appropriately confronted. Inside pressures are more dangerous and insidious. They include academic freedom issues as well as the university’s rank

¹⁰⁸ Henry B. Eyring, “A Leader of Learners,” Inauguration, September 29, 2014. https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/henry-b-eyring_leader-learners/.

¹⁰⁹ Kevin J. Worthen, “Two Challenges Facing Brigham Young University as a Religiously Affiliated University,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (2015): 9.

and status process (Brigham Young University's version of tenure). President Worthen has indicated that "one of the things we need to be constantly concerned about is that our hearts don't get set so much on the things of this world and aspire to the honors of men that we start to drift internally."¹¹⁰ One of the thornier internal pressures facing the university concerns its current rank and status process.¹¹¹ The current process places a premium on the scholarly output of faculty members. They are expected to publish in top-tier journals and are rewarded for doing so. Many of these top-tier journals are not friendly, and some are outright hostile, toward expressions of faith. The need to publish causes many faculty members to immerse themselves in the secular aspects of their disciplines. This immersion could potentially lead to secularization, as it has at other universities without the integration of the secular with the sacred. University leaders also place high value on the integration of the sacred and the secular in the classroom. However, the rank and status process does not reward faculty who successfully integrate the sacred and secular in the same ways that it rewards those who successfully publish in the secular academy. This creates a disconnect for faculty members, with the university encouraging them to immerse themselves in their secular disciplines in order to successfully publish while at the same time encouraging them to integrate their secular disciplines with the sacred in their teaching. This creates a cognitive burden for faculty members in terms of switching between disciplinary expectations and the university's faith-building expectations.

The disconnect that the rank and status process creates between the sacred and the secular potentially has long-term consequences for the university. Speaking at the university's annual pre-school conference, Elder Kim B. Clark, current Commissioner of Education, told university

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 9.

¹¹¹ The university's rank and status document highlights the challenges facing faculty. Brigham Young University, *Rank and Status Policy* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 2008), <https://avp.byu.edu/wp-content/documents/rankstatuspolicy.pdf>.

employees that “whatever level of spirituality we now enjoy in our lives; whatever degree of faith in Jesus Christ we now have; whatever strength of commitment and consecration; whatever degree of obedience, hope, or charity is ours; and whatever level of professional skill or ability we have obtained, it will not be sufficient for the work that lies ahead.”¹¹² Elder Clark’s address was a clear reminder that the sacred must be the top priority at Brigham Young University. It points to the need for university leadership and faculty to pay close attention to those internal pressures that could shift the university’s focus from its mission to integrate the sacred and the secular. In 1975 Church President Spencer W. Kimball suggested that a time might come when the university “may have to break with certain patterns of the educational establishment” if it is to successfully do so.¹¹³

Elder Dallin H. Oaks, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, recently suggested that the university re-examine what it rewards. He said that “the Church needs the help of BYU faculty in a variety of ways. If the time required to give that help is not credited appropriately in department and faculty evaluations for compensation and promotion it will not be good for [departments, colleges, or] the university [as a whole].”¹¹⁴ President Worthen elaborated on this point, saying that “combining faithfulness with learning—and research with teaching—requires a lot of extra effort.” He further highlighted the importance of properly recognizing and incentivizing both faith-based teaching and student-centered research and stated that this is “something that is quite difficult. It is easy to count the number of publications that research produces; it is much more difficult to evaluate how much impact the research endeavor

¹¹² Kim B. Clark, “The Lord’s Pattern,” Brigham Young University Annual University Conference, August 22, 2016. https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/kim-b-clark_the-lords-pattern/.

¹¹³ Kimball, “Second-Century Address,” 72.

¹¹⁴ Dallin H. Oaks, “It Hasn’t Been Easy and It Won’t Get Easier,” Brigham Young University Annual Leadership Conference, August 25, 2014.

has on the students. Thus, achieving our goal in the unique way we desire will require on-going, constant, extra-effort on every level.”¹¹⁵

Responding successfully to internal pressures to deviate from the university’s mission to integrate the sacred and the secular will require creative solutions and will involve the entire campus community working together. Pressure to secularize will be an ongoing challenge for Brigham Young University. Outside pressures will be the easiest to recognize, but it is the inside pressures that will require the most attention. It was only as universities succumbed to inside pressures that they moved along the path of secularization. Religion became marginalized on campuses as university leaders, boards of governance, faculty, and students came to value academic excellence, as defined by the standards of prestigious secular universities, over everything else. President Gordon B. Hinckley described Brigham Young University as “a continuing experiment on a great premise that a large and complex university can be first class academically while nurturing an environment of faith in God and the practice of Christian principles.”¹¹⁶ If that “continuing experiment” is to be viewed as successful by Church leadership, then it must continue to pursue the vision outlined by Brigham Young of an institution that integrates the sacred and the secular in meaningful ways.

Conclusion

Leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints value education, both the sacred and the secular, and the important role that it plays in shaping young people. This is seen in the steps that they took in the 1930s and 1940s to tighten the ties that bind Brigham Young University to the Church. These actions were aimed at helping the Church establish an institution

¹¹⁵ Kevin J. Worthen, “BYU: A Unique Kind of Education,” Brigham Young University Annual University Conference, August 28, 2017. https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/kevin-j-worthen_byu-unique-kind-education/.

¹¹⁶ Gordon B. Hinckley, “Trust and Accountability,” Brigham Young University devotional address, October 13, 1992. https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/gordon-b-hinckley_trust-accountability/.

that mixed what they saw as the best elements of the modern university and faith-based institutions. These actions still impact the university and its relationship with the Church today. Church leaders clearly articulated their vision for the university and worked with university leaders to articulate an appropriate mission to guide the university's actions. They moved to ensure that the university's Board of Trustees would represent their vision for the university by deciding to have the highest Church leaders sit on that board. They chose a university president who valued the integration of the sacred and the secular and charged him to make the university spiritually strengthening and academically sound. They encouraged President McDonald in his efforts to ensure that students and faculty who came to Brigham Young University had strong belief in the teachings of the Church and a willingness to abide by Church standards. They also encouraged him to develop a strong campus culture that emphasized the integration of the sacred and the secular. This campus culture featured branches of the Church, devotionals, required religion classes, and wholesome recreational activities.

These actions allowed the university to remain tightly connected to the Church at a time when its academic peers were divesting themselves of any connection to their founding religious traditions. If Brigham Young University is to avoid the path of secularization followed by its peers, then the university must continue to emphasize a vision, mission, and ethos that values the integration of the sacred and the secular.

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APPENDIX A

Extended Literature Review

Firm in the Faith:

How Religiously Affiliated Universities Stay True to Their Spiritual Moorings

American higher education has its roots in religious communities. The majority of American research universities began as religiously affiliated colleges whose missions were to develop Christian character for their students and foster faith in order to prepare men for the ministry or to work in government. Beginning in the late 19th century and continuing over the course of the 20th century, the vast majority of these research universities abandoned their religious affiliations in the pursuit of academic excellence (Cohen, 1998; Marsden, 1994; Ream, Beaty, & Lion, 2004; Van Engen, 1994). By the early 21st century, out of the 207 universities classified as high or very high research universities using the Carnegie classification, scholars could only identify between seven and nine research universities that claimed a religious affiliation (Ream et al., 2004; Wilkins & Whetten, 2012). Brigham Young University was one of these institutions. In many ways, Brigham Young University is an outlier. Established as Brigham Young Academy in 1875 at a time when most research universities were beginning the process of shedding their religious affiliation, Brigham Young University spent most of the 20th century becoming “more closely tied to its affiliated church and more intentionally religious than any of the remaining religious universities” (Wilkins & Whetten, 2012, p. 5). This literature review looks at the process of secularization in higher education and examines Brigham Young University as a case study for ways religiously affiliated research universities can remain true to their religious moorings in a secular academic environment.

Secularization is the process through which faith becomes marginalized in society. Berger (1967) describes secularization as the process “by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols” (p. 107). He observes that secularization can be seen “in the decline of religious contents in the arts, in philosophy, in literature, and most important of all, in the rise of science as an autonomous, thoroughly secular perspective on the world” (p. 107). Benz (1978) augments our understanding of secularization by arguing that it is more than the shrinking influence of religious institutions (in the form of institutional churches) on the public. Rather, it is the diminishing influence of religion on modern men and women and their ethical behavior. It is a process of de-sacralization that involves people’s losing consciousness of the holiness of life, not only in social structures but also in the private sphere. Taylor (2007) has a different view of secularization. He argues that secularization is not the absence of the sacred in daily life; rather, it is the movement of society from a state in which it is almost impossible not to believe in God to one in which believing in God is simply one of many options. He describes three stages of secularization: (a) secularized public spaces, (b) a decline in belief and practice, and (c) development of cultural conditions in which unbelief is acceptable. The thread running through all of these definitions or approaches to secularization is that it is a process through which society marginalizes the sacred. This marginalization has had important implications for society in general and for the academy in particular.

In higher education secularization is the process through which faith and religious belief move from the center of the academic enterprise to its periphery. Waggoner (2011a) has argued that understanding the process of secularization in the academy is important because it has led to the “development of blind spots with respect to religion and spirituality in several of its important constituent groups” (p. 9). These blind spots have significant ramifications for higher

education because contemporary college students are highly interested in religion and spirituality and expect to have their questions answered in the course of their studies. Smith (2003a) argues that secularization in the academy was not inevitable. Rather, it was a historical accomplishment, an achievement of specific groups of people with a specific agenda. This suggests that academics can avoid or reverse secularization at religiously affiliated institutions of higher education.

Secularization poses many challenges to religiously affiliated universities, and there are several key factors that enable a religiously affiliated institution to effectively meet those challenges. This literature review examines what those challenges are and how they have manifested themselves. It also looks at what key factors enable religiously affiliated research universities to stay connected to their religious traditions. It examines the actions taken by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Brigham Young University President Howard S. McDonald (1945–1949) during the years 1939–1949 to ensure that Brigham Young University remained true to its religious tradition at a time that many research universities in the country were completing their process of secularization. The McDonald presidency occurred at a key moment for Brigham Young University; it is surprising that few have written about his presidency.

Secularization in Higher Education

There is an ongoing debate in the United States about whether or not the secularization of higher education is beneficial. The answer to this question depends on which vision of public life resonates the most with a particular audience. Hunter (1991) has described two competing visions for public life in the United States. The orthodox vision argues that there are non-negotiable moral truths that are established by a Christian God. These truths govern what is acceptable and what is not. This includes what is taught in schools from the primary to post-

secondary levels. Proponents of this vision see the secularization of higher education as a problem. On the other hand, the progressive vision argues that moral and spiritual truth can only be relative and conditional. It argues that the search for knowledge should be open and that we should not set boundaries on what is knowable. Proponents of this vision see the secularization of education, particularly higher education, as a good thing. These distinct visions shed light on the transformation that occurred in American higher education in the middle of the 20th century.

Almost all American institutions of higher education were founded under the auspices of the orthodox vision, and they existed to foster faith and Christian character. The quest for truth occurred within the confines set by the associated religious traditions. As the boundaries of knowledge began to expand and the concept of universities was introduced in the United States, the progressive vision replaced the orthodox vision in higher education. This manifested itself in American higher education when universities adopted the European research tradition. This tradition was rooted in the Enlightenment's two major epistemological paradigms: rationalism and empiricism. These paradigms argue that people can only discover knowledge or truth through reason or experiences involving sensory perception—a methodology that has come to be known as the scientific method. Proponents of this paradigm argue that if knowledge or truth claims cannot be evaluated or confirmed using reason and sensory experience, then they are not relevant for academic study. It was only a short step for American universities to argue that academic excellence necessarily excludes the sacred (Gay, 1966; Wade, 2002). In pursuit of academic excellence and open-minded inquiry, many universities pulled away from their sponsoring religious traditions (Arthur, 2008). According to Marsden (1992b), secularization in higher education is “the transformation from an era when organized Christianity and explicitly

Christian ideals had a major role in the leading institutions of higher education to an era when they have almost none” (pp. 4–5).

Secularization of higher education was not a uniquely American phenomenon. Similar changes were occurring in Great Britain, and these changes were driven by similar factors: changing student and faculty demographics, growing religious pluralism in the country, and changing university leadership. Christianity was an integral part of British universities in the middle of the 19th century, and it was inconceivable that it might not play an important part in the universities in the future. However, by the end of the 20th century, religion, if it was even part of a university, was on the periphery. Bebbington (1992) points out that this shift occurred without any overt hostility to religion and, largely, without any controversy. It was largely driven by the emerging quest for academic excellence as defined by the empiricist and rationalist traditions.

Several scholars have attempted to understand why colleges and universities disaffiliated from the Christian churches that founded them. Marsden (1992a, 1994) offers a detailed critique of the role that mainline Protestantism played in the development of higher education in the United States. He traces that role from the founding of Harvard in the 1630s through the collapse of the mainline Protestant establishment in the 1960s. He argues that by the middle of the 19th century most Protestant church colleges served as virtual public institutions and that these institutions saw themselves as dedicated to “non-sectarian” Protestantism. They maintained their Christian affiliations through the presence of Christian faculty members and Christian students. They also required compulsory chapel attendance and taught moral philosophy courses as the capstone of college education. As the mainline Protestant establishment made efforts to accommodate the growing religious pluralism in the United States, it lost its theological

integrity. Its religious platform was reduced to social service and individualistic character building. The emergence and growth of the Social Gospel movement also played an important role in this process because it de-emphasized theology and focused on solving social issues such as poverty and inequality (Curtis, 1991; White & Hopkins, 1976). This made it relatively easy for colleges and universities to marginalize their founding religious traditions and led institutions of higher education to disestablish religion. Established nonbelief became the dominant perspective in higher education.

Smith (2003a) argues that this process was quite intentional and that “religion’s historical marginalization in science, the universities, mass education, reform politics, and the media was a historical accomplishment, an achievement of specific groups of people, many of whom intended to marginalize religion” (pp. 32–33). He builds on Marsden’s thesis by claiming that “American public life was secularized by groups of rising scientific, academic, and literary intellectuals whose upward mobility—made possible by expanding industrial capitalism and an enlarging state—was obstructed by the Protestant establishment” (p. 37). These individuals consciously fought to displace mainline Protestantism’s authority and to advance themselves as new, alternative cultural authorities. Their efforts led to the marginalization of the sacred in the academy and to the rise of the secular university.

Longfield (1992b) examines how the process described by Marsden and Smith occurred at several Midwestern universities. He describes how required courses in religious subjects, required chapel services, and prayer in class had all been abandoned by 1900. He argues that dropping these compulsory activities did not mean that these institutions were attempting to disengage from their religious tradition or that they were nonreligious. Rather, they believed that by shifting to voluntary participation in religious activities that they could continue cultivating

broad Christian ideals and accommodate new members of their campus communities. By the end of the 20th century, however, universities eliminated efforts to develop Christian ideals in favor of service to the nation, and the marginalization of religion was complete.

While Marsden (1994), Smith (2003a), and Longfield (1992b) focus specifically on Protestant colleges and universities, Van Engen (1994) looks at Catholic universities. He examines the history of Catholic higher education in the United States and argues that Catholic institutions are following a path similar to their Protestant counterparts on a slightly delayed schedule. This delayed schedule is the result of the nature of the Catholic educational system, which was more centralized and tended to be staffed by clerical educators—significant differences from the rest of American higher education. Van Engen points out that both universities and the Catholic community have undergone significant changes over the course of the 20th century, and these changes have made for a troubled relationship between academia and the Catholic community. He argues that a drive for excellence has led to a disconnect between the Catholic community and the leadership, faculty, and student body of its universities. Fewer participants are fully invested in the Catholic vision of community, and this has long-term implications for the nature of Catholic universities and the future of their ties to the Catholic church.

Burtchaell (1998) complicates our understanding of the secularization process at Christian colleges and universities. He examines colleges and universities from seven religious traditions (Congregationalist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, Catholic, and Evangelical) to see if there are commonalities for these institutions' disaffiliating from their religious traditions. He argues that the reasons colleges and universities disaffiliate from their sponsoring religious traditions are complex and unique. However, he sees the roots of the

problem in the fact that the tie between a religious tradition and its university was often one of convenience. The university needed the religious tradition for funding (never in significant amounts) and/or students. Religion was vital and active in the personal lives of individuals on campus (faculty, students, presidents, etc.), but there was little or no link between academic instruction and religion. As universities developed funding sources separate from those provided by their founding religious traditions, and as the religious background of the student body diversified as universities began admitting qualified candidates regardless of their faith affiliation, the link between the religious tradition and the institution slowly dissolved. The need that had tied universities to their sponsoring religious traditions was no longer present, and university leaders felt no compelling need to maintain tight affiliation to that tradition. This suggests that colleges and universities that wish to maintain their connection to their sponsoring religious traditions must consciously work to create ties between the religious tradition and the institution. Spach (2011) echoes this insight. He writes that one of the questions facing Presbyterian colleges is how to embody their Christian identity meaningfully in a context where Christianity is but one of the diverse religious and nonreligious perspectives on campuses. He posits that faculty members, board members, and other community members must be trained and understand that the “why and how of the institution’s mission and ethos arise from the Reformed theological tradition” (p. 201). Institutions must intentionally choose to do this.

While Burtchaell laments the secularization of colleges and universities and attempts to understand why it happened, Benne (2001) seeks to develop a conceptual framework to understand why some colleges and universities have managed to keep and strengthen their ties with the religious tradition that founded them when so many other schools have failed to do so. He looks at six religiously affiliated institutions (Calvin College, Wheaton College, Baylor

University, the University of Notre Dame, St. Olaf College, and Valparaiso University) that he considers to have strong ties with their religious traditions. He aims to discover what commonalities bind them together as institutions still affiliated with their religious traditions. He identifies vision, ethos, and mission as critical to successfully remaining a Christian college or university. This foundation is augmented by a governance board, faculty, and student body that are deeply invested in the religious tradition. Benne's conceptual framework looks at Protestant and Catholic colleges and universities. It has the potential to offer an interesting lens for examining the connections between The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its institutions of higher education.

The road to secularization in the United States happened quickly (Marsden, 1994). There is not one way that research universities have reached the point where they have disaffiliated with their founding religious traditions. However, there are commonalities and challenges that drive the secularization process. Understanding and focusing on those challenges can help a religiously affiliated university maintain its connections with its sponsoring religious tradition.

The Challenge of Secularization

For institutions that desire to remain affiliated with their religious traditions, it is crucial to understand the challenges that lead to secularization. These challenges include changes in the composition of university leadership, faculty, and student body; a push for academic excellence and the secularization of knowledge; a desire to be more like mainstream universities; and the need to accommodate growing religious pluralism in society.

Composition of the University Community

Benne (2001) indicates that the makeup of the leadership, faculty, and student body of an institution plays an important role in its ability to stay affiliated with its religious tradition. Dutile

(1994) similarly argues that among the things that make a Catholic university Catholic are a faculty and a student body that includes a critical mass of Catholics. In his review of secularization in Great Britain, Bebbington (1992) underscores the important role that changes in leadership, faculty, and student body can have on an institution. In an effort to make a place for increasing religious pluralism in the country, universities marginalized religion in general at the urging of their constituents—mainly the students and the faculty. Hart (1992a) examines the important role a leader plays in influencing the direction a university goes. He looks at Daniel Coit Gilman and his influence on Johns Hopkins University. He discusses how Gilman's belief in the ultimate harmony of science and religion led him to regard Christianity as more a code of ethics than a system of doctrine. He points out that the shift in Gilman's thinking represents that of other leaders of higher education during this time period. This shift was part of the mainline Protestant establishment's abandonment of Christian doctrine in favor of a social gospel focused on living conditions and societal problems that drove much of secularization at universities. The story of Daniel Coit Gilman shows the influence that leaders of institutions of higher education have on their institutions. The policies they promulgate and the actions they take impact the direction of an institution.

Attridge (1994) points out that, much like Protestant institutions, Catholic institutions face pressures to secularize. He argues that an important key to successfully countering these pressures is to find faculty and leaders who believe in the institution's religious tradition and are willing to work within it. Arthur (2008) points out that it is the leadership of research universities that establishes the mission and vision of these institutions. When institutions focus on academic excellence to the exclusion of religious identity, they move down the secularization path. While

leaders respond to faculty and students, those leaders are the ones setting the direction for the institution.

Academic Excellence and the Secularization of Knowledge

Another important pressure that leads institutions to secularize is a desire to be academically excellent, an aim often accompanied by the secularization of knowledge. The concept of academic excellence developed out of several assumptions during the Enlightenment. The most relevant of these assumptions relates to the way we understand the world. Religion was a vital part of the way people understood the world in the Middle Ages and early days of the Enlightenment. This began to change as early scientific discoveries and exploratory voyages disrupted Europeans' sense of the world and initiated a new methodology for examining that world. This new methodology consisted "of listening first to experience rather than to tradition and the church" (Wade, 2002). The idea that science could teach us more than religion could about the world led to religion's gradual sidelining in academic discussions. It also led to the assumption that because religion is not amenable to the usual canons of empiricism, it cannot contribute in meaningful ways to academic excellence and must be discarded (Gay, 1966). Richards (1982) traces the history of the academic worldview's secularization. He emphasizes the role that particular disciplines have played in this process and argues that many academic disciplines continue to exert pressures on institutions of higher education (particularly religious ones) to secularize. Smith (2003b) augments our understanding of these pressures in a study of the process of secularization in sociology and posits that secularization in sociology is the result of two key facts: (a) early American academic sociologists personally tended to be antagonistic to religion because its truth claims were not knowable empirically, and (b) these early sociologists felt that they needed to discredit their competition, who were largely involved as

Social Gospel reform activists. The personal feelings of these early academic sociologists combined with their struggle with religious sociologists, whom they viewed as their antagonists, and caused them to heavily discount any positive role that religious belief could play in sociology. They worked to exclude religious sociologists from leadership in the developing profession and, in the process, marginalized religion writ large in sociology. Thus, “secularization was the outcome of a power struggle between contending groups with conflicting interests and ideologies that mobilized to win control over institutions governing the production of socially legitimate knowledge” (Smith, 2003b, p. 153). These early academic sociologists labored to position themselves as experts who could lead efforts to reform the political, social, and business environments of early 20th-century America. Because these early academic sociologists positioned themselves as the face of the discipline and as necessary experts for societal reform, religion was relegated to the sidelines in sociology—a position where it has remained since the early 20th century. A similar story has played out in other academic disciplines.

Disciplinary expectations similar to those in sociology currently challenge religious institutions because they expect their faculty to publish in high-quality academic journals, and many of those journals are not open to discussions of faith. In fact, as Hart (1992b) has shown, institutions have pressured even the academic study of religion to be more secular. Hart argues that religion scholars strive to make their discipline more scientific by embracing the ideas of the academy. He also examines the establishment of divinity schools to fill the role of producing ministers for the churches. He argues that both these actions led to a marginalization of the study of religion that is still felt in the academy today.

Cohen (1998) traces the development of the modern higher education system and adds additional nuance to the arguments made by Smith (2003b) and Hart (1992a). He argues that before colleges could become universities “higher education had to modify several concepts to which colleges had been adhering since early in the Colonial Era” (Cohen, 1998, p. 103–104). They had to adopt a service-to-the-community role; foster the growth of a professionalized faculty; elevate farming, mechanics, industry, and other new disciplines as areas worthy of academic study; prioritize the sciences over the humanities; extend post-secondary education beyond an undergraduate experience by organizing graduate schools and awarding advanced degrees; and gain access to more resources. They also had to value research and the acquisition of knowledge as ends in themselves, rather than as means to an end. Most importantly, they had to reduce their involvement with religion, especially sectarianism.

Sloan (1994) focuses on the relationship between faith and knowledge and ways the mainline Protestant churches dealt and did not deal with that relationship. He argues that the church’s claim to have a legitimate voice in higher education depended on its ability to demonstrate a strong connection between faith and knowledge. Once this connection was broken, most church-affiliated colleges and universities severed their connections with their founding traditions. Sloan argues that the decision to focus on academic excellence as defined by the empiricist and rationalist traditions was the driver that severed the connection between faith and knowledge and led to the secularization of many institutions of higher education.

Mainstream

Another pressure pushing universities to secularize is the desire to be part of the mainstream. Marsden (1994) makes it abundantly clear that the major driver of secularization for many Protestant universities was their desire to remain a part of the mainline Protestant

establishment and to play a leading role in setting the direction of that establishment. As the mainline Protestant establishment moved away from its theological moorings, so too did these universities.

Protestant universities were not the only institutions moving toward the mainstream—Catholic universities also struggled with this challenge. Gleason (1994) ties the notion of being an outsider to an institution's successfully maintaining connections to a religious tradition. He points out that Catholics have long been viewed as outsiders and that this fact influenced the way they looked at their universities. Catholics were so conscious of being different that having a Catholic university to meet their specific needs seemed natural. It was only when Catholics began to become more mainstreamed that the idea of a Catholic university became problematic. Efforts to mainstream led Catholic institutions to change hiring practices in an effort to attract the best scholars, and this changed their institutional cultures. These changes were seen not only in the faculty, but also in the boards of governance and the student bodies of their research universities. These changes have initiated a process of secularization at Catholic universities that seems to be accelerating in the 21st century.

Religious Pluralism

Religious pluralism offers both challenges and possibilities to universities that wish to maintain their religious affiliations. The major challenge is reflected in the story of secularization in Great Britain told by Bebbington (1992). Efforts to accommodate pluralism were ultimately what led to the exclusion of religion from the university setting. Randall (2013) argues that religious pluralism in American life has led to increased secularism in public life as institutions make efforts to provide a space for everyone. This has had definite implications for research universities desiring to remain an important part of public life. Longfield (1992a) shows how this

impacted Yale University. He traces the way the tension between Yale's dual heritage as both a Christian and a public institution was resolved through the university's disestablishing religion on campus in an effort to make the campus more pluralistic. Leaders did not believe that it would harm Christian life on campus. In fact, they expected it to invigorate Christian life. This did not happen, and once it became disengaged from campus life, religion was banished to the periphery. Gong (2010) acknowledges that religious pluralism is a reality in the United States and that we need to accommodate it in the public square. However, he also points out that religious pluralism poses a significant challenge to religiously affiliated institutions. This is not an insuperable challenge. It does require that institutions consciously make space for religious pluralism and for their own religious traditions.

Marsden (1994) points to the possibilities for pluralism. He argues that increasing pluralism should open a space in the academy for religion to move from the periphery back into the main life of the university. From his perspective, increasing pluralism should also open a space where the academy accepts religiously affiliated universities as equals. Gordon (2003) examines the concepts of individual and institutional academic freedom and comes to the conclusion that "religious colleges and universities, with their distinctive educational missions, make important contributions to pluralism in American higher education, as well as to religious freedom" (p. 20). He points out that allowing institutional academic freedom at religious institutions of higher education creates an environment of competing worldviews that fosters intellectual seeking and knowledge creation. This environment is an important outcome of pluralism. This point also strengthens the argument for allowing intentionally religious colleges and universities to maintain and strengthen connections with their sponsoring religious traditions. Pluralism demands that there be a space for religiously affiliated research universities in the

academy because they increase the diversity of higher education and aid in the development of knowledge. The academy as a whole should not become completely secular.

Deficits of Secularization

As mentioned, not everyone sees secularization as a good thing. Sommerville (2006) has argued that the concept of the secular university was flawed from the beginning. He points out that the marginalization of religion from institutions of higher education has diminished our understanding of life. He also argues that secularization has led to universities' shying away from dealing with what he terms the "human questions." Universities are no longer able to provide guidance on how to deal with the challenging aspects of American life from this perspective. Sommerville continues by stating that education is a fundamentally religious enterprise and that religious discourse needs to be reintroduced at universities.

Waggoner (2011b) posits that the sacred and the secular are at play in all academic institutions and that they often exist in parallel. He argues that the disconnect between the sacred and the secular does a disservice to students of higher education because students are perennially engaged with the topics of religion and spirituality, and this engagement flavors their academic endeavors. He argues that the parallel natures of universities need to "connect and more seriously interact" and that it will take concerted effort for them to do so (Waggoner, 2011b, p. 242). It is time for academics to permit the sacred to return to an active role as one voice among many in the secular academy.

Hibbs (2010) agrees that the concept of the secular university is flawed. He examines the sources of what he terms a "strange discontent" within the nation's universities. This discontent centers around the moral authority that universities are supposed to have and that Hibbs argues they have lost. He posits that this discontent is due to universities' not knowing how to be

universities anymore. Historically, faith has been the major source of integration for universities, and without faith, integration has been lost. He identifies three areas where integration is necessary: between the life of the mind and the rest of human life, between inquiry and truth, and in the unity of truth. He also posits that the greatest danger to faith-based institutions is success in terms of external factors. As faith-based institutions are recognized as excellent by their peers, they are pressured to become even more like these institutions, and this includes reducing the influence of their religious tradition.

Hibbs, Waggoner, and Sommerville each make compelling arguments about the need for a place for religiously affiliated universities in the academy. They have an important role to play in a pluralistic society. Schuman (2010) argues that religiously affiliated colleges are thriving in the early 21st century and that other institutions of higher education have much to learn from them. He points out that these institutions are demonstrating that it is possible to be academically excellent and spiritually strong. This provides an important road map for religiously affiliated universities. Hesburgh (1994) has argued that for a Catholic university to be great it must successfully meet the world's standards for great universities (strong teaching, outstanding faculty, sufficient research funds, etc.), and it must successfully integrate the spiritual into all of this. He argues that, in a Catholic context, for this to happen everyone in the university community must be Christian or respect the Christian faith. He firmly believes that this is not an impossible quest. The rest of this paper examines Brigham Young University in the 1930s and 1940s as a case study for ways a religiously affiliated university can chart a course for academic excellence and remain spiritually strong.

Brigham Young University

Brigham Young University was founded in 1875 as Brigham Young Academy by President Brigham Young of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Brigham Young fully intended that the new school be a place where the sacred and the secular were consciously intermixed (Bergera & Priddis, 1985; Randall, 2003; Wilkinson, 1975). President Young set the course of the new institution by advising the first full-time principal, Karl G. Maeser, to teach secular subjects with the spirit of God (Richards, 2014). At its inception Brigham Young Academy focused on primary and secondary education while offering a few college courses. This began to change in the late 19th and early 20th century as the institution's leadership changed. Under the direction of Benjamin Cluff Jr. the institution began to offer more collegiate courses, and then, in an effort to give the institution more credibility, President Cluff changed its name to Brigham Young University in 1903. He hoped that the institution would live up to its name (Bergera & Priddis, 1985; Wilkinson, 1975). The goals of the institution shifted from an almost exclusive focus on the spiritual nature of education to one of both academic excellence and spiritual development (Richards, 2014; Wilkinson, 1975). This introduced a powerful tension to the university that continues to influence it today.

Cluff's successor, George H. Brimhall, initially pursued academic excellence, but when academics came into conflict with the teachings and views of the sponsoring religious tradition, he led efforts to refocus on strengthening the spiritual moorings of the university (Bergera & Priddis, 1985; Wilkinson, 1975; Woodger & Groberg, 2010). Franklin S. Harris arrived at Brigham Young University as the first president with a doctoral degree and quickly recognized the importance of improving the academics of the institution. However, he first had to ensure the university's survival as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints retrenched from the

educational network of academies it had built at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries. In 1909 Brigham Young University had been named as the Church Teachers' College, and this made the institution central to the Church's educational plans. It did not, however, guarantee that the university would survive the Church's move to reduce its involvement in primary, secondary, and higher education. Harris successfully reoriented the university's mission to producing both teachers and leaders for the Church, and this enabled the university to survive (Daines, 2006). Convinced that the university was on stable footing with the Church, Harris turned his attention to academic excellence. He recognized the need to improve the physical facilities of the campus and the quality of the faculty teaching there. He submitted an ambitious plan to the Commission of Education and went to work. The university constructed a new library building in 1925, and the quality of the faculty steadily began to improve. The university was first accredited as a college in the 1920s under the direction of President Franklin S. Harris (Daines, 2010).

However, from the perspective of Church leadership, all was not well. Brigham Young University's pursuit of academic excellence raised the possibility that the institution might follow the path of its sister institution, the University of Utah. The University of Utah had begun as a Church-sponsored institution in 1850 as the University of Deseret, but the Church had lost curricular and leadership control over the institution as it followed the path of secularization (DeBoer, 1951). The University of Deseret's first president, John R. Park, although a member of the Church, intended to build a full-fledged university modeled after those of the East. He developed an academic foundation for the university that mimicked those of Eastern universities. He also staffed the university with faculty who had been educated in the East and who were familiar with those institutions. Park was firmly convinced that mixing sectarianism and public education was a bad thing, and the territorial legislature agreed that the school should remain free

from sectarian teaching or control. The focus of the university was academics (Chamberlain, 1960; Jeppson, 1973). The path that the University of Deseret was following concerned many Church leaders. Simpson (2016) noted that the “Church leaders were quick to recognize universities as institutional rivals in the formation and transformation of Mormon students’ identity and character” (p. 36).

The pattern of secularization at the University of Deseret was similar to the pattern of secularization that Church leaders observed in the public school system developing in the Utah Territory. Their initial reaction to this pattern was to establish their own school system that featured primary and secondary schools known as academies. A few of these academies offered collegiate-level work. However, competing with public schools soon became a costly endeavor, and the Church chose to scale back its educational efforts by eliminating many of the academies. Even after this, concerns about secularization did not go away.

Concerned about the growing trend toward secularization in education in general, J. Reuben Clark Jr., a member of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, delivered an address to educators in the Church’s educational network. He pointed out that the primary responsibility of teachers in the Church system, including those at Brigham Young University, was to strengthen the Christian faith of the students they interacted with (Clark, 1938). This address had, and continues to have, important ramifications for the institutions of higher education in the Church Educational System (Esplin, 2006). It stands as a road map for how these institutions should balance the sacred and the secular, with a clear priority placed on the important role of the sacred in education.

President Franklin S. Harris resigned as president of Brigham Young University in 1945 to pursue other opportunities. Church leadership appreciated his efforts to make the university a

university in more than name, but they were also concerned that the quest for academic excellence needed to be tempered by a refocus on the spiritual dimensions of education. They chose Howard S. McDonald to replace President Harris based on the belief that he could be a spiritual leader for the institution (Harris, 1945; Rimington, 1982; Wilkinson, 1975). McDonald had a background in education at the primary and secondary level prior to coming to Brigham Young University (McDonald, 1969). J. Reuben Clark Jr. gave the charge at President McDonald's inauguration and reiterated many of things that he had said in his 1938 address to religious educators. He pointed out that "the university has a dual function, a dual aim and purpose—secular learning, the lesser value, and spiritual development, the greater" (Clark, 1949, p. 10). He then challenged McDonald to continue the university's pursuit of academic excellence and told him that "we look confidently forward to an increased spirituality in this school" (Clark, 1949, p. 14). It was clear that a focus on academic excellence and spiritual strength was the goal the leadership of the Church had—with a clear priority on spirituality.

McDonald became president of the university at the end of World War II and had to deal with the challenges occasioned by the government's increased involvement in higher education—particularly in the arena of accreditation. He also had to grapple with the increase in student body caused by the GI Bill (Allen, 2016; Peterson & Cannon, 2015; Rimington, 1982; Wilkinson, 1975). Another challenge was "the loss of concern for God and his work and for the holy and sacred in human life" that characterized Western society following World War II (Tobler, 1978). Religion became marginalized in both the public and the private squares, and this had major implications for universities as they came to view religion as outside their purview. The occurrences at Brigham Young University with regards to rising student bodies and increased government involvement and funding through the GI Bill were not unique. They

occurred throughout institutions of higher education following World War II (Cardozier, 1993). What was unique was Brigham Young University's response to these challenges. The institution consciously chose to tie itself closer to its sponsoring religious tradition through a series of actions that occurred during the timeframe surrounding World War II. While several scholars have written about the presidential administrations of Franklin S. Harris and Ernest L. Wilkinson, few have written about Howard S. McDonald. McDonald's administration occurred during the midst of significant changes at the university and deserves more attention.

Conclusion

Brigham Young University faced many of the same pressures to secularize that other institutions faced immediately prior to and following World War II. These pressures included a pursuit of academic excellence, the pressures of increasing religious pluralism, and a desire to be seen as part of the mainstream of the American academy. In spite of these pressures, Brigham Young University remained true to its sponsoring religious tradition. In fact, according to Wilkins and Whetten (2012), the university strengthened those ties.

Benne (2001) and others have outlined the crucial factors that allow a university to remain true to its religious roots. These include maintaining a vision of the institution's role, a community ethos tied to the sponsoring religious tradition, and a mission rooted in the sponsoring religious tradition. These universities also have a governance board and university leadership that are deeply vested in the sponsoring religious tradition, a critical mass of faculty that participate in the sponsoring religious tradition, and a student body engaged with the sponsoring religious tradition. Using this lens, it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of how Brigham Young University survived the pressures to secularize post-World War II. Understanding how the university responded in this time period can help the university today.

Worthen (2015) has identified two main challenges to the university in the 21st century, and both involve pressures to secularize. The first are external and involve governmental regulations that put a twofold burden on the university. Efforts to meet the regulatory burden cause the university to divert funds away from its primary mission of education, and the regulations themselves pressure the university to become more secular in order to conform with society's expectations. The second pressures are internal and involve questing for academic excellence while being careful that the university not lose its "soul." Faculty drive this quest for excellence, and they must be invested in the mission of the institution and of the associated religious tradition, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Oaks (2017) described the challenges confronting Brigham Young University in 2017 and argued that the university will only achieve its potential in the Lord's way. He pointed out that "for many years, religiously affiliated colleges and universities have been steadily disappearing, some by formal disaffiliation and some by institutional drift" (p. 1). He discussed the need to figure out measures that appropriately measure what the university is most interested in and suggested that academic excellence must go hand in hand with spiritual strength—both must be measured and rewarded. Worthen (2017) stated that Brigham Young University must remain closely aligned with the Church and that the university is in the messy middle when it comes to the compatibility of faith and learning. He invoked Church President Spencer W. Kimball, saying, "I believe this unique combination of faith-based teaching and student-centered research is a key ingredient to the kind of holistic learning and character development that President Kimball called education for eternity—the kind of student learning and character development that is at the heart of our prophetically declared destiny" (Worthen, 2017). It is clear the university continues to care about the strength of its ties to its religious tradition. It is

also clear the Church values its connection with the university. The powerful ethos created by this shared vision is a critical part of the uniqueness of Brigham Young University.

An ethos that values the connection between the sacred and the secular is at the heart of the conceptual framework for avoiding secularization articulated by Benne and others. This ethos is not the only part of the conceptual framework for which Brigham Young University is an exemplar. Leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints value education and the important role it plays in shaping young people. We see this in the steps they took in the 1930s and 1940s to tighten the ties that bind Brigham Young University to the Church. They aimed to establish an institution that mixed what they saw as the best elements of the modern university and faith-based institutions. These actions still impact the university and its relationship with the Church today. Church leaders clearly articulated their vision for the university and worked with university leaders to develop an appropriate mission to guide the university's actions. They moved to ensure that the university's board of trustees would represent their vision for the university by placing the highest Church leaders on that board. They chose a university president who valued the integration of the sacred and the secular and charged him to make the university spiritually strengthening and academically sound. They encouraged President McDonald in his efforts to ensure that students and faculty who came to Brigham Young University had strong testimonies of the gospel or respect for the teachings of Jesus Christ and a willingness to abide by Church standards. They also encouraged him to develop a strong campus culture that emphasized the integration of the sacred and the secular. This campus culture featured Church meetings, devotionals, required religion classes, and wholesome recreational activities.

These actions allowed the university to remain tightly connected to the Church at a time that its academic peers were divesting themselves of any connection to their founding religious

traditions. If Brigham Young University is to avoid the path of secularization followed by its peers, then the university must continue to emphasize a vision, mission, and ethos that values the integration of the sacred and the secular. It must also ensure that its rewards systems are closely aligned with its unique mission.

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APPENDIX B

Detailed Methods

This research study addresses a problem of practice that has deep historical roots—the challenge of being a faith-based institution of higher education in a largely secular academy. It traces the secularization of the academy and outlines actions that faith-based institutions can take to remain connected to their faith-based traditions in an environment that is constantly pressuring these institutions to secularize. It uses Brigham Young University as a case study for developing recommendations for faith-based institutions that wish to remain connected to their faith traditions and it shows how actions taken in the 1930s and 1940s by the university have allowed it to successfully combine faithfulness and learning in meaningful ways. Brigham Young University was selected as the focus of the case study because it is known as the most intentionally religious university in the United States and it has a reputation for producing qualified students who successfully engage in the secular academy.

This research study utilizes the historical method to create a framework for understanding current pressures to secularize at Brigham Young University and to posit possible paths for beginning to address those pressures. As historical methodology undergirds the entire study, it is important to understand what is meant by a historical methodology. English historian, philosopher, and archaeologist R. G. Collingwood (1993) describes history as “a kind of research or inquiry” that attempts to “answer questions about human actions done in the past” (p. 9). According to Collingwood, good history is based on the interpretation of evidence left behind by individuals, families, and corporate entities. This evidence takes the form of primary sources. Primary sources are the raw materials that historians use to reconstruct the past. They are firsthand recordings of events that come directly from participants in those events. They provide

an important window into the past and the framework on which historians develop their interpretations of past events. Primary sources can include documents, photographs, audiovisual materials, and other means of transmitting information. At its heart, the methodology of history requires engagement with these primary sources.

German historian and founder of the modern source-based historical discipline Leopold von Ranke (2011) describes history as both a science and an art. He wrote “[h]istory is a science in collecting, finding, penetrating; it is an art because it recreates and portrays that which it has found and recognized” (p. 8). The science of history and the art of history require engagement with primary sources in thoughtful and considered ways. The historical methodology utilized by this research study combines the art and science of history. It takes a scientific approach by using library tools to identify appropriate archival resources, then carefully reviewing those primary sources and extracting pertinent information from them, and finally using the technique of triangulation to verify the information extracted from the examined primary sources. It engages in the art of historical research by utilizing historical imagination to recreate past events and to give meaning to those events in terms of the proposed theoretical framework at the heart of this research study. Historical imagination is required to create connections between the lessons of the past and challenges of today.

Primary sources are only useful if they can be placed in their proper context. This means that the historian must understand the time period that the primary sources were created in as well as how and why those sources were created in the first place. Secondary sources were used to develop a framework for understanding the process of secularization at institutions of higher education and to establish the context in which activities occurred at Brigham Young University. This framework informed my understanding of the primary sources that were examined.

This research study is based heavily on primary source documents. These primary source documents provide an important window into the past and provide important lessons for the present. The L. Tom Perry Special Collections (hereafter Perry Special Collections) in the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University is home to a rich trove of primary source documents related to the history of Brigham Young University and its relationships to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. These materials include university records, personal and public correspondence, private journals and diaries, speech files, and oral histories. They also include materials published contemporaneously with events described in the primary source documents.

Information from primary and secondary sources was collected from personal research in the Perry Special Collections. This research involved utilizing online tools to identify collections relevant to my research question as well as consulting with archivists knowledgeable about Brigham Young University's history. These materials were then thoroughly reviewed and extensive notes taken. The notes were then examined to identify patterns and ideas that could be organized to form arguments, assessments, conclusions, and questions for future research. These patterns and ideas were combined with ideas gleaned from a significant literature review to develop a coherent framework that could explain why Brigham Young University avoided secularization in the 1930s and 1940s. This information was then utilized to examine current pressures to secularize at the university and to offer potential ways to counter those pressures.

Good history is a creative act as the historian utilizes primary source documents to attempt to re-create the past and understand how the past can inform the present. This act of historical imagination is inherently biased as the historian brings his or her own personal experiences to their work. It is also biased by the nature of the sources that historians work with.

The events examined in this study occurred over sixty years ago and the records examined were created for purposes other than understanding how Brigham Young University did not secularize. A variety of approaches are utilized to minimize the impact of these sources of bias on the research study.

To counter personal bias, the historian must be transparent about their background and the influences shaping their approach to history. Crucial information to help understand this research study and my approach to it is the fact that I am an archivist by profession, employed by the L. Tom Perry Special Collections in the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University. I am also a historian by training educated at the University of Chicago to be highly critical of sources and to critically interpret evidence. Furthermore, I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the institution sponsoring Brigham Young University, and a strong adherent to its doctrines—particularly the doctrines related to education. I strongly believe that true education integrates the sacred and the secular. This shapes how I approach and interpret historical events. Being aware of these biases helps me avoid the challenge of confirmatory bias. Understanding what my inclinations are meant that I carefully checked to verify that the sources were indeed saying what I thought they said and I consciously looked for evidence in the sources that could possibly contradict my anticipated findings. My dissertation committee has been another important check on my personal bias. Committee members have reviewed my work carefully and asked penetrating questions about my interpretation of information gleaned from the primary sources. They have also pointed out areas for further research that would clarify or enhance my findings.

I have also proactively worked to verify the reliability of the primary sources themselves through a process that historians refer to as triangulation. To check the reliability of the primary

sources utilized in this study, I utilized the tests of consistency and corroboration. The following questions were asked of each source: Does the information in the source contradict other sources? Does it contradict itself? Why was the source created? How was it used? The fact that the majority of the primary sources utilized in this research study were transactional in nature is important. The transactional nature of these sources increases their value as evidence of the activities being examined because they were generated as part of those same activities. In conjunction with the tests of consistency and corroboration, I also situated each source in its historical context and attempted to understand what external influences might have impacted the creation of the sources. I also compared my findings with those of other scholars who have written about secularization in the academy as well as the history of Brigham Young University. If the information that I had gleaned from the primary sources contradicted this secondary literature, I re-examined the primary sources to verify that the information as I had noted it was accurate. This thorough vetting of the sources allows me to be confident in the findings of this research study.

Engraved on the National Archives building in Washington, D. C. is the statement “The Past is Prologue.” We must understand the past if we are to successfully navigate the future. This is particularly true for faith-based institutions of higher education that wish to remain true to their spiritual moorings and to actively engage in the academy. This research study utilizes the methodology of history to extract important lessons from the past history of Brigham Young University that will inform the way that the university navigates the challenges of secularization that it faces today.

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APPENDIX C

IRB Approval

FYI.

Pam

Pamela Hallam
Educational Leadership and Foundations
306-G MCKB
(801) 422-3600

On 2/15/18, 10:29 AM, "Steven Hite" <Steve.Hite@byu.edu> wrote:

Dear Professor Hallam,

As you requested, I have contacted BYU's IRB office for clarification regarding the 12 February 2018 memorandum from Gordon Daines regarding exempt status for his dissertation work. First, Gordon should be praised for pursuing this clarification prior to beginning his dissertation work. If all of our students would do the same, then potential challenges would be greatly minimized.

The feedback I received from BYU's IRB Office is summarized in the points following:

1-Once a person passes away, the need for IRB clearance for work on their life, based on publicly-accessible archival data, no longer exists. This type of research is always considered exempt.

2-So long as the archival research does not extend to collecting new data from living individuals, then there is no need for IRB approval.

3-There is a category of research broadly identified as Oral History research that is exempt from IRB requirements, even if it includes collecting data from living persons in a number of ways. If a student believes that their project would be classified as Oral History research as the IRB would define it, then they should contact the IRB Administrator, Ms. Sandee Aina, to confirm this classification.

Based on the information provided in Gordon's memorandum, which limits the data sources to only those located in the archives and special collections repositories of BYU, it appears that his research work is exempt from the need for IRB review and approval. If his work, for whatever reasons, or at whatever stage of development, extends beyond the delimitations he asserts in his memorandum, however, I would advise him and the department to consider the information provided in this response to determine the best (which is usually the most conservative) way forward.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

Regards,

Steve

APPENDIX D

Journal of Mormon History Format Requirements**How to Submit an Article**

Manuscripts dealing with any aspect of Mormon history (any tradition tracing its origin to Joseph Smith Jr.) will be considered. While articles based on disciplines other than history are acceptable, the focus should be on the past. Primary consideration is given to manuscripts that make a significant contribution to the knowledge of the Mormon past through new interpretations and/or new information. Articles should be approximately 10,000 words in length. Articles longer than 15,000 words (including end or footnotes) will not be considered. Acceptance is based on originality, use of primary sources, literary quality, accuracy, and relevance. Reprints and simultaneous submissions are not accepted. The journal uses the Chicago Manual of Style (16th edition). Articles should use footnotes.

Submissions should be sent to *Journal of Mormon History*, at journal@mormonhistoryassociation.org. Inquiries can be addressed to the editor Jessie L. Embry, Editor at jessie_embry@byu.edu. **The author's name and contact information should be located on a page separate from the manuscript.** Illustrations do not need to be submitted until the article has been accepted but submissions should include a list of possible illustrations and a description of them in a cover letter. The peer reviewed evaluation process will take approximately 90 days.

Once an article is accepted for publication, authors must supply figures and illustrations of sufficient quality for print reproduction. TIF files are preferred, but we may accept JPG, GIF, or EPS. Resolution must be at least 300 dots per inch (dpi) for photos and illustrations. For maps and other line art, 1200 dpi is optimal. Tables should be submitted in Microsoft Word format and may be included at the end of the article file. Permission to reproduce any images and text are the responsibility of the author and must be supplied with the final accepted manuscript.

The Journal of Mormon History is now being published by the University of Illinois Press. Authors will be required to sign a consent to publish form which gives the copyright to the Press. Those with concerns should contact JMH editor Jessie Embry.

Please see the Journal's style guide [HERE](#) based on the *Chicago Manual of Style* and its specifications for photographs and other illustrative materials.

APPENDIX E

Dissertation References

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