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# Memory, History, and Forgetting in the Sandra Allen Collection of Papers on Mormonism: A Feminist Rhetorical Historiography of Institutional Intervention in the Equal Rights Amendment

Valerie Kinsey

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**MEMORY, HISTORY, FORGETTING  
IN THE  
*SANDRA ALLEN COLLECTION OF PAPERS ON  
MORMONISM:*  
A FEMINIST RHETORICAL HISTORIOGRAPHY OF  
INSTITUTIONAL INTERVENTION IN THE EQUAL  
RIGHTS AMENDMENT**

by

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A.B., Humanities, Stanford University, 1998  
M.F.A., Creative Writing, University of New Mexico, 2005

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**English**

The University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

**May 2015**

**DEDICATION**

To Sandra Webb Allen

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**ABSTRACT**

This dissertation leverages archival theory, public memory theory, feminist historiography, and rhetorical theory to argue that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints reinterpreted the Mormon past to engender identification and foster political action during the Equal Rights Amendment ratification period (1976-1982). *Chapter One* provides readers with an orientation to the *Sandra Allen Collection of Papers on Mormonism* and argues that its creator, Sandra Allen, marshaled her understanding of archiving, history writing, and institutional archives to make her history public. *Chapter Two: On Memory* uses theories of public memory to explain why the Mormon Church built the Nauvoo Monument to Women (MTW). The chapter posits that public monuments are pedagogical: They argue in the epideictic register for what should be by praising a past. By providing an explanation of the historical context in which the MTW was erected, the chapter demonstrates that the Mormon Church sought to assuage feelings of resentment among women. Its statues, physical location, and dedication suggest the MTW is less a representation honoring the past than a means of representing women's ideally embodied roles. *Chapter Three: On History* argues that Mormons draw from and build upon their history as means of self-identification. Church leaders foster this identification by calling upon members to contribute to history by producing personal journals, books of remembrance, and genealogies. The process of creating home archives engenders an ongoing practice of self-discipline, wherein members perform Mormon *ethé*. *Chapter Four: On Forgetting* examines the discourses that brought about and ultimately suppressed a "Golden Age" of Mormon history. By offering a history of Mormon historiography, the chapter argues that the Church silenced professional historians. At the same time, the family history methodology the Church forwarded conceals structural inequality. The chapter asserts that the Mormon Church silenced counter-memories to prevent them from gaining purchase among stakeholders. After summarizing the major arguments presented, the dissertation's conclusion offers heuristic derived from the Roman god, Janus, as a tool for imaginative speculation on theorizing resistance to institutional rhetorics.

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## PREFACE

When transcribing Sandra Allen’s original writings, I have attempted to maintain her exact phrasing and punctuation. Given that her personal journals were handwritten and unedited, Allen made on occasion what English teachers might call “common errors” in spelling and punctuation. My overall approach to editing has been to apply a light touch evenly. I have made adjustments only when I felt the omission of a word, a misspelling, or misplaced punctuation mark caused a stumbling block for readers. Some might find my editorial decisions idiosyncratic, and I would have little to say in my defense. I applied my best judgment at the time. Edits are indicated with brackets.

As an outsider to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I have undoubtedly misused, misinterpreted, or failed to recognize the nuance associated with some terms. As a general rule, I refer to members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as *Mormons* and the organization as the *Mormon Church* for brevity’s sake. My understanding is that the preferred name is the *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, and that those inside the community tend to refer to other members as *LDS*. *Mormons* also refer to themselves as *Saints* as in, *Saints of Latter-days*. In keeping with what I perceived to be common usage, I use *Saints* to refer to the early followers of Joseph Smith, Jr. (although the term is used and still applies). *Mormon* appears to have been intended and interpreted as a slight given that Smith’s followers called themselves *Saints*. My perception is that *Mormons* have appropriated this term and made it their own; I would not use it if I believed it caused offense. Native Americans are called *Lamanites*. *Mormons* refer to non-*Mormons* as *Gentiles*.

The term *Gentiles* is derived from the Bible, and is used to refer to non-Jewish peoples. At the risk of oversimplifying, Mormons see themselves as the theological descendants of a Jewish man who came to what is now called America in Biblical times. Many phrases Mormons use stem from their belief that they are the inheritors of this religious tradition: Utah is called *Zion*, for example. Like Jews, Mormons build temples. These temples are sacred spaces wherein certain rituals are enacted. Except in extraordinary circumstances, like the dedication of a new temple, Gentiles are not allowed to enter. Temples should not be confused with churches.

Mormon women tend to refer to one another using the title *Sister*; if they are on familiar terms or view themselves as commensurate in hierarchy, they use Christian names as in *Sister Emma*. For acquaintances and those who occupy a “higher” position, they tend to use surnames, as in *Sister Smith*. A wider range of titles is used for men. As a general rule, Mormon men in good standing constitute the lay clergy, or in Mormon terms, “hold the priesthood.” Titles may be general or refer to institutional positions and communicate rank. Groups of Mormon men are referred to as *Brethren*. A specific man might be called *Brother Joseph* or *Brother Smith*; depending upon his position, he might also be referred to as *Bishop Smith* or *Elder Smith*.

Rules governing when to capitalize *church* have proven inscrutable to me. My tendency has been to capitalize *church* when I am attributing agency or actions traceable to the organization, as in: The Church opposed passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, and, of course, when a proper name is suitable, as in: Allen identified as a member of the Mormon Church. Finally, *Pro-Family Coalition* appeared with and without a hyphen. To standardize, I chose the hyphenated version.

## INTRODUCTION

*Equality of rights under law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex. Section 1 of the Equal Rights Amendment*

Six years ago I stumbled across the *Sandra Allen Collection of Papers on Mormonism* in the Center for Southwest Research (CSWR) at the University of New Mexico. In one archived document, *History and Definition of the Project*, the collection's donor, Sandra Allen, explains that her research interests stem from her unusual experiences as a political operative. She claims that during the height of the Equal Rights Amendment controversy in Nevada in 1978, the Mormon Church "'called me' and 'set me apart' to be a spy for them. I was to become involved in the pro-ERA rallies and organizations. The purpose was to gather information..." (1).

In addition to her journals from this time period and other miscellaneous personal items, the archive includes thousands of pages of research Allen amassed on the Mormon Church and its involvement in politics, particularly the politics of gender and race in America. By 1991, when Allen donated her collection to CSWR, she had "cut all ties" to the Church and had "returned to school with the goal of getting a Doctorate degree in both history and women's studies" (*History* 1). When I located Allen through CSWR archivist Kathlene Ferris, she was teaching sociology and queer theory at the Metropolitan State College of Denver, where we eventually met in June 2011.

The scope of the *Sandra Allen Collection* is broad. As an example, one folder contains articles in American history journals, such as the *Utah Historical Quarterly*,

about attempts made by late nineteenth century Mormon women settlers in Utah to cultivate silkworms. Articles in the folders of a different box describe a 1970s-era program wherein predominantly Anglo Mormon families in the Intermountain West were encouraged to invite underage, disadvantaged Native American students to come and live with them. As I began to sift through documents, I did my best to follow Allen's logic – to understand what she was trying to understand and ultimately show about the Church.

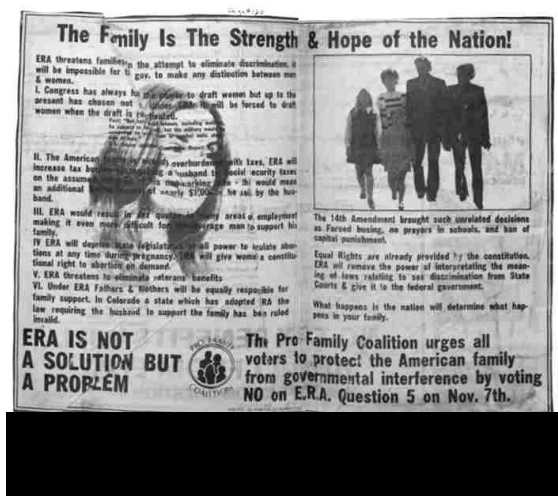
The documents Allen collected were intended to move an audience. In some cases, Allen made aspects of her argument explicit. Particularly with regard to ERA, Allen stated her position outright in a series of academic documents and made a case in its defense. The best way I can summarize the overarching claim of the archive is that Allen perceives the Mormon Church as a kind of political octopus, head in Salt Lake City, Utah, and tentacles stretching into Washington, DC, the American West, and down into Mexico and Latin America. Allen intends to show that the once-persecuted minority Church has outsized ambitions, ambitions that involve determining the proper course of action for the majority of Americans on pressing social, cultural and economic issues. Allen's rhetorical project involves convincing those who encounter her archive that these ambitions need to be exposed and stopped. Her past experiences shaped her and her interpretations of events. At the same time, she also engages in shaping her audience's interpretation of the past as a cautionary tale about the present.

In her *Topic of Research*, Allen explains why her history of “what happened”—that the Mormon Church thwarted passage of ERA – still matters. In 1991, she predicts that the Church will continue to fight against gender equality much as it had in the ERA battle, and will leverage its vast human and capital resources to prevent any legal

advances: “Because the defeat of the ERA was so powerfully executed, it has given the Mormon Church ‘fire’ to continue” (*Topic of Research 2*). She argues that the strategies she deployed as the Church’s political agent will be redeployed by the Church to advance its position on other “‘moral’ issues that are facing America” (*Topic of Research 2*). Allen expresses concern that a well-organized, well-funded minority can, by exerting pressure strategically, upset the will of the majority. Allen states that

many of the battles being waged by the ‘Right-wing-ers’ for censorship in the schools, the closing of Planned Parenthood offices, and elimination of abortion clinics, are in fact supported in a variety of ways by the Mormon Church. And, when the issues are sent to the public for voters’ opinions, the democratic process has been and is being manipulated by ultra-conservative groups that were trained by Mormon activists as to how to over-run the system. (*Topic of Research 2*)

Activists pressing for change in the realm of women’s rights as well as greater acceptance for members of the LGBT community will not know what they are up against unless people like her speak out.



What are these more progressive activists up against? Allen describes the Mormon Church’s intervention in American politics during the ERA debate variably. She refers to it as a “grass-roots appearing” movement, one that the Church wanted to be perceived as a series of “local” responses to

the ERA rather than part of a well-planned, well-executed, and well-funded national campaign. Her own organization, the Pro-Family Coalition, was to present itself as a “local” response to ERA, but was staffed by Mormon volunteers who received official callings by the Church and been “set apart,” or given special blessings, to organize (Figure 1). Church leadership in Salt Lake City came up with the “Pro-Family Coalition” name and its logo, letterhead, advertisements, and its printed materials; these same leaders funded Pro-Family’s advertising and travel costs. The Church directed Pro-Family’s local leaders’ actions. Just as the Church sent Allen to spy on pro-ERA groups in Nevada, the Church also used Mormons working inside the FBI to disclose the strategies of national women’s groups (*Topic of Research 2*). Allen argues that the Mormon Church played an enormous role in engendering the rise of the “New Right” and “Moral Majority” movements; religious leaders such as Jerry Falwell received training and/or material for training and recruiting through the “Freeman Institute,” a tacitly sanctioned political arm of the LDS Church (*Topic of Research 2*). Allen claims that Nevada’s Pro-Family’s President was later sent to states in the Bible Belt to train activists there (*Topic of Research 2*). Thus, an important part of the Mormon Church’s ERA strategy was to dis-appear behind “grass roots” affiliates.

“Dirty politics” is the other expression Allen uses to describe her Pro-Family work, as when she called Nevada Mormons on the phone asking them to “switch” political parties. After training these new Democrats in how to manipulate their precincts, “over 300 Mormons were seated” in the State of Nevada’s Democratic Convention to put pressure on the party to change its pro-ERA stance (Allen, *Topic of Research 2*). Allen found evidence that bishops, the leaders of local wards, applied pressure to Church

members to write checks to finance these campaigns, which were concentrated in the states that had not ratified the ERA by 1977. Allen's own husband in 1978, William Purcell, was approached; what Allen didn't know at the time is that the Church elicited funds from all over the country ("Telephone Interview").

Allen's concerns that the strategies the Mormon Church developed to fight ERA would be redeployed in the context of ongoing "moral" debates has, arguably, come to fruition. In California, the Mormon Church supported a 2008 ballot initiative, Proposition 8, which stated that only marriages between a man and a woman would be recognized. A documentary film Allen recommended, *Prop 8: The Mormon Proposition*, details the strategies used by the LDS Church to help pass this law. Watching the film after reading Allen's journals, I was reminded of an assertion made by two-time Booker Prize Winning historical novelist Hilary Mantel. In a preface to *A Place of Greater Safety*, Mantel explains that her understanding of history is "guided by a belief that what goes onto the record is often tried out earlier, off the record" (ix). ERA was the Church's test site.

The strategies the Mormon Church used forty years ago to foster identification apply today. Based upon my interpretation of the documents in the collection, I believe Allen shows through myriad example how the Church engenders loyalty and near-hegemonic political values among an increasingly diverse group of believers. Her (re)searches into this topic might have been motivated by an attempt to come to terms with her own actions in Nevada's ERA battle. For me, the relationship between the individual, the institution, and the arena of public discourse becomes the point of entry. I have wanted to understand, in the terms of my discipline, how an institution managed to exert (and continues to exert) so much influence over its membership.



Texts and materials in the archive constitute multiple narratives about what happened in the past, why things happened including what or who caused them to happen, who benefitted from what happened, and what lessons we are to learn from what happened. Sandra Allen's story – rather set of overlapping narratives, plural – is the mobilizing force of the archive. Allen's story is presented in her personal journals and re-presented in her academic papers. This first narrative thread focuses upon Allen's personal experiences as political operative for the Mormon Church during the Equal Rights Amendment ratification period and on the claim that the Church developed successful interventions in public discourse. This thread is woven throughout the dissertation, but is not its principle subject.

A second narrative thread is that of the archive itself, the *Sandra Allen Collection of Papers on Mormonism*, which is the public medium through which Allen presents her history. I address this narrative thread directly in chapter one, which considers how Allen makes her archival documents “move.” Allen uses the archive to corroborate her experiences as a Mormon political operative by finding documentary evidence in support of her historical claims. At the same time, she uses the archive to establish her ethos. By situating herself as an academic as well as an activist in the lesbian, gay, and queer community, she lends support to her interpretation of past events. Archives are not typically perceived as dialogic, or made in answer to a rhetorical situation, yet Allen was motivated to establish her archive by evolving circumstances in the present, particularly by her fear that the Mormon Church would continue to intervene in politics to thwart civil rights. Allen urges us to re-see the past and to rewrite the past to better engage institutional interventions in the present.

A third narrative thread, which presents itself in slivers and shards in the archive, is the story of the Mormon past and Mormon historiography. This narrative thread tells how the Church leveraged the past to mobilize and instruct its membership during moments of social and political upheaval, as in the ERA ratification period. The first two narrative threads run parallel to the third, insofar as they argue for a certain version of the past – one that seeks to persuade and instruct audiences in the present. The third narrative thread is addressed in chapters two, three, and four; it is the story of how the institution – at the direction of its senior leadership – leveraged the past to consolidate its power and maintain its relevance among believers.

Strange as it sounds, even though the narratives woven through the *Sandra Allen Collection* are intended to move an audience, I have had a difficult time situating this project in the realm of rhetoric. For example, is this project a history of rhetoric or a rhetoric of history? A revisionist history? An example of feminist historiography? Answers depend upon what these phrases mean and the kinds of studies and academic work they index. I turned to the *Octalogs*<sup>1</sup> to get a better sense of the ways different scholars theorize histories of rhetoric, and was startled by the profound, foundational, and enduring disagreements about the meaning of the most important terms.<sup>2</sup> Thus, to employ any of these terms is to reflect an understanding of rhetoric that deflects (or rejects, outright) other possible meanings.

The crux of the dissertation's argument is that representations of the past speak to the concerns of the (evolving) present, and that representations of the past are pedagogical: they seek to instruct their audiences about the present and thereby direct their future actions. During the height of the ERA controversy, the leaders of the Mormon

Church routinely mobilized and reconstructed the past and asked its members to mobilize and reconstruct the past as a means of garnering identification to accomplish its then-present political objectives. When its members resisted official interpretations of the past, the Church sought to engender “acts of forgetting” in order to take their counter-memories out of circulation. This dissertation uses Sandra Allen’s archival materials, her embodied experiences, and our interviews as a means of exploring how the individual, under the instruction and supervision of institutional authority, participates in remembering and rewriting the past, hers and that of her people, and the implications such practices have in (con)figuring present political discourse. Thus, this dissertation is a history of a historiography: a narrative of the past about how individuals who identified with(in) the Mormon Church went about remembering and writing the past.

Given that the project itself is a representation of the past, it is therefore also “about” this moment in the field. Moreover, it enacts a pedagogy: instructions in how to see this past in ways that have implications for the future of histories of rhetoric. Thus, my problem contextualizing this dissertation within the realm of rhetoric actually speaks to larger, persistent questions – questions that have implications for how we engage in, theorize, and teach histories of rhetorics.

No text that claims to be a history of rhetoric or a rhetorical history, or that purports to use the methods of rhetorical historiography can avoid engagement with multiple, contested *topoi*. My project is an argument for a certain understanding of what rhetoric is, what histories of rhetoric may be(come), and, as a consequence of the first two, how to re-theorize history writing. In what follows, I explore the ways this project

*releases, inverts, extends, and engages* the following *topoi*: “the rhetorical tradition,” “local histories,” “feminist rhetorical historiography,” and “the materialist turn.”

### **“Releasing” the Rhetorical Tradition**

Participants and observers of the Octalogs have noted the extent to which fixing and revising the rhetorical tradition has been a primary concern among historians of rhetoric. No *topos* has been more generative and more contested in the field since the first Octalog in 1988. Reflecting upon the most recent Octalog conversation (2010), Jasper Neel expresses concern that much of what passes for “rhetoric” has no bearing on his understanding of the term:

The terms *rhetor* and *rhetoric* appeared in Attic Greek no earlier than 460 BCE when Pericles became First Citizen and no later than Plato’s publication of *Gorgias* (which I would date sometime not too far either way from 390 BCE). The history of those terms cannot be disassociated from five names: Isocrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian. These five men form the core of the beginning of the history of rhetoric. (245–6)

Neel goes on to say that “post-Shaughnessy composition studies faculty hope for a history of rhetoric that would need a focal term different from ‘rhetoric,’ at least as the five named above lived that term” (246). Neel’s discourse invests in what Malea Powell describes as “maintaining a boundary between studying rhetoric and studying everything (anything) else” (“This Is a Story about a Belief . . . Octalog III: The Politics of Histoigraphy in 2010” 121). Powell reflects that such scholars “might want to ask me what I *mean* when I use the word *rhetoric* if I don’t hearken back to Aristotle’s supposed consolidation of the term” (121; emphasis original).

Disagreement over the meaning of the term “rhetoric” persists, and perhaps paradoxically, “the rhetorical tradition” as *topos* has been a productive starting point for scholars of the history of rhetoric who have sought to “uncover and recover histories that have been neglected or hidden” (Agnew, Gries, and Stuckey 109). Pushing against the idea of a hegemonic, androcentric rhetorical tradition, feminist historians continue to delve into the archives and engage in what Jacqueline Jones Royster and Gisa Kirsch call “*rescue, recovery and (re)inscription*” (642). Rescue, recovery, and (re)inscription does not simply mean “add[ing] women to the history of rhetoric”; these processes engender revisions in “our thinking about rhetorical theory and practice” (Enoch, “Octalog III” 115). Jessica Enoch goes on to argue that feminist historians have also “reread” the rhetorical tradition through the lens of gender, demonstrating “how masculine ways of performing rhetoric gained precedence and how rhetorical pedagogies have often been feminized and, consequently, dismissed” (“Octalog III” 115). Thus, the *topos* of the rhetorical tradition constituted an important, even necessary, starting point for expanding thinking about and re-theorizing rhetoric itself.

Some historians of rhetoric resist moves to open up the tradition to revision precisely because of the way revisions put pressure upon “rhetoric.” Robert J. Connors gives weight to Enoch’s claims in his 1997 book, *Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds, Theory, and Pedagogy*, although he does so as one whose purpose is to maintain a boundary, not redraw it. In this footnote, Connors pushes back against a capacious understanding of the term using the inclusion of women as an example of the problem:

The historical place of women in rhetoric is indeed so slight that some feminist scholars are now calling for a complete reevaluation of what may

be called “rhetorical history.” Scholars such as Susan Jarratt wish to open up rhetorical history to include female writers, philosophers, abbesses, mystics, and other historical figures who used rhetoric. This Burkean expansion of the meaning of the term “rhetoric” is certainly necessary if feminist historians are to have any women rhetoricians at all to work with in the period before 1800. I am concerned in this chapter, however, with *the discipline that called itself rhetoric and the persons who, considering themselves part of it, gave themselves the name of rhetoricians*. This historical discipline allowed no women into it, and no women before the seventeenth century are known to have called themselves by that name. Contemporary ideological requirements should not force us into chronocentric distortion of the ways people in the past viewed themselves. (429; emphasis added)

While Connors derides the work of feminist historians of rhetoric who must make a “Burkean” move in order to allow the study of women rhetors, Enoch celebrates the ways in which the work of recovering women’s voices with[in] the rhetorical tradition and re-reading the rhetorical tradition through the lens of gender has caused reflection and revision of rhetoric *qua* rhetoric. Enoch subsequently argues that it may well be time to “release hold” of the tradition, or to pursue histories of rhetoric that do not take the rhetorical tradition as their starting point and its revision their *telos*.

Increasingly, scholars are denying the existence of a rhetorical tradition. This so-called “tradition” is a fiction – a fabrication – that reproduces Western epistemologies and reifies discursive power relations. Powell argues explicitly against the idea that

“there is a rhetorical tradition around which all other rhetorical traditions constellate. [This] belief that all rhetorical scholarship must somehow, some way, show a genealogical or thematic relationship to that mythical Greco-Roman origin story in order to be counted as ‘really’ (or ‘just’) about rhetoric” is one that she does not share, and in fact, finds “methodologically unacceptable” (“This Is a Story about a Belief . . . Octalog III: The Politics of Histoirography in 2010” 121). For Powell, engaging in conversation with the rhetorical tradition – attempting, for example, to “make space for other rhetorics” –perpetuates rather than challenges our belief in and reliance upon a master colonizing narrative. Insistence on tying objects of study to the ways the Greeks and the Romans defined rhetoric and rhetorical practice constitutes a way of excluding “others” and placing their voices and practices in inferior relation.

Those who wish to keep “rhetoric” tethered to the Western canon do not necessarily do so in defense of white male privilege. However, upholding a definition of rhetoric that is tied to the tradition does privilege the study of certain types of speech and symbolic action. Rhetoric in the “traditional” sense precludes our examination of many persuasive practices, especially those instantiated by powerful institutions. The debate over the tradition seems to have stalled at the point where “traditionalists” accuse “revisionists” of redefining rhetoric in order to justify the study of one marginalized group or another. This is what the Connors quotation suggests. His argument could be interpreted to mean that an expansive, capacious rhetoric is necessary *only* to include those who have had limited access to forums, podiums, and pulpits.

My point is just the opposite. I argue that in order to study how white male privilege has reproduced itself over time, we must embrace a capacious understanding of

rhetoric. Institutions like Mormon Church, institutions that own publishing houses, newspaper franchises, production companies, or media and cable conglomerates have diversified their communication practices and divested themselves of the tradition. Using definitions of rhetoric furthered by scholars including Kenneth Burke, I.A. Richards, and Chaim Perelman invests us with the tools to study the ways language *uses* and is *used by* actors, individual and institutional, to obtain and consolidate power. An insistence on engaging in dialectic with the rhetorical tradition, on the other hand, divests us of the tools we need to examine institutional rhetorics – the ways most of us encounter efforts to move our minds and bodies in everyday circumstances.

### **Inverting Local Histories**

Local or micro histories constitute one ideological and methodological response to a hegemonic rhetorical tradition. In their introduction to “Octalog III: The Politics of Historiography in 2010,” the writers summarize the overarching concerns of Octalog II:

[Octalog II] extended [Octalog I] discussions by pointing us toward the importance of local, contested, and marginalized histories and rhetorical practices and encouraging us to listen for the silences that have been left out of well-known historical accounts. The discussions urged a continued awareness about how moving the margins to center revises our understanding of rhetorical history. (Agnew, Gries, and Stuckey 109)

Although the introduction does not posit a definition, it suggests that local histories tend to concern themselves with “moving the margins to the center” and exploring silences in “well-known historical accounts” of rhetoric. In “Stitching Together Events: Of Joints, Folds, And Assemblages” in 2013’s *Theorizing Histories of Rhetoric*, Byron Hawk



comments, with some regret, upon the continued interest in revisionist histories (of which local histories are one example), and notes the extent to which the field perpetuates the dialectic between traditional and revisionist historiographies: “The desire to go back to the archives and read them as documents, or facts, is still a predominant force in the field (traditional historiography), and the most recent conference panel on historiography at CCCC still appears dominated by the desire for recovering excluded figures from the discipline’s view (revisionary historiography)” (106). I interpret Hawk’s statement to mean that local histories are revisionist histories that take up and extend the rhetorical tradition rather than subvert it. Hawk’s statement further argues that the “local” turn has not produced new approaches to doing history, although many would disagree.

This interest in “local, contested, and marginalized histories” engendered what Charles E. Morris III calls the “archival (re)turn” in rhetorical studies, as scholars in the field both (re)turned to the archives and rigorously theorized methods of research and approaches to writing histor(ies). Morris, Barbara Biesecker, and Cheryl Glenn and Jessica Enoch have urged historians to consider the rhetoricity of the archive itself and the ways that scholars working in archives filter, arrange, animate, and re-present documents found in the archive (331). Linda Ferreira-Buckley, whose 1999 scholarly paper, “Rescuing the Archives from Foucault,” arguably signaled the return to local archives, reflected in 2011 on the impact of the move toward the local and its broader methodological implications for the field:

In the last several decades, histories – now very likely to be microhistories, not Howellian tomes – have become more open-ended and characterize history-making itself as collaborative. Most scholars now

acknowledge that their essay, book, or presentation focuses on only a small piece of something much bigger and more complex. They recognize that their account is limited by available materials, time, and so forth. They usually acknowledge, sometimes proclaim, an awareness of their subjectivities and their lack of certitude: History is far from settled because it is shaped by their perspectives, positions, theories, and so on. That is to say, their account, like all accounts, are subject to challenge and hence to revision, small and large. The grounding principles of our discipline have changed, even if they are followed imperfectly. (Ferreira-Buckley 247)

For these and many other scholars, “local” signals not only an interest in certain kinds of historical subjects, but also a commitment to a certain kind of historiography. This approach foregrounds the role of the archive as a site of invention and the role(s) of the archivist, researcher/historian in mobilizing archival materials.

In the nearly twenty years since Octalog II, scholars have taken up the concept of the local such that it has become a commonplace. As David Gold persuasively argues, the debate over *whether* histories of rhetoric need to be revised to include African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, women and other historically marginalized groups has been settled:

As historians of rhetoric and composition, we are no longer complicating an overly simplified past; we are complicating an already complicated one. We know that long before the emergence of contemporary theories of discourse, pedagogy, or knowledge making, school and college English

instructors sought to empower students through language instruction, link rhetorical instruction to democratic action, and develop locally responsive pedagogies that took into account the needs and desires of diverse communities. (23)

Historians can no longer claim to be revising the rhetorical tradition; this tradition has been and continues to be revised. A robust body of research, much of it conducted between Octalogs II (1997) and III (2010) has demonstrated unequivocally that even those who were (and continue to be) excluded from full participation in our nation have sought to learn, practice, and deploy the *ars rhetorica*, even as our conception of “rhetoric” has become more flexible and capacious.

At their best, local histories add new voices and practices to the tradition as well as extend and nuance understandings of rhetoric itself. Ferriera-Buckley remarks that since the ascendance of the local, “history-writing has changed ‘radically,’ using the adverb to allude to our discipline’s attempts to get back to the ‘roots’ of rhetoric – that is, to challenge old assumptions about what rhetoric was and is, who used it, and so on” (247). Even as local histories engage the rhetorical tradition, their “revision” does not seek to supplant or replace a master narrative. Instead, they are methodologically grounded by their circumscribed, narrow scope, and upon their (often) self-conscious insistence on the multiplicity of possible histories. Local histories of rhetoric, by resisting larger historical claims, invite the discovery of more such histories. As a result of the their proliferation, historians must now answer, “why this history?” (Agnew, Gries, and Stuckey 110) or risk, to use Gold’s phrase, “historiographic myopia” (25).

Scholars interested in engaging local subjects, methods, or both, are charged with addressing the “roots” of rhetoric (Ferriera-Buckley), connecting their work to larger historical questions (Gold), examining a series of linked local histories across time to perform diachronic as well as synchronic historiography (Hawhee and Olson), or “explor[ing] the dynamics of power and issues of identity formation” (Agnew, Gries, and Stuckey 110).

At first glance, this dissertation looks like a local history. I use a single archive, the *Sandra Allen Collection of Papers on Mormonism*, and contend (mostly) with a circumscribed period of time, 1977-1979. Chapter One explains how I theorize archival spaces generally, and how I approached the *Sandra Allen Collection* specifically. I differentiate my interpretation of Allen’s writings and collected documents from her interpretations of them, positing that multiple interpretations are possible (even likely). Above all, Allen’s exigencies for establishing the archive differ in important ways from my exigence for mobilizing her archive for this dissertation. Methodologically, my dissertation has been heavily informed by the “archival turn” and the *topos* of the local.

Local histories tend to announce the limits of their historical claims and the historian’s investments. While they suggest what I would call under-examined historical possibilities, they tend not to work metonymically. A local history does not “stand for” a larger whole. Instead of making grandiose historical claims, local histories tend to extend disciplinary knowledge by exploring the ways individual, named *rhetors*, teachers of rhetoric and composition, schools or programs in rhetoric and composition, or organizations and clubs have applied, extended, reinvented, or reconfigured knowledge of rhetoric as a means of personal and community empowerment.

Re-visioning rhetorical history to include those long “left out” has been considered important political, ideological work in the present because our understanding of what happened shapes our sense of what is possible. The past, in this sense, is not prologue so much as pedagogy: the way we construct the past teaches us about the present. As scholars, we might be gratified with/in the local to find counterexamples and counterpublics. However, when we look around *now* and see that rhetorical power remains concentrated in the hands of the few, we locate an exigence – a need – to continue to revisit the past (and other disciplines, including the social sciences) for new orientations, examples, and ideas. The proliferation of local histories cannot be proof against ongoing experience(s) of exclusion in the present.<sup>3</sup>

While I share many of the concerns that engendered the proliferation of local histories and informed historiographic praxes, I see this project as an inversion of the local for several reasons that will become apparent. This dissertation connects the microhistory to the macrohistory because its purpose is to reveal the ways in which an institution mediated between the individual and the national.

Unlike the subject of most revisionist local histories of rhetoric, the dissertation does not make a margin-center move. The primary subject is a conservative religious institution run almost exclusively by white American men – those imbued with cultural, social, political, and economic capital. Choosing to study this institution’s intervention in the ERA debate (a circumscribed period of time) was essential in order to explore, in depth, the coordinated, multifaceted rhetorical strategies developed and deployed for purposes of suppressing the rights of women and gays.

Although the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is run and administered by flesh and blood individuals, and the rhetorical strategies under discussion in this project were invented and implemented by its leadership, much of the language we use in rhetoric (including local histories of rhetoric) ascribes agency to the *rhetor*. Certainly, this term applies in specific cases, as when certain persons imbued with institutional authority gave speeches or released letters or texts of importance. But even in a hierarchical organization where the Church's President is described as a Prophet, Seer and Revelator who has – in the eyes of his people – direct communication with God, individual rhetors are not necessarily primary movers. This institution “speaks” through its organizational structure, agencies, policies, memoranda, directives, culture, traditions, architecture, representatives and believers. The purpose of homing in upon an institution in this particular history of rhetoric is to understand how identities are formed and identification is sustained, and to understand how a small (albeit powerful) minority wields discursive power over a majority. Although this dissertation has been heavily informed by the rise and ascendance of local histories and shares many of the same concerns, it is, depending on the angle of view, a re-imagination of the local or its inversion, an anti-thesis.

### **Extending Feminist Rhetorical Historiography**

As argued above, many feminist historians of rhetoric have been motivated to create a body of work wherein the rhetorical accomplishments of women are recognized and remembered. Enoch summarizes the impulse: “To challenge and revise the rhetorical tradition – this phrase captures the prevailing exigencies for feminist historiography in rhetoric” (“Releasing Hold” 58). This feminist body of work largely falls into two

categories: (1) “rescue, recovery and (re)inscription,” and (2) rereading Western canonical texts of rhetoric through the lens of gender. Cheryl Glenn’s work in *Rhetoric Retold* succeeds in both categories, providing first evidence of women who managed to leave an “indelible and inimitable mark” (73) while indexing the systems of power that defined which bodies could and could not speak in public. “The project of regendering rhetorical history is a feminist performative act,” Glenn argues; regendering destabilizes notions of transcendent gender categories while asserting that rhetorical histories undermine a single History, *a* rhetorical tradition (174). Enoch’s purpose in “Releasing Hold” is to “explor[e] what is left out of the dominant narrative told about feminist historiography” and to further two areas that could lead to further inquiry: “the rhetorical practice of remembering and the rhetorical practice of gendering” (“Releasing Hold” 59).

A feminist rhetorical investigation of public memories considers who and what is remembered as well as why certain memories are “forgotten.” Such investigations assume that dominant public memories are neither happenstance nor neutral, but instead serve to perpetuate the prevailing ideological investments, understandings of, and reasons for the way “things are.” Because public memories “are determined and shaped by the group,” they are malleable – subject to discussion, revision, “negotiation, and, often, contestation” (Zelizer 214). Public memories are rhetorical because they are “implicated in a range of other activities having as much to do with identity formation, power and authority, cultural norms, and social interaction as with the simple act of recall” (Zelizer 214). In short, public memories work to constitute identities, communities, and interpretations of the world (Enoch, “Releasing Hold” 62).

The rhetorical practice of gendering is the means by which institutions shape and fix boundaries along gendered lines in order to reproduce current, asymmetrical power relationships. Gendering serves institutional needs in multiple, interwoven ways: first, gendering as a rhetorical practice naturalizes unjust distribution practices; second, it perpetuates asymmetrical power relationships by engaging members in ongoing, daily performances of difference; and, third, it offers current and potential members a comforting view of gender relations that contrasts with movements toward gender equality in mainstream American culture.

This dissertation project takes up both lines of feminist inquiry. First, the Mormon Church built a site of remembrance, the Monument to Women in Nauvoo, to foster identification by (en)gendering the appearance of public memory and to instruct members in their proper gendered identities and circumscribed role(s). Second, the project considers how institutionally required discursive practices discipline and reify memory while perpetuating gendered categories. Third, my project argues that the Mormon Church deployed multiple strategies to suppress counter-memories and counter-narratives that disrupted their efforts to foster identification and fix gendered boundaries.

This dissertation constitutes a departure from conventional feminist historiography because its *telos* is not to challenge or revise “the tradition.” It does, however, extend work already being done by feminist historians of rhetoric, those like Enoch, Jordynn Jack, and Roxanne Mountford, whose work engages the rhetorical practices of remembering and gendering.



### Engaging the “Materialist Turn”

What is a materialist history of rhetoric? It is a history that studies systems, discourses and performances within communities, and identifies sources of power to speak and silence (Tolar Burton 112). In the preface to their edited collection, *Towards A Rhetoric of Everyday Life*, Martin Nystrand and John Duffy argue:

“Rhetoric” here refers not to the classical arts of persuasion, or the verbal ornamentation of elite discourse, but rather to the ways that individuals and groups use language to constitute their social realities, and as a medium for creating, managing, or resisting ideological meanings. (ix)

They assert that “[t]he discourses of institutions and popular culture are rhetorical in the sense that they situate us in our worlds: they shape our ideas about ‘the way things are,’ who we are, where we belong, and guide what we talk about and what we say (and don’t say)” (Nystrand and Duffy ix).

A materialist history of rhetoric examines how our interactions and contexts, institutional and cultural, have (re)produced conceptions of what and who we are or came to be, and (dis)abled certain ways of seeing, acting, and being. If rhetoric is the “strategic study of the circulation of power through communication” (Dolmage 113), then a history of rhetoric would examine how different actors, individuals and institutions, invented, borrowed, delivered or implemented communication practices to obtain, consolidate, and leverage power in certain historical contexts.

A move to examine the relationships between discourse and power indexes what Byron Hawk has called the “materialist turn” in rhetoric. This renewed, recently reinvigorated interest in how political economies and material conditions engender

contexts of composition and circumscribe available means attempts to mend the rift between academia and “the political and institutional contexts within which we work” (T. Miller 254).<sup>4</sup> Such a move is necessary, Nan Johnson argues in her 2011 commentary on *Octalog III*, because: “The institutional arm of rhetoric has defined the discourses of power and promised empowerment while simultaneously controlling access to instruction in these crucial codes along racial, gendered, and socio-economic lines” (242). It is time, Johnson believes, to eschew this “prestige rationalization” and “break with historical precedent”; she calls upon members of the field to study “rhetorical culture in its ordinary forms” or the “rhetorical practices of the everyday” (242). In 2010’s *Octalog*, Ralph Cintrón expressed his “impatience” with historiographic work that focuses on how the disadvantaged have leveraged rhetoric “to advance their material conditions” while leaving “sedimented power relations” intact and unexamined (127). Such power relations may be explored through “material analyses of political economy” (Cintrón 127). In short, Cintrón argues, “we are too much about words,” and need to more rigorously “meld rhetorical and material analyses” (127). And in her response to *Octalog III*, Roxanne Mountford reiterates the aforementioned calls for scholars of the history of rhetoric to engage more meaningfully with material contexts and to ask different questions:

In *Octalog II*, I argued that rhetoric was living productively beyond our borders, pointing in particular to ethnographic work that brought a broader consideration of material and political issues to the study of rhetoric. I suggested [in 1997] that Richard Enos’s question in *Octalog I* about our methodologies had not been adequately addressed. Ralph Cintrón raises

the same question in Octalog III. These three calls, spread across three decades, suggest that there may still be limitations with how historiography of rhetoric is practiced. To be sure, Richard Enos, Ralph Cintrón, and I are rhetoricians who use research methods of anthropology and archaeology, which engage context and materiality as a basic concern. But lately, I have begun to think that the problem may not lie so much in our methodologies but in our research questions and interests that, in my view, focus too much on questions of language and *not enough on the networks of power in which language resides*. (253; emphasis added)

This dissertation project addresses the systems of power in which language resides by asking two variations on a single question: First, on the national, institutional (macro) order, how did a particular institution, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, use rhetoric to foster cooperation among its stakeholders in order to assert its “peculiarity” and further its most pressing political agenda in the late 1970s, the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment? Second, on the local, personal (micro) order, how did this same institution persuade individual women like Sandra Allen to act against their own social, political, economic, material, and even psychological interest(s)?

## **Conclusion**

In the past year, several prominent Mormons who have expressed public dissent from the Church’s official positions on gender have been excommunicated. Kate Kelly, a human rights attorney and Mormon, is an advocate for the rights of women in the church: She believes women should be able to hold the priesthood. Ordain Women, the organization Kelly founded, cites Church records to argue that the Prophet Joseph Smith,

Jr. intended women to hold the priesthood. Kelly was told in May of 2014 that unless she stepped down from her position as president of Ordain Women and gave up her cause, she would face charges of apostasy (false teaching). In June 2014, Kelly was “tried” in absentia and excommunicated.

The host of a popular podcast, Mormon Stories, which has become a forum for LDS members, faced apostasy charges for his public support of gay Mormons. John Dehlin was excommunicated in January 2015. Other Mormon activists, particularly those with a strong internet presence, received similar messages and were told to stand down from their positions, surrender their platforms, or face excommunication in a flurry of letters sent out in May 2014. Although individuals received notices from their local bishopric, local wards were guided to take action by senior LDS Church leadership. Of growing concern to senior Church leaders are movements within the Church to extend the priesthood to women and to acknowledge (and, ultimately “accept”) gay Mormons. The LDS leadership continues to send a strong message to Mormons regarding its view of acceptable gender roles. But the Church is also concerned that changing laws and social mores in the United States might force it to soften its stance. Passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, for example, could render its hard-line position less palatable to members over time. ERA might also render the Church vulnerable to legal challenge.

Given the very public excommunications of outspoken dissenters – a strategy discussed in “On Forgetting” – readers might conclude that the Mormon Church controls its members through threats of public humiliation and expulsion. Such threats do serve “to persuade” certain members to alter their speech and behavior. Without denying that these communications have an effect, they do not by themselves explain the Church’s

tremendous and increasingly international appeal. Moreover, such statements cannot explain why many Mormon women, Sandra Allen included, were persuaded to not only vote, but also fight, against ratification of ERA.

Now, more than ever, as we find ourselves in a situation where our access to information is mediated through a few very rich, very powerful institutions, institutions which are invested in certain political outcomes here and abroad, we as scholars of rhetoric need to explore all of the “available means” and mechanisms these powerful institutions have at their disposal to mete out “justice,” and the processes by and through which they convince us that their actions are “just.” It is my sincere hope that this project takes one small step to that end.

### **Chapter Summaries**

*Chapter One* provides readers with a “thick description” of my primary source, the *Sandra Allen Collection of Papers on Mormonism*, located in the Center for Southwest Research at the University of New Mexico. I situate myself in relation to the archive and the individual, Sandy Allen, whom I was able to interview for this project. I provide for the reader my approach to interpreting the materials. I argue that Allen leveraged her understanding of archiving, history writing, and institutional practices in order to make her *Collection* public.

*Chapter Two: On Memory* uses theories of public memory to explain why the Mormon Church built the Nauvoo Monument to Women in the 1970s. The chapter posits that public monuments are pedagogical: they argue in the epideictic register for what should be by praising a past.<sup>5</sup> By providing an explanation of the historical context in which the Monument to Women (MTW) was built, I aim to demonstrate the Mormon

Church sought (1) to assuage feelings of resentment amongst Mormon women regarding the Church's recent moves to limit their autonomy, and (2) to provide an opportunity to share the Church's message on women on its terms. Its statues, physical location, and dedication suggest the MTW is less a re-presentation of "the past" than a means of representing women's ideally embodied roles.

*Chapter Three: On History* argues that history constitutes an important trope, or site of invention, in Mormon rhetoric. Mormons draw from and build upon their history as means of self-identification. Church leaders foster this identification by calling upon members to contribute to history by producing certain documents, especially the personal journal, the book of remembrance, and the genealogy. These documents are products of life lived the Mormon way, but they are also resources for instructing members in how to live in accordance with Mormon teachings. The home archives are monuments to the faith; like other monuments, they are pedagogical, instructing members in ways of seeing the world. The process of creating these home archives engenders an ongoing practice of self-discipline, wherein members perform Mormonism, including those aspects of belief that can be damaging or limiting to the individual.

*Chapter Four: On Forgetting* examines the discourses which engendered and then suppressed a Golden Age of Mormon history. By offering a history of Mormon historiography, the chapter argues that the Church silenced historians who sought to interpret the past. At the same time, the Church instructed its individual members in lay history. The lay history methodology, I argue, forecloses ways of seeing structural inequality in both the past and the present. This chapter argues that institutions like the

Mormon Church foster acts of forgetting that disable ways of viewing the past and prevent counter-memories from gaining purchase among stakeholders.

The dissertation's conclusion reviews the arguments made and posits a new question for further consideration: given the efficacy of the Mormon Church's rhetoric, how did Sandra Allen come to leave the Church? I offer a heuristic derived from the Roman god, Janus, as a tool for imaginative speculation on how closely held beliefs change.

## CHAPTER 1

### Toward a Materialist Approach to Writing Histories of Rhetoric

*If you want to understand what a science is, you should look in the first instance not at its theories or its findings, and certainly not at what its apologists say about it; you should look at what the practitioners of it do.* Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*

Historians rewrite history. Historians of rhetoric rewrite histories of how people *used* and *were used by* language in the past. As a historian of rhetoric, I take for granted that all language is symbolic and representational or “turtles all the way down,” to paraphrase Clifford Geertz’s famous analogy. This dissertation is a history of a Mormon historiography. It argues that the Mormon Church, entangled in (inter)national discursive forces over which it had little control, exercised power through its members during the Equal Rights Amendment era by requiring that they remember and write the past in a certain way. The methods the church taught its members served *rhetorical* purposes as I will show, by engendering group cohesion, providing pedagogical instruction, and re-inscribing a way of (not) seeing the past.

Communication transpires in contexts of asymmetrical power relations. My husband, a member of the United States Marine Corps, jokes that if you have two majors in a room, one will always be senior. That is, even among individuals of the same institutional rank, one will *still* outrank the other. I take as given that in every discursive context, we engage in a process of situating ourselves with regard to our interlocutors and how we perceive this power differential effects what may (not) be said. Communication is tacit, meaning that we infer meaning through non-verbal signals that are context



specific. Communication furthermore transpires between individuals who are “one of a kind.” I like this phrase because its colloquial meaning is “unique” or “individual,” but taken out of its idiomatic context, the phrase would suggest that we are part of a group. We are always both separate and together. We are ourselves texts “readable” to interlocutors, and every encounter, no matter how insignificant, demands we attune ourselves to our audience.

These understandings of how communication works in everyday contexts inform how I perform history. Mine is not to present a factual account the past. I interpret and mobilize inscriptions (writings, texts) and traces of communications (descriptions of encounters, performances, actions, contexts) into a plausible narrative of how people living in the past mobilized language in and about the past in order to maintain, acquire, and wield power. The historian of rhetoric dwells within two historical moments: her own and an(other). As outsiders to a different time, we are destined to make mis(takes) that a native dweller would not make. On the other hand, as an(other) – a stranger – we may be more sensitive to language as a presencing force: the way configurations of symbols conceal as much as they reveal of the world. The historian of rhetoric attempts to understand (stands-under) the linguistic, performative, and material resources available to “one of a kind” people at a given moment in time. These resources together engender and constrain certain kinds of rhetorics and rhetorical performances that, in turn, engender and constrain what may be done and said.

Historians rewrite history in some way (method) for some reason (exigence). I addressed my own exigence in the introduction to this dissertation and continue to reflect upon exigencies in this chapter. Mainly, however, the focus in this section is upon

method. Mine is a study of the rhetoric of a specific institution at a specific time as inflected through the life of a woman, Sandra Allen, and the materials she donated to the University of New Mexico's Center for Southwest Research: the *Sandra Allen Collection of Papers on Mormonism*. Although people make up and run institutions, institutions differ from individuals in important ways insofar as they have access to different and often much larger resources. These resources both enable and disable certain kinds of communication. It bears repeating that nearly all of the information to which we have access about the world is mediated through institutions. Thus, they play a powerful role in shaping our perception of "reality."

Institutions moreover exercise power through the distribution of goods, merchandise, rights, duties, obligations, advantages, responsibilities, and honors. At stake is whether this system of distribution is just or unjust. Tensions inherently exist between those stakeholders who benefit from or prefer some distribution and those who perceive the distribution to be unjust and would like it to change. Given that the perception of justice is of vital concern for those who benefit most from a given configuration of distribution practices (lest its benefactors have an insurrection on their hands), institutions leverage their communication resources to shape reality. Institutions have the ability to distribute items of cultural value and shape the values of the culture. As a humorous example of this dynamic, I am reminded of an episode of the television situation comedy *Cheers*, wherein the bartender, Woody, asks Rebecca, the bar's manager, for a raise. She tells him that she's relieved he *only* asking for more money instead of a promotion with a new, important-sounding title. The joke is that Woody leaves the exchange feeling quite satisfied with his new title (and not a cent richer).

To produce this dissertation, I have had to take into account statements and texts generated by and through one particular institution and its agencies, and the relationship of these statements and texts to structure, resources, and *modus operandi*: the way in which it reproduces its system of distribution through dissemination and production of discourse. I have had to interpret the way these particular discourses are interpreted, spoken and enacted through the institution's stakeholders, the bodies of individual people, as material instantiation of the struggle for justice.

This project began with my interest in a single person who was a political operative for the Mormon Church, a powerful and increasingly international institution. I begin this chapter by looking at the way Sandra Allen describes her embodied experiences as an institutional agent. I see this project as a genealogical one insofar as it seeks to historicize rhetorics through touch. "*Genealogy is a history of touch*, such that ideas, morals, and concepts descend through the body's encounter with a living world," Nathan Stormer argues in "Recursivity: A Working Paper on Rhetoric and *Mnesis*" (29; emphasis original). A genealogical study of rhetoric "would inspect how a particular rhetoric emerged from a stage of forces, keeping a close eye on the minute 'touches' between the human body and the world that embody the practice of that rhetoric" (Stormer 29). The rhetorics under examination – in this case institutional rhetorics that emerged in response to the civil and women's rights movements – do not exist "external to materiality" but rather "express materiality" (29). From Sandra Allen's body and her body of work I move out to contextualize these institutional rhetorics: the material manifestations engendered by competing discourses that were shaping the Mormon Church and which it simultaneously struggled to shape. I begin in this chapter with

Sandra Allen's embodied experiences, her discursive constructions – as product of struggle between discursive forces – *and* a resource that she deploys and re-deploys. Chapters Two, Three and Four historicize the way an institutional rhetoric emerged from and “played out” in a specific context: the Equal Rights Amendment era.

The *Sandra Allen Collection* is both an object of study and a window through which I view the competing discourses that engendered the archive. In the ensuing discussion I do the following: introduce the *Sandra Allen Collection* through Richard A. Lanham's heuristics described in *Analyzing Prose*: “Looking *Through*” and “Looking *At*” the text/archive. By “Looking *Through*” I mean to suggest reading the stories in the archive as narratives, arguments, histories; by “Looking *At*” I mean to examine the archive as a fabrication, a made thing (Lanham). Under the rubric of the first, I provide a concise summary of Allen's story, attending to her representations of embodied experience. Under the rubric of the second, I explore my primary modes of interacting with and in this archive. I reflect upon this interaction and its implications for the histories I represent in this dissertation. In the second half of the chapter, I provide background on and definitions of research methods I have borrowed from the social sciences: “thick description” and *habitus*, explaining their utility for this project. Engaging a genealogical and materialist orientation to rhetorical history, I interpret the archive (synthesizing the processes “looking through” and “looking at”) to reveal the ways Allen leveraged her understanding of the relationship between institutions and publics. Though self-reflective, this chapter shows as much as tells how I arrived at the arguments presented in Chapters Two, Three, and Four.

To be clear, I did not know how to approach this rhetorical history before I began. I more-or-less wrote the dissertation first and then figured out what I was writing about. Based upon my training in the field so far, I anticipated which methods might be of use, pursued those methods, encountered problems, engaged in a process of improvisation, and then returned to this methodology. What is written here is what I have learned in the process of “doing” history. My methodology has been both a product and a resource in this project. The experience of doing history on this scale has led me to hold in tension two competing but not necessarily contradictory ideas about historiography: the first – borrowed from Byron Hawk – is that each history requires its own historiography, and the second is that the practice of theorizing one’s history-writing methods (and reading others’ methodologies) foments historiographic invention. My purposes in rendering this chapter a methodology are both ethical insofar as it addresses “how” I arrived at my conclusions and generative (I hope) for other historians of rhetoric. What I offer here is a description of a methodology and its enactment.

### ***Looking Through the Archive***

In the electronic finding guide of the Rocky Mountain Online Archive, I came across this description of the archive in 2009:

As an active female member of the Mormon Church in 1978-1979, Sandra Allen was called upon by the church hierarchy to join pro-ERA groups and report back to the Church on their activities. This was done in order to find the best strategies to defeat the ERA in the State of Nevada.

(“Inventory”)

Before examining the archive as text or rhetorical construct, I want to present for the reader Sandra Allen's historical narrative(s). Her story drew me in as a human being, and I believe it is worth sharing. In so doing, I aim to foreground Allen's voice and her argument(s), which inspired this project.

What is imminently important is that Allen recorded her political experiences as they unfolded, and she interpreted them at that time as a Mormon or "Saint," as devout Mormons call themselves. My re-presentation is rhetorical because it involves making choices about what aspects of her extensive journal writings are important here – for my purposes and my audience's participation. My summary is guided by three explicit motives: to foreground Allen's embodied experiences as a political operative for the Mormon Church in her own words; to provide an overview of those political experiences; and to accomplish the first two succinctly.

Allen's two personal journals are the last documents in Box 5 of her *Collection* and are prefaced by a letter to the future researcher. "My book," she writes in "An Important Introduction, Before You Begin Reading," "is not meant to demean the work of the Mormon women who involved themselves as the political arm of the Mormon Church Headquarters' wishes" (2). Rather, she states, "I honor these women's courage and commitment, for this was my courage and commitment at one time"; however, she goes on to add, "I want it also to be clearly noted that there was something dishonorable going on that these women were/are not aware of--that being that they are being used" (2). When we met in Denver, Allen explained that she had to "cattle-prod" herself to attend pro-ERA meetings. To be Mormon for her, particularly a lesbian and a political operative, meant shutting down physically: "You had to dis-attach yourself from your

body and be shut down” (“Denver Interview”). In spite of her statements, which describe in physical terms an emotionally tortuous situation, she did persist until the November 1978 referendum. The “Important Introduction,” which proceeds and frames the journals, further argues that Mormon Church made extraordinary demands upon women to become involved in defeating the ERA:

It took an incredible amount of sacrifice for Mormon women to become involved in the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment, and the sacrifice was even greater for those women who headed up the new grass-roots appearing organizations that became the political muscle that is even being felt today. Many times during and after this political campaign I wondered if the men at the top of the Church hierarchy realized how emotionally “bloodied” and wounded these women became while working on the front lines of this political battle. Some of the women, I have heard, have [] overcome these scars and continue on to the next battles on the agenda of what was labeled by the press as the Right-Wing Movement. (*Important Introduction 2*)

Why then, if she had to “cattle-prod” herself and incur “scars,” did Allen cooperate? The purpose of the statement is to explain how she justified her participation to herself at the time. She describes this process as asking for and receiving the “God Nod” (*Important Introduction 1*). After fasting and prayer, Allen would appeal to Heavenly Father for guidance when making a difficult decision. What she experienced after receiving the “God Nod” was a feeling of “peace and calm” that would tell her to proceed on her path (*Important Introduction 1*). This awareness, taken in conjunction with the fact that she

received a special blessing and “calling” for her political work by a Stake President, led Allen to interpret her embodied response as caused by Satan (“Telephone Interview”). Hers was a common, encouraged response. One Mormon woman historian writing about the Mormon women who mobilized against the International Women’s Year Conference in 1977 adapts Jerome L. Himmelstein’s writings to make a similar point: “Leaders in the new religious right used religious imagery to combat these issues and to encourage members to become involved. The ERA and women’s movement became tools of Satan; those who opposed became saints. As such, these issues became the battlegrounds for good and evil” (Harris xxiv).

### **The Personal Journals: Sandra Allen and the Work of Pro-Family**

The summer of 1977 *Star Wars* was in movie theaters. Sandra Allen was a fifth generation orthodox Mormon, a twenty-six year old wife, and the mother of a toddler boy and an infant girl. Because of her devotion to the Church and her reputation as a teacher, she had already garnered the respect of the Mormons in her ward in North Las Vegas, Nevada. As evidence, she was “called” – selected by the male leadership in her ward – to be a Counselor to the Relief Society President, a prestigious position. Allen knew about the ERA through news media sources; she told me in our second interview that it was a pervasive topic. On the pages of her journal, she recorded that Mormons were being “harassed” because of their position against ratification of ERA (*First Volume* 62). She supported the Mormons and disapproved of the ERA, but she mostly wrote about her friendships, her children, and family in this *First Volume* – not politics.

Things change in January of 1978. Allen, like nearly all members of the Mormon Church in the United States, attended a telecast Fireside Meeting at the Stake Center



Cultural Hall specifically about the National Women’s Conference.<sup>6</sup> Reflecting on what she’d heard that night about the women’s liberation movement, Allen writes, “There is so much evil going on about us – I feel angry and helpless. I want to know what I can do to change things” (*Second Volume* 29). A week later, on January 22, 1978, she participated in a pro-life march. Her entry for the day states, “I want to be more involved in the battle line. I think this is where Carol [Carlson] is headed and I want to be there with her” (*Second Volume* 32). The march marks the beginning of Allen’s activism.

Carol Carlson invited Allen to attend a political conference in Tonopah, Nevada. The women went at the behest of (and at the expense of) an unnamed, male member of the Church in order to assess the state’s other anti-ERA organizations and to learn how to organize precincts in advance of the upcoming state-wide referendum vote on ERA. After the conference, the women put in motion a plan to recruit Mormons to get involved in local party politics, and Carlson wondered if Allen might be interested in taking on an official, leadership role in the political battle to come. Allen pondered the situation:

Carol asked me if I wanted to become involved in Quest.<sup>7</sup> The Spirit moved me as she spoke and it was interesting to me to feel so definitely moved to righteous anger about the Equal Rights Amendment. I felt called to action. . . . I have only one and a half weeks to organize and educate my 5 precincts in the ward boundaries. (*Second Volume* 38)

Allen’s first political assignment was to organize Mormons to switch from registered Republicans to registered Democrats.

Although Allen had been recruited to join an established political organization in Nevada called Quest, she learned early that spring that she and Carlson would be starting

a new organization and awaited marching orders from Salt Lake City. The first mention of the new organization came in April, when Allen was “set apart” to do the necessary work as one of Carlson’s “arms,” or her right hand.<sup>8</sup> She writes, “The Stake President, Frank Dixon, gave me a special blessing concerning this new organization” (*Second Volume 50*). In May 1978, Allen reports:

The organization is officially called ‘Pro-Family Coalition: Vote No on Question #5’ (In November, the question of Nevada ratifying the ERA is on the ballot as #5). Then after it is over with we can drop the last half-retain the first part, and start after other pieces of legislation that attacks the family and good moral principles.<sup>9</sup> (*Second Volume 51*)

As an integral part of this new organization, Allen spoke about the ERA to Mormon women at Relief Society meetings (Figure 2). She educated them on the “havoc” that ERA would wreak on families.<sup>10</sup>

Allen writes about feeling “stretched to the limit” and entreated the bishop in her ward to release her from some of her church callings; two days later, Carol Carlson told



her that two other women will henceforth serve as her “arms” (*Second Volume 56*). Just after her twenty-seventh birthday, Allen gave a speech about ERA at a Relief Society lesson that served as a turning point. Leading up to that June speech, Allen reported that she’d “been lecturing most of the evenings at the meetings at Carol’s place” and was exhausted (*Second Volume 66*). She knew she had “blown it” by becoming overly emotional. Afterward, Allen was chastised for her performance and given a new position

as an “information gatherer.”

Acting in this new capacity, she joined several organizations in support of the ERA, attended their meetings, and reported her findings back to Carlson. The first meeting Allen attended in this capacity is for the Conservative Caucus, a group which when Allen joined was still supporting ratification (*Second Volume 72*). Allen records what transpires at a meeting held by the Coalitions of Christians and Jews for ERA:

Because Ted Latour (anti-ERA) showed up for a while, there [were] hostilities and suspicion so it was suggested that everyone state their name, congregation they came from, and their stand on the ERA. Ted was seated 3 chairs away and as it came to my turn to speak I gave my name, stated that I was a ‘free Christian.’ No one noticed that I hadn’t said my stand on ERA, because it was getting closer to Ted’s turn to speak. The Lord protected me and I wasn’t noticed. (*Second Volume 73*)

Carlson also asked Allen to visit to a certain Planned Parenthood office without letting on that she was doing so as a member of Pro-Family. Allen implies in her journal that she identifies herself as a lesbian to a Planned Parenthood employee in order to get information:

There had been a report that a young girl was shown a lesbian film and I went to check things out. I talked with Darleen about getting hold of some information on lesbianism for discussion by my ‘group.’ She asked if I was funded in my research - I said ‘no’ - so she gave me *Our Bodies, Ourselves* (which is a pretty gros[s] book). (*Second Volume 83*)<sup>11</sup>

Allen tended not to emphasize what she learned at these meetings. Instead, she focused on the physical toll they were taking. On August 5, 1978 she writes:

I feel the weight of being involved in this struggle against the ERA movement. The Lord has blessed me beyond belief but working with the undercover work, and attending their ‘dark’ meetings without being able to come to our ‘light’ and Heaven-sanctioned meetings is being a terrible strain to my soul. (*Second Volume* 91)

Soon after, she records, “I feel so spiritually drained going to these meetings that on most every single one I’ve need Bill [her husband] to give me a Priesthood blessing” (*Second Volume* 100). In one of the most poignant examples of her struggle, she writes in October 1978: “The ERA situation is starting to gather more intensity and momentum. Everyday there is at least 2 pieces in the paper mentioning it. I feel drained of soft, compassionate emotions” (*Second Volume* 104). Allen composed a poem around this time called “The Reluctant Warrior” about the eponymous hero’s “painful duty” (*Second Volume* 93). After one day of working events, Allen writes that she feels “sick”; “my spirit was panting and starving for nourishment” (*Second Volume* 101–2).

Allen “surfaced” with the Pro-Family women the day before the election. She drove Carol Carlson to some local television appearances, including a debate with one of the “biggies” whom Allen met as a spy, Cynthia Cunningham, the head of Nevadans for ERA. Allen describes sitting in Cunningham’s line of sight during the debate so that Cunningham would recognize her as a person who attended several meetings (*Second Volume* 108). Before Allen goes on to declare “victory,” she writes: “It’s going to take the pro-ERA ladies quite a while to figure out how we did this one” (*Second Volume*

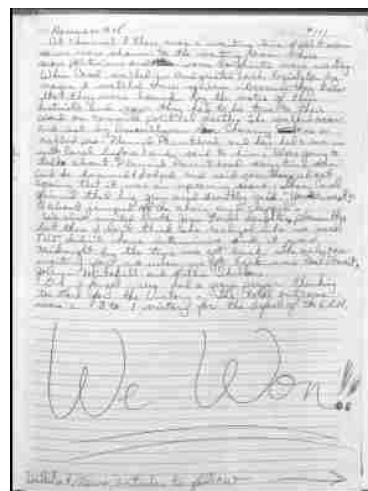
108). Her journal entry for November 7, 1978, the day she and her colleagues at the Pro-Family Coalition: Vote No on Question #5 had been long anticipating, reads as follows:

Election Day. Well, it finally came and it was well worth the wait.

Mom watched the children while Bill and I went to Roy Martin Jr. High (where Dad teaches) to vote. ... I remember when I put the puncher in the appropriate hole on our ballot I just let it sit there a minute while I stared at it. Just to make it officially known to our children and all generations, Bill, myself, Grandpa Allen and Grandma Allen voted against the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment in the State of Nevada and the United States of America. (*Second Volume* 110)

On the following page in her journal she notes, “Oh, I forgot - we had a group prayer thanking the Lord for the Victory. The total outcome was 3 to 1 victory for the defeat of the ERA. WE WON!!!” (Figure 3).

Soon after the referendum, Allen moved with her husband and children to West Jordan, Utah. The last entry in Allen’s journals, dated October 19-21, 1979, recounts Allen’s September visit to Las Vegas to attend “Community AWAKE!” the first Pro-Family Coalition



Convention. The convention featured a keynote speech by Phyllis Schlafly titled “Is the Family an Endangered Species?”. Carol Carlson made the opening remarks (Pro-Family Coalition 1). According to handwritten marks on her copy of the newsletter, Allen introduced two speakers, Jerry R. Seiler and Victor L. Brown, Jr., in the breakout

sessions.<sup>12</sup> The topics of the speeches were as follows: “Humanism – Religion of the Future” and “The Sorrow of Homosexuality” (Pro-Family Coalition 2). Victor L. Brown, Jr.’s bio indicates that he “is the director of the Institute for Studies in Values and Human Behavior” who “received his doctor of social work at the University of Utah” (Pro-Family Coalition 3).<sup>13</sup> About re-uniting with her colleagues to hear Phyllis Schlafly Allen says: “all of the [Pro-Family Coalition] staff was sitting up front of everyone - I got tears in my eyes.... They are marvelous and unselfish women. Valiant!!” (*Second Volume* n.p.).

### **Looking *At* the Archive: Archive as Texts**

Jacques Derrida in *Archive Fever* explains that the word “archive” is derived from the Greek *arkheion*: “a house, a domicile, an address, the residence of the superior magistrates, the archons” (2). The archons were both the keepers and interpreters of the documents, including the laws, which were housed within (Derrida 2). The archive is a dwelling space as well as an interpretive one; its occupants held position of power and responsibility. Derrida goes on to link the history and development of the word, through the Latin, to mean both “commencement” and “commandment.” The etymology implies that the archive is at once a starting place, and, at the same time, a residence where the law resides. At first, I had difficulty resolving the tension in these two seemingly divergent meanings. Upon further reflection, I came to consider the archive as the place where my dissertation began, the source of my project. But I must also answer to the archive; I have not only a physical responsibility to care for the materials, but also a hermeneutic responsibility in the way I interpret and represent them. By inhabiting this space, I occupy a powerful position, but one I am required to embark upon with an ethic

of care. I take into account calls made to approach archival spaces critically, as places of invention that are themselves discursive constructs. In the forthcoming sections, I situate the archive in its physical location and institutional context; I examine the order and arrangement of the multiple kinds of materials housed therein and critically reflect upon my own process of inventing the archive.

### **Locating the *Sandra Allen Collection*: The Physical Space**

The Center for Southwest Research (CSWR) at Zimmerman Library on the main campus of the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque houses the *Sandra Allen Collection of Papers on Mormonism*. The renowned architect John Gaw Meem designed Zimmerman in the Pueblo Revival style. The ruddy brown adobe draws a dramatic contrast against the startling blue New Mexico sky. As a graduate student at the university who lived and worked in Albuquerque between 2003 and 2011, I'd make a point of walking through Zimmerman's lobby whenever I came to campus. For me, it was the heart of the school if not the heart of my very existence in New Mexico.

Sandra Allen's papers are part of the special collections at CSWR, which is located on the west side of Zimmerman's ground floor. CSWR focuses on "Native American, Chicano/Hispano, Spanish Colonial, and environmental history, plus a wide range of locally published archival materials documenting the region" according to the statement on the UNM Libraries website; "Manuscript collections at the CSWR shed light on the political, economic, social and cultural history of New Mexico," although manuscripts from Mexico, Latin America and the Southwest region are also heavily represented ("CSWR Collection Strengths"). To enter CSWR, a separate space within the library, I left my ink pens, snacks, water bottle and backpack in a wooden locker.

Laptops, pencils and a notepad are allowed inside; a photo I.D. is necessary. After storing my belongings, I'd fill out a form requesting the *Sandra Allen Collection*, identified by its call number, indicating which box or boxes I needed. A special collections research librarian would send the work-study student to retrieve the boxes in exchange for that photo I.D.

Long, solid wooden pine tables and heavy pine chairs occupy the center of the room; the clean wooden lines are echoed by the *vigas* on the ceiling. Glass-enclosed bookcases stand, floor to ceiling on the first level, and on the mezzanine. The exterior wall, hip to ceiling, is comprised of windows. From these windows, one may look out upon the doings in Smith Plaza or spy a contemplative figure standing on the Humanities Building's second floor balcony. The much dowdier Humanities Building, home to the English Department, stands just on the other side of Smith Plaza, opposite Zimmerman Library and CWSR. The English Department is a busy and noisy place – linoleum floors, fluorescent lighting, dirty windows – it is a place that smells of microwaved leftovers and old sweaters. To extend Emile Durkheim's binary categorization, the English Department is a profane space where the messy work of learning transpires; CWSR feels, on the other hand, like a sacred space. On a given day, one might feel intimidated (I'm not a real scholar, more like an imposter!) or reassured (how can I not be a real scholar when I hang out in places like this?).

Malea Powell addresses this tension in her essay "Dreaming Charles Eastman" through a description of "sitting at one of the long, cool tables in the reserved reading room" of Chicago's Newberry Library, a "magnificent Gilded Age romanesque-revival edifice" ("Dreaming Charles Eastman: Cultural Memory, Autobiography, and Geography



in Indigenous Rhetorical Histories” 120). Powell’s indigenous ancestors, the Miamis, once referred to the land upon which the library was constructed as “*checagou*, the place of wild garlic” (“Dreaming Charles Eastman: Cultural Memory, Autobiography, and Geography in Indigenous Rhetorical Histories” 120). By indexing an alternative spatial-temporal-historical context for this archive, Powell posits that the Newberry is an imperialist, colonial space.

Zimmerman Library, a relatively new building in the history of New Mexico, projects a majesty and an appearance of permanence that elides the fact that it was built upon a (contested) territory inhabited by indigenous peoples for at least 1,000 years and twice colonized by European settlers. The Newberry, Zimmerman, and perhaps specifically CSWR, “are textual spaces designed to intimidate,” doing so “as a way to negate their own temporality and impermanence” (Powell, “Dreaming Charles Eastman: Cultural Memory, Autobiography, and Geography in Indigenous Rhetorical Histories” 121). In short, these “magnificent” buildings organize time/space so as to reinscribe dominant, Western, Anglo American ideas of which histories and whose stories matter.

In 2009, I had only ideas about archives, ideas that were informed, in part, by the physical space where I encountered the *Sandra Allen Collection*. Above, I chose to describe the physical location because the sanctity of CSWR, when combined with my middling grasp of historiography, led me to one of many false conclusions: that the archive is of the past, and that it preserves this unadulterated past so that a researcher may write a history of that past. In *Archive Fever*, Derrida posits this misconception about the archive seems almost intuitive, “[a]nd the word and the notion of the archive seem at first, admittedly, to point toward the past, to refer to the signs of consigned memory, to

recall faithfulness to tradition” (33). CSWR seems the house of tradition itself. In this sense, I initially believed it impossible that I could “do” anything to the documents. (Soon after I began visiting the archive, a librarian chastised me for holding a folder instead of allowing it to rest on the sturdy pine table.) The archive seemed a guarded, immutable, transcendent entity. I did not see the way any history I could write would, in fact, constitute and vivify the documents and materials in the archive. I did not see that in writing about an archive, I would “invent” said archive for my readers, creating one possible history that would, ultimately become *part* of the archive.

Along these lines, I believed “the archive,” public though it was, contained protected, even privileged, information. I am speaking here not just of the documents in the *Sandra Allen Collection*. Archives contain irreplaceable documents, rarities. Widely available contemporary definitions posit that an archive is a location, a place, i.e. an archive is a *repository* of documents of historical and/or rare value. These common definitions of archives depend upon understandings of the words *history* and *value*. Whose history? Whose values? Even the word *rare* poses problems due to the proliferation of archives.<sup>14</sup>

In the *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Michel Foucault observes “that in our time, history is that which transforms *documents* into *monuments*,” meaning that our documents are becoming the constructions through which we as a society or culture wish to be known (7; emphasis original). We hoard traces not to understand the past or to interpret the past, but out of an anxiety “about the meaning of the present” (Nora 13). These arguments suggest that the definition of “archives” remains contested; above all,

what Foucault and Nora ask us to keep in mind is that archivization serves a purpose in the present. What is deemed valuable is contested and shifts over time.

The archives at CSWR “argue” for the institution: they make a case for CSWR’s resources and relevance among its peer institutions. Institutions like CSWR, though claiming for themselves a transcendent and therefore uncontested relevance (through, for example, their architecture as Powell argues), take actions, like accessioning certain archives, in order to establish their collections in ways that reproduce this relevance among stakeholders. At the same time, in acquiring certain collections and housing them within CSWR, scholars and community members interpret the documents as rare and valuable. At work is a mutually affirming prestige discourse, which affects how we read archives.

Simultaneously, the place of prestige offered by a university’s special collections may be a strategic and useful way to leverage one’s documents, imbricating them with a certain status and exposing them to a certain readership. What I will ultimately argue is that Allen’s archive “means more” by virtue of being housed in this archive; thus, repositioning them at CSWR constitutes a rhetorical “move” of which Allen was aware. Furthermore, by re-placing her home archives into an institutional space, she is also making a strategic, discursive alliance *in the present* against another powerful institution, the Mormon Church.

### **Order and Arrangement of Materials in the *Sandra Allen Collection***

The *Sandra Allen Collection* is made up of six boxes, a total of 5.35 cubic feet of material. The “Scope and Content” section of the online “Inventory,” a digital document viewable through the Rocky Mountain Online Archive (RMOA), explains that the

archive is a result of Allen's extensive research "into the Mormon Church and its involvement in the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment." Sandra Allen is listed as the creator of the archive. Kathlene Ferris, an archivist at CSWR (who agreed to be interviewed for this project), worked with Allen in 1991 when the archive was accessioned. CSWR archivist Beth Silbright oversaw its processing.

Archivists, whenever possible, maintain original order (Morris and Rose 55). Original order refers to the arrangement of the documents when a collection is accessioned, or the way the collector wants the documents arranged. Explain Morris and Rose in their essay, "Invisible Hands," "[a]rchivists do not impose their own organizational principles upon materials that are already organized but rather devote their efforts to identifying and clarifying the organizational principles followed by the creator, recognizing that the arrangement itself may be of interest and significance to researchers" (55–56). This concept is especially important, Morris and Rose argue, for scholars of rhetoric wherein original order may provide important contextual cues regarding a given document or an archive in general. The collection that was originally accessioned by the CSWR is fundamentally different from the collection today, due to the more recent addition of many of Allen's personal papers. As a result, knowing *when* documents were added to the collection is vitally important, especially for genealogies.

One way of partitioning documents in an archive is by *intrinsic value* and *evidentiary value*. Those documents with intrinsic value are irreplaceable, like original letters or journals. Those with evidentiary value are "important only because of their relationship to the collection's creator" (Morris and Rose 62). I might revise this contention by eliminating the "only" to argue that documents with evidentiary value are

important because of their relationship to the collection's creator and by virtue of their connection to the intrinsically valuable documents. In the *Sandra Allen Collection*, the majority of the documents fall under the latter category. Of what are these "evidentiary documents" evidence? I have posed answers to this question in a number of different ways, ultimately deciding there is no possible *one* answer, only answers.

Additionally, the archivist groups together major categories in a collection, which are called "series." According to the "Inventory," the collection was originally divided into four series. I provide here a brief overview of the series. *Series I: Research Materials* takes up four boxes (Boxes 1-4) plus eight folders in Box 5, and "is comprised mainly of photocopies of magazine and newspaper articles, excerpts from books, information from manuscript collections, and dissertations" At least two-thirds of the documents in the collection belong to this series. The "Scope and Content" section of the online "Inventory" guide provides some insight as to the subject and purpose of the collected materials:

Although this collection contains material predominantly on the Mormon Church and the ERA, it also includes material on the situation of Mormon women from the founding of the Church to the present day. Allen's research shows the position of the Mormon Church on subjects such as minorities, family issues, censorship, and politics. In addition, there is information on Howard Hughes and the 'Mormon Will,' and Mormons in the FBI and CIA. Also included are some humorous books and articles written by Mormons about Mormons.

The documents in *Series I* fall under the rubric of evidentiary value; most are linked to Allen's overarching interest in the Mormon Church's involvement in ERA, but touch upon incredibly diverse discourses.

*Series II: Preliminary Research and Notes* contains Allen's research notes, bibliographic notes, and other miscellaneous materials. The documents in *Series II* are housed in thirteen folders, a little over one third of Box 5. The most important document in *Series II* for my purposes is the *Topic of Research and Notes*. This document has intrinsic value and is the first document (in terms of original order) in the collection wherein Allen speaks directly to an academic audience about her research plans, explaining the reasons she began assembling documents, and what she wanted to do and demonstrate with these documents. Also of interest are the unfulfilled interlibrary loan (ILL) requests Allen filled out and saved. These documents play a role in Allen's account of why she created the archive; they additionally provide other possible leads and avenues of research. Also in *Series II* is the bibliography of Mormon material at UNM Allen created when she was employed as a CSWR work-study student.

*Series III: Publications* offers a bit of a puzzle. The five folders in this series, still contained within Box 5, are photocopies of books, with one exception. One of the photocopied books in this series was written in 1852 and is a scathing critique of Joseph Smith and Mormonism. Another is a contemporary self-help book written by a Mormon psychotherapist in 1981 for a general audience. Another book deals with the threat of communism in Mormondom; yet another with near death experience. It is not clear to me why this diverse set of publications, which also fall under the rubric of materials with evidentiary value, have been distinguished from the materials in Series I. Twenty-three

books were transferred from the collection to the library shelves, although no date or rationale was provided. The presumed reason is limited space. I do not know whether these transferred books were ever considered part of Series III: Publications.

*Series IV: Miscellaneous*, the last series included in the original 1991 accession, contains academic paper drafts written by Sandra Allen, personal awards, notes, and newspaper clippings, as well as a cassette audiotape of Elder Harold B. Lee speaking at Brigham Young University. These “miscellaneous” items take up five folders and are still within Box 5. Two kinds of items are of particular interest in this series, including Allen’s academic paper drafts. Two of these papers present Allen’s argument about the role of the Mormon Church in defeating the ERA. Taken in conjunction with the *History and Definition of the Project* and *Topic of Research and Notes* in Series II, these documents articulate Allen’s direction of thought and intentions. A second item, a photocopy of Allen’s daily planner from the time of her involvement in spying for the Mormon Church, corroborates statements in her journals.

The *Addition to the Collection*, added in November 1997, is described in the inventory as “Publications, Journals, Miscellany.” These materials are dispersed across eight folders: three folders complete Box 5; five folders make up Box 6. The lynchpins of the entire collection, as I will soon argue, are contained in these “Additions,” including the two personal journals Allen added to the collection and her preface to these journals. Other key additions include Allen’s personal family history, articles written by her one-time employer and mentor, Doris S. Platt, and the magazine *Pride in New Mexico*.

Examining the evidentiary documents in light of Allen’s stated research interests and her personal writings proved overwhelming at times. While she was forthright about

the goals of her research in her academic exposition, she might have been conflicted about just which story was most important to tell when researching. The evidence she amassed, voluminous as it is, stretched out in many directions, many of which, in my eyes, appeared tangential to Allen's articulated project. Her *Collection* reflects a rabidly curious and tenacious consciousness. I maintained a belief that the connections between findings were tangible to her, even when I had to engage my imagination. Time influenced my view of what "evidence" was most interesting. Retrospectively, I believe I *used* these documents as instantiations of the discourses that informed and were informed by the Mormon Church leading up to, during, and following ERA.

*Testimony.* Allen and I spoke at length two times: once on the telephone in March 2011 and once in her office in Denver in June 2011. We arranged the telephone interview over email, deciding that given my imminent departure from Albuquerque, it would not be possible to arrange an in-person interview. Because I'd spent nearly every day that winter with the *Sandra Allen Collection*, I felt a fluency and familiarity with the collection that I wanted to exploit; simultaneously, I was nervous that Allen would change her mind. During the telephone interview, I took handwritten notes and then transcribed them onto my computer. The second interview took place at the end of June 2011. Allen and I arranged to meet where she teaches, the Metropolitan State University of Denver. She agreed to a recorded interview.

### **(Re)Making the Archive and My Material Contexts of Reading and Writing**

Like Jacques Derrida, Barbara Biesecker in "Of Historicity, Rhetoric: The Archive as Scene of Invention" conceives of the archive in spatial terms. The historian does not merely consult the archive, but rather engenders the archive. Biesecker's



argument takes into account both the deconstruction of history and the deconstruction of the subject. The meanings of those documents found in the archive are not self-evident or transparent. In the first place, the researcher-historian reads them in a certain way. *How* she reads them involves a complex interplay of discourses and situations. She reflects a history, to borrow from Kenneth Burke's concept of terministic screens as explicated in *Language as Symbolic Action*, by selecting and deflecting meanings as she writes ("Terministic Screens" 45).

Biesecker's assertion that the archive is the "scene of our collective invention, of our collective invention of us and of it" (124) persuades me – in part. Her conception does seem particularly convincing in an era wherein archives exist potentially everywhere.<sup>15</sup> The documents we find and deem relevant reflect upon the kinds of stories that excite and interest us, our values. Historians create an archive within and among her archives, one that speaks to our ideological orientations, interests, short and long term objectives, and passions. Cheryl Glenn and Jessica Enoch deliberately orient their Burkean dramatic analysis in "Drama In the Archives: Rereading Methods, Rewriting History" such that the researcher herself is the primary agent: "we [historians] pose the research question, identify an archive, travel to it, and then 'act on' and activate the materials we locate" (328).

Before turning to an exploration of my interest[edness] in this project, I want to focus upon the impact of the context(s) of production. I have already described the way in which CSWR as an institutional space informed my reading of the *Sandra Allen Collection*, investing the archive with intrinsic value (a term, as I have shown, that is used to refer to certain kinds of documents by archivists). But contexts of research and writing

informed this project in myriad other ways. Because I began this project living in close proximity to CSWR and had near unlimited access to the *Sandra Allen Collection*, and because my research questions were not well-articulated (even to myself), I ended up creating the archive on a “wiki,” or a series personal web pages. In this sense, I did, in fact, engage in a process of fabricating a digital version of the *Sandra Allen Collection*. I established separate web pages for each box in the collection and typed the names of all of the folders in a given box, keeping punctuation and identifying descriptive marks identical to those in the original. I made hyperlinks to each folder, and, maintaining original order, took down notes on the contents. At the outset, I went folder by folder, writing down the bibliographic information of *all* contents, reading them one by one, and typing notes on every piece. Eventually, I realized time and access were not *sufficiently* in abundance to proceed in this way.

Since Allen’s writings had intrinsic value, I worked to make sure I had photocopies of the shorter documents and copious notes on the longer documents, i.e. her personal journals. I then scanned or photocopied important images, like Allen’s photographs and awards. I made facsimile reproductions of the materials Allen saved from her work with the Pro-Family Coalition, including a cookbook the group produced and their anti-ERA print advertisements. Once I knew I had access to these records from any computer with an internet connection, I then applied specific lenses or filters to the documents with evidentiary value.

During my visits to CSWR in March of 2012 and October 2013, I made a few important observations about the limits of my archival research methods. When I returned to work on my virtual archive a year after leaving New Mexico, I perceived that

“ERA” had been the Burkean “God term” I’d used to evaluate the relevance of every record. In the year between March 2011 and March 2012, I’d become increasingly conscious of the broader discursive context surrounding questions of gender equality and race in the Mormon Church, especially the ways in which both national and international pressure to grant legal and cultural equality to men of African descent reverberated among the Saints and instigated institutional changes. By focusing more broadly on race as well as gender discourses, I “found” in the *Sandra Allen Collection* a trove of documents that spoke to that crucial nexus where bodies meet institutional power.<sup>16</sup> Another example of evidentiary documents whose importance I minimized during my initial stages of research included articles concerning archival, documentary, and historical practices in the LDS tradition. As I grew increasingly interested in how and why Allen kept (and saved) her personal journals and amassed the materials that would eventually become the *Sandra Allen Collection*, these sources proved valuable to me. My areas of interest shifted based upon my greater breadth of knowledge about Mormonism. I recognized how much I had yet to learn from Allen and became increasingly impressed with the scope and depth of her research.

A final material example of how I, as historian, took part in digitally re“creating” the archive: initially, I tried to avoid scanning documents due to the arduousness of this project. Again, between March 2011 and March 2012, CSWR acquired a new digital scanner. The new scanner was user-friendly and much faster, enabling me to make digital, PDF reproductions during my visits. Rather than spend time taking meticulous notes on certain records or being required to make “selections” prematurely regarding which items would be most useful to have at a later time, I was able to cast a wider net.

Moreover, having a facsimile of an item meant, in some cases, I could preserve Allen's handwriting or marginal gloss and a visual sense of the document's context (like type, advertisements, surrounding copy, placement, images).

My inter-action with the materials in the archive changed as I read documents through different terministic screens. These screens came out of the archive: Allen was involved politically with ERA, for example, so I initially read to learn "all about" ERA. In fact, ERA constitutes an important *topos* in the archive. Over time, as I dwelled in the archives (in CSWR and later, in my digital archive), culled books, articles, and other sources indexed in the archive or mentioned in sources from the archive, new *topoi* presented themselves. Ultimately, my interest in these *topoi* as discourses informing Allen's experience shifted to become the center of gravity in the dissertation.

Time and access constrain a scholar's ability to produce scholarship. As a creative writer – someone who has crafted historical fiction, screenplays, stories and novels – I am also acutely aware of how the dissertation as genre inflected my experience. A book length scholarly work differs from a book length creative work in myriad ways I cannot describe here, but, needless to say, these differences influence the entire reading and writing process. In short, the dissertation genre dis/ables ways of inter-acting with/in the archive. In keeping with Lloyd Bitzer's understanding of material exigence in "The Rhetorical Situation," my desire to complete this program and earn a degree constituted that which was "waiting to be done." In order to be accepted among my peers as a doctor of philosophy, I knew I would need to demonstrate my ability to re-produce something that looks like a dissertation in my field. Risa Applegarth in "Rhetorical Scarcity: Spatial and Economic Inflections on Genre Change" argues convincingly that certain genres

serve to exclude those who are unlikely – due to material constraints, including time and access – to complete certain kinds of genres, particularly the scholarly monograph (471). Being a heterosexual, married Anglo woman has proved more enabling than disabling in this context: my husband has been able to provide financial support and child-care so that I may complete the project.

I think it's important to say explicitly that I am interested in the nexus between women, religion, language, and power. I have enjoyed nearly every aspect and every stage of this creative process. I care about Allen and respect her as a human being. But there is an end-game for me, a concrete, material goal I wish to achieve. I am invested in this process such that it is difficult and perhaps hypocritical now to critique entrance barriers and boundary maintenance within the field. I have thought a great deal about Allen's goals – her expressed desire to earn a doctorate in two areas, history and women's studies – and her current position as an adjunct faculty member with a master's degree. When I initially got in touch with Allen, we had some discussion about her cell phone: she could not afford to keep one turned on all the time. I do not believe that her current material circumstances reflect upon her determination or lack thereof, skills as a researcher, or anything “about her,” but upon a grossly unjust system in higher education. Barriers to participation in academic institutions are real and have material consequences; they serve to reproduce the kinds of exclusions we see everywhere in society.

My gendered, sexed, raced and classed body makes a difference, as does my conception of justice and my sensitivity to the ways in which institutions attempt to naturalize and thus maintain gendered boundaries. I am cognizant at times of how whiteness confers privilege upon me. I find that I vacillate between states of blindness to

this privilege, as when I failed to see the significance of admitting men of African descent to the priesthood to the discussion over women's rights, and efforts to address this naivety, which results, sometimes in other distortions. I have already mentioned the fact that my sexual orientation has been a material advantage in producing this project; I hope I have neither elided nor overemphasized the role Allen's physical desire for other women has played in the process of contextualizing her texts and speech. But even as I announce and catalogue these identity differences for the reader, I stipulate that such observations cannot fully explain the strategic choices and the decisions I have made in the process of drafting this dissertation. At the same time, it would also be a mistake to argue that my project is merely the story I want to tell. After spending close to six years pouring over the materials in the archive and meeting Sandy Allen, I have struggled to arrange the dissertation in many different ways, acknowledging that none of them actualize all or even most of the rich possibilities present. I have sought to do justice to Allen's energy and commitment to this project as well as my own energy and commitment, and more often than not, fear I have fallen short. At some point, after grappling with the material, I made choices, choices that felt more organic than contrived; choices that cannot be reduced to the fact that I am a white, left-leaning, agnostic, heterosexual feminist raised in the "third wave," but that emerged out of a relationship, academic, personal, political, even emotional with the documents Allen left, and out of the conversations we had about those documents and the topics they touched upon as well as my engagement and conversations with other voices in my interdisciplinary scholarly community.<sup>17</sup>

### **Looking *Through* –and *Beyond* the Archive to Interpretation of Mormonism**

I must now draw a line between *this* history and *Allen's* history, between the way I am rewriting history and the way Allen is rewriting history. Even as every level of this project is informed by Allen's archive, I make this line to demonstrate the necessity of toggling between Allen as "one of a kind" (*sui generis*, an individual) and one of a kind (a member of a social group). Such toggling is important as it enables me to consider the individual in relation to a national political movement through an institutionalized social group. In the seminal sociological text, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Pierre Bourdieu presents the concept of the *habitus*, the means by and through which social formations tend to reproduce themselves through the individual's encounter with the everyday.

Explains Bourdieu:

The habitus is the product of the work of inculcation and appropriation necessary in order for those products of collective history, the objective structures (e.g. of language, economy, etc.) to succeed in reproducing themselves more or less completely, in the form of durable dispositions, in the organisms (which one can, if one wishes, call individuals) lastingly subjected to the same conditionings, and hence placed in the same material conditions of existence. (85)

Studying Mormonism as a cultural system and Mormons as a cultural group in the late 1970s served several interrelated purposes in my dissertation: (1) I had to interpret Allen's archive. To interpret *Allen's* interpretations of events, I read a plethora of interpretations of Mormonism, texts that functioned as ethnographies. Not to belabor the point, but I want to index in the strongest possible terms that the ethnographic materials

to which I turned are interpretations of interpretations. Still, even these second (or third or fourth) order interpretations of Mormonism as a cultural system were necessary for me to “make sense” of Allen’s personal journals and the discourses I wanted to trace: the Mormon response to ERA. Without these Mormon ethnographies, the way *Allen* interpreted the ERA, the Church’s messages on ERA, the necessity of her own political involvement, her embodied experience as a political operative (and a woman, lesbian, American, mother, etc.), and the way she described her thoughts and actions in the everyday would not *mean* to me, an outsider.<sup>18</sup> Given that we “make sense” of what is said in the context in which it is said (Bourdieu 25; Geertz 19) and that it operates between individuals of fluid but unequal power relations, I endeavored to fabricate for my purposes a “thick description” of Mormonism in the late 1970s toward an interpretation of Mormon *habitus*. (2) Even as a third or fourth order interpretation of Mormonism in the late 1970s enabled me to make more informed interpretations of Allen’s archive, constructing a notion of the Mormon *habitus* enabled me to extrapolate – from Allen’s interpretations – the way other Mormons would have (or, at the very least, plausibly could have) interpreted the Mormon Church’s rhetoric, explicit and tacit, on ERA. (3) Access to how Mormons tended to interpret other prominent discourses in circulation and the Mormon Church’s interpretation of these discourses went a long way toward explaining their political actions at the time.

Finally, immersing myself in this period of Mormonism and deeply imagining the Mormon *habitus* granted some access to Mormon preoccupations in everyday life. In keeping with the thinking of Clifford Geertz, Michel Foucault, and Pierre Bourdieu, I was inclined to believe that rhetoric would be found in these preoccupations. A conception of



*habitus* enables us to begin to consider the meaning of the lowly power struggles. The mundane, everyday performances were the modes through which the battle over ERA – and the rights and roles of women – was being fought. To reinscribe Nathan Stormer’s quote: “[I]deas, morals, and concepts descend through the body’s encounter with a living world” (29). Concepts of vital importance for certain groups in certain moments (Stormer cites “liberty” as an example) “emerge from power struggles, often lowly rather than noble ones” (29). Thus, I wanted tentative answers to questions such as: what was it, at that time, to inhabit a Mormon body, to embody Mormonism; to live life the Mormon way? What did it mean to be an “orthodox” Mormon and a Mormon woman in America (and therefore, also an American)? How do the answer(s) shift in different discursive contexts?

Allen might have anticipated such a move, as her archival materials, her *Collection of Papers On Mormonism*, was a library unto itself and the beginning of my education; what I did not find in the archive was cited in the archive – in Allen’s bibliographies or in the bibliographies of articles or books she had already collected. I read volumes about Mormons and Mormonism written by anthropologists, sociologists, religious studies scholars, historians, and journalists; I read books, journal, magazine and newspaper articles, memoirs, dissertations, histories, and studies. Writers included practicing Mormons, Mormon apologists, curious non-Mormons, ex-Mormons, new Mormons, skeptical or hostile non-Mormons, scholars of Mormonism (its origins and beliefs), investigative journalists in the American West, to name a few. Not every piece I read was written in the narrow window of time between 1977-1979, but much – for

reasons that become increasingly clear in subsequent chapters – was written between 1974-1982.

With this information, I drew a crude map of the Mormon Church: its hierarchy, its structure, and its rationale for both. I recorded names of agencies and departments and drew inferences about their functions. Mormon histories charted changes in the institution: the emergence of new agencies, programs and departments. These histories provided the names and ideological bents of influential leaders who had competing visions for the Church's future and sought to shape the institution and its responses to a dynamic national and international political environment. Ethnographies indexed important Mormon genealogies and suggested who and why certain Mormon men tended to "rise through the Church ranks." Some of the journalistic accounts estimated the Church's membership and financial resources. Of particular interest to me were its communication media holdings. The purpose of my crude map was to understand the movement of power in and through the institution and the means and media through which messages were sent and received. Who spoke and from what position of power? How was the message communicated? How would it likely be interpreted? Often, it must be said, I had to "refer back" in my research, especially on two counts: to determine who was speaking and through what communicative channel.

As an outsider, my goal was to understand Mormonism as a cultural logic: to view the Mormon Church and the beliefs it espouses not only *as* a Mormon, but also in the terms used by Mormons. Moreover, I wanted to imaginatively inhabit a particular moment for Mormons. Institutions, even as they tend to leverage claims of permanence, change – sometimes radically – over time. Thus, it was important for me to understand a

particular Mormon moment and what had given rise to it. Even as the very diversity of perspectives on Mormonism I read challenged me to avoid totalizing claims, I sought “the probable” about what Mormons *tended* to believe about the nature of God and reality, what they tended to do (or not do) because of those beliefs or to express those beliefs, what they tended to think about other Mormons, non-Mormons, ex-Mormons, how they tended to view the Church’s authority, the way they tended to interpret other cultural logics, what they tended to believe about gender and race, and what attitudes they tended to adopt about matters both inside and outside the church that were causes of conflict or tension at that time.

In the 1970s, how did Mormons tend to regard (or spend) money, work, and recreation? What did they tend to eat – were there Mormon foods or food prohibitions? How did they tend to dress and regard clothing? How did they view dating, sex, sexuality, marriage, reproduction, divorce? Children, child-rearing and education? How did they arrange space – inside and outside their homes? Mormon ways of understanding physical and mental health, wellness, aging, and death was relevant, as were their attitudes about popular culture, i.e. television, movies, books, and music. Sandra Allen once told me that she could identify Mormons by the way they spoke or certain turns of phrase. Sonia Johnson once asserted once that she was “Mormon down to her toenails.” This implies that every aspect of her being was Mormon.

Pursuant to my desire to comprehend the Mormon *habitus* circa 1978, I began reading histories written in that time about a more distant Mormon past. These histories – many of which were written by Mormon women about Mormon women – were important insofar as this dissertation argues that anxiety or conflict in the present constitutes an

important exigence for remembering and rewriting the past. The explosion of Mormon histories created by Mormon historians in the 1970s led to a consideration of what was being used as and what counted for historical evidence. Such questions opened up research into Mormon orientations to history and Mormon historiography practices. This investigation, in turn, led to genealogy, books of remembrance, and personal journals.

The Mormon Church exercised power by proclaiming its truth – a truth its members were required to accept – but also, and more importantly, by asking its members to perform certain daily tasks that reproduced certain dispositions to the discourses in play. The power of these disciplines stems from their embodied daily-ness, the way they constantly (re)orient practitioners to a certain perspective and (re)enact certain beliefs *without appearing to be politically motivated*. In *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Pierre Bourdieu explains the dynamic at work:

If all societies and, significantly, all the “totalitarian institutions”, in Goffman’s phrase, that seek to produce a new man through a process of “deculturation” and “reculturation” set such store on the seemingly most insignificant details of *dress, bearing, physical and verbal manners*, the reason is that, treating the body as a memory, they entrust to it in abbreviated and practical, i.e. mnemonic, form the fundamental principles of the arbitrary content of culture. The principles embodied in this way are placed beyond the grasp of consciousness, and hence cannot be touched by voluntary, deliberate transformation, cannot even be made explicit; nothing seems more ineffable, more incommunicable, more inimitable, and therefore, more precious, than the values given body, *made*

body by the transubstantiation achieved by the hidden persuasion of an implicit pedagogy, capable of instilling a whole cosmology, an ethic, a metaphysic, a political philosophy, through injunctions as insignificant as “stand up straight.” . . . The whole trick of pedagogic reason lies precisely in the way it extorts the essential while seeming to demand the insignificant (94–5; emphasis original).<sup>19</sup>

What this passage argues is that as historians we must pay close attention to the smallest performances. Writing about Bourdieu’s work, philosopher and ethnographer Paul Rabinow in “Representations Are Social Facts: Modernity and Post-Modernity in Anthropology,” a chapter in *Writing Culture*, explains the dynamic at stake in other terms:

The work of Pierre Bourdieu is helpful in posing questions about the politics of culture. . . . His new sociology of cultural production does not seek to reduce knowledge to social position or interest per se but, rather, to place all of these variables within the complex constraints – Bourdieu’s *habitus* – within which they are produced and received. Bourdieu is particularly attentive to strategies of cultural power that advance through denying their attachment to immediate political ends and thereby accumulate both symbolic capital and “high” structural position. (252)

In all probability during the late 1970s, Mormons themselves tended not to interpret their daily preoccupations and practices as part of a national power struggle. Instead, they viewed these preoccupations and performances as expressions of their faith.

### **A Rhetorical History of the *Sandra Allen Collection***

As posited above, Sandra Allen added several important documents to her *Collection* in November of 1997. These documents include her personal journals, the preface to these journals, a copy of a magazine (*Pride in New Mexico*) to which she contributed editorial, poems, stories, interviews, photographs, and graphics, her family history *Webb Family Stories 1996*, and the *Webb Family Genealogy 1996*. That Allen donated these materials six years after donating the majority of the collection gave me pause to consider the rhetorical impact and public work of the “Additions” to the archive as a whole, and ultimately reconsider the archive in archaeological terms. Allen made rhetorical choices in constructing the *Sandra Allen Collection*. She exercised control over which materials to include and which to exclude. She considered how the materials might be arranged and ordered; she leveraged her understanding of both the immediate institutional and broader cultural contexts in which her archive would be situated and to which it would speak. Allen gives the reader access to her experiences and the way she has interpreted and re-interpreted these experiences, establishing her ethos as an historian, archivist, and historiographer. In spite of the copious writings on the archive and archival research, little work in rhetoric and composition studies addresses the donor’s work in engendering the archive. As such, I am borrowing American Studies scholar Rodrigo Lazo’s term “migrant archives” to describe this rhetorical work. Migrant archives are archives that move in and through official, often state archives. They are “more than a record of social processes of a representation of experiences” he explains; “the writing itself, whether in book form or scraps of paper, is a site where migrant conditions take material form” (Lazo 38). Lazo’s term is useful as a way to explicate two

movements: the work Allen undertook to move the archive and the work she undertook to mobilize materials in the archive.

### **The Migrant Archives: An Archaeological Analysis**

What was to become the *Sandra Allen Collection* originated in a religious context and began with stories. Mormons cast themselves as a chosen people, but a persecuted people. They took their stories with them when they emigrated across the plains to the Great Salt Lake Basin to establish a new Zion. Allen's mother's family was among the earliest believers. When the vast majority of Mormons were swayed to give up plural marriage, Allen's ancestors immigrated to Mexico. They kept their archives and continued writing and retelling old stories. These were remembered and retold, connecting the generations through oral and social history, and through written history, too, as these migration stories were inscribed, typed up, printed, and bound for sale at family gatherings (see, for example, *Webb Family Stories 1996*). Traces of this archive remain in her *Collection*.

As a devout believer in the 1970s, Sandra Allen kept personal journals as well as books of remembrance and family genealogies as her parents had before her. She was taught to save ephemera: newspaper clippings, cards, letters, photographs, and other materials that described people, events, and relationships. She also kept some few souvenirs from her unusual political activities. Some of these items were pasted onto the pages of her journals, on which she wrote about her daily life, her friends and family, her spiritual highs and lows, and her political work from 1977-79.

Home archives in this context serve soteriological needs, that is, they play a role in the Mormon plan of salvation. Allen remembers hearing from Church leaders: "by

these books ye shall be judged” (“Telephone Interview”). These “migrant archives” serve practical and rhetorical needs as well. They are “counter-national” documents, reinscribing specifically Mormon beliefs, including belief in Mormons as a people who have a covenant with God, belief in church authorities, belief in the restored gospel, and belief in an(other) American history. Allen’s journal entries in the *Collection* come to an end in 1979, soon after she moves with her family to West Jordan, Utah.

Allen’s next writings are dated 1991, when she is a woman of forty. She has returned to college at UNM to pursue a bachelor’s degree in Women Studies and became an apprentice scholar to a handful of professors who have taken an interest in her research. Allen opens her new archival chapter thus:

I have now returned to school with the goal of getting a Doctorate degree in both history and women's studies. The research and documentation training I have received through work experience and school has instilled in me the desire to become a reputable researcher in these two academic fields. (*History 1*)

This document from 1991, a research plan, provides not only an overview of Allen’s educational goals, but also her research credentials, an overview of her historical project, a methodology, and a bibliography. Her goal as an historian is to rewrite the histories of ERA. She has “cut all ties” to the Mormon Church (*History 1*). Alongside her scholarly work is a letter Allen received from Nancy S. Kirkpatrick, congratulating her for winning first place for her academic paper on near death experience at the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual New Mexico Women’s Studies Conference. Another letter in the same folder shows that she has made the Dean’s List. The April 1991 UNM General Library Center for Southwest



Research Manuscripts Processing and Conservation Monthly Report indicates that her *Collection* has been accessioned.

Then, in 1997, Allen writes a preface to her journals and donates several of the key pieces mentioned above. Allen situates herself: she becomes re-embodied, adding new dimensions and authority to her *Collection*.

### **Moving The Archive: Radical Recontextualization**

We can trace the “migration” of the *Sandra Allen Collection* in the passage above from Las Vegas to West Jordan to Albuquerque. We can trace its movement from Mormon migrant archive to public institutional archive. In between West Jordan and Albuquerque, Allen left the Mormon Church, divorced her husband, struggled to maintain relationships with her children, and came out as a lesbian. She salvaged, preserved, and moved her archival materials at some personal cost. Allen’s archive became a refugee archive: she was a cast-out of the Mormon Church because of her sexuality and became a threat because of her insider knowledge.<sup>20</sup> Allen commenced the archiving process again when she arrived in New Mexico as a student, researcher, and employee at CSWR.

I draw attention to the way Allen created the archive, kept certain pieces of the archive, removed it from its context, and recontextualized it to illustrate that the meaning of the documents – the sense we make of them – shifts. In CSWR, the documents in the archive, Allen’s personal journals, for example, mean something different than they did in Allen’s home in Las Vegas: they subvert that which they at first proclaimed.

Allen was acutely aware of the stakes of this recontextualization and what it would mean to active Mormons in 1992.<sup>21</sup> After receiving boos and threats while

presenting her paper, “The Mormon Involvement in the Defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment,” at the Western Regional Honors Conference in 1992 at Arizona State University, Allen feared both for her physical safety and the safety of the vast number of materials she had already collected in support of her project (“Telephone Interview”).<sup>22</sup> In Allen’s telling, after the conference, she and Kathlene Ferris, came up with the idea to preserve the vast body of research she’d collected concerning Mormonism and women’s issues (“Telephone Interview”).<sup>23</sup> The rules governing access to CSWR’s special collections would render it difficult for an individual acting out of personal loyalty to the Mormon Church, out of a church directive, or out of personal dislike, to sabotage or destroy her record.

Allen may have moved her archive into CSWR for another reason, one I have posited above: The archive confers value upon the archival materials. In addition to being safe, the *Sandra Allen Collection* would occupy a place of respect by those who come to consult it. I do not intend to contradict Allen’s claim that she feared for her own safety and that of her *Collection*; I do, however, believe her choice to move the materials into CSWR (as opposed, to say, a safety deposit box) constitutes a rhetorical move.

Allen was employed at CSWR when her collection was accessioned. At the time, she was working for Ferris and learned how to process collections under Ferris’s tutelage. As an undergraduate work-study, Allen had become intimately familiar with several special collections at the CSWR.<sup>24</sup> Specifically, she was asked to put together a bibliography of materials in Zimmerman Library on Mormonism and Mormon History. One conclusion Ferris drew from this bibliography was that the library did not have enough information or resources on Mormonism or Mormons. Because UNM is located

in the Intermountain West and CSWR aims to position itself as an important regional source, Ferris saw the value in bolstering CSWR's holdings in this area. Ferris told me that at CSWR archivists make recommendations about which collections to accession to the director of CSWR. While the director has the power to turn down a recommendation, she could not think of a time when the director exercised this prerogative; thus, she had been confident the collection would be accessioned (Ferris).

I understand Allen's decision to donate her materials and Ferris's decision to recommend that they be accessioned in terms of *exigence*. Yet, in the recent scholarship on archives, I did not find the accessioning process described as exigence. One reason this term does not appear might be reasoned through Carolyn Miller's landmark essay "Genre as Social Action," which moved the conversation about exigence toward the dialogic nature of genre. Another reason "exigence" is not commonly used in conjunction with archives is that many institutional archives – though archivists are increasingly self-reflexive about their rhetorical choices – tend to present themselves as transcendent entities and engaged in the process of collecting materials of timeless value (E. Johnson 190). Yet institutional actors do make explicit choices regarding what to accession given their geopolitical context and in consideration of the holdings of other regional archives; institutions are both shaped by discourses even as they shape discourses. Institutions, including university archives, that implicitly claim to dwell outside the realm of politics, "advance through denying their attachment to immediate political ends and thereby accumulate both symbolic capital and 'high' structural position" (Rabinow 252).

In the context of academic archives, Bitzer's material grounding of exigence makes sense. Archivists are increasingly conscious of their activist role. At least since the

1970s, archivists have been made responsible, in part, for “hold[ing] up a mirror to mankind” [sic] and “collecting a record that accurately represent[s] human experience for future generations” (E. Johnson 193–4). Thus, increasingly cognizant of what “should exist” in their archives to capture this full range of human activities, archivists think in terms of exigence: gaps to fill. The gap – which Ferris characterizes as a dearth of materials on Mormonism and Mormons (and, perhaps, to rephrase this in a more contentious vein, a dearth of criticism on the Church’s involvement in regional and national politics) – is “something waiting to be done.”

As a CSWR work-study, Allen was familiar with the archivists who make recommendations about what collections to accession and the institutional values and agendas, including how the archive aims to position itself regionally. Further, because Allen worked on the bibliography of materials on Zimmerman Library’s collection of materials on Mormonism and Mormons, she was aware of its holdings. She may have been more familiar with Zimmerman Library’s collection of materials on Mormonism and Mormons than any other individual. Allen knew her research on Mormon-related issues would address a material gap. She knew of no other archives or resources like the one she could offer CSWR. While Allen’s motivation for donating the collection and Ferris’s motivation for accessioning it did not entirely overlap, both women saw a material and symbolic opening into which the archive would fit in a way that made sense in the CSWR context.

Allen had another exigence for donating her materials to CSWR: she wanted her experiences as a Mormon political operative – and her research on the Mormon Church’s intervention in ERA – to be made public. Before elaborating upon these motives for

depositing her archive into a public institution, I want to reiterate that this deposition – her choice to donate and CSWR’s choice to accession – is not apolitical. Allen might have deposited her materials in a safety deposit box or asked her parents to keep them for her; Ferris and the archivists as CSWR might have accessioned a different collection on Mormonism, one fabricated by a Mormon apologist. Because her *Collection* dwells in a public university archive, her counter-history and counter-memory of ERA may circulate and find purchase in challenging histor(ies) and memories of that time. Moreover, as Allen argues, the collection addresses a political situation today.<sup>25</sup>

### **Mobilizing the *Sandra Allen Collection*: Allen Makes the Materials Move**

In her 1991 document, *History and Definition of the Project*, Allen expresses several interrelated concerns:

Since my return to school, I began to see to what extent the Mormon [C]hurch had involved itself, nation wide, to defeat the ERA. In looking into the history of the defeat of the ERA, very little has been linked to the Mormon [C]hurch, which was one of the [Church’s] goals [that] I was aware of. (1)

The first and most important of these concerns involves Allen’s claim that many other Mormon women across the country had had experiences very similar to hers while working for the Pro-Family Coalition in Nevada; hers was not an isolated case. Allen knew that Pro-Family did not constitute a “local” response to ERA; it was a model for how to engender political action that *appeared* local. In fact, the Church employed this model strategically across the nation. The reason why the Mormon Church used this strategy is that it proved effective, and it kept the Church’s role obscure.

A second concern Allen expresses in 1991 is that few people appeared to have known or have written about the Church's covert strategy on ERA. According to Allen:

When the Equal Rights Amendment Referendum, in Nevada, was defeated on election day, November 197[8], it was hardly known by the general public that it was because of the involvement of the Mormon Church. When the ERA was defeated in other western states, some suspicions arose, but no one knew the extent of the Mormon involvement or the amounts of money that had been placed into the anti-ERA campaign nation wide. (*Topic of Research 1*)

From her own experience, she knew that the Pro-Family Coalition was to present itself as a local, emergent response to the threat of ERA and “moral” issues affecting the family. However, she wondered whether others like her had come forward, what journalists had uncovered, and what narratives had been, at that time, recounted in academic and popular histories. What evidence regarding the Church's intervention into the national debate surrounding ERA had come to light and what stories about this past were in circulation?

Not long after the defeat of the ERA (in the '80's), did the theories as to what happened begin to be published. Several dissertations, articles in magazines, journals, and newspapers began to come out with their speculations as to the reasons for the ERA's failure to pass. By comparing these writings, so far, it is noticed that at the most maybe a paragraph or two was written about the small visible evidence that the Mormon Church had been involved. To date, I have located only two books published ...

that come the closest to identify[ing] the powerful impact of the Church on the outcome of the Amendment. (Allen, *Topic of Research 1*)

Allen did find histories of the Church's covert ERA intervention. But based upon her research in the early 1990s, she believed few histories went far enough in establishing the extent of the Mormon Church's role in bringing down the ERA. According to Allen, only *The Mormon Corporate Empire* by John Heinerman and Anson Shupe and *From Housewife to Heretic* by Sonia Johnson come close to representing the past accurately. Thus, Allen expresses her fear that the LDS Church's radical involvement in ERA politics would continue to go unnoticed by history: what happened to the ERA will (continue to) be misremembered.

In her *History and Definition of the Project, Topic of Research and Notes*, and *Research Paper Draft*, Allen makes several major arguments concerning ERA, which I summarize as follows: The Mormon Church opposed the ERA in overt and covert ways. Any historian can trace the Church's public statements on ERA according to Allen; her contribution involves an explication of the Mormon Church's covert campaign. She wants "to tie together the scattered writings on this subject and to bind it with oral histories" (*Research Paper Draft 1*). Without Allen (or another like her) to reveal the Church's covert role, Americans will never know what happened. Instead, we will continue to accept that Phyllis Schlafly and STOP ERA were responsible. The Church trained other socially conservative organizations in how to deploy similar covert methods, which are still being used. Thus, there is little hope of knowing what is "really" going on in American politics. Explains Allen:

The importance of knowing the Mormon Church's political maneuvering [sic] and the impact it has on women's issues in America is essential, if only to clearly identify it as such. Those groups of individuals that are working for more social reform . . . have no idea as to who or what they are up against in the political arena. In reality, that which has been called a "grass roots conservative movement" has been miss-labeled and [its] image has been purposely been misleading. (*History* 1–2)

Allen, under the auspices of her advisor, Dr. Rosie Otero, spoke publicly about ERA in 1992 and presented her research findings at the aforementioned academic conference in Tempe. So far as I know – and so far as Allen has told me – this was the only public forum in which her work appeared until the *Sandra Allen Collection* was made available in 1997.<sup>26</sup>

Allen thus indexes yet another exigence for donating her materials to CSWR: she has decided not to pursue her line of research, but believes the public should know what the Church and its devout members did during ERA because they continue to deploy these political interventions. Her decision to deposit her archive in 1991 constitutes a response to others' symbolic actions. We can understand Allen's exigence here using Carolyn Miller's conceptualization of the term: her archive is an utterance that acts within a social context to alter that context and invite further utterances (151). By moving her archive into CSWR, Allen was able to engage in political activism in a way that protected herself and her materials.

My argument, that 1991's *Sandra Allen Collection* rewrites history for political purposes today, is supported by: (1) her academic prose and (2) the voluminous research



in her *Collection*. This research, in the terms of the archive, constitutes *evidentiary* value. Even for scholars who do not read every single item in her *Collection*, the multiple boxes of solicited, organized, photocopied research evidence stands as material proof of her claims. I make the case that the 1991 *Sandra Allen Collection* constitutes a social act, but it is not a strong case, especially in light of the way the subsequent inclusion of the Additions to the Collection animates and mobilizes the archive.

I have already argued that an understanding of the physical movement of the archive is necessary, as its changing contexts inform and even radically alter meaning. Here I wish to return to the chronological development of the archive. The materials included in the 1997 Additions render Sandra Allen's archive an activist archive and a historiography because they bring Allen's situated, embodied ethos to bear on the materials.

### ***Sandy Allen's Ethos in the Activist Archive***

Allen's personal journals, her statement to the researcher framing those journals, and her creative, rhetorical work in the magazine she co-edited and co-founded, *Pride in New Mexico*, are a series of interrelated narratives that function together to create an overarching (if still incomplete) narrative.<sup>27</sup> While Allen's academic papers from 1991-1992 are intended to stand on their own and represent briefly her experiences as a spy, Allen's journals provide her audience her interpretation of her political experiences as they were unfolding. The account in the journals is an account that is missing or forgotten in histories of the ERA. By deciding to share this historical account with the public within a secular institution, Allen is implicitly arguing that they should be remembered, even at the risk of disclosing a history that she was instructed (and threatened) not to

disclose (*Second Volume* 93; “Denver Interview”). The disclosure also opens Allen up to criticism for the choices she made, but, through her *Important Introduction*, she demonstrates her *responsibility*, or her ability to respond to those criticisms. One important anecdote – not yet deposited in the archive – reveals Allen’s response-ability for her actions. In March of 1992, Allen was selected to introduce Gloria Steinem when Steinem spoke at the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the UNM Women Studies Program and Women’s Center. Allen presented Steinem with a photograph she had taken of her when Steinem was campaigning for ERA and Allen was fighting against it. Introducing Steinem, Allen stated, “the article in your *Ms.* magazine was correct in connecting the Mormon involvement in the defeat of the ERA in the key state of Nevada (specifically Clark County), however, the STOP ERA organization was not the primary group that did this.”<sup>28</sup> Allen goes on to say, “It is interesting in light of your new book about asking for us to come together to work out differences from a place of compassion that the photographer returned to continue her university education and is now a Women’s Studies student.” According to Allen, Steinem asked, “Are you that student?” “Yes. I am” (“Denver Interview”; *Steinem Introduction*).

In the spring of 1992, Allen was the target of a more-or-less organized attempt by members of the Church to silence her. In light of these hostilities, she might not have been willing to deposit personal materials. Yet her decision to withhold items at that time, items like her personal journals that “tell” her story, also divested her of a powerful rhetorical tool: her ethos. Situating herself in the present – the place from which she is telling her story – the place where she arrived – constitutes an ethical rhetorical move that, in turn, moves her audience to be persuaded by her interpretation of the past.

***Re-Presenting the Body: Self-Images and Ethos***

Prior to Allen's decision to incorporate the Additions to the Collection, her *Collection* included a single photographic self-portrait. This self-portrait was displayed on the UNM campus as part of the twentieth anniversary of Women Studies and the Women's Resource Center. It also appeared on the cover of a pamphlet describing the events associated with the anniversary celebration. The self-portrait is a still life and depicts Allen's belongings. The scene is a sunlit indoor space that evokes the character of the southwest. A single chair dominates, and it is adorned with a jean jacket. Books, glasses, and pipe occupy the chair's seat, and cowboy boots stand beside the chair.

It bears consideration that this portrait depicts an absent body. The clothing, accessories, and objects in the photo metonymically "stand for" Allen in the space (Figure 4). The broader context, the academic, secular celebration of women and the study of women at UNM would have led the audience to situate the photograph more specifically in New Mexico and to identify its photographer as a woman and a women's studies student, even though the objects themselves could belong to a man. Allen may have wanted to intentionally



challenge the viewer. Even without representing her face or body, the self-portrait reveals a great deal about Allen – her intellectual bent, her affinity for books and reading, her contemplative nature, her casual, androgynous style, her habitat or geographic and physical surroundings, and her preferred mode of consuming tobacco, a mode associated

with (older) men. But she also asks the audience to consider what kind of body or bodies might inhabit this space.

There was one other photographic representation of Allen in her 1991 *Collection*. In 1969, Allen went to Chicago to compete in the national 4H competition in the Home Improvement Division. The *Las Vegas Sun* covered the story and showed Allen, then in high school, with her entry. The photo (and clipping) appears to have been reproduced many times and is small and grainy; still, Allen is primly dressed with curled, shoulder-length blonde hair. The audience is invited to consider simultaneously Allen as an “all-American,” feminine teenager who garnered accolades and recognition for the way she applied her artistic ability to the domestic sphere, and Allen as an academic and photographer, who has applied her artistic ability and talents in more ambiguous and subversive ways.

My own conclusion is that Allen was ambivalent about presenting herself when the collection was accessioned in 1991. This ambivalence may have been out of fear of divulging further personal data, discomfort or reluctance to “come out” in the archive, or because she was emulating academic epistemologies that privilege mind over body. By remaining “faceless” and disembodied, I believe she wanted her reader’s focus to be on the evidentiary materials she collected rather than on her person.

Still, this dis-embodiment undermines her ethos. Feminist notions of ethos posit that ethos is more than a means of persuasion derived from the audience’s previous knowledge of a speaker or the way the speaker presents herself on a particular occasion. Instead, ethos emerges from the rhetor’s material self-presentation over time, as she negotiates competing ideologies and material conditions that dis/allow certain kinds of

performances (Harrison 244). I argue that by granting the audience visual access to her body, she is more fully occupying a changing *habitus*, revealing rather than concealing the cultural and social structures of which her rhetorical performances are product and resource. In short, her ideological transformation is inscribed in writing and on her body. Her body “speaks” her story and commitments.

In 1994’s *Pride in New Mexico: A Celebration of Diversity*, Allen positions herself first as a community spokesperson who supports diversity in the queer community and second as a bridge between queer and straight peoples. She offers a direct message to readers titled “And Now, Some Ramblings From Sandy” and accompanied by a photograph. She speaks directly to the magazine’s audience, arguing that many pay lip service to diversity in sexual expression but “there are more people who talk about it than actually want to celebrate and really support it” (“Ramblings” 4). Her second purpose in contributing to the magazine was to bolster communications and relations between those in New Mexico’s queer and straight communities (“Ramblings” 4).



In the accompanying photograph, Allen is lighting a pipe (Figure 5). Her eyes are focused on the task rather than the camera. Her hair is a dark blonde and cut short. She wears what appears to be a denim shirt, although because the image was reproduced in black and white, it is difficult to tell. One notable feature of the photograph is her abundant, predominantly southwestern style jewelry: rings, necklaces, and earrings. Allen

appears relaxed, comfortable, and unselfconscious in the photograph. The setting and composition is informal: the photo was taken outside and it looks as though Allen were sitting on the ground; behind her are someone's knees. The jewelry, pipe, and tinted sunglasses express an individuality, and also, given the flavor of the jewelry, a regionalism – Allen is indicating that she is at home in the local style. The short hairstyle and denim shirt suggest an androgynous or even male persona, especially when considered in conjunction with the pipe. The pose is so casual that it is almost aloof.

When Allen included the edition of *Pride in New Mexico* as part of the 1997 Additions, she may have considered how this self-presentation would resonate with and complicate other self-presentations. Other photographic images of Allen were included in the Additions, and so I perceive the portrait that appears in the *Pride In New Mexico*

publication to be in conversation with photos of Allen from her personal journals. One such photo of Allen is pasted inside the cover of the first volume. She appears with best friend, Cheryl (Figure 6). The image is not a self-portrait. It is a snapshot from a party. In this image, Allen wears her thick, blonde hair at her chin to frame her face.



As in the *Pride* photo, she wears glasses and jewelry, although her accessories are dainty and conservative – untinted glasses, a small gold pendant, and pearl earrings. Allen wears a long-sleeved dress. Her hands are clasped in front of her, and she smiles directly at the camera. Rather than appearing aloof, she appears happy, pleasing, and mindful of a viewer – both the photographer and the audience (herself, Cheryl, her husband, friends).

Her outfit, hairstyle, accessories, posture, and facial expression convey her understanding of feminine convention. Further, the background, a room furnished with wood furniture and knick-knacks communicate domesticity, a cozy home scene.

These two embodied performances in the archive grant the audience access to Allen's investments. This display of ethos mobilizes the materials for the audience, helping us to interpret them in the ways Allen intended they be interpreted. Allen wanted to establish her credibility as a former Mormon with insider access to this community. But in granting her audience access to her evolving identity a lesbian activist who seeks to be a bridge between communities and do more than pay "lip service" to gender equality, she is arguing for the material, public implications of her *Collection*.

### **Conclusion**

Earlier, I argued that institutions confer value upon stakeholders while shaping stakeholders' ideas about what they should value. As a devout, orthodox Mormon, Allen valued her family, their stories, and their histories, which she learned to collect. She learned to value her family's archive and made her own archive, incorporating materials she valued, including "evidence" of the faith. She was also taught (and required) to produce historical documents, of which the personal journals are one example. Allen's Mormon migrant archive asserts an identity that affirms a set of non-dominant beliefs and posits a worldview shared with a group that seeks, simultaneously, to exist peacefully within a dominant culture while retaining its unique characteristics that attract and retain believers. Allen's political work fighting the Equal Rights Amendment as part of the Pro-Family Coalition and her simultaneous recording of her participation in this "war" constitutes a "material embodiment" of organized expressions.

As I go on to argue in *Chapter Three: On History*, Mormon home archives are engendered by the Mormon *habitus*, product and resource of living life the Mormon way. The histories these practices engender are not value-neutral: they reinforce Mormon ways of knowing and being in the world. Allen's decision to take pieces of her Mormon home archive with her after she "came out" could be construed as evidence of a kind of vestige, a habit. As a Mormon refugee – cast out because of her sexuality – her archive ceased to have *public* value (a point forcefully made by many in the queer community who have worked hard to make queer archives visible and accessible); by taking it out of its Mormon home context, it ceased to be "evidence" of or monument to the Mormon faith.

Later, as an undergraduate and student-worker at CSWR, Allen learned a different way of doing history and re-producing historical knowledge. Ideas of what counts for "evidence" or has "evidentiary value" differ in this context. By becoming an expert researcher and gaining inside knowledge of the way an institutional archive functions at a public research university, Allen was able to make public sense of her inscriptions through the donation of her *Collection of Papers on Mormonism*.

Producing histories involves reproducing ways of knowing and being. These ways of knowing and being are not transcendent categories, but shift, depending upon the context in which they were produced and through which they are communicated. Even as privileges and accolades were conferred upon Allen (both in the Mormon context and in the university context), her ways of valuing produced certain histories and discourses. What makes Allen "one of a kind" – a special case – is her demonstrated ability to adopt the *habitus* of a secular, academic historian, *and also* to leverage this situated knowledge to make her history public through her archive. She is, in all respects, an adroit



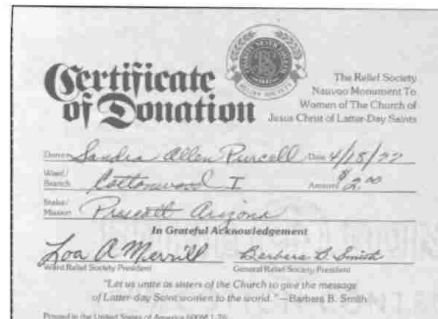
rhetorician for finding the means to connect with a public. Moreover, Allen's history is persuasive. She gives credence to her interpretation of events through the embodied representation of her story. Finally, I argue that Allen performs the work of historiographer, as she self-consciously reflects upon the implications of her shifting investments and what is at stake in the telling.

At the same time, Allen as "one of a kind" (Mormon, refugee, feminist historian, lesbian activist) draws attention to our dependence upon institutions to confer legitimacy upon our histories; they establish the grounds on which and from which to speak. To say this another way, institutional actors profoundly influence *which* stories matter and *how* we should tell those stories, thus shaping our beliefs about the past as "reality itself." By telling certain stories a certain way, institutions teach us whose stories and what events are (not) materially important, shaping our present interaction with one another and the world. The ensuing dissertation uses three different examples to make this very argument.

## CHAPTER 2

### On Memory

Tucked into the pages of Sandra Allen’s journals are two *Certificates of Donation* for “The Relief Society Nauvoo Monument to Women of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” The pre-printed signature of the General Relief Society President, Barbara B. Smith, appears along with the following quotation: “Let us unite as sisters of the Church to give the message of Latter-day Saint women to the world” (Figure 7).



<sup>29</sup>Allen donated two dollars to the Monument to Women (MTW) in her name and two dollars in the name of her daughter, Rachael, on April 18, 1977. A little over a year later, as Allen took a break from her Pro-Family Coalition work in Las Vegas to attend a family reunion in Cottonwood, Arizona, the leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, including (then) Church President Spencer W. Kimball, dedicated the MTW in Nauvoo, Illinois. The dedication festivities transpired over three days, from June 28-30, 1978, drew thousands, involved the production of an elaborate, original musical, *Because of Elizabeth*, and provided the opportunity for various church leaders to speak to those in attendance and other members of the Latter Day Saint public through news coverage of the event.

The monument itself consists of thirteen bronze statues. The centerpiece of the monument is a “heroic” figure of a woman, who, standing close to nine feet tall, gazes into the distance. Around her are twelve life-sized sculptures “expressing the widely varied nature of women’s vital roles in society,” according to the MTW website.

“[D]edicated to women of past, present, and future,” the MTW is located within a two-acre garden adjacent to the Nauvoo Visitors’ Center, described as “birthplace” of the Relief Society. At the time of the dedication, the Relief Society boasted 1.2 million members across the globe, Sandra Allen included.

Leading up to its June 1978 dedication, those who designed and created the MTW spoke to audiences about the way they hoped visitors would experience the thirteen statues arranged in the garden. The statues were photographed as “works in progress” in the March 1977 issue of the LDS magazine, *The Ensign*. According to the interviewer, MTW creator and designer Dennis Smith

hopes the monument will go beyond mere illustration of a woman’s roles to convey the universal qualities and concepts of womanhood to which all women can relate. The monument should evoke from its visitors a simple, sincere, and somewhat reserved sentiment rather than overworked sentimentality.

The artist’s statement indicates that he sought to create a “universal” rather than contextual or cultural ideal of womanhood. The second sculptor, Florence Hansen, “believes that the purpose of the monument is to ‘portray to the world the stand our Church takes concerning women; to honor women and their contributions to society; and to heighten women’s aspirations as they relate to each concept’” (Wilson). Hansen sees the monument as a “stand” on women that also offers honor and inspiration.

President Barbara Smith, who oversaw the project, states in one interview with the mainstream press that the monument, “expresses our hope for the future, inspires courage to meet adversity, and offers direction that will lead us to do much good”

(“Mormon Women” 7A). As for the feeling the monument is meant to evoke, Smith states, “We hope every woman seeing these bronze figures will see herself stepping into the future, confidently with her head held high” (“Mormon Women” 7A). Those who created and commissioned the MTW had high hopes that it would constitute a grand and meaningful gesture honoring women and also benefit women by giving them inspiration, confidence, and direction.

Through its presses and public relations office, the Mormon Church sought to build interest and excitement for the MTW and its dedication. Church-owned *Deseret News* covered progress on the statues’ journey from Utah to Illinois. An April 1978 article includes images of two statues being hoisted onto trucks (“Statues Are”). In the June 1978 issue of *The Ensign* wherein the three members of the Relief Society General Presidency are interviewed, Smith states, “What we’re most excited about right now, of course, is the dedication of the Nauvoo Monument to Women this month” (“Accept Fully”). The Church sought to include and excite even those who could not attend the dedication or visit the statues. For Mormons living far from Nauvoo, plays like *The Circle of Woman’s Reach*, which was produced by the Relief Society of Ridgecrest, California, provided viewers insight into the statues’ meaning by having live models enact the tableaux. Prior to their permanent installation, several statues were put on display in the Relief Society Building in Temple Square, allowing many living in or traveling through the Salt Lake City area to see them. The Relief Society also made available for purchase bronze and porcelain replicas of most of the statues. In our Denver interview, Allen recalled that women “went crazy for those little statues.” “They were starving for that kind of attention” from the Church (“Telephone Interview”).

At the moment when the MTW was publicly dedicated in June 1978, the Mormon Church was facing internal discord and negative publicity in the mainstream press for its increasingly strident opposition to ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. In 1977, Mormons in several of the state women's conferences – state conferences that were planned in conjunction with and in preparation for the National Women's Conference in Houston that November – surprised local organizers with their sudden, vocal opposition to ERA. The Mormon objections to nearly all of the conference resolutions, which touched upon a wide range of issues affecting women, engendered hostility in kind, earning the Mormon Church the epithet of “the newest enemy of the women's movement.” Just a few weeks prior to the dedication ceremony, the First Presidency reiterated in a strongly worded letter to Congress its opposition to ERA and emphatically objected to a new law that would ultimately (but futilely) extend the deadline for ratification, calling the extension “unfair.”

The Church's stand on ERA drew the ire of some Mormons, too. Many were unsettled. At the time of the MTW dedication, the Church was engaged in a battle over the meaning of its own past and what that past should mean for a new generation of Mormon women. A vocal, articulate Mormon counterpublic was forming in response to a cultural shift within the Church, a shift that began before the ERA crisis but reached a state of crisis during ERA ratification. These educated Mormons read the speeches and writings of the first and second generations of Saints and found inspiration and support for women's rights.

Without denying the extraordinary contributions of these early women, the Church brought to bear a different interpretive lens upon these early Saints' rhetorical

and political work. In a letter to Mormons for ERA spokesperson Sonia Johnson, Barbara Smith reminded her that their foremothers did not disobey priesthood authorities (Bradley 338). Needless to say, the Church imagined role models for women in the late 1970s different from than those cited by Sonia Johnson and the editors of *Exponent II*. And “imagined” is the key word. Rather than cite specific examples or composites, the Church imagined ideal figures (bodies) to meet its needs at the time. As the forthcoming discussion of the monument site, the statuary, and the dedication ceremonies reveal, the Church fostered identification among women by evoking *nostalgia* for its pioneer past while eliding historical narratives about Mormon women.

The ethos of this shift within the Mormon Church, I argue, is an ethos of nostalgia. Nostalgia “*distorts the past for the sake of affect in the present*” (Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles 421; emphasis original). “The rhetorical use of nostalgia invokes an idealized, mythologized past to ‘find/construct sources of identity, agency, or community that are felt to be lacking [in the present]’” (Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles 421); nostalgia is leveraged in the present to evoke certain feelings about the past in order to foster identification. However, essential to an understanding of nostalgia is that it fosters identification in the name of a purpose or shared undertaking that no longer exists or applies. Thus, nostalgia engenders a feeling of continuity with the past while obscuring differences between a “then” and the “now.” Church leaders used nostalgia during the *retrenchment* era to fulfill its mission of growing and enduring into the future. Specifically, the MTW mobilizes nostalgia for the Nauvoo “pioneer” period to garner identification in the present; simultaneously, it instructs women to reproduce an idealized

embodiment of womanhood by calling upon the community's images and fantasies about the past.

As scholars of rhetoric and communications working in the multidisciplinary field of memory studies, we accept “that the past serves the present in various ways” (Balthrop, Blair, and Michel 171). As a consequence, we must attend, simultaneously, to what James Loewen has called the “manifest narrative,” that which is being commemorated, honored, remembered, or preserved. The manifest narrative might be understood as the redeployment of specific, shared values at a specific time for a specific reason. Or, to simplify, “the story” the monument's sponsors want told. But the “manifest narrative” becomes manifest only in context. To “read” the monument, we attend to the discourses surrounding its erection (Balthrop, Blair, and Michel 171). In what follows, I attend to the discursive forces out of which the MTW emerged, attend to the manifest narrative – “the story” the Church wants told – through a discussion of the geographical monument site, statues, and dedication, and offer critique of the monument on historical and ethical grounds.

### **Calls for Equality: Race and Gender in the Institutional Church**

A revelation received by Church President Kimball on June 8, 1978, just three weeks before the dedication of the MTW, allowed men of African descent to join the priesthood. This revelation ended a longstanding ban and raised the expectations of some that women, too, would finally be included. Such rumors were immediately put to rest. Elder Joseph Anderson, a General Authority who happened to be visiting Illinois near the MTW site on June 12, 1978, stated in an interview that “he does not expect a revelation ever that would allow women to enter the priesthood” (Bailey). The idiosyncrasies of

Elder Anderson's statement aside, it appears to reflect the leadership's desire to staunch the hopes of those who believe Prophet Smith and God intended for women to one day be ordained.<sup>30</sup>

The timing of the President's revelation concerning black men and the priesthood raised eyebrows. The Church had ignored calls to include African American men for years. *Why now?* Writing in her untitled *Research Paper Draft*, Sandra Allen offers this argument to explain the link between race and gender in Church politics:

Not long before the ERA issue was in the "center court" of public attention, the issue and controversy facing the Mormon Church was over black males being able to participate fully in the Church, by being able to receive the Priesthood. Many Afro-American leaders and pro-Afro-American supporters had constantly challenged the Mormon Church's stand on allowing the Afro-American male to become an equal member. Through it all, the Church maintained that the discrimination clause had been a part of the Church's doctrine for decades, and that this doctrine was based upon the revelations that had been given to the Prophet of this, His, church. Thus, this position could not change until God would speak to His Prophet and change the policy. The position that the Presidency of the Church took was expressed and implied as a result of consulting with God on the implications with this [Equal Rights] Amendment. In actuality, one source stated to me that the Church had put into motion its most trusted lawyers to examine the legal implications on the Church if the ERA should pass. They were facing serious lawsuits in court over the issue of



Afro-American males having equal access to the religious priesthood.

Though Mormons seem to be in their best element while feeling persecuted, the business and bigoted side of the Church were beginning to feel a genuine threat and a possible court-ordered interference with their organization. After the word came down that they would indeed be in a bad position if the Equal Rights Amendment passed, *every* effort was made to secure the total defeat of it. (2; emphasis original)

Allen is not the only one to argue that the Church's opposition to passage of the ERA must be considered in light of the tremendous pressure brought to bear upon it for denying access to the priesthood for men of African descent. She argues that civil rights legislation pushed the Church to do that which it would not have done otherwise: allow men of African descent to hold the priesthood. There is some support for this view. In the *Sandra Allen Collection*, one newspaper article suggests that at least one African American member sued the Church and protested at its semiannual conference in 1978 ("Dissident Nabbed" 14); an examination of court cases against the Mormon Church in *The Mormon Corporate Empire* does not suggest a trend (Heinerman and Shupe 239–41). The same line of thinking was then extended to the Equal Rights Amendment. If the amendment passed, it would not be long before the Church had to allow women access to the priesthood as well. If the Church resisted, it would have to defend itself in American courts. The Church conducted extensive research to determine how vulnerable it would be to discrimination challenges should ERA pass. Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah asks the question directly during one subcommittee hearing (Heinerman and Shupe 145). A Mormon lawyer and the former Solicitor General of the United States, Rex E. Lee,

challenged ERA on two legal fronts in the book *A Lawyer Looks at the Equal Rights Amendment*. The Church takes up his lines of argument to justify its position, claiming that there is no legal need for the ERA based upon the way the constitution is already interpreted, and it would force courts to dismantle certain state protections extended to women based upon gender. Without question, to repeat Allen's argument, "every effort was made to secure the total defeat of [ERA]."

The Church's opposition to ERA was, however, not *only* a reaction against the amendment's possible legal implications, although ERA certainly became its *bête noir*. Long before ERA became a lightning rod, the Church had moved to reimagine in radical ways the role of women. The "accommodation and peculiarity thesis" provides ways of understanding the reasons behind the Church's evolving positions on race and gender in the 1960s and 1970s.

### **The Accommodation and Peculiarity Thesis**

How did Mormonism emerge, thrive, and survive when other new religions that sprang up around the Second Great Awakening failed? In answer to this question, practicing Mormon and sociologist Armand Mauss posits new religions must strike a balance between *accommodation* to the larger society and adherence to a religious vision that stands in contrast with that society (*peculiarity*) (5). Mauss's monograph, *The Angel and the Beehive*, uses these two eponymous, important symbols from Mormonism to analogize this productive tension: Mauss sees the angel as the symbol of the religion's "spiritual and prophetic elements" and the beehive as the symbol of "all aspects of Mormon involvement with the world" (3).

Starting around the turn of the twentieth century, Mormons worked steadily to ingratiate themselves to a once hostile American public through their industriousness, productivity, patriotism, and wealth. By midcentury, the Church's policies and stance were most in line with and reflective of the American mainstream. Mauss charts the institutional Church's relationship with dominant American society over a period of time, arguing the "apex the accommodation" occurred around 1960. Very soon thereafter, a sweeping Church program that involved shifts in policy and attitude generally called *retrenchment* served to reinforce the idea the Mormons are, in fact, a "peculiar people."

While there is no single explanation for why people gravitate toward religions like Mormonism that make rigorous moral demands and "evoke ridicule, suspicion, hostility, and stigma from surrounding society," one theory suggests that members who align their ideas, values, and behavior with such religions establish a satisfying personal identity (9). When the religion shifts too far into the mainstream and relaxes demands, members lose some of this sense of self. Mauss uses sociologist Rodney Stark to describe the dynamic: "[T]he more [members] sacrifice, the more dependent they will become upon the rewards offered by their religion. The more 'costly' such products, in terms of member sacrifice, investment, stigmatization, the more 'valuable' they become" (10). Thus, relaxing moral boundaries and the threshold for participation actually weakens the individual's commitment.

Starting at the peak of accommodation, Church leadership sought to return to its "outsider" position, and to reestablish those aspects of the faith that set it apart. This shift in stance, called *retrenchment*, came from the very top and was implemented church-wide (Mauss 82). Retrenchment appears to have been a response to social liberalization in

American society as well as a concern that Mormons were losing a group identity. In our Denver interview, Allen speculated that retrenchment came out of the Church's explosive growth abroad and the movement of Mormon people out of rural communities in the Intermountain West into urban and suburban environments. Mormons no longer lived in intimate, physical proximity with other Mormons, and instead, had to set themselves apart through a reinvigorated emphasis upon Mormon cultural practices. Because the Mormon leadership believed that the Church had moved too far in the direction of accommodation, retrenchment as an institutional ethos sought ways to counter accommodation and distinguish Mormonism from American culture.

Like many American institutions around 1960, the Church was flush with cash and sought to put this money to work to expand via missionization. Expansion means the ability to grow – to convert new members – while retaining current members. The goal of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is evangelical. In the 1970s as today, the Church seeks to convert every soul, now or once living. Thus, the religion must reach more and more people. Even as the Church increases and expands (which requires some degree of accommodation), for it to remain attractive and compelling, it must – to recall Mauss – retain its unique character and maintain a high participation threshold.

Expansion must be balanced with identification, a sense of cohesion based upon a shared worldview that offers contrasts with alternatives posited by the dominant society and other religions. Central to the way many scholars understand the Church's opposition to ERA is the importance of maintaining a balance between expansion and identification, and the Church's particular concern with retaining group cohesion in the late 1970s.

One narrative posits that in 1978, after years of social and legal pressure from civil rights groups and African Americans in the United States as well as pressure from the Church's own missionaries in Latin America, particularly Brazil where the Church was finding growing success, then-Church President Spencer Kimball received the revelation lifting the so-called black priesthood ban (Limerick 325).<sup>31</sup> Many Saints celebrated this revelation on its moral merits and a belief in divine justice and equality.<sup>32</sup> However, because of the longstanding prohibition against black priesthood holders, the revelation alienated some members who (racist or not) saw the change in policy as a bowing to changing American social norms.<sup>33</sup>

As this controversy roiled the Church, Americans in many states were deciding whether to ratify ERA. Taking an anti-ERA position allowed the Church – so this historical argument goes – to *reassert* its particular worldview. In the 1970s, this worldview was increasingly characterized by the primacy of the nuclear family as the unit of salvation. While some scholars, including Mauss, indicate that nothing in Church doctrine or teaching explains the vehemence with which the Church fought passage of the ERA (117), the Church feared that certain aspects of its teaching could be undermined by legal and societal changes the ERA would – or could – usher in.<sup>34</sup> Many, like Allen, speculate the Church was particularly concerned that passage of ERA could lead to a legal push to expand the priesthood to include women. On this point, we are in agreement.

### **Mormon Women's Bodies as Retrenchment Battleground**

The “assimilation and peculiarity thesis” explains the pressure upon the Church to respond to changing societal norms to broaden its appeal while asserting its differences from (and opposition to) society. However, the way this thesis has been applied to

questions of race and gender in the 1970s implies that the Church used ERA as a means of asserting its peculiarity. Or, to put it another way, it argues that the Church traded the rights of black men for the rights of women. There are a few problems with this interpretation. One is that by 1978, most American civil rights leaders had given up on the Mormon Church. The period of intense conflict over that particular issue had passed. The Church was still vulnerable to legal challenges from African Americans, and this may have been an important consideration. Second, its own missionaries in Brazil called upon the hierarchy to lift the ban as it was proving a stumbling block in a country where they were otherwise finding great success. While Kimball's revelation could be interpreted as a concession to shifting American social norms, it may also (and perhaps better) be interpreted as a concession to its missionaries abroad. Regardless of why the revelation came to Kimball in 1978, it did yield positive press in the United States, earning Kimball accolades. Even if the revelation was a necessary concession given pressures at home and abroad, lifting the ban does not account for the radical steps the Church put in place well *before* the 1978 battles over ERA to redefine, in dramatic ways, women's social roles. If misinterpreted, the accommodation-peculiarity thesis would suggest that the Church used its position on ERA as *the* means of asserting its cultural differences from the cultural mainstream. If the Church weighed the rights of African American men and the rights of women together, it must have done so a decade before Kimball's 1978 revelation and the ERA fight.

I do find this thesis useful to account for retrenchment generally and Priesthood Correlation specifically, the goal of which was a standardization of Mormonism that focused upon the home and woman's role therein. Historian Patricia Nelson Limerick

agrees. In her book, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*, she rejects the idea that the Church opposed ERA *only* as a means to halt the expansion of women's legal rights (to be clear, the Church did seek to halt this expansion). According to Limerick, the Church's well-timed revelation on black men allowed it to dodge the issue of women rights altogether. In Limerick's interpretation, the Church was not engaging in a legalistic quibble over what the law should be, but rather, was committed to representing an essential(ly) different view of "woman." Therefore, the Church wasn't trying to stop women's progress so much as turn back the clock to an *imagined* Mormon past wherein gender roles appeared stable and self-evident. Writes Limerick:

In the debate on black exclusion and in the revelation itself, *Newsweek* noted, "the question of female ordination [was] not even an issue. By announcing the 1978 revelation, Kimball earned the label "progressive." But on the question of women's role, he fully escaped that unsettling label. "Man and woman," Kimball explained in 1977, "are two different kinds of being: He's hard and tough. He's supposed to furnish the family's livelihood. She's more tender, and unless a husband dies or the children are grown, we feel she ought to remain at home and teach the children the things they should know." (326)

The Church's opposition to ERA, rather than being the necessary countermeasure to quell dissatisfaction over the recent inclusion of Afro-American men, was the axis upon which the entire retrenchment program hinged. The re-assertion of Mormon peculiarity in the social realm – the Mormon *habitus* – was to be enacted in the 1970s through the bodies of Mormon women, and it was upon this battleground that the definition of what it meant to

be Mormon was fought. The Church's opposition to ERA *grew out of* a radical reinterpretation of what it meant to be a Mormon woman. Moreover, this radical reinterpretation was leveraged in response to political exigencies that began to surface before ERA grabbed the national spotlight and were not grounded in dominant Mormon histories or in vernacular notions of the women in Mormon history.

The Priesthood Correlation program all but eliminated women's institutional power. The Mormon women's auxiliary, the Relief Society, was for many years a powerful and somewhat autonomous or "semiautonomous" auxiliary institution with its own real estate, property, publications, and programs (Gottlieb and Wiley 191). Though in no way equal in power and resources to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Relief Society was, in theory, a separate entity that "functioned on its *own*," especially in "day-to-day activities, fund raising and expenditure of funds, internal educational programs, and social service activities" (Gottlieb and Wiley 192).<sup>35</sup> In spite of the Relief Society's deference to the priesthood on doctrinal matters and in relation to broad church policy, several attempts were made in the first half of the twentieth century to "'take over' and/or integrate auxiliary activities," but in vain; the Relief Society retained its semi-autonomy, even rejecting a push in the 1950s to "refocus women's activities more exclusively toward the home" (Gottlieb and Wiley 193). However, this independence did not survive the retrenchment era. A formal policy called Priesthood Correlation led to the "reorganization" of the Relief Society. Gottlieb and Wiley, authors of *America's Saints*, explain that

though most church members understand Correlation in terms of its organizational, centralizing impact, they miss its fundamental ideological



character, which centered on the newly evolving role of women, the family, and their relation to the overall leadership structures and policies of the church. (195)

Correlation set its sights on “the home,” instituting a previously unsuccessful bid to ensure the practice of “Family Home Evening,” and sought to redefine and reign in the power of the auxiliaries. Prior to Correlation, the women’s groups themselves “had boards that selected the authors for their publications or wrote the lessons themselves, and oversaw all publishing decisions, down to picking the typeface, the cover design and the formats”; after Priesthood Correlation, all of these tasks were handled by various committees under Church authority (Gottlieb and Wiley 197). With this change, subject matters of Relief Society lessons turned from social welfare (public concerns) to the home and woman’s role in relation to the home and family (private concerns).

Homemaking – rather than something wives and mothers accomplished in the course of living their lives – was redefined as their very purpose. Lessons focused upon how best to organize this time/space. Allen asserts that the Church also established two different Relief Society schedules within wards, one for women who worked and that met at night, and one for women who stayed at home, which met during the day. Meetings, activities and events were kept separate, Allen argues, so that those who worked would not influence those who did not (“Telephone Interview”).

The Church’s take-over of the Relief Society occurred between 1969 and 1970. The auxiliary’s real estate and holdings were incorporated into Church coffers, and its publication, *Relief Society Magazine*, was replaced with the new, church-wide magazine,

*The Ensign*. Writing in the 1982 introduction to *A Legacy Remembered*, the editors diplomatically explain:

In December 1970, after a fifty-seven-year history, publication of the *Relief Society Magazine* came to an end. Although many of the 298,250 subscribers looked forward to the inauguration of a new magazine that would bring interests of men and women of the Church together, there were those who could not help but look back. The *Relief Society Magazine* had been an outgrowth of the *Woman's Exponent*, and together they had spanned a period of nearly one hundred years. Such a tradition for women would not die without a degree of sadness. (Clark, Cazier, and Hafen xi)

*The Ensign* wasted no time in articulating how women should view themselves and their role. In its first issue, January 1971, both then-President Joseph Fielding Smith and future, now-current Church President (then Apostle) Thomas S. Monson condemned women's liberation and asserted the essential, God-given differences between men and women (Bradley 69–70).

In “The Women’s Movement: Liberation or Deception?” the future Church President begins by answering the question posed in the title. He describes “the goals and demands that are now being made by some women: free abortion, free child care, and equal employment” (17). Are these women “liberated? Have they achieved freedom? Equality? No.... They have been deceived. They have lost their true identity. They have followed the Pied Piper of Sin who has cunningly led them away from their divine role of womanhood down that pathway of error ...” (18). However, Monson’s piece also provides a guide for what women may expect to learn in Relief Society, now that the Church

leadership has taken over stewardship of the organization. He explains that “in planning the curriculum for women of the Church,” it has been guided by Smith and by those who succeed him (i.e. current Church leadership). They believe that:

1. Every woman as been endowed by God with distinctive characteristics, gifts, and talents . . . .
2. The Priesthood is the central power of the Church . . . .
3. The home is the basic organization to teach an individual to walk uprightly before the Lord . . . .
4. Compassionate service and a sensitivity to the needs of others are the principle purposes [of the Relief Society].”

(19)

After explaining their guiding principles in designing the new curriculum, Monson provides women with the assumptions undergirding this pedagogy and its goals. Women should not forget that they “belong to a sex, and that with the differences in sex are associated important differences in function and behavior. Equality of rights does not imply identity of functions” (20). In fact, in the Church’s view, it’s just the opposite. As a result, lessons must exploit these essential biological and attending differences in function and purpose. Monson concludes by stating that the three major “challenges” for women are: “first, *sustain your husband*; second, *strengthen your home*; third, *serve your God*” (20; emphasis original). Although he initially states that women have God-given gifts, pursuing these is not ranked as a main challenge. Instead, a woman should obey her husband and his wishes, make a strong home for her husband and children, and do these things for God in ways explained by His representatives, i.e. Monson.

Many LDS women reacted angrily to these institutional changes. They were particularly dismayed by the fact their beloved General Relief Society President, Belle

Spafford, was “relieved” from her calling. Although Spafford remained publicly deferential, the prevailing logic of the time suggested that she was dismissed because of her private resistance to the usurpation. Previously, the position of General President was understood to be a lifetime appointment. Church women watched as the funds they had raised through bazaars and bake sales were now directed “to the centralized, priesthood-controlled financial bureaucracy, which would have the power to also decide how the women’s funds would be spent” (Gottlieb and Wiley 198). In nearly one fell swoop, the Church took over the organization, its holdings, and its ability to raise money autonomously; it revised the rules governing who would lead the women’s organization, ending the longstanding “life-time appointment” tradition thus rendering the president more beholden to Church leadership; it took responsibility for writing and publishing lessons to be given in meetings; and, it ended publication of the organization’s independent magazine.

These institutional changes were unprecedented. The Relief Society had for nearly one hundred and forty years managed its own affairs. It is not without irony that in the wake of this take-over, the Church President announced that he approved the Relief Society’s plans to erect a monument in honor of women. This monument – according to articles published in the Church-owned *Ensign* and repeated in official press releases – would be funded primarily through donations made by women(!), leading women to believe that their organization acted entirely as its midwife. While the MTW resembled many other projects taken on by the Relief Society, it must, even in its time, be considered a reflection of woman as imaginatively re-presented by a male-led institution. By implementing Priesthood Correlation and taking a decisive stand against ERA during the

ratification period, the LDS Church risked the possibility that women Saints would defect from the Church's position and support passage of the amendment. The Church built the MTW in part to ensure this didn't happen.

The Church makes a rhetorical move to accommodate women's demands for greater public visibility by constructing a grand, public monument that renders her public role ornament rather than instrument. The construction and dedication of MTW served rhetorical purposes to a watchful American audience. It constituted a symbolic concession to women that also enhanced the Church's ethos and deflected criticism of anti-feminism. For its Mormon audience, however, the MTW mobilized nostalgia to forge identification among membership, while instructing Mormon women in how to interpret that past. The MTW should, in this sense, be understood as a pedagogical site that uses the epideictic form to reproduce Mormon *habitus*.

### **Public Memory, Public Remembrance and the Monument to Women**

Public remembrance is “not simply to turn backward; it is itself a type of action that steadies us in the face of an unknown and unpredictable future” (Browne 60). Thus, public remembrance constitutes a kind of symbolic act in time, even as it (often) makes a claim of “contextlessness” or transcendence. Although the MTW in Nauvoo was, by most accounts, two and a half to three years in the making, plans for its erection came out of period of growing anxiety about the “place” of women that invited address. By the time the monument was dedicated, debate among Mormons and among Americans over the “place” of women generally and the ERA specifically had reached a fever pitch. Thus, the MTW allowed the Church to take a “stand” on this division, a “stand” that allowed its leadership multiple opportunities – and a lasting pedagogical site – to shape the debate.

To put it in different terms, the Mormon Church constructed an elaborate public monument to women whose purpose is to instruct women that they have no public role.

### **Origin of the Monument to Women**

I have demonstrated that the Church's position on the place of women stemmed from an enormous ideological shift that began around 1960 and that had already been institutionally codified through retrenchment programs such as the Priesthood Correlation. Given its radical move to redefine the role of womanhood, it was by 1974 a foregone conclusion that the Church would oppose ERA; however, it timed its public statement of opposition to ERA to coincide with the announcement of an enormous project designed to "honor" women.

Plans for the MTW were first announced publicly by Barbara Smith during the October 1975 Relief Society Conference. Smith first spoke out against ERA almost a year before in December 1974, but she took the opportunity to reassert the Relief Society's anti-ERA position during that October conference. This proved one of the few occasions where Smith (or any member of the Church's leadership) mentioned both the MTW and ERA. In the new year (1976), General Authorities began presenting publicly the Church's opposition to ERA, establishing what historian Martha Bradley calls the "rhetorical pattern" wherein a woman defends her traditional values and the proper roles for women in advance of public statements made by the all-male Church leadership (*Pedestals & Podiums: Utah Women, Religious Authority & Equal Rights* 95). In keeping with this rhetorical pattern, the First Presidency released its first official statement on ERA in October 1976. Not coincidentally, President Kimball announced plans for the

MTW that same month at the 146<sup>th</sup> Semiannual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

In his address, Kimball states that the Relief Society is hoping to conclude the fund drive within six months, by March 17, 1977, because this date marks the 135<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Relief Society (Kimball, “Our Own”). According to a subsequent article in *The Ensign*, organizers hoped to dedicate the monument in March 1978, coinciding with the 136<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Relief Society. By citing these “anniversaries,” speakers would lead audiences to believe that the *exigence* for erecting the monument is to commemorate the founding of the Relief Society. A careful examination of the timing surrounding the MTW suggests its *exigence* is better understood as a means of deflecting criticism inside and outside the Church for its increasingly anti-woman stand.

Although neither President Kimball nor Mrs. Smith offered the Church’s public position on ERA as a reason for the monument, the drive to raise funds for the MTW, its fabrication, the transport of the thirteen statues from Utah to Illinois, and its dedication transpired between October 1975 and June 1978, coinciding with the Church’s overt and covert war against ERA. Herein lies another rhetorical pattern: Smith and the Church’s male leadership discuss either the MTW or ERA but never both together. Allen interprets the impulse behind this separation as a kind of *canard*. The MTW was, to her way of thinking, a distraction, a tactic to keep women from thinking too much about the Church’s opposition to ERA; the MTW constituted a “‘Look over here!’ move” – that is the way Allen phrased it (“Telephone Interview”).

Although one would expect Church-owned media like *The Ensign* to respect Church leaders' wishes to designate the MTW and ERA separate issues, the mainstream press largely follows suit. With few exceptions, reporters either crib heavily from Mrs. Smith's press release materials and interviews on the MTW, as in an April 1978 piece from West Monroe, Louisiana's *Ouachita Citizen*, or they address the Church's position on ERA. In a Ukiah, California piece appearing on April 6, 1978, "Mormon Women Don't Think ERA is Answer Says Smith," Smith explains that while "We want women everywhere to have full social, financial, and legal rights," she believes "ERA is not a panacea for all that remains to be accomplished" ("Mormon Women" 11). This Ukiah article makes no reference to the MTW. The omission is astonishing, given the fact it was published in April 1978, during Smith's MTW junket, and that it rehearses aspects of the history of the Relief Society. I can only conclude that either the reporter or the editors agreed to discuss *either* MTW *or* ERA in order to secure an interview with Smith.

One single article of a dozen or so about the MTW in Box 1, Folder 1 of the *Sandra Allen Collection*, "Mormons Build Monument To Women But Oppose Equal Rights Amendment" (Oberholtzer A-13), announces the link between MTW and ERA. Judy Klemesrud for the *New York Times* is another notable exception. In her May 5, 1978 piece, she explicitly links the LDS Church's antifeminist political agenda with the monument. According to the *Times*, Smith came to New York "mainly to talk about the Relief Society's new million-dollar Monument to Women" by bringing photographs of the statues, "which show women mainly in the traditional roles of wife, mother, grandmother, teacher and nurturer" (Klemesrud A16). A large photograph of one statue is reprinted with the article, as is a candid photo of Smith. Klemesrud questions Smith about



the Mormon Church's reputation as "the newest enemy of the women's movement" (A16). Smith "conceded" the LDS Church is strongly opposed to ERA, but states in the interview "we are for women's rights in principle," including "equal pay for equal work, equal educational opportunities, and equal credit treatment" (Klemesrud A16).

The Klemesrud interview is the most confrontational one that I encountered, and provides additional context for the origin of the epithet "the newest enemy of the women's movement" (A16) by explaining the dismay and outrage the organizers of the International Women's Year Conference in Utah experienced in June 1977 when senior church leadership – through the Relief Society – requested women show up in numbers to the event.<sup>36</sup> To the *Times*, Smith flatly denies "a Mormon plot" on ERA, but admitted – "somewhat" – that "right wing extremists had used the Mormon women at the convention" (Klemesrud A16). I speculate that the *Times* was, at that moment, the only news source with enough clout to garner an interview with Smith without conceding to her terms in advance. One final point: none of the books written about (or that contend with) the Church's political opposition to and intervention in the ERA ratification battles mention the MTW. Even in historical representation, these topics remain separate.

To conclude this section, the timing of the MTW gave the Relief Society president an opportunity to present the Church's "stand" on women in a positive way to the mainstream press during a contentious time. After receiving negative publicity for its intervention in IWY conferences and its public opposition to ERA, the Church needed a tangible example to demonstrate how it values women. By treating as separate issues the MTW and ERA, the Church was able to put a more positive spin upon its reinterpretation of the role of women in contemporary society. Furthermore, by situating the statues in

Nauvoo, the Church rendered them an unlikely tourist stop for non-Mormons; the MTW is a site of remembrance made by and for members of the Church. However, given the scope and scale of the project, it constituted “news” in the spring of 1978 and afforded Smith an opportunity to represent the institution’s “stand” on women.

### **Monument to Women in Nauvoo as Site of Public Remembrance**

The remainder of the chapter explores how the monument as a group of physical representations, as a specific geographic location, and as animated by speeches and a dramatic performance associated with the dedication work individually and together to en/gender a set of “images and fantasies” about the past that had in 1978 – and may continue to have – ongoing implications for Mormon women and women’s fight for equality.

Public memory studies are concerned with the “rhetorical work” or the series of motivated choices and their attendant reflections, selections, and deflections that go into creating and maintaining “vernacular presentations of the past” (Enoch and Jack 519). These studies cast light on how the past is leveraged in the present. Representations of the past, both site-based and narrative, offer perspectives on how members of a group have participated and therefore should participate in public life. To this end, the MTW in Nauvoo as a site of remembrance offers insight into the way the Mormon Church believed women should regard themselves – “the widely varied nature of women’s vital roles in society” – and the kinds of contributions to the world women are best suited to (not) make.

The central idea in memory studies is that memories exist, thrive, and circulate among and between as well as within people (Zelizer 214). This concept does not negate

the idea that individuals remember uniquely; instead, it posits that memories exist in language and narrative and bear relation to a past and a present wherein people speak and act together. The shared nature of memory implies multiple levels of communication between individuals within a group, community, or public, encompassing a wide range of activities (Zelizer 215). Memories remain fluid because people cannot control memory; they cannot know in advance what they will remember or what will provoke or summon a “new” memory; neither distance of space nor time predict what one remembers or forgets. Within individuals, “memory is life,” explains Pierre Nora; “it remains in permanent evolution, opening to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived” (8). Those who share memories may or may not live in the same time or same place; they could be organized variously: as neighbors, as a counter/public, as stakeholders in an institution.

Mormons make up one such group: they have a sense of themselves as a people based upon shared beliefs about God, the universe, and the nature of reality that comes out of a common understanding of the past. Even though Mormons may be perceived, even stereotyped, as internally homogenous and deferential to the Church’s authority, internal division and disagreement persists among Mormons as others. To paraphrase Kenneth Burke in *A Rhetoric of Motives*, division is always part of identification (*A Rhetoric of Motives* 22). Those with memories of the past negotiate *what* occurred, the *order* of occurrence, *how* and *why* it occurred, and what such an occurrence *means*. Individuals’ memories of events and experiences, as well as their ongoing parsing, partaking and witnessing of enactments of these memories, bear upon identity formation.

Thus, even when much agreement exists among a group about the past, new information or old information viewed through a different lens has the power to disrupt or unsettle consensus or undermine “official” history (Zelizer 217).

What is important here is the interplay between public memory, sites of remembrance, and rhetoric. Public memory is the least stable concept and the most difficult to define, and occurs as people in physical proximity engage – by virtue of the space itself and the speech acts that transpire within that space – to remember. Public memory transpires out in the open, by/for/before the public audience, and provides the conditions of possibility for the existence of a public sphere. For Casey, public memory is always situated: “[P]ublic memory occurs only when people meet and interact in a single scene of interaction” (32). Public memory requires an enactment of publicness; as such, bodies must be in proximity. The individuals are joined together, but only in the act of remembering in public; this spatial proximity does not suggest or engender other forms of intimacy (Casey 32–33). Further, the public memory is subject to discussion – in the moment and in reflection – and what is discussed is a common topic “of deep concern to all who gather in a given place” (Casey 35). Finally, what transpires is a commemoration brought into being by a plural (Casey 35). Public memory as concept and public memories as appearances might be understood best as “the images and fantasies of specific communities about aspects of the past” (Phillips 219).

Sites of remembrance are places *designed* to induce public memory. They are “the kind of dominant, reified and calcified forms of remembrance that serve to establish broader frameworks within which the fantasies of public memory are contained and proscribed” (Phillips 219). While attending to the context in which Benedict Anderson

described the archaeological museum in seminal work on the origins of nationalism in *Imagined Communities*, I map Anderson's museum onto institutional iterations of sites of remembrance; these sites appear on local tourist maps or as landmarks, their image is "infinitely reproducible" (182). Though "particular" and identifiable through "memorable image," such sites of remembrance aim for "contextlessness" (185).

Although the individual's interaction within an institutional site of public remembrance may or may not conform to the projected goals, public remembrance as an institutional practice aims to concretize public memories for specific purposes in the present. These purposes are invariably political as they serve to instantiate one constellation of meanings about the past over other possible constellations, and this meaning has implications in the present, implications regarding how a certain group should inter-act in public. Sites of public remembrance stand in communication with a history, buttressing and supporting it, but they operate symbolically, too. Phillips argues that sites of remembrance work via enthymeme, wherein the site evokes public memory but does not elaborate it. Instead, the audience supplies the missing proposition(s), collaborating in the meaning-making process. Though it may be an impossible task to fix permanently what is inherently fluid, rhetoric may be employed to render public memories usable in the present through recollection. Explains Phillips:

Rhetoric can be understood as an art of shaping public remembrance through the process of conditioning enthymematic reasoning. In this way, rhetoric crafts and utilizes forms of public remembrance in the service of disciplining memories and shaping a framework in which experience of the past is cultivated and contained. (217)

The *rhetor*, who occupies an important or evocative geographical position, invokes aspects of the past to mobilize memory through a dedication or epideictic speech. The rhetor assists the audience in recalling, guiding them through what occurred in what sequence, its (ongoing) importance, and its eternity.

The rhetorical purpose of the MTW in Nauvoo at the time of its 1978 dedication is twofold. One purpose was to garner identification amongst LDS women in a contentious present. The monument, the geographical space of the site, and the statements and enactments surrounding its dedication worked together to discipline “the images and fantasies of specific communities about aspects of the past” (Phillips 219). Together, these elements were designed to foster the appearance of public memory and enable audience participation in a *rhetoric of recollection*. This process, Phillips asserts, is one by which *rhetors* seek to fix what is inherently mobile and unstable, memory, and render it politically usable in the present. Inextricably tied to this analysis is a critique of the monument, the way the epideictic speeches and artistic performances associated with the monument spoke to (or failed to speak to) the vernacular past.

The second purpose of the monument is pedagogical. The MTW sought to unify Mormons divided over the Church’s reinterpretation of the role of women in society, of which its position on ERA is one manifestation. But the MTW also used its representations of women and the speeches attending the unveiling of these representations to instruct women on their proper roles and place in society. Using the epideictic mode in praise of “the good,” the MTW reifies gendered distinctions. The following sections explain how the physical monument site, the statues, and dedication performances work

in tandem to garner identification and en/gender instruction on women's proper social roles.

### **The Site: A Pilgrimage to Historic Nauvoo**

“More than 130 years ago,” Janet Brigham reports in her article “Dedication of the Nauvoo Monument to Women” for the September 1978 issue of *The Ensign*, “thousands of Saints trekked westward out of Nauvoo, Illinois. This June, thousands came back to visit. Dedication to the gospel took the early Saints away; the dedication of a monument brought them back” (Brigham). Nauvoo, Illinois, called “The City of Joseph” by Brigham Young, sits “some fifty-three miles north of Quincy on a peninsula jutting into the Mississippi River from the Illinois side” (Arrington and Bitton 68). The Saints came to Nauvoo in 1839 the wake of violent persecution in Kirtland, Ohio, and, previously, Independence, Missouri. In the face of discouragement, fear, and internal disagreement, they managed to build under Smith's leadership in Nauvoo “an impressive temple, a large hotel, sawmills, a flour mill, a tool factory, a foundry, and a chinaware factory” (Arrington and Bitton 68–9). This development was possible due to an influx of new converts, primarily from England, and the fact that Smith was able to secure, through a one-time confidant, a “liberal charter” from the Illinois state legislature. During the Nauvoo period, the Saints – precarious though their situation remained – enjoyed a kind of “self-rule” and began practicing many of the doctrines that today distinguish Mormonism from other religions including baptism for the dead, the “sealing” of husband and wife in eternal marriage, and other temple ceremonies. The practice of plural or patriarchal marriage – a practice that would come to define Mormonism for many years – is also associated with Nauvoo. Mormon historians Arrington and Bitton in

*The Mormon Experience* describe a “paradoxical combination of forces” that enabled Nauvoo to emerge, grow, thrive, and then wither. Nauvoo’s star burned brightly for a short time before flaming out, yet the possibilities that emerged during this period fueled the Saints’ desire to follow Brigham Young across the plains to Utah and build again.

The Nauvoo period transpired within what Jan Shipps calls “sacred time” when the Saints participated in or lived through sacred events in a new age (*Mormonism* 52). Those in this new religious community who accepted the fledgling movement’s radical restoration claims are “profoundly important” to the movement because it is in part through their belief that the restoration transpired (Shipps, *Mormonism* 71). Without these believers, the radical restoration could not become a reality. In the eyes of today’s members, much is owed the early converts for the courage of their convictions and the magnitude of their sacrifices.

The body believers grew and even by some measure flourished in Nauvoo even though many suffered from malaria, typhoid, and other illnesses. Emma and Joseph Smith lost two babies; Joseph Smith’s brother also died of disease. Most immigrants arrived with near nothing, and because the Saints had twice (or more) been forced to abandon their homes and businesses, few had much to offer the newcomers. Conditions were often cramped and food could be scarce. Smith continued to be tormented by his foes in Missouri and was forced to go into hiding on more than one occasion. Reasons for this harassment extended beyond his radical religious claims. Smith sought to render his community of Saints economically and socially self-sufficient, alienating neighbors and potential trading partners. Furthermore, he took an unusual view of the origin of Indians and a sympathetic view of the plight of African slaves; his position on slavery did not



endear the Mormons to Missouri slave owners. Word spread, too, about his plans to reinstate patriarchal marriage and his vision for transforming the familial, social order. Even before his eventual incarceration and murder, he spent five months in jail for attempting to suppress anti-Mormon hate by destroying an opposition printing press. Still, in spite of these troubles, Smith continued to introduce new revelations and instruct his followers in temple ceremonies and endowments.

The Nauvoo period is characterized by the “flowering of the ‘fullness of the gospel’ through which the Saints came to see themselves not as forming a New Israel but as establishing a very real connection with an ancient one” (Shipps, *Mormonism* 82–83). It was during this period that Mormonism as a movement evolved into a “distinct, discrete, internally consistent religious tradition” (Shipps, *Mormonism* 85), having shed aspects of “apostolic past” to become “the literal restoration of Israel” (Shipps, *Mormonism* 83). Nauvoo remains associated with this “flowering,” and its inhabitants with those who made the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints a reality.

Nauvoo reminds Mormons of the religion’s maturation and development as well as the assassination of Joseph Smith and all that followed. According to Shipps, after the murder of Joseph Smith and his brother in 1844, the community became divided over whether this intense period of restoration and historical recapitulation of biblical events had come to a close. The better part believed sacred events were still unfolding, and followed Brigham Young across the continent into the new Zion in the Great Salt Basin, enacting Exodus on the American continent. Smith’s death and Young’s rise to lead the

Saints on a dangerous journey across the plains are remembered as events that strengthened resolve and even solidified the burgeoning idea of Mormons as a people.

For Mormons, the Nauvoo period constitutes part of a sacred history. The story of the Saints between 1839-1845 is for many believers as much scripture as historical narrative. The Saints believed the radical restoration claims and lived those beliefs even though it cost them their homes, belongings, and even loved ones. Within that time and place, much of the Mormon religious tradition came into being.

Although no Saint living in June 1978 could travel back in time to the early 1840s, many were willing and able to travel to Nauvoo in spite of its (still) remote location on the Mississippi. The Relief Society arranged bus transport, tickets for each of the dedication days, lodging, and tour schedules for the influx of approximately seven to eight thousand visitors. Due to scant accommodations, many, like Mormon historian Claudia Bushman who covered the event for *Exponent II*, stayed an hour or more away.

In addition to attending the dedication ceremonies, visitors toured the town itself, which was in the process of being restored with the financial backing of the Church. Sites included the restored homes of Joseph and Emma Smith, Brigham Young, and the “Red Brick Store” where the Relief Society was organized. Visitors to the MTW dedication were able to “step back in time” figuratively speaking by walking through the town. In nearby Carthage stands the jail where Joseph and Hyrum Smith were murdered on June 27, 1844. Many arranged transport to see where they were martyred. Like many of the other buildings important in the history of the Church, the jail has been restored and a statue to Joseph and Hyrum Smith erected.

Nauvoo, then being carefully restored to reflect its character in the 1840s, constitutes for Mormons a reminder of the death of Joseph Smith, Jr. and their early persecution. It is the place that made a disparate group of followers a chosen people. Simply being in the town among the restored sites was meant to transport visitors back in time and effect identification. Of the gathering, Bushman writes,

Unknown to each other as we were, for the most part, there was still a remarkable closeness, the feeling of sisterhood. Every one of us shared a common heritage, experiences, and assumptions. We could strike up an acquaintance with any one person and soon find ourselves with a friend, common friends, telling personal stories, making connections. (6)

As women, Mormons, and Relief Society members attending the dedication, those who gathered together shared experiences, assumptions and a common group heritage that created a spirit of sisterhood. It was not only the monument – to which Bushman and the vast majority of others contributed donations – but also the place that inspired reflection upon the past and a deep sense of identification.

### **The Statues: The Mormon Ideal Embodied**

The statues are situated adjacent to the town Visitor's Center, within a garden the



size of a football field. Circular, winding paths lead to groupings of statues, and are meant to symbolize the nature of eternal time. *Joseph and Emma Smith*, the statue that sits closest to the Visitor's Center entrance, honors the founding of Relief Society (Figure 8). It

depicts the moment during the first meeting of this new women's society when Joseph Smith, Jr. handed his wife, Emma Smith, a five dollar gold piece for the poor (Newell and Avery 108). According to the MTW website, Emma Smith is quoted in the accompanying inscription saying, "...All I have to give to the poor I will give to this society." This quotation was taken down in the minutes from the first meeting of the Female Relief Society on March 17, 1842. Bushman states that this statue symbolizes for her "the beginning of the Relief Society, of woman's charity, of Emma's public life as Relief Society President" (6).

Certainly, the statue focuses upon the founding of the Relief Society and the role charity occupied and continues to occupy in its mission. That the statue also symbolizes Emma Smith's public life is a less plausible interpretation of the statue, and one undermined by official statements. Neither President Kimball nor Barbara Smith mention Emma Smith's role in establishing the Relief Society in their remarks about the meaning of the statues leading up to the dedication ("Role of Womanhood"). Visually, Emma Smith makes an appearance. One could easily conclude that representing Emma and Joseph Smith and this particular moment constitutes a logical choice given that first stated purpose of the MTW is to commemorate the founding of the Relief Society. Emma Smith was elected the group's first president and presided, with her husband, over the first meeting. The Smiths explained the purposes of the new society, which were recorded in meeting minutes: "'to provoke the brethren to good works...to save the elders the trouble of rebuking...to look after the wants of the poor ... [to] do good ... [to] deal frankly with each other,' and 'to correct the morals of the community'" (Newell and Avery 108).

While its original purposes were many, the principal function of the Relief Society at the time, as suggested by the Smiths in these surviving meeting minutes, appears to be a kind of oversight committee designed to provoke good works, save elders from having to rebuke, and maintain the *morals* of the Saints, men and women alike. The role of the Relief Society in offering moral guidance and frank speech is a point to which I will return. Still, early on, looking “after the wants of the poor” is inscribed as one of its principal functions, and on this count, Emma Smith has an impeccable reputation. Her biographers, Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery claim in *Mormon Enigma* that she devoted herself tirelessly to the care of others less fortunate.

*Joseph and Emma Smith* visually suggests that it was the Smiths’ idea to start the Relief Society. However, according to Newell and Avery, the idea for forming the society came from two women: Sarah Kimball and Eliza R. Snow. Snow drafted a constitution and by-laws and presented them to Joseph Smith, who stated upon reading them, “I will organize the sisters under the priesthood after a pattern of the priesthood” and called together nineteen women and several men on March 17, 1842 (106). Even if the Smiths did not come up with the idea for the Relief Society, the manifest narrative, the moment the statue depicts, shows Joseph Smith financing its relief work in the form of a five dollar gold coin. In the statue, Emma Smith receives Joseph’s beneficence. She plans to dedicate resources to the less fortunate and the needy. According to the meeting minutes, much is made of the financing of the Relief Society; many contributed funds, including Emma herself.

The manifest narrative or “story” presented by *Joseph and Emma Smith* bears some further consideration and raises serious interpretive questions. The MTW is

supposed to commemorate, in part, an anniversary of the founding of the Relief Society. Even if we assume the project fell behind schedule by six months, it would have commemorated the 136<sup>th</sup> anniversary, an odd choice. Although the Relief Society was organized in 1842, it was dissolved in 1846. While it would have been accurate to say in 1978 that the Relief Society was founded 135 years prior, it would have been disingenuous to imply that it had operated continuously from that date forward. This is an important point because Joseph Smith dissolved the Relief Society during his lifetime. Given the fact that Smith was killed shortly after he moved to shut it down, it would be easy to assume the organization died with Smith, only to be resurrected when the Saints had re-established themselves in Utah. This remains the institution's vernacular history.

In fact, at the end of Joseph Smith's life as in 1978, Emma Smith was a controversial figure. She quarreled publicly with her husband and refused to move west under Brigham Young's leadership. It's now widely accepted that she rejected outright her husband's revelation concerning patriarchal marriage (polygamy). Under Emma Smith's leadership, the central "moral" issue confronting the community of Saints was polygamy, which she fiercely opposed and refused to believe her husband had sanctioned (let alone practiced). Because the prophet was directing members of the priesthood to engage in patriarchal marriage, and because this practice involved prominent women in the community who accepted the teaching, Emma found herself challenging both her confidants in the society and her husband. Historians Newell and Avery remark that some of the women at those early Relief Society meetings – including Emma's close friends like Eliza R. Snow – were already secretly married to leading members of the community. They must have felt caught in a very uncomfortable situation to say the least:

told in private by the prophet that they were fulfilling God's will and told in public by his wife that their behavior was immoral. As Smith came to realize that his wife was using her public position as the President of the Female Relief Society and its meetings as a platform to communicate her moral outrage over plural marriage and to accuse specific individuals of practicing plural marriage, he dissolved the organization.

Within this last year (fall of 2014), the Church finally acknowledged Smith's position on and, significantly, his participation in plural marriage, conceding he had up to forty wives (Goodstein). But in 1978, the Church had not yet acknowledged Smith's multiple wives. Without this part of the story, it must have been difficult for Mormons to "make sense" of Emma's refusal to follow Brigham Young to Utah. In most narratives, Emma does not break with her husband but simply fades from view after Smith is murdered and the majority of Saints move west. Emma Smith in 1978 was not portrayed as one who took a stand against a practice she saw as hurtful, sinful, or wrong; she was, at best a "Mormon enigma" (to reference the title of her biography, *Mormon Enigma*) and, at worst, an apostate because she wanted her son, Joseph Smith III, to lead the Church. When the majority of Saints followed Brigham Young, she started a new church, what became the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (RLDS) and later Community of Christ.

When the MTW was dedicated, another monument to the National Woman's Relief Society stood at the site of the Nauvoo Temple. This first monument to the Relief Society, a collaborative effort by the LDS Church and the RLDS Church, was erected in 1933 at the RLDS-owned Red Brick Store (Figure 9). The



purpose of this monument was to honor the founding of the Relief Society, and, by extension, Emma Smith's role in the organization. Eventually, the large stone with the bronze inscription was moved: first to the site of the ruined Nauvoo Temple in 1952, then, to the Nauvoo Visitor's Center in 1988. In the reporting of the June 1978 dedication of the MTW, I could find no mention of this first monument.<sup>37</sup>

Why, given the historical problems *Joseph and Emma Smith* pose (in 1978 and today), was this particular moment depicted? A statue of Eliza Snow, for example, a Mormon "heroine" and the woman who wrote the Relief Society's bylaws and presented them to Joseph Smith would have made a suitable alternative. And, while Snow was a plural wife, she is not a controversial figure – not a *Mormon enigma*. Such a statue would, however, argue for women's autonomy and initiative; such a statue would argue for women's public contributions to Mormonism. On the other hand, contrary to Bushman's interpretation of Emma's role in *Joseph and Emma Smith*, the manifest narrative emphasizes Emma's private role as Joseph's wife. It further – and perhaps more importantly in the context – offers justification for the Church's recent reorganization and usurpation of the Relief Society. The statue builds a bridge between the past and the present by implying that the Relief Society has *always* depended upon the male priesthood to establish its agenda and to fund its work. This historical moment is an expression of the way members of the Relief Society in 1978 are meant to understand their relative position to the male leaders of the organization as well as their mission and purposes in the present: They receive ideas and financial support from the priesthood rather than generate them.



A final point about *Joseph and Emma Smith*: given the importance of Sarah Kimball and Eliza R. Snow, for example, in coming up with the idea for the organization, the Relief Society's contributions to both Mormon communities and to the nation, one would expect this statue to be in conversation with other historical representations from this or subsequent time periods. *Joseph and Emma Smith* is the only historical moment cited among thirteen total statues in a memorial whose "first" function, as enumerated by the organization's president, is "to honor the founding of Relief Society" ("Role of Womanhood").

Following *Joseph and Emma Smith*, the first grouping of statues "is a circle which indicates woman and her interior life" (Bushman 6). The centerpiece of this first circle – and the monument – is *Woman*. The woman depicted here is "young, strong, confident"; this figure "is to represent all women, their challenges and achievements" (Bushman 6). According to sculptor Dennis Smith, the Relief Society originally envisioned the MTW as this single statue. Around *Woman* are four figures, all sculpted by Dennis Smith, representing aspects or pursuits of the individual: *Woman in Prayer*, *Woman Learning*, *Woman and Her Talents* and *Compassionate Woman*. Bushman suggests that the figure of the woman as sculptor depicted in *Woman and Her Talents* is a "microcosm" of the entire park (Figure 10). As the sculptor is herself sculpting the visage of a woman, "woman is actually recreating herself" (6).



The next circle of statues depicts women with/in the family. The relationship between men and women is represented in two statues in this group: *Courtship for Eternity* and *In the Family Circle*. The first shows a couple pondering what Mormons would call “eternal” or temple marriage. The second depicts a man, woman, and child together to “convey the message that men and women are jointly charged with the responsibilities of parenthood and raising their families in righteousness” (“Mormon Play”).<sup>38</sup> *In Her Mother’s Footsteps*, also part of this grouping of statues, a mother is



shown with a babe in arms and an older child, a girl, “looking up to her mother and foreseeing her future responsibilities and callings as a mother and a homemaker” (“Mormon Play”). A mother keeps a hand on the shoulder of a teenaged boy as he is about to assume greater responsibilities in *Preparing Her*

*Son*. In *Teaching with Love*, the second statue by Florence P. Hansen, a woman is depicted with a young girl holding a violin. “This serene, gracious mother encloses her daughter within the circle of her caring. The daughter, her teeth still too big for her mouth, her hair a little stringy, looks up to her mother with perfect trust,” explains Bushman (6). Relationships, particularly those of wife and mother, are a dominant theme in the statuary park. *Joyful Moment*, the center of this circle of statues, however, is meant to convey “that a woman’s capacity for rapport is not restricted to motherhood (Figure 11). The single woman can give and gain fulfillment” (“Mormon Play”).<sup>39</sup>

The final statue in the garden, *Fulfillment*, shows an older woman sitting in a rocking chair, a quilt draped over her lap. *Fulfillment* is meant to invoke the idea “of a

woman binding the deeds of her life into an eternal pattern” in a way that echoes the garden landscape. Depicted alone, the woman is part of “many larger patterns” (Bushman 6). Another interpretation of the statue posits that the woman is “finding fulfillment through service in her declining years” (Arnold 1D).

The women’s physical attributes and garments merit consideration. *Fulfillment* shows an older woman, but all of the other statues are of women in their youth or early middle age: they are slim and comely with long hair and Anglo features. As the observer for the *Exponent II* wrote: “What is the dominant image of woman in these statues? She is young, slim, girlish, in long dresses in puffed and flowing sleeves. Except for the mature figure in *Fulfillment*, these women are in their teens, twenties, early thirties. The sturdy, heroic matron of earlier Church art has been replaced by this fragile and decorative figure” (Bushman 6). The image of women presented in these statues contrasts not only with the “matron” of earlier Church art, but also with the impression made by the majority of those attending the dedication – with a notable exception. According to Bushman, the General Board of the Relief Society “contrasted sharply with the hot, travel-worn visitors. The Board, with their well-cared-for faces, their pretty hair, and their flowing dresses, looked cool and fresh, as if they could have posed for the statues themselves” (6). On the other hand, the majority of onlookers, besides being “hot” and “travel-worn,” were described in the same article as “modest ladies of a certain age in skirts or pant suits, their hair neatly bouffant” (Bushman 6). In short, the statues reflected ideal types more than typical ones. None of the statues feature middle-aged women with bouffant hair or pant suits.

Emma Smith's hairstyle and clothing reflect the Nauvoo period, situating her in a specific time and place. The hairstyles and clothing of the other statues communicate historical context more ambiguously. Long hair worn down or in a ponytail may reflect contemporary taste. Dennis Smith, in describing *Woman*, says, "I have tried to use clothing that is not dated by a particular period, developing a drapery that is delicate and free as well as monumental" ("Role of Womanhood"). As Bushman points out, however, most of the statues feature garments – floor-length skirts, for example, and "puffed and flowing sleeves" – that are either girlish or anachronistic. In *Teaching with Love*, the seated figure was described by at least one writer as "a pioneer woman" (Arnold 1D). The statues are dressed in a feminine manner and in styles associated with a romanticized past, updated in cases to reflect more modern tastes in figure and style.

Not one writer or reporter I have found touches upon the way race and ethnicity figure into the monument. In spite of the importance of the "Lamanites" or American Indians in Mormon histories, no Native American women are represented in the MTW. None of the figures are of non-white descent, i.e. African, Chicana/Latina, Asian, or Pacific Islander, in spite of the Church's global missionary efforts and successes (particularly in the South Pacific and Latin America). In 1977, only about ten percent of Relief Society members lived outside of the United States, and many of these in Europe, Canada, the British Isles, and Scandinavia. From this perspective, the statues likely do reflect the racial/ethnic make-up of the majority of Mormons. Still, during the dedication ceremony, the Relief Society promoted the idea that fundraising for the monument was a global effort. All of the dignitaries attending the dedication were escorted out "through an avenue of flags carried by women in long white gowns representing all of the countries

where the Relief Society is organized” (Bushman 7). This diversity and global focus is not visually represented in the backgrounds of women in the monument. Given, moreover, the controversy surrounding the exclusion of African American men in the priesthood, visitors might have expected a more inclusive gesture.

The statues themselves, press coverage, and live tableaux leading up to the dedication of the monument provide insight into the how the LDS Church and Relief Society wanted to portray the nature of women or womanhood. Certain tropes emerge repeatedly about women’s roles and gifts. In Mormon terms, these would be called “stewardships,” meaning the special responsibilities for which women are uniquely and biologically suited. Childbearing and childrearing are the most obvious examples of a woman’s stewardships, although significantly, none of the young women depicted is pregnant. “Motherhood” dominates the majority of statues. Aside from the ability and necessity of making babies and raising children, women are here associated with qualities of nurturing, compassion, and selflessness. These stewardships emerge in several of the statues. The statues also mean to support the idea that women should pursue artistic talents as well as follow their interests and intellectual curiosity as they sculpt, quilt, read and learn. Piety, finally, is an overt theme in *Woman in Prayer*.

The reason for *thirteen* statues is not self-evident, nor is it explained in any of the statements or literature. A visual and thematic disconnect moreover occurs between the lone historical representation and the twelve statues that aim for “contextlessness.” Given the wealth of important historical contributions members of the society made in Nauvoo and in later periods, a much more obvious and coherent choice would have been to

remain in the historical register and depict either actual women in history or women inspired by the actions and experiences of many.

Without belittling the stewardships selected for representation, it is fair to say that by today's standards as well as by 1978's, the monument does not necessarily demonstrate "the widely varied nature of women's vital roles in society." There is no clear justification for the various stewardships depicted. Many kinds of roles, including, most obviously, women's public and professional roles, are excluded.

Bushman interprets the statue of Emma Smith to signify that she assumed a public role as President of the Relief Society. However, this is not how Church leaders sought to portray Emma's role. Through Bushman's summary of the dedication speech given by Ezra T. Benson, Benson "quoted Joseph Smith, who said the labors of women should be confined to those around them, the circle of their acquaintance, and mostly to those of the Relief Society" (6). Drawing on the authority of Joseph Smith (and neglecting many of Smith's other comments concerning the Relief Society), Benson sought to circumscribe the role of women to extend only so far as their "circle of their acquaintance." He negated the idea that Smith ever intended for his wife to assume a public position of leadership.<sup>40</sup> That Emma Smith did, in fact, use her position as Relief Society President to express public dissent from her husband on what became an issue of central importance to the Mormon people in Nauvoo is obscured to say the least. The disagreement between the Smiths caused a rift that split the community in two, as Emma stood her ground and remained in Nauvoo while Brigham Young took the Saints west so that they could continue to fulfill Smith's radical (polygamous) vision. Bushman is correct in claiming that Emma Smith was an important public figure, but this is not the "manifest narrative"

of the statue. The “story” it is supposed to tell is of Emma’s dependence on and deference to her husband.

Not long after the Relief Society was re-established in Utah, its leaders became involved in local and national politics. The Relief Society worked in tandem with the priesthood, speaking out on behalf of religious freedoms and woman suffrage in what was then United States territory. Many women including Emmeline Wells, Charlotte Godbe, and Susa Young Gates were admired for their rhetorical accomplishments. In spite of a demonstrable tradition of public speaking, writing, and activism, which reached a crescendo in the 1890s, none of the statues depict women at the podium, managing a printing press, or holding a pen.

While promoting the monument and dedication festivities, Barbara Smith told interviewers that her own grandmother was a doctor, and many Mormon women acted as midwives. In fact, the central character, “Elizabeth,” in the musical production written and staged for the dedication of the monument, *Because of Elizabeth*, performs these duties. “Elizabeth’s” daughter in the same play becomes a medical doctor. In the early days of the Church, women participated in a ceremony called the “laying of hands” for the sick. Although the Church forbids women from giving blessings, Joseph Smith defended the right of all Saints, young and old, to participate in the practice (Madsen, “The Nineteenth Century: Mormon Women and the Struggle for Definition” 9). None of the statues depict women doctors, nurses, or midwives, even though Mormon women have acted as healers in various capacities. And while many Mormon historians during the 1970s were reading the diaries of their foremothers who crossed the plains driving

oxen or pulling handcarts and went on to establish farms, none of the statues in the park show a woman engaged in physical labor.

“The statues are much more moving in person than the pictures I had seen,” writes Claudia Bushman for *Exponent II* (6). It is with this caveat that I draw some conclusions about the thirteen bronze statues. Without ignoring or attempting to diminish the aesthetic experience of encountering the statues – an experience I have not had personally – I seek here to summarize observations made by a close viewing of photographic images of the statues and the descriptions of them provided by multiple sources. The statues posit “eternal” roles for women based upon qualities that are viewed as God-given. These stewardships are explicit and in some ways endearing, but they are also limiting – even within the Mormon experience – and ignore much of the political, organizational, and professional work Mormon women did and continue to do. Moreover, and just as troubling, womanhood is embodied almost exclusively in young, attractive, slender, Anglo women.

The monument seeks to concretize certain images and ideas about “woman” by making transcendent claims about her eternal nature and the roles in society for which she is suited. The monument at once indexes select aspects of a certain historical moment, the founding of the Female Relief Society in 1842, while aiming for contextlessness, avoiding direct citation of other historical periods. This movement between historical time and ahistorical time is not explained in any of the literature, interviews or dedication speeches. Nor does it grant the monument obvious visual coherence. If the first reason for the monument is to honor the founding of the society, why does only one statue of thirteen do this work, especially given the number of rich



historical moments in the history of the institution from which to choose? Each of the other twelve statues is justified in the literature, but together, they raise questions. They seem to argue that *all* of women's stewardships, gifts, and responsibilities are, in fact, represented.

As a thought experiment, I imagined a monument to men. Allowing for a single historical representation, *Joseph and Emma Smith*, I considered what the other twelve statues would depict. All of the men would be young and Anglo, except for one older distinguished figure, who would, perhaps, be represented smoking a pipe in a rocking chair or whittling some wood. The statues would be arranged around a central, nine foot tall figure gazing heroically into the distance: *Man*. He might be dressed in a way reminiscent of the 1850s, but he would be attractive, clean-shaven, and well-kempt (no whiff of the oxen). The other men surrounding him would be engaged in hobbies and meaningful work like holding a tennis racket, reading over a desk, playing the saxophone, or donning a crude baseball mitt and tossing the ball around with a boy – a son or nephew. The men would be slightly different and performing different tasks. Collectively, they would constitute the Monument to Men. The only conclusion one would be able to draw from such a display is that the designers had very specific ideas of what men should look like, how they should comport themselves, what kinds of things they should do, and which male body type is most desirable.

To recapitulate, public monuments do public work; by indexing how members of a group once participated in public life they instruct those who attend them how they *should* participate in public life. But a problem emerges if a monument's manifest narrative is that women should take no *active* public role. The MTW enacts a pedagogy

of *passive* self-presentation, instructing women that only their physical attributes – their bodies, clothing, hairstyles, and gestures – are publicly valuable. This is why the very idea of a Monument to Men is absurd.

The choices made by those who designed and commissioned the monument are opaque and even incoherent if considered outside of the retrenchment shift broadly speaking and ERA specifically. Only in light of the then-present political situation do some of these the artistic choices become transparent. The gallery of romanticized figures that allude to the past but avoid direct citation of specific historical people or events (*Joseph and Emma Smith* excepted) suggests, above all, that the MTW does not aim “first” to commemorate the Relief Society. In any case, this monument already exists. The past physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual contributions of Mormon women to their people are reduced in scope to the familial: interpersonal and biological. What is suggested by the physical MTW is an image and fantasy about the past. Thus, the MTW under the guise of commemorating the Mormon past, constructs a pedagogy for the present, one that instructs viewers of not only their proper roles and stewardships, but also of the range of preferred embodiments. *Woman and Her Talents* betrays this interest. Bushman astutely interprets this statue to suggest that woman reproduces herself; yet given the emphasis on biological reproduction, an annunciation-like scene, or visibly pregnant woman would be a logical embodiment of this ideal. In fact, I believe Bushman reveals the way in which this monument calls upon women to re-create their figures, clothing, hair and mannerisms in a way pleasing to men. While women are to bear children, they are not look as though they bear children. The extent of this pedagogy

becomes clear in light of the speech acts and performances accompanying the MTW dedication.

### **Dedicating the Monument to Women: A Pedagogy in Women's Place**

The dedication transpired over the course of three days in 1978: June 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, and 30<sup>th</sup>. To accommodate the nearly 7,500 guests, near-identical ceremonies were offered each day; approximately 2,500 visitors received tickets to attend only one day of the dedication (Brigham). Visitors were treated to an elaborate musical performance, *Because of Elizabeth*, written and produced in honor of the dedication. Members of the Quorum of the Twelve, L. Tom Perry, Bruce R. McConkie, and Ezra Taft Benson, gave successive addresses. All three days, President Spencer W. Kimball gave the dedication prayer. The weather that June weekend was hot and sticky. The “moment of fulfillment” so many women had been waiting for was described vividly in *The Ensign*:

Humidity became a downpour only moments after 2,500 women and dignitaries gathered under a giant tent for the first dedicatory service.

While Sister Smith and others spoke, rain clattered on the tent roof. But, by the time President Kimball offered remarks before the dedicatory prayer, the rain had turned to sunshine. “The beautiful storm we had has passed, and beyond the showers comes the peace,” he said. (Brigham)

Undoubtedly, the weather contributed to a poignant atmosphere, as close to three thousand Mormons, mostly women, stood shoulder to shoulder beneath the tent to celebrate the dedication of the monument.

President Kimball's complete, compiled remarks from the weekend were published in the March 1979 edition of *The Ensign*.<sup>41</sup> His reflections upon the role of

women in the Nauvoo of times past sets the stage for his comments upon the role of women in the present. At the outset, President Kimball makes direct reference to the occasion of the dedication and the site suggesting that together they gave rise to a series of questions in his own mind:

I have thought, what was [the women's] work as the happenings of Nauvoo unfolded? What did they have to do to move, at a moment's notice, from one place to another, coming from Kirtland, Ohio, to Missouri, to Illinois, building, from the forests around them, homes that they would soon need to leave? Having been here only a short time, they were asked to move again. ("Sisters Seek")

After telling an anecdote of one pioneer woman brought to tears by the difficulty of building a home only to leave it, he resumes his ruminations upon the implications these difficult circumstances:

As they crossed the plains, beginning in Iowa, just across the river from here, it was very, very difficult. For many weeks and months before they left, the men came to the blacksmith shop to build wagons so that they could transport their families. The thought keeps recurring to me, what were the women doing all this time while the husbands were out trying to build a wagon, or to fix it so they could leave? Who did all the packing? Who did all the work of taking care of the family? The women—the mothers of Israel—were very, very busy. ("Sisters Seek")

This reflection on the relationship between the men’s labor, the labor of building that transpired in public, and women’s labor, the labor of support that transpired primarily in private, continues:

The thing that appeals to me is that all the way across those plains—1,500 miles or more of hardship, hunger, cold, Indians, and the other problems that came to them—the women, the mothers, stood side by side with their husbands and suffered all the privations their husbands did. When they were building the temple here in Nauvoo, they were very, very busy sewing shirts for the workmen, preparing food, getting things together, and doing all the things women can do to make a place habitable.

(Kimball, “Sisters Seek”)

He states that women toiled in a less public but no less important way than men. He also makes the point that women suffered as much as men during this pioneer era; they made the same kinds of sacrifices.

The discussion of historical events in the opening of President Kimball’s dedication does not move in chronological order. In the above passage, fleeing from Nauvoo and making the journey across 1,500 miles of the continent is described before the erection of the Nauvoo temple is described. The place itself appears to trigger questions in the mind of the speaker, and his reflection upon these events provides the answers. In this opening, he does not offer an exposition of history or a series of causes and effects, but rather a kind of meditation upon the importance of women (and women’s work) in the early community of Saints in Nauvoo, and the way they endured “side by side with their husbands” (Kimball, “Sisters Seek”).

President Kimball's speech underscores this parity in suffering on behalf of the faith, even as it emphasizes the necessity for a division of labor. His remarks contain a long quotation from N. Eldon Tanner, one of his two counselors, from a talk given in 1973 (and published as a brochure) called *The Role of Womanhood*. Tanner argues that woman can find no higher purpose or outlet for her skills and talents than being a wife and mother. President Kimball then frames his own conclusion about the bearing of the past upon the present. This conclusion, derived from scripture that is or should be familiar to the audience, has been "almost forgotten" today ("Sisters Seek"). Men have the responsibility to support their wives in the public marketplace and women are to "take care of the family" and to assist the husband:

The Lord said women have claim upon their husbands for their maintenance until their husbands be taken (see D&C 83:2). Women are to take care of the family—the Lord has so stated—to be an assistant to the husband, to work with him, but not to earn the living, except in unusual circumstances. Men ought to be men indeed and earn the living under normal circumstances. ("Sisters Seek")

He then turns his attention to the garden and what the statues "actually mean." Like the other speakers, however, he does not say what the statues actually mean; this may be because of the interpretive problems posed by the number of statues and their lack of narrative cohesion. The monument is then dedicated to the memory of Joseph Smith, Jr.: "We are grateful that thou didst lead thy persecuted exiles from contiguous lands to this beautiful area of the world. We are grateful that thy prophet did find this land—mostly marshland—where a great city could be founded" ("Sisters Seek").

Throughout the dedicatory prayer, President Kimball re-tells the history of the founding of Nauvoo. He recounts the movement of the “the early-day exiles from Kirtland, Ohio, from Adam-ondi-Ahman in Missouri, and from other places” to Nauvoo. These exiles “did finally find their way to this beautiful location, this acreage which they found, tree and bush-covered and somewhat a marshland” (“Sisters Seek”). He describes the early settlers of Nauvoo, including “both men and women,” as “intrepid, courageous souls” (“Sisters Seek”). He tells of the difficult manual labor involved in settling the area, the process through which “rude huts” gave way to “attractive homes.” He states that all of those gathered for the dedication are grateful for the work of “our ancestors” who, “through their sacrifice and hardships,” made “the home of the church of the living God for those few years” (“Sisters Seek”). He honors “the glorious lives and saddening deaths of many of our ancestors at this place” and “the courage and strength of those who built the city and finally erected a magnificent temple on these grounds” (“Sisters Seek”). He concludes this history of Nauvoo by citing it as the starting point for the “the great, perilous trek across the trackless plains” (“Sisters Seek”).

After offering this history, President Kimball moves ahead in time to the present. He thanks Heavenly Father that some of the buildings have been restored. In the context of the present, he thanks God that the current “Relief Society organization with its numerous wives and mothers and patriots and pilgrims has found the place to beautify and to memorialize the great work done by the Prophet Joseph Smith” (“Sisters Seek”). That the founding of the Relief Society is not included in the history of the area constitutes a notable omission, especially given the presumed reason for the speech. President Kimball’s message about the shared history of “our ancestors” and their

suffering and sacrifice in the joint project of coming to Nauvoo, building the city of Nauvoo, and fleeing Nauvoo takes precedence. The role of the contemporary Relief Society is, in part, to beautify and memorialize this past: to remember these sufferings and sacrifices. That the Relief Society became a world-functioning organization, like the Church itself, is a testament to the great work done by Joseph Smith. Nothing of the accomplishments of the Relief Society women, its purposes or contributions as an organization in the Nauvoo period ever comes to light in this prayer.

That a history of Nauvoo is presented by the Church President to a group of several thousand Mormons during a prayer offered in Nauvoo gives it special credence. President Kimball guides his audience through a *rhetoric of recollection*. A rhetoric of recollection – as opposed to a discipline of recollection as imagined by Aristotle – functions in an enthymematical manner (Phillips 218). The *rhetor* draws upon the *kairos*, the place and moment and relies upon the audience to supply the links and subsequent meanings. In groups with a strong sense of shared history, this strategy may be particularly effective in fostering the appearance of public memory. The speech interacts with the physical site itself to evoke this shared past, hence an identification that suggests the *where* (where we were and where we are going), *who* (who we were, are, and will be), and *what* (what we did and will continue to do). How does Kimball want the audience to answer these questions, and which histories are elided in this rhetoric of recollection?

President Kimball's remarks and dedicatory prayer constitute reminders of the necessity of both dividing labor and remaining unified as a people in the face of persecution and outside pressure. Men and women performed different tasks and had



different responsibilities in Nauvoo; both endured hardships. He lauds not the glory of women's roles in the past, but rather their courage, sacrifice, and suffering, which was commensurate with men's. Through this rhetoric of recollection, Kimball argues that among Mormons, men have always occupied public spaces and had public responsibilities, and women have always occupied private spaces and held private responsibilities. One is not better than the other; they both require equal sacrifice. This division of labor persists today out of necessity.

His emphasis on the Nauvoo settlers – those who toiled in the most inglorious of circumstances – argues for *selflessness*. At the dedication, Kimball emphasizes the parity between the sexes, but that even given this parity, putting self before others is required of women. Sacrificing for one's faith is to be expected. Kimball makes this point enthymematically in the dedication, but explicitly in a different 1978 speech:

One of the important messages that emerges from the history of great women in all ages is that they cared more for the future of their families than for their own comfort. Such good women had a grasp of what matters in life. When called upon to do so, they could fashion a lovely city in the midst of a swamp or make the desert bloom like a rose.<sup>42</sup>

Selflessness is a key to happiness and effectiveness ... We have grown strong as a people because our mothers and our women have been so selfless. That ennobling quality must not be lost ... (“A Woman's” 17–18).

A third argument Kimball makes is that Mormons were tested during the Nauvoo period, and they are being tested now. Other speakers during the dedication ceremony make this

point more directly than does Kimball, as I will soon demonstrate. Again, drawing from other remarks made in 1978, Kimball explains the tests the women of today face: “It is against the home and family life that Satan has aimed his greatest efforts to destroy. He strikes the moral sanctity of the home. His plan is labeled ‘a new morality’ in which freedom of sexual relations is proclaimed” (“A Woman’s” 27). Through his rhetoric of recollection, the audience would arrive at the conclusion that without adhering to the same division of responsibilities as the Nauvoo Saints, women today would be betraying the courage, sacrifice, and suffering of their ancestors. Furthermore, by remaining at home, women are persevering against Satan. Fulfilling the role of homemaker in today’s world requires the same kinds of courage, sacrifice, or suffering as following Joseph Smith, Jr. during the Nauvoo period.

Jan Shipps argues in her seminal work *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* that during one particular time of upheaval in the history of the LDS Church, 1916, the Church president, then Joseph Fielding Smith, delivered a sermon

that called up the sacred past and brought it forward to vindicate the present. Just as surely as the Christian canon, in order to establish a correspondence between two apparently different eras, brought the Hebraic past into the Christian present by providing a genealogical bridge and pointing up analogues between the personal history of Jesus and the corporate history of the Jews, so the prophet-president’s sermon established a basis for a metaphysical bonding between the nineteenth-century Mormon experience and its distinctly dissimilar twentieth-century counterpart. (*Mormonism* 141)

In Shipps's telling of this speech given at the semiannual Church Conference in Salt Lake City, Joseph F. Smith pictured himself as "the bridge between the past and the present" (*Mormonism* 142) and sought to "demonstrate continuity with Mormon beginnings" (*Mormonism* 143). Without using the language of memory studies or rhetorical theory, Shipps argues that the pioneer past was brought to bear in that particular moment to steady the Church when it became clear that much of Joseph Smith, Jr.'s vision and Brigham Young's vision would not survive in twentieth century America. Specifically, the practice of patriarchal marriage and the manifestation of a political, economic, and religious kingdom had to be abandoned. In the wake of this particular series of political defeats, the Church sought to maintain a connection with its past to assure the Mormons that they shared the same faith and were of the same stuff as their revered ancestors. Although much of what originally united them had fallen away, their shared past could – or would – serve as a suitable replacement.

At stake for President Joseph F. Smith was the future of the Mormon Church, which had to undergo a transformation in order to survive in modern America. Like President Smith before him, President Kimball was responsible for shepherding the Mormon Church through another major cultural transformation, one that began around 1960. As an outsider, it is difficult to separate where the leadership's concern over the rise (or perceived rise) of certain social problems ends and its concern over reproducing Mormonism begins. It is clear that rapid social change, the movement of Mormons out of rural communities in the Intermountain West, international expansion and an increasingly diverse membership engendered retrenchment. But what is unclear is whether retrenchment was anodyne or opiate: a force leaders believed would ameliorate the

effects of these changes or a force that would engender a new Mormon era, underscoring the need for and power of the institutional Church. Regardless, the Church's leaders united behind the nuclear family and the traditional home as both the means to the end and the end itself.

What is not mentioned in Kimball's recollection is that in 1978 as in 1916 – Joseph F. Smith's time – many of the reasons the early believers were willing to endure so much hardship no longer applied. As such, his dedication constitutes an example of *nostalgia*. To reprise earlier statements, nostalgia fosters identification in the name of a purpose or shared undertaking that no longer exists or applies. Thus, nostalgia engenders a feeling of continuity with the past while obscuring differences between a “then” and the “now.” The 1978 Mormons were not forging a new religious kingdom in America; they were not attempting to instantiate polygamy in a hostile social climate. In fact, they were trying to reinstate a version of the Victorian ideal their ancestors fled 1,500 miles to escape. To be free of religious persecution and practice their religion (particularly patriarchal marriage) beyond the reach of the United States government and other tormenters were the reasons behind the “trek across the trackless plains.” Just as Joseph F. Smith's speech to the gathered Saints in 1916 sought to assure them that they should construe their experiences as a continuation and fulfillment of the experiences of their religious ancestors, so, too, were the Mormon women and members of the Relief Society encouraged in President Kimball's dedication to see their experiences as a continuation and fulfillment of the experiences of their foremothers. Building and dedicating the statues in Nauvoo reinforces this continuity, this pilgrimage in reverse.

Problems emerge when the connections Church leaders make between past and present are scrutinized. For example, at least one dedication speech draws comparisons between the dire physical, material challenges faced by pioneer women persecuted for their beliefs and the “challenges” faced by contemporary women. In his speech on the first day of the dedication, Elder Perry

honored his great-grandmother, Martha Webb, a convert to the Church who pulled a handcart across the plains and made straw hats to support her five children after the death of her husband. “I’ve often compared her courage to that of today’s women. The scene has changed dramatically, but the challenge is just as real as it was in any period of history.”

(Brigham)

Mrs. Smith, in her remarks, attempts to address the nature of the present material challenges women face. States Smith: “It is a matter of deep concern that social and economic conditions today are enticing, if not forcing, woman out of the sphere in which she can find the most happiness and can render the greatest good to mankind” (Brigham). Armed militia men chased early those early converts out of their homes and their towns, looting and burning what they couldn’t carry out (we remember President Kimball’s recollection of the pioneer woman who fell to pieces because she had to move the home she had just built). Today’s women are practically being driven from their homes. Yet the speakers would lead us to believe that Mormon women “today” endure similar circumstances. But are women today *enticed* out of their homes or *practically forced* out? Are the challenges the early Saints in Nauvoo faced similar to or different from those facing the Mormon women assembled there in 1978?

This attempt to link the present with a romanticized version of the past is also evident in the production, *Because of Elizabeth*. The elaborate production involved a cast and crew of 240. The music for the production was recorded in London, England; the chorus was recorded in California (Brigham). Written by Moana B. Bennett, *Because of Elizabeth* is described by Claudia Bushman as “part pageant, part docu-drama, part musical, part straight play [that] focuses on the lives of women in the early Church” (6). “Elizabeth,” the central character, is a beautiful, charming convert from England who comes to Nauvoo, marries a Mormon, becomes part of the Relief Society, lives through the martyrdom of Joseph Smith, Jr., heads west through Winter Quarters, has four daughters, acts as a midwife to many other women, and is confronted throughout with suffering and loss.

Through “Elizabeth” and her offspring, the musical touches upon significant moments in the history of the Relief Society, highlighting its broad charitable work as well as “*Woman’s Exponent*, grain saving, work toward woman suffrage” (Bushman 6). The saga ends as Elizabeth stands at the “apex” of a family across five generations. She herself begot these relations and brought many other children into the world as midwife. The play emphasizes that women’s most important creative capability is procreative by emphasizing the multiple generations brought forth by one devout woman. The hardship and loneliness that women endured is dramatized in multiple ways, through the main character’s struggles as well through the losses of other important women.

In her *Exponent II* piece, Bushman observes that the play manages to touch upon many important historical moments in Mormon and Relief Society history, but makes some glaring omissions. Reading the script, one blogger comes to some similar

conclusions: “I was intrigued by what was included (the wheat program, women getting the vote in Utah, the *Exponent*) and what was omitted (any mention of polygamy or Indians, for starters)” (Hangen). Bushman concedes she is not sure how the historical practice of polygamy should be handled. By failing to include it altogether, the history is incoherent and misleading (like *Joseph and Emma Smith*) because it implies the Church supported woman suffrage on its own merit.

“*Because of Elizabeth* reminds us of two earlier eras,” observes the blogger, “not only the Nauvoo period it very partially reconstructs, but also the early flowering of Mormon women’s history in the 1970s, and a whole self-contained world of earnest, sentimental, artistic productions designed to celebrate Mormonism’s distinctiveness and bind them together as a people... one cultural hall at a time” (Hangen). Certainly, the play sought to capture the Nauvoo past through the eyes of a fictional woman who lived through several important moments in Mormon history. But the blogger’s observation about the zeitgeist in which the play was written and produced is worth exploring. During this time, many talented Mormon women historians were looking to the journals and diaries of their foremothers for inspiration, an understanding of their “distinctiveness” as a people, and even for direction during a time of social change the 1970s. This musical appropriated dramatic material from these archival documents and organized it into a polished representation and re-production of the past. The musical offered a “very partially reconstructed” history meant to codify a meaning about the past for use in the present; as a work of art including musical numbers with dancing and singing, costumes, sets, and fictional characters *Because of Elizabeth* functioned symbolically, too, offering viewers “images and fantasies ... about aspects of the past” (Phillips 219). Above all, the

musical marshaled nostalgia for the pioneer era. Biological continuity (or generations) stands metonymically for historical continuity, building a bridge from Nauvoo to the present.

*Because of Elizabeth* raises questions about the aesthetic choices and meaning of the Nauvoo Monument to Women more than it answers them. By dramatizing the history of early women, it asks why the moments it enacts were not represented in the statues. Though the production may be justly criticized for eliding polygamy, for example, it does present a much fuller range of roles for women, including midwives, heads of households, laborers, public advocates, performers, and doctors. Although motherhood remains at the “apex,” the production draws attention to the dearth of roles depicted in the physical MTW and suggests myriad missed opportunities: All of the possible historical moments that might have been rendered – using real Mormon women leaders or historical composites – but were not.

### **Conclusion**

Writing about commemorative events, Balthrop, Blair and Michel argue that “the rhetoric of such events usually provides guidance to the audience, offering or implying interpretations of the site that are preferred by those empowered to offer them. Those interpretations promoted and reproduced in tourist pamphlets, newspapers, books, or Web sites, invite later visitors to share in the preferred hermeneutic as well” (Balthrop, Blair, and Michel 171). Some of the *goals* of the monument are detailed in literature and by statements presented earlier in the chapter. Even in this regard, however, the messages are not entirely coherent. Is the purpose to honor the founding of the Relief Society? Depict the eternal pattern for women to follow? Proclaim graphically the greatness of



women? The individual statues and the relationships depicted therein are described in detail. The feeling the monument is meant to engender is stated. However, the dedication, despite speeches, prayers and a musical performance, did not offer attendees an interpretation of the monument, likely because of the incoherence of the monument itself, or, at the very least, the difficulty of discussing succinctly its various components. At the heart is this ambiguity: is the Monument to Women in Nauvoo primarily a site to commemorate the founding of the Relief Society or is it primarily a site to define womanhood? What the monument actually demonstrates – and what it “actually means” – perhaps cannot be said without abandoning any claim it makes to honoring the past.

The emphasis on establishing and maintaining “traditional homes” became the focus of many Church programs. The authorities also encouraged temple marriage for college-aged couples, childbearing, childrearing, and homemaking for women as full-time pursuits.<sup>43</sup> The statements and speeches of all of the Church leaders during the dedication ceremonies therefore focused upon the role women are to play in maintaining a “traditional” home. Doing so in the face of a hostile society constitutes a great challenge.

The central conceit of memory studies is that the concerns of the present are always present in representations of the past. Thus, the scholar working in memory studies seeks to demonstrate the “presence of the present” by focusing on how “various constructions of the past are deployed in the present” (Balthrop, Blair, and Michel 195). To that end, I have shown that the impetus for building the Monument to Women in Nauvoo emerged out of a particular historical, political context and pervasive anxiety in the LDS community about its identity in a rapidly evolving American society. The

occasion of the dedication of the MTW gave Church leaders an important opportunity to present to a mostly sympathetic audience their response to the progressive call for gender equality in a place that invited a unity and communion with the past. Through his dedication prayer, President Kimball employed a rhetoric of recollection to draw attention to the suffering of women alongside men in the establishment of Nauvoo and the birth of a persecuted people, thus implying that women of the present are, in accepting the Church's claims about the proper role of women and adopting an anti-ERA stand, honoring the work done and sacrifices made by their ancestors. Perhaps, above all else, President Kimball made the case for unity: Whatever the claims the women's movement might make upon Mormon women, identifying as a Mormon is more important. The site chosen for the MTW evokes this feeling of multigenerational identification across space and time, and the necessity of choosing to embrace images and fantasies offered by the Church over those proffered by others.

Balthrop, Blair, and Michel urge those of us in memory studies to do more than index the role present concerns play in commemorating and remembering the past. While such studies may be "fascinating," they often fail to make claims that ascribe value judgments about whether public memory is leveraged in a responsible way. "That is a delicate and colossally risky matter," they state, but "both practicality and theoretical integrity seem to demand that we assume the risk" (196). Their conclusions emerge out of their evaluation of the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C., which, they conclude, is legible (can be interpreted) *only* "if one takes it to be about the present" (194), implying that "to use Heathcote's language, 'the superficial gesture towards remembrance' is superficial in the extreme (195).

Such value judgments should be leveraged cautiously, in specific circumstances where warranted by evidence and tempered by a scholar's disclosure of interpretive bias. What is the difference, for example, between an ordinary "superficial gesture toward remembrance" and one that is "superficial in the extreme"? What criteria, if any, may be asserted? The authors imply that one way of determining whether a site of remembrance constitutes a legitimate appropriation of the past is whether a visitor can interpret its manifest narrative. I also draw a second conclusion from their work, arguing that legitimate appropriations of the past honor rather than diminish those to which they supposedly pay tribute.

My reading of the Nauvoo Monument to Women is that it does not honor the founding (or contributions) of the Relief Society. As my dissertation argues and seeks to demonstrate, the institutional LDS Church, during this fractious period of time, mobilized the past in myriad ways to thwart passage of the ERA and maintain the very social order against which many pioneer saints rebelled. In this sense, many images of the past that were invoked during President Kimball's dedication prayer, during the performance of *Because of Elizabeth*, and in the statue of *Joseph and Emma Smith*, established a false continuity between the sacrifices and beliefs of the early Saints and those of the then-contemporary Mormons. Above all, reasons for the persecution of the Mormons and their forced exodus from Nauvoo were elided rendering the exposition of the past incoherent and therefore illegible. The Saints in Smith's time saw themselves restoring the true church, and manifesting this restoration through religious, economic, political, military, social, and familial practices, the greater part of which had to be abandoned in order to survive in the twentieth century. Implicit during the dedication ceremonies was the claim

that Mormon women who did not embrace their appropriate social roles and stewardships would be betraying their foremothers who made tremendous sacrifices for theirs and their children's future.

The representation of the founding of the Relief Society, rather than championing its accomplishments and the contributions of its members, emphasizes Emma Smith's dependence upon Joseph Smith. While Joseph Smith gave his wife a gold coin during the first meeting, Emma contributed a dollar, too. By the end of the first meeting, the treasurer reported income over ten dollars. Moreover, the concept of "Joseph Smith" turning "the key in behalf of women" is not represented (in fact, Madsen claims that the Church changed this wording; archival sources claim that he turned the key *to* women ("The Nineteenth Century: Mormon Women and the Struggle for Definition" 7)). His vision – to make this select group a kingdom of priests – is not represented. As the Relief Society's first president, a post to which she was elected, Emma Smith sought to improve the morals of the community by fighting for her own vision of right and wrong – a vision that ultimately and dramatically collided with her husband's. Emma Smith's piety, beliefs, sense of decency, and outspokenness on certain moral concerns are diminished in this representation and overshadowed by her husband's financial gesture. The statue does, however, lend credence to an argument that the LDS Church had a particular interest in furthering in the wake of the 1969-1970 reorganization: The Relief Society should be financially dependent upon the priesthood, just as it was in Prophet Joseph's time. Thus, the statue offers a justification for the greater LDS Church assuming control of the Relief Society's finances and appropriating its funds.

More troubling is the disconnect between the commemoration of the founding of the Relief Society and the other twelve statues. The inspiration for these statues is not grounded in historical accounts of women or individual members of the Relief Society. The number of statues appears to have no outward justification, nor does there appear a self-evident reason for the specific roles and stewardships rendered. Loose organizing principles unite two groupings: aspects of the individual woman and the woman's role in relationships. The limited way women are depicted and embodied has already been elaborated; however, I would add that women are not portrayed in relationship with other women: as sisters or members of a group of women. This seems a particularly strange oversight for a monument that was funded and organized by an organization of women; it seems stranger still when the "first" purpose of the monument is to honor the founding of that organization. This particular omission undercuts the very idea of a monument to women as a group and instead argues for a woman's place in the hierarchy of church and home: she is never shown among peers. This omission might also underscore a fear of women politically united.

The rationale for these statues of women respond not to a call to celebrate the full variety of roles, professions, and work done by Mormon women – either their literal historical sacrifices and contributions or even those imagined in plays like *Because of Elizabeth* – but to aspects of those essential qualities found most desirable by the male-led institution. To the Mormon women, this statue offered an ethos of self-sacrifice and attendance to the needs and desires of others. Although the past was mobilized to make this argument, the "images and fantasies" were meant to counter the offer of equality of opportunity and full participation in society offered by the Equal Rights Amendment.

Sensing the possibility of defection and disillusionment, the MTW sought to justify the priesthood's appropriation of the Relief Society's assets and resources in order to refocus women upon their private responsibilities.

The MTW attempts to soothe Mormon women during retrenchment even while it justifies a top-down, radical reinterpretation of a woman's embodied place. Retrenchment policies affected nearly every aspect of daily life for Mormon women. One institutional program particularly, Priesthood Correlation, furthered two messages: women's role is homemaker and her function is baby-maker. Homemaking replaced community advocacy. Women were taught through recently revised Relief Society lessons, speeches, and the MTW that they hold no public office, no public place. Theirs is to strengthen the home. By doing so, they are defeating Satan and endeavoring in the role destined to give them the most fulfillment and pleasure. Even when this role causes suffering or sacrifice, it is necessary to persevere in order to honor those selfless women who came before. Because "motherhood" is the highest calling for women, a calling which is different from but is billed as commensurate with "priesthood," Mormon women faced increasing pressure to bear more children. Women were told in myriad ways that their unique and essential capacity is biological.

What underscores, above all, the way these roles and functions represent a male ideal is through the way the statues are embodied: wives, mothers, and homemakers do not appear dowdy, overweight, ill-kept, or even pregnant. They are young, slim, pretty, and Anglo. The figures are models more than mothers. Through these ideally embodied forms, the MTW engenders a pedagogy of embodiment, one that actually undermines its stated goal of granting women confidence. Rather than assuring women that their

capacity to give and receive love matters most, the monument instructs them that the values it appears to celebrate must be engendered in a particular way in order to be esteemed. There should be public monuments to nurturing, compassion and love, but the MTW does not perform this public work.

## CHAPTER 3

### On History

Over dinner at our house one evening, a devout Mormon man told my husband and me about his mother's deep devotion to the faith.<sup>44</sup> Every day for years she wrote in her journal. By the end of her life, she had shelves full of journals. These journals were *voluminous* – they occupied space in the family's home. They had a presence. The man spoke with pride about them. Not long ago, his mother grew very ill. Just before she passed away she asked – to his utter shock – that her journals be burnt. And so they were.

Like my friend's mother, Sandra Allen kept journals.<sup>45</sup> Questions surrounding the journals kept by these two different Mormon women inspired this chapter. What became of these journals spurred consideration of the rhetorical implications of journals as material historical records and as a daily history-writing practice. The idea that these women's journals served rhetorical purposes – that is, the journals addressed audience(s) – led first to an investigation of what journals *do* in the Mormon Church. Why are these documents as material historical records important? Who reads them and why? I went on to consider what journal writing does *for* the Mormon Church. Is the process or activity of keeping a journal significant, and if so, to what end?

To begin, the practice of writing history, in the form of a daily personal journal, and the material one produces if one is faithful to this practice, engender identification. As Kenneth Burke points out in the introduction to *A Rhetoric of Motives*, rhetoric is most often associated with the word *persuasion*, rather than the word *identification*. His purpose in reclaiming an understanding of rhetoric as identification is to more properly identify the uses of rhetoric “for describing the ways in which the members of a group



promote social cohesion by acting rhetorically upon themselves and one another” (Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* xiv). Identification proves more useful than “the classical notion of clear persuasive intent” when considering the importance of establishing or maintaining cohesion among members of a social group (Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* xiv).

According to Burke, “Identification is affirmed with earnestness precisely because there is division. Identification is compensatory to division. If men were not apart from one another, there would be no need for the rhetorician to proclaim their unity” (*A Rhetoric of Motives* 22).

Rather than looking for a single stirring speech that unites people, students of rhetoric would do well to look for a “*body of identifications* that owe their convincingness much more to trivial repetition and dull daily re-enforcement than to exceptional rhetorical skill” (Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* 26). In the practice of personal journal writing specifically, home archiving generally, and the material results these practices bring into the home, we see examples of this “body of identifications” brought into being through “repetition” and “dull daily re-enforcement.”

Home history writing and archiving encourage certain habits of mind – habits that situate individuals in a certain relationship to the past. How people understand the past dis/ables certain ways of interpreting and acting in the present. This chapter explores how the Mormon Church forged identification during the ERA debate through home historical production and the institutionalization of migrant archives. By mandating believers engage in certain discursive, historical practices and encouraging members to contribute others, Church policies en/gendered political cooperation.

Shifts within the Mormon Church and shifts within American society in the period leading up to the Equal Rights Amendment ratification extension era (1978-1981) caused multiple divisions. The majority of Americans, polls suggested, favored passage of ERA. By the time the Mormon Church became publicly involved in the conflict, only three states needed to approve ERA for it to be ratified and incorporated into the Constitution of the United States. The Church opposed its passage, and therefore its interests stood in conflict with the interests of American people.

Division between the Mormon Church and the American mainstream would likely work to the Church's long-term advantage and actually help leaders mobilize members to become politically active. Their history suggests that Mormons have thrived by offering a set of beliefs that stand in contrast with those held by the majority. As discussed in *Chapter Two: On Memory*, Church leaders strive to find the right balance between accommodation and peculiarity. I interpret the Church's stand on the role of women (of which its opposition to ERA is an outgrowth) as one means by which the Mormon Church sought to assert its "peculiarity" in this time.

It must be said, however, that the Church's position on ERA was not just a symbolic action. The Church wanted ERA stopped lest the amendment legally threaten its longstanding practice of denying women the priesthood and undermine its efforts to redefine women's roles. The Church declared a rhetorical war on ERA and supporters of women's liberation, employing the terms of war to mobilize Mormon women in the battle against ratification. The need for identification comes about due to a need of acting-together; such cooperation is leveraged to confront division or conflict. Taken to an extreme, cooperation leads to that "perversion of communion": war (Burke, *A Rhetoric of*

*Motives* 22). On the pages of her journal, Sandra Allen characterizes herself as “a reluctant warrior” and “a spy for the Lord’s army” engaged “in combat” (*Second Volume* 102–104). Rhetoric in the form of identification is mobilized to engender cooperation that may be marshaled in an acting-together to confront a larger division or a conflict.

The Church feared internal division over its retrenchment era efforts to redefine women’s roles. Its opposition to ERA threatened to become the lightning rod for women who opposed this redefinition of women’s roles. Solving this internal division required leadership to draw upon aspects of its past to reaffirm the solidarity of the Mormon people. As *Chapter Two: On Memory* argues, the Monument to Women constitutes an example of the way an “idea, image, or fantasy” about the past was leveraged in order to foster group identification. This chapter explores a different way in which the past is organized in the present to maintain identification while engaging women in practices designed to internalize messages about their proper social roles.

### **Historical Record Keeping In the Context of Mormonism**

As discussed in *On Memory*, the Mormon Church began mobilizing to reassert its peculiarity around the peak of accommodation (1960). By the end of that decade, the larger movement called *retrenchment* had been implemented. Although retrenchment does not refer to a single program or initiative, it was principally concerned with redefining the role of women by insisting on women’s essential procreative function and her responsibility to find fulfillment through serving her husband, her children, and her God.

Retrenchment focused heavily upon strengthening the home through programs like Family Home Evening. Simultaneously, new Relief Society curricula focused upon women’s work as homemaking. Rather than encouraging women to find meaning through

public service and through engagement with/in the larger world, these lessons instructed women that she should find meaning at home, in private. Mormon and sociologist Armand Mauss perceives the institutional emphasis on the creation of genealogies, particularly, if not family histories generally, to be an example of policy that gained renewed importance in the retrenchment era (88). To be clear, historical record keeping has long been part of the Mormon *habitus*. However, with retrenchment, Church leadership called upon members to reapply themselves to the production of certain historical documents. The production of these historical documents constitutes an extension of a Mormon tradition: Joseph Smith called upon his followers to keep personal histories and records to record the unfolding of this “new dispensation.” Production of historical documents in this retrenchment context performs the additional rhetorical work, including gendering and, as will be discussed in the next chapter, dis/abling certain perspectives on the past. The material products these practices have brought into being constitute, moreover, monuments to the Mormon faith (within the home and outside of it) as well as resources for current and future Mormons.

### **Materiality: Documents Into Monuments**

Home historical practices yield fruit that engender identification. These home archives are “migrant archives” because, according to Rodrigo Lazo, they have “the potential to challenge the authority of the national building” (37). Lazo’s argument is that “archive and nation came together to grant each other authority and credibility” (36). Nations use archives to argue for their legitimacy and to delimit what constitutes memory and history. Lazo comes to the conclusion – one I share and elaborate in *Chapter One* – that exerting control over archival spaces has “epistemological and political ramifications”

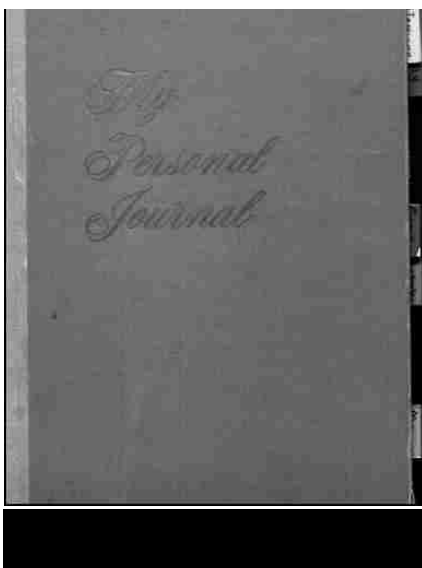
(38). Personal or migrant archives serve, then, as *counter*-national archives when made under the auspices of an institution that challenges or opposes national authority and national history.

Immediately following Joseph Smith's translation of the *Book of Mormon*, the nascent Mormon Church positioned itself in conflict with the United States government. The community sought to set itself apart from all other religious traditions and establish a new religious colony. The Saints saw themselves as not another church, but rather a *people* who were restoring, through their very actions, the holy kingdom of Christ. The tradition of historical record keeping began with the first followers of Joseph Smith, Jr. His revelations and the events they inspired ushered in a new Judeo-Christian epoch, or what in Mormon terms is called "the new dispensation of the fullness of times." These new "Saints of Latter-days" cast themselves as participants in the new epoch, bringing it into being and witnessing to the unfolding events. Given their important role in this new dispensation, Saints were charged by the prophet to keep histories.

Smith recognized the very important role the records of the first Saints would have on future generations. When taken together, these records would also challenge national archives. They inscribe Mormon culture, indexing the importance of faith in the restored gospel, obedience to Church authorities, and the existence of *another* national history: the history of the continent revealed in the *Book of Mormon*. These historical documents stand together to pro-claim answers to the following kinds of questions: which or whose history is important and on what or whose authority? In fact, Joseph Smith's admonition to keep these historical records engendered a formidable institutional archival

collection, one that has proven to be a cultural and religious resource for its people and international scholars.

It is within this context that Mormons are taught the significance of keeping histories and charged with creating and maintaining historical documents including genealogies, books of remembrance, and the personal journal. *Genealogies*, which establish multigenerational kinship links, enable family members and proxies to perform baptisms for those who lived and died before receiving the restored gospel. *Books of remembrance* and *personal journals* are documents that testify to lives lived the Mormon



way, and often become part of larger family histories (Figure 12). Mormon “migrant archives,” including the genealogy, book of remembrance, and personal journal, constitute material demonstrations of faith in the home. Further, these home archives often migrate in/to institutional Church archival spaces, wherein they serve as material proof of the Church’s claims, physically incorporated into a Mormon monument.

Mormon home archives should then be understood as both a product of living life in accordance with the Mormon faith and a resource for the Mormon Church in perpetuating belief in this faith.

To explore the importance of the materiality of these archives, it is worth returning for a moment to the anecdote about my friend’s mother who asked that her journals be burnt. Because it will never be known why she made the request, what matters is that her son had been deeply impressed by the volume of her personal journals:

the space these documents – his mother’s writing – took in their home. Their physicality as materiality made an impression upon him. In discussing the significance of the material vis à vis the historical, we are at once addressing the physical manifestation and the generic content. In the *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Michel Foucault observes, “in our time, history is that which transforms *documents* into *monuments*” (7; emphasis original). This understanding of history suggests that “the most humble testimony, the most modest vestige” is granted “the potential dignity of the memorable” (Nora 13). This orientation to the past has led to the proliferation of archives. In rhetorical terms, transforming *documents* into *monuments* serves to foster identification in the present. Documents are reifications of shared belief; they are the constructions through which a society, culture or religious group wishes to be known to its members.

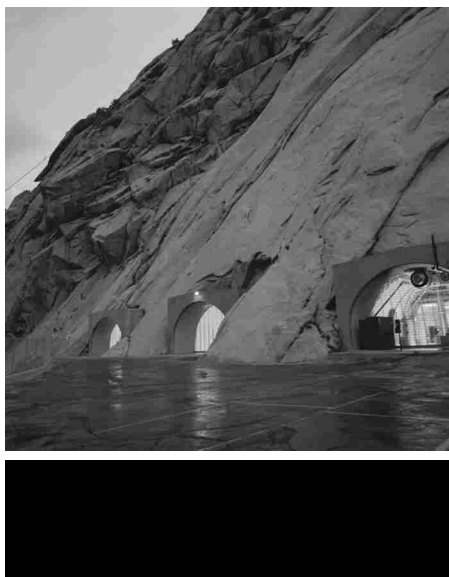
Creating and hoarding documents is not, therefore, necessarily a project that leads to an understanding or interpretation of the past, but rather is a project that emerges out of an anxiety “about the meaning of the present” (Nora 13). The historical documents become a buttress against encroaching anxiety about one’s identity: a material proof of belonging. To consider one example, Sandra Allen’s home archive could, in these terms, constitute a monument – an entity making a transcendent claim in a specific site – to an interfamily, intergenerational, social, and cultural identity. This identity is reinforced in part through the *materiality* of the archive.

### **Material Monument to Mormon Identity: Little Cottonwood Canyon**

The Mormon genealogical archives stored in Little Cottonwood Canyon constitute a monument to the Mormon faith, or a site of remembrance. Archives constitute one example of a public site of remembrance. The walls circumscribing the

building or complex of buildings in which archives are held serve to delimit, metaphorically speaking, the past (Lazo 37). Archives are physical manifestations of a transcendent claim to own the past. Through a manifest archive, historical documents become monuments – reified sites of remembrance – that foster a shared belief in “our” past and “our” identity as citizens (as in the national archives) or as Mormons (as in the Church’s genealogical archives).

So extensive are the Mormon Church’s genealogical records that the Church established a huge vault which was “bored through the sheer granite rock” in Little



Cottonwood Canyon in order to make an “impregnable repository” to hold Church and genealogical records (Figure 13). This enormous physical space is meant to withstand any catastrophic event – natural and or man-made – barring the destruction of the earth itself. Viewed this way, it claims to be more substantial, more “transcendent” than the national archives, or any

building. The genealogical archive at Little Cottonwood Canyon stands as a fortress of documents.

This site of remembrance is institutionally sponsored; it was built with and maintained by institutional funds, but members of the Church are required to provide the records housed therein. Copies of genealogical records are retained by priesthood authorities, verified by Church archivists, transferred to microfilm once confirmed, and deposited in the Church archives. In the late 1970s, the Church had accumulated more



than 2 billion pages of records (Arrington and Bitton 268). The goal of the Mormon genealogical project is to have a record of every human being, now or once living. What is interesting about the genealogical records is that individually, they constitute a specific kind of proof of one's individual identity – a map of one's ancestors – while cumulatively, as part of 2 billion records, genealogical records constitute a proof of one's group identity. This identity is intergenerational, connecting to those who lived before, and multinational, connecting to those who came to America from other places. At the same time, this identity is Mormon, connecting to other Mormons who are also contributing to this archive. The purposes of these genealogical records are explored further in the next section on historical practice.

Before moving on, however, the point must be made that Little Cottonwood Canyon is a physical manifestation of Mormon counter-national claims to the past. At the same time, because it is a site of remembrance it functions pedagogically to instruct audiences regarding what is or should be valued. This particular monument argues that biological kinship connections through time are important in the extreme. And even though Little Cottonwood Canyon could withstand a nuclear holocaust and is, as part of a mountain, timeless, transcendent, and impregnable, it is a made thing. Mormons began building this site in 1962, just as the Church was implementing retrenchment. Thus, if the larger goal of retrenchment was to reassert the peculiarity of Mormonism through a reinterpretation of the role of womanhood, we see Little Cottonwood Canyon as a means of extending this argument cum worldview. Genealogical records underscore the idea that women's highest purpose is to make human beings and the function of women's bodies, through procreation, is to make these links in the endless genealogical chain.

Of course, this site is not just a monument to networks upon networks of biological kinship. It is also an historical resource for Mormons. Mormons are required to make, as well as deposit, genealogies; to this end, the Church's vast archives are necessary for their ongoing genealogical research. In addition to making a material argument for the Church's transcendent historical claims, the purpose of these genealogical records is to assist Mormons (and non Mormons) in creating genealogical records. Thus, this monument is both a product of living the Mormon faith and a resource for other Mormons. I focus more upon the ways participating in ongoing genealogical historical production engenders identification in the next section. Before doing so, I want to consider the material importance of women's archival documents.

### **The Other Monument to Women: Women's Historical Documents as Site of Remembrance**

At the outset of the retrenchment era, the Church opened its doors to and expanded institutional Church archives ushering in what has been called the "Golden Age" of Mormon history writing. Mormon women scholars participated in this historical renaissance, as did many men who became interested in previously under-explored areas of the Church's history – including the contributions made by Mormon women to the founding and building of the Church. The sudden explosion of interest in Mormon women's histories may be explained by multiple factors, including the visibility and success of certain aspects of the American women's movement, particularly in academia. In the 1970s, the Church capitalized on the potential benefit of drawing attention to its holdings of women's documents, encouraging women to visit these holdings, and also

calling upon women members to contribute to these holdings through a stated commitment to expand its collection in this area.

*Women's Voices: An Untold History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900*, published in 1982, is an edited collection that came out of this renaissance period and drew upon the “untold” stories of Mormon women. The idea for the collection came from the then-Church Historian, Dr. Leonard Arrington in 1974 (Godfrey, Godfrey, and Derr vii). While working on the *Women's Voices* collection in the mid-1970s, Mormon historians used the Church Historical Department Archive and read “more than 250 women’s diaries, letters, and journals” (Godfrey, Godfrey, and Derr vii). The editors invite interested readers to visit the LDS Church Historical Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, and the Brigham Young University Library in Provo, Utah (Godfrey, Godfrey, and Derr vii). There, readers can expect to find documents written, collected, and saved by women like those excerpted in the book.

Even as Kenneth Godfrey and his collaborators, Audrey Godfrey and Jill Mulvay Derr, were editing the *Women's Voices* collection, Brigham Young University established the Women’s History Archives at the Harold B. Lee Library. The Women’s History Archives, inaugurated in 1974, stands as a specially recognized monument to the discursive, rhetorical, and literary practices made primarily by LDS women. This monument is comprised of migrant archives that have made their way from domestic, family-controlled spaces into an institutional space. In a September 1975 piece on the creation of the Women’s History Archives in *Exponent II*, the author describes the new archive as containing 230 collections, “ranging in size from a single letter or diary to a complete set of professional papers” (Pompa 3). The purpose of the Women’s History

Archives is “to acquire the papers of prominent LDS women from all walks of life, as well as non-LDS women from the Intermountain West. Virtually every conceivable type of document is needed: personal papers and manuscripts (correspondence, diaries, journals and scrapbooks); ...” (Pompa 3). The Women’s History Archives, the article goes on to explain, is staffed by professional archivists and librarians for use by researchers and a “sincere” and earnest public (Pompa 3).

Although the introduction to *Women’s Voices* and the *Exponent II* article highlight the Church’s women’s holdings, Mormon and historian of Mormon women, Maureen Ursenbach Beecher cites Davis Bitton’s 1977 figure that “the ratio of women’s to men’s life writings in Utah repositories is about one in ten,” which she attributes to “our failure to value and preserve women’s life writings as by their failure to write” (20).

While the Mormon Church has collected some women’s writings and migrant archives by 1977, its holdings on women make up around ten percent of their entire collection. Given the explosion of interest in the mid-1970s to recover Mormon women who made important contributions to Mormon history and the interest in Mormon women’s historical writings, the Church began soliciting these materials. To echo the argument made in *Chapter One*, the Church, likely under the auspices of Dr. Arrington, who was then the Church Historian, sought to fill a gap.

A dearth of women’s personal writings constituted an *exigence*, something waiting to be done. The *Exponent II* piece urges women visit the newly established Women’s History Archives and furthers urgent request: “We earnestly seek donations of historical materials for the archives. Comprehensive documentation of women in history requires the broadest possible enthusiasm and support” (Pompa 3). Some ambiguity

persists about whether all materials will be accepted and whether the general public will have access to all the materials, but the call to contribute to and visit the archive resounds. And, in a September of 1976 follow-up, the writer announces that the archive has grown to 300 collections and appointed an Advisory Board. Burgess-Olson, a member of the board, discusses an effort to collect oral histories of LDS women and women in the Intermountain West. The general public is invited to become trained in the appropriate methods for gathering such histories; moreover, “plans are being made for a seminar to help make the public generally more aware of the Women’s History Archives” (Burgess-Olson 2). This news piece demonstrates that the archive is growing. According to yet another article in the *Exponent II*, the Women’s History Archives held its first symposium in March of 1977. The purpose of the symposium, which the board hoped would become an annual event, was to draw scholars’ attention to the archives and to attract and educate potential donors (“Out of the Archives” 3).

The Church sought to expand its collections, focusing primarily upon the contributions of everyday Mormon women. It reached out to members of the LDS public to contribute migrant family archives. In keeping with broader institutional, academic trends, such calls arguably represent a shift in institutional accessioning practices, wherein archivists aim to build more “democratic” archival spaces, archives that reflect life as lived. In many respects, this is “a good thing,” as whole social worlds and a fuller, richer range of human experiences come into view. With these new volumes of women’s everyday experiences comes access to realms deemed unworthy of inclusion in History.

Yet, in the context of retrenchment, there is a danger that these women’s personal writings reinscribe women’s essentially private role(s). The introduction to *Women’s*

*Voices*, for example, argues that even while “the nineteenth century woman’s movement challenged ... whether or not the home was their only legitimate sphere of activity,” leaders like Eliza R. Snow and Brigham Young “strongly emphasized the priority of women’s duties at home” (Godfrey, Godfrey, and Derr 12). The interpretive lens these editors bring to bear on Snow and Young is evident given the original emphasis, for example, in the Eliza R. Snow quotation on which they comment. Snow’s purpose is not to relegate women to the home, but to argue for their engagement outside of it, explaining home is “a mother’s first duty, but it is not *all* her duty” (Godfrey, Godfrey, and Derr; Snow's emphasis original 13). Snow suggests women have duties outside of those to her husband and children.

The institution’s holdings on women – its archival collection of their personal documents and its solicitation of additional women’s collections – should be considered in light of retrenchment goals. In the retrenchment context, this archival expansion may be understood as another material embodiment of the Church’s position on women during this time as explicated in *Chapter Two*. Previously, I claimed that the Nauvoo Monument to Women should be viewed as a grand public statement whose purpose is to teach women they have no public role. The Church’s archival holdings on Mormon women constitute a public monument designed to demonstrate that the Church values women’s essentially private contributions to its establishment and expansion.

At the same time, the documents archived therein – composed for the most part in the context of Mormon belief – do additional rhetorical work. They may be leveraged as evidence in the service of historical accounts that then reproduce Mormon historical identity claims. They are counter-national documents that reinforce the importance of

different histories and authorities. To take up the line of argument I offered in Chapter One, just as the Mormon institutional archives confers value upon these documents, they confer value upon the Mormon archival space as their contents serve as “evidence” of Mormon beliefs.

The majority of this chapter follows a different line of argument. In the coming sections, I consider how home history writing as a *practice* operates rhetorically to reproduce asymmetrical power relations within Mormonism along gendered lines. Home-history writing constitutes a discipline that extends institutional power into the most private of spaces. Home history writing practices in this context en/gender daily performances that reinscribe a culturally Mormon orientation to the world. Rhetorics, I have argued, manifest materially, through the body. In what follows, I connect home history-writing, undertaken at the direction of the institution and monitored by that institution, to embodied performances of institutional belonging. These performances continually organize “the past” to dis/able ways of seeing and acting in the present and future.

### **Disciplining Historical Production**

Given, in part, their material importance, the Mormon Church devotes extraordinary resources toward (1) explaining the necessity of keeping historical records; (2) instructing members in how to create these records; (3) supervising their production; (4) providing opportunities for members to “utilize” these records; and (5) constructing space for these records to be archived. The entire process, involving explanation, instruction, creation, supervision, employment, maintenance, and migration into a Church archive, is a rhetorical one. In Burkean terms, engaging in these specialized historical

activities also means participating in a “larger unit of action” (*A Rhetoric of Motives* 27). In this case, the larger unit of action might be described as practicing Mormonism or participating in the religious mission of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Burke explains that “*Identification* is a word for the autonomous activity’s place in this wider context” (*A Rhetoric of Motives* 27); these discrete activities can only be understood in the wider context of being Mormon and belonging to the Church. “*Belonging* in this sense is rhetorical” as participating in a specialized or series of specialized activities makes one a part of a group.

But the way in which a history-writing practice works to (en)gender identification extends beyond the individual’s participation in the “mechanics” of the process. The processes themselves discipline mind and body. Participating in these historical activities fosters an orientation to the world and to a past that serves to reproduce Mormon *habitus*, or the Mormon way of thinking, being and interpreting the present. Engaging in the creation of the genealogy, book of remembrance, and personal journal is a method of instruction in gender roles. These practices reinforce a biological understanding of family and the importance of biological procreation. They privilege historical continuity and identification over discontinuity and difference. Furthermore, undertaking these activities ultimately (en)genders a practice of self-rhetoric, an internal modulation of expression and performance that reinforces more than it undermines institutional authority and an externally posited “ideal.”

### **Genealogies: Constructing a Biological Hierarchy**

As previously posited, the Church renewed its emphasis on the production and maintenance of genealogies during the retrenchment era (Mauss 88–9). Mauss situates



genealogical research and its companion, “temple work,” as an example that illustrates his broader retrenchment hypothesis, which, to re-summarize, posits that in the interest of survival and endurance, Church leadership instituted around 1960 a series of programs to assert its differences from mainstream society, “Mormon peculiarity.” Genealogical research – knowing who one’s ancestors are and the basic trajectory of their migrations, one’s familial interconnections with others’ kinship networks, and how to find, organize, synthesize and use these data – is taught and practiced at all levels of the Church. The way genealogical records are ultimately used as part of the Mormon faith sets the Mormons apart from other Christians. Conducting genealogical research and producing genealogical records is an activity undertaken in the context of religious practice. Producing genealogical documents is a barrier to participation: members must produce genealogies going back at least four generations in order to remain in good standing and to enter Mormon temples (Mauss 89). This practice existed before retrenchment, but in the mid-1960s it becomes a focal point.

This emphasis on conducting genealogical research finds expression in Sandra Allen’s journals, wherein genealogies are mentioned multiple times in different Church-related contexts. On September 6, 1977, Allen mentions the Relief Society lessons for the month are on genealogy (*First Volume* 104), and she records commentary on the first and subsequent lessons, stating, for example: “I was so impressed with Sis. Davie’s lesson that I took notes” (*First Volume* 104). The Church’s genealogical archives, as previously discussed, constitute both product and resource in this endeavor. They exist because of the vast amount of genealogical work already completed by Mormons and because of the Church’s commitment to preserving these records and rendering them useful to ongoing

temple work and to ongoing research. In order to have a new link added to one's ancestry, "it has to be verified by church experts in Salt Lake" before being "officially entered on the family's chart" (Leone 195).

While many Mormons (and non Mormons) gain satisfaction from conducting this historical research and compiling their genealogies, the most important stated function of genealogical records in Mormonism is to identify deceased family members who still require salvation. Once a revelation posited the possibility of baptism for the dead, members were called to learn names and biographical data of their ancestors. This information can then be used in a ritual wherein a living Mormon proxy of the same gender of the deceased – often but not always a direct descendent – takes the ancestral soul through a baptism in a Mormon temple. Moreover, the Church recruits devout members of good standing to perform this "temple work" for all those who lived before the Church was restored. Through these baptisms, the Church hopes first to offer all souls, living and dead, the opportunity to convert, and second, to keep families together in the afterlife.

Genealogical research, far from being an intellectual pursuit for its own sake or a perfunctory gesture, serves rhetorical purposes. Genealogical work "enables living Mormons to identify with the past in what might be called a mythical process of appropriation" (Davies). Genealogical work thus unites history (what happened in the past) with identity (in the present) insofar as the knowledge of one's kin, learned and employed in profane space and time, is applied in rituals that unfold in sacred space (the temple) and sacred time (a uniting of past, present, and future in eternity). These rituals are embodied, and believers prepare for them by cleansing their bodies, anointing them,

and donning sacred garments. Enacting these rituals brings the participant into close proximity with the spiritual world, granting them access to a heightened, spiritual space. In rhetorical terms, the ritual practice engenders consubstantiality, when separate souls have the experience of oneness. Baptism for the dead might be described as a transcendent experience of identification in time. In this case, the living Saint becomes one, ritually speaking, with her ancestor. This feeling reinforces her own belief and feeling of identification with her family through the Mormon Church.

Genealogical work moreover “fosters the continued sense of connection to a unique identity and heritage among the members” (Mauss 89). Even the term “genealogy” in the Mormon context has come to mean “compiling of family history more generally,” as the “genealogy program and library of the church were renamed ‘Family History’ during the eighties” (Mauss 89). Leone explains that Mormons do not need to turn their “kinsman into an comprehensible historical figure” to fulfill their obligation in the strictest sense, but “the unofficial but widespread attitude is to gather as much accompanying information about one’s dead as possible” (195). Focusing history on kinship produces two results: “all ties are viewed from an egocentric perspective, and the largest possible grouping is the family” (Leone 196). This expanded view of genealogy as family history acts to historicize the family, providing a sense that the individuals who comprise it and its experiences are singular and intrinsically important. Creating and maintaining genealogies situates the creator – most often a woman – and its audience in an individualized, culturally Mormon historical perspective (Leone 178).<sup>46</sup>

To take Leone’s observations one step further and consider them in light of retrenchment policies generally and in light of *Because of Elizabeth* specifically, I argue

that the genealogical orientation furthers a biologically-driven hierarchy. As stated in *Chapter Two*, the title character in the musical play performed at the MTW dedication, Elizabeth, stands at the “apex” of five generations of Mormon women. Her highest function has been “to beget” more Mormons – to reproduce Mormons biologically. While many men enjoy genealogical research, Leone argues and Sandra Allen’s journals suggest, that it often falls to women to complete church genealogical charts. Thus, through this rhetorical (re)production, women would have been constantly reminded of the ongoing necessity of biological procreation.

### **Books of Remembrance: Identification with Ancestors**

The book of remembrance is another historical genre unique to Mormons, and performs similar rhetorical work. The book – a sort of hybrid genre – tends to contain “genealogical charts and records of important information, such as schools, business activities, church positions, places of residence, talents and interest, faith-promoting experiences, travel and outstanding acquaintances” (Leone 199). Like the genealogy, the book demonstrates belonging because “every Mormon family possesses” one (Leone 199). In the late 1970s, Arrington and Bitton state that a book of remembrance is found in nearly every Mormon home, describing it to their non-Mormon audience as a celebration of family history (cite). For Mormons, the book serves spiritual purposes as well as historical ones. An article published in the *LDS Church News* online argues for the genre’s importance: “a book of remembrance compiled under inspiration from the Holy Ghost may be considered a form of scripture for family members and their posterity” some teachings indicate the book may be necessary in the future – at the time of judgment (Askar).<sup>47</sup>

Allen writes about creating a book of remembrance for her family and beginning two such books for each of her children, Chris and Rachael. In August 1977, Allen recounts in her journal a talk given by Stake President Dickson on “quality leadership at home,” wherein he underscores the importance of keeping personal histories and books of remembrance up to date. Allen gathers that creating and updating these books are an important part of maintaining quality at home (*First Volume* 91)

According to Leone, the book of remembrance is part of the “do-it-yourself” system of Mormon history. Like the genealogy, the book “centers around a ‘Pedigree of Progenitors,’ the record of one’s ancestors, as these are discovered and initiated into Mormonism through church rites” (200). Also like the genealogy, books of remembrance cultivate identification. Leone understands the discipline of creating the book to be rhetorical in another sense, arguing that the genre forecloses certain ways of seeing both the past and the present. Like the genealogy, “the *Book* is so organized that it focuses on the merits and accomplishments of the individuals compiling it” (199–200), thus situating the creator in that ego/family-centric historical position. When writing about one’s ancestors, “there is an obvious predisposition to concentrate on the traits in the past most interesting to oneself” thus reproducing in the present only what one finds useful or relevant in the past (200).

As Leone puts it, “while constructing an autobiography, therefore, one is also constructing the prototype for biographies of one’s ancestors” (200). This observation bears consideration from the perspective of rhetorical genre theory. On one side of the coin, the book creates an avenue for learning about one’s kinsmen; however, the flipside of the coin is that it circumscribes ways of seeing one’s ancestors. The questions the

writer pursues often emerge out of her present interests and conditions, and therefore profoundly limit the kinds of historical information that is found. Going forward, examples of these books script for future generations what information about one's family and one's past is available and significant. Both the genealogy and book of remembrance imply that the largest possible grouping – and the most desirable one – is the family unit, thus any historical analysis typically ignores the “groups, classes, economic or political processes” that historians use in writing history (Leone 196). This unit of study simultaneously disguises conditions – especially conditions of structural inequality – among the dead as well as the living. When writers focus upon identification with one or more biologically related ancestors about whom they may know little except for dates of birth, baptism, and death (and perhaps the birthdates of their children), it is easy to elide historical disconnections and differences and “make sense” of their life choices in context – a subject to which I return in the following chapter.

### **Personal Journals: EnGendering Dull Daily Reinforcement**

In addition to keeping genealogies and books of remembrance, teachings strongly encourage members to produce personal journals, which also foster group identification and a certain orientation to the past.<sup>48</sup> There may be a great deal of latitude in terms of what these personal journals look like, but the journals Allen kept in the late 1970s were published by Bookcraft, a Church-affiliated press in Salt Lake City. They have a blue cloth hard cover and feature a gold script font that reads, “My Personal Journal”; Allen's married name appears in smaller gold block print font on the cover of the first journal. The paper inside is lined, standard letter size, of good quality, and contains a place for the date and page number at the top of every page. This format encourages neat handwriting

and prose rather than drawing or sketching, for example, and in some ways, the format communicates certain content expectations: the journal should be legible for easy reading; it should be a daily, narrative account.

The practice of keeping a personal journal – like the practice of keeping other historical records – facilitates identification and group cohesion, insofar as these are practices undertaken in the context of Mormonism. Journal writing at first glance may then appear to be just one of many religious commitments. Journal writing is an act of religious devotion and a performance of obedience. Writing the personal journal bears consideration since aspects of the journal as a genre illuminate for students of rhetoric the “*body of identifications*” that prove convincing by virtue of “trivial repetition and dull daily reinforcement” (Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* 26). While the genealogy and book of remembrance may be neglected for some period of time and then updated just before a meeting with a bishop, a personal journal requires more self-discipline, a daily commitment of time and mental effort. The personal journal in the LDS tradition encourages careful self-construction so as to maintain identification over time.<sup>49</sup>

### **Construction of Ethos in the Personal Journal: Audiences Addressed**

In the Mormon tradition, personal journals should be viewed as rhetorical texts that address multiple audiences. Typically, women’s personal journals are not regarded as persuasive, audience-oriented documents – a space where women would address an(other). Although not central to her exegesis of the role of ethos construction in self-rhetorics, Kimberly Harrison points out that many scholars, including Randall Jimerson, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, and Vicki Tolar Collins, have argued that diaries were often constructed as public, audience-oriented documents (245). Irina Peperno suggests that in

spite of the capaciousness of the diary as a genre, it remains associated with “privacy, intimacy, and secrecy” (562), and that reading even published diaries is a kind of “violation (albeit licensed) of ‘the secrecy clause’” (564). Even in the presence of an audience, Paperno argues that the genre demands to be read “*as if*” it is an authentic and immediate document, “*as if* it is a private text capable of communicating an *authentic* self and an *immediate* experience” (565). And yet, a paradox is at work. Paperno argues that “the diary should also be described in terms of its addressee and its communicative situation”; the diary constitutes a communicative act because it “externalizes and objectifies the inner, socializes and historicizes the intimate” (572). She calls the diary the “archive of the intimate”; while we presume when reading the diary that it was not written for an audience, it cannot be anything but a communicative act (Paperno 572).

In writing about how to treat women’s diaries in archival description, Heather Beattie argues that such descriptions should consider “the diarist’s motivation for writing, the intended audience, and the implications of the diary’s custodial history and representation” (82). Beattie suggests that archivists should aim to provide contextual information about women’s diaries, including the “larger sociopolitical context in which a diary was written” (Beattie 86) as well as the reason a woman kept a diary. Such reasons are often explicit (Beattie 88). Some texts are more audience-oriented than others. According to Beattie, some diary writers tracked the mundane – weather, expenses and receipts, and visits from family and friends (Beattie 91) without ever providing signposts that would assist a reader in co-constructing meaning. In citing Lynn Bloom’s work on women’s diaries, Beattie argues that many diaries are strikingly and clearly audience-oriented, presenting “themes, characters, and scenery”; what these



documents also have in common is that the author presents ““a central character, herself, as seen through a central consciousness, also herself”” (Beattie 93). Thus, certain diaries communicate more than others do, and one feature of the audience-focused diaries is the author’s self-conscious construction of herself as a character.

In rhetorical terms, diary writers create an ethos, or presentation of self, to persuade others or to meet expectations fostered by the rhetorical situation. To echo and extend Beattie and Bloom, not every journal written by an LDS woman exhibits a strong audience orientation; some writers – like my friend’s mother – preferred her journals be destroyed rather than read. In the context of the Mormon Church, women’s personal journals often address multiple audiences, including members of the priesthood, children, one’s Mormon sisters, and one’s self.

Day by day, one persuades one’s audience that one belongs – is living Mormonism – and one persuades oneself to act as a Mormon should act, to act-together with other Mormons, or to interpret one’s actions in the context of Mormonism, even when acting thus means hindering one’s own ability to thrive.<sup>50</sup> Sandra Allen considered the likely audience(s) for her journals and shaped her writing to meet a given audience’s expectations; Allen adopted multiple and at times overlapping positions or *ethes* from which to write her journals.

Because personal journals are written in the first person in separate, typically daily installments in response to different external and changing circumstances over a significant period of time, constructing a transcendent ethos is untenable (Jarratt and Reynolds 47). Rather than a fixed point, one’s ethos is always contextual, in relationship with other individuals, a specific geographical space, an instant in time, and network of

fluid changing circumstances. The diarist must therefore continually re-create her ethos to account for her shifting relationship to self and to the situation in which she seeks to communicate – but without appearing constructed, fabricated, or rhetorical.

This is a difficult challenge, particularly for the Mormon writer. Personal journals in this context act as a testament to unchanging truths about the nature of God and his One True Church as much as they are records of a dynamic, earthly existence. Particularly in the Mormon religious tradition that posits the soul as an eternal “intelligence,” maintaining the appearance of a stable ethos – one that reflects knowledge of the restored gospel – is vitally important.<sup>51</sup> Across her two volumes, Allen strives to maintain this self-presentation through near daily repetition of specific phrases underscoring her belief in the Church’s eternal principles and its fundamental truth. Attesting to the veracity of the Church’s claims in myriad ways constitute an opportunity for the diarist to present herself occupying an unchanging position in relationship to these truth claims. In a sense, these phrases help Allen connect with all of her Mormon audiences while reinforcing her self-identity.

Kenneth Burke explains why someone would repeat phrases or express certain views to an audience that already shares these views. By “striving to form himself in accordance with the communicative norms that match the cooperative ways of his society,” the diarist strives to establish identification with his audience (*A Rhetoric of Motives* 39). Such statements affirm the writer’s and the audience’s belief in their shared endeavor.

Women’s personal journals in the LDS tradition speak to various normative audiences: priesthood holders, generations of family members, other Mormon women,

and the self. Each of these audiences impacted Sandra Allen's writing process, including what Allen wrote about, what she left out, and the manner in which she discusses certain topics. Ethos is one kind of rhetorical appeal, a strategy levied by the rhetor to persuade an audience. It is also a way to make oneself heard or render oneself credible. In this context, ethos may best be understood as a demonstration of belonging, a performance of belonging that socializes and historicizes one's experiences and thoughts, making them meaningful in the context of the group. Allen's primary purpose in the journal was convincing others – and ultimately herself – that she was living life the Mormon way. In crafting one's ethos in the personal journal, one must daily negotiate one's absolute separateness – unique identity – with one's desire for consubstantiality. Engaging in daily performances for different audiences enabled Allen to adopt – and internalize – certain kinds of *ethe* that were desirable to the group, while foreclosing the possibility of embracing *ethe* more in line with Allen's individual desires. These daily performances, by emphasizing Mormon identification, limit Allen's self-expression and the possibility that she would identify with an(other) – like the women on whom she was spying.

***Priesthood Holders: A Male Normative Audience***

Sandra Allen anticipated her Mormon husband as a reader. In the text of the journals, Allen makes reference to sharing with him poems or passages of which she was particularly proud. She also frequently closes her journals, the first one particularly, with a sentence of appreciation for him. The role of the husband in Mormon theology goes beyond that of partner, spouse, or even head of household. A practicing Mormon husband and father “holds the priesthood” and is thus the spiritual leader of the home and serves as the patriarchal link between the home and the Mormon hierarchy. Thus, a husband is

considered a wife's most immediate spiritual leader and advisor. He is endowed with certain spiritual gifts and roles, including the ability to offer blessings and cures for or ameliorations of illnesses and ailments through a "laying of hands." Bill Purcell, Sandra Allen's then-husband, would be an intimate, familial audience, but also an authoritative and spiritual one.

In the Mormon patriarchal hierarchy above the husband is the bishop. Allen viewed the ward bishop as the most important audience of her journals she told me in our phone interview. Bishops, who have the authority to grant the temple recommend, asked to see that women were keeping the appropriate family records.<sup>52</sup> It was assumed such men had the privilege of reading all of these documents in the service of executing their responsibilities, even though the thought likely made some uncomfortable (Allen, "Telephone Interview").

All of the multiple ways in which Allen's conception of this male, authoritative audience shaped her writing cannot be decisively determined, even as Allen stated that this audience did profoundly influence what she excluded and included. In our phone interview, Allen recalls fearing that she would "slip up" with Cheryl – reveal either in word or action that her feelings went beyond mere friendship, although these fears are not revealed in the journals. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, who works with Mormon women's journals, suggests this self-editing practice is normative in the personal journal; while some writers excise their texts after the fact, "more frequently" writers "totally omit details which belie the persona [they] are trying to present" (28). Besides excluding information, writers fabricate or embellish information on occasion. Allen indicated that much of what she wrote about her husband, including her words of praise and

appreciation, was included strictly pro-forma. Allen told me to ignore what she wrote about him as it would not have reflected her real feelings about him – even at that time (“Telephone Interview”).<sup>53</sup>

Allen adopts a certain stance with regard to Church teachings and authority, a stance that was in line with the religious teachings and the socio-cultural expectations. In this way, her audience shapes how she approaches certain topics. For example, when she is struggling during one period to juggle her regular religious obligations, her husband complains about her absences from home. Because her husband is unhappy, Allen takes up the matter with the bishop. She asks to be released from her calling, but plans to submit to the bishop’s decision on the matter. Nearly a month later, Allen learns from the Stake Presidency that she has been “released.” When Bill and Sandra discussed this turn of events and her new, less demanding calling in the Relief Society as the spiritual living teacher, she writes, “I need to learn how to support him better so he will want to be able to support me” (*First Volume* 186). Through this episode, Allen demonstrates her understanding of willingness to follow a protocol: submit to her husband’s request to ask to be released from her calling, to accept whatever decision the bishop made, and to learn to better support her husband so that he would “want” to support her in the future as opposed to be resentful of her activities. As these conversations and events unfolded between October 1977 and November 1977, Allen constructs an ethos of obedience. By never fully revealing her own feelings about the matter, she demonstrates deference to the male religious leadership and hierarchy.<sup>54</sup>

Allen cultivates an ethos of feminine obedience, but she also cultivates another kind of ethos to foster identification with her audience of male priesthood-holders. Soon

after she becomes involved in Nevada politics, she occupies a role typically reserved for men, a role she variously describes as *spy*, *soldier*, or *warrior*. As a spy for the Pro-Family Coalition, Allen is sent out into the Gentile world. In this capacity, sees herself as a protector of women, especially Mormon women and their roles and values.<sup>55</sup>

The Church hierarchy couches the political debate over ERA in terms of warfare. When Allen was “set apart” to become part of the Pro-Family Coalition, she said she was told that she would have the armor of God and that the Church would be her shield (“Telephone Interview”). Her poem from August 1978 extends further the Church’s metaphor:

The Reluctant Warrior alone on the hill - his watch over  
evening a painful duty.  
  
The eyes, watching for intruders like automatic sensors, see  
not the dismal scenes before them. His tired body taunts them  
to see better days (*Second Volume 73*)

Allen takes up this metaphor and positions herself occupying a role on the front lines.

The ethos of the “reluctant warrior” in Allen’s personal journal presents what appears to be a transgressive possibility – that women do engage in meaningful political work outside the home – while reinforcing the idea that members of the Church hierarchy establish the circumstances and context in which such transgressions are acceptable. Allen perceives herself as a defender of her religion. The speaker in Allen’s poem, the warrior, is portrayed as a man. Even as her husband complains of her absences from home and as she notices her unraveling physical and emotional condition caused by her political assignments, she perseveres in the battle.

In Mormon terms, Allen sees herself playing a vital part in the new dispensation of the fullness of time – one actor in “a story that still lay in the future” (Davies). Once certain political situations are deemed significant by the General Authorities – like the fight against ERA – they take on biblical proportion. This worldview, derived from the radical restoration claim asserted by Joseph Smith, Jr. and the early millennial vision, wherein the “end of days” was believed nigh, persists among orthodox believers. To this end, Allen presents herself as one of the most dedicated Mormons. The Pro-Family Coalition work affords her an opportunity to demonstrate her Mormon-ness: not everyone in her faith community is courageous enough to take political action on moral issues like ERA. She writes that one woman she meets is “afraid to get involved” (*Second Volume* 103). Her participation on the other hand is a badge of courage.

Allen adopts an ethos of appreciation of and deference to priesthood holders and members of the hierarchy. This deference plays out in multiple ways. First, Allen seeks relief from her calling to be a Counselor to the Relief Society President for her ward when it displeases her husband. Second, she responds to a call from the pulpit to become involved in politics, working to defeat ERA. Although the ethos she establishes when describing her work is masculine – a warrior – her work is undertaken with the full backing of the priesthood. She reveals her willingness to take up the mantle and participate in this war for good over evil. Even though others are afraid to become involved politically, Allen presents herself as “reluctant,” but a warrior nonetheless. For Allen’s male, priesthood-holding readers, she performs a deferential, feminine ethos except when she is asked – through appropriate channels – to perform political work in public. This gender transgression is admissible, even admirable, because of the acute

political exigence. Women were asked to perform this “male” work to be the face of the Church’s anti-ERA organizations like the Pro-Family Coalition. So complete is Allen’s understanding of the transgression that in her imaginative representation, she uses the male pronoun. Allen performs gender roles that reproduce male dominance even when she adopts a male persona.

### ***All Generations***

In a book called *You’re a Mormon Now: A Handbook for New Latter-day Saints* written by Dennis Lythgoe, the author explains that

you are encouraged to keep a personal journal, as one means of keeping your family together and to inspire family members. Just as the *Book of Mormon* represents an important record of peoples and their religious experiences, your journal serves the same purpose for your family and your descendants. (43–44)

*You’re a Mormon Now* establishes a connection between the sacred events narrated in the *Book of Mormon* and the contents of a personal journal, suggesting subject and significance, as “an important record of peoples and their religious experiences.” The book’s author describes the personal journal in terms similar to the way an archivist and expert on the genre Brother Flick describes the book of remembrance. These are documents designed to link generations of Mormons together: one’s extended family is the principle audience.

Children and parents, as links to past and future, figure as literal and imaginative audiences for the personal journal. Journals and diaries are passed down in families, living into the future. In one *Church News* article, , Brother Flick, sums up the personal



benefits of maintaining these historical records: “‘If you want to be remembered, write,’ he said. “‘That is the key thing; remember that. If you want to be remembered in your family, just write’” (Askar). Through personal journals, one may become known and remembered by children and grandchildren.

From her journals, it is clear that Allen considers her “generations” an important audience that wants to be remembered as living according to the rules and expectations consistent with a devout Mormon woman. Allen directly invokes this multigenerational audience when she records casting her vote against ERA in Nevada (*Second Volume* 110). She wants it to be known to “all generations” she voted in accordance with the Church’s teachings. Beecher argues that personal writings, especially those found in Mormon manuscript collections, constitute

either the daily jottings of mothers, wives, daughters, or the women’s mature attempts to set their lives in order, to explain themselves, not to the world, as Newman attempted in his *Apologia pro vita sua*, but to their children and their children’s children in the Puritan tradition of testimony bearing and lasting testament. (18)

These women’s writings are an opportunity for the diarist to present herself as living her beliefs to her children and her children’s children. In addition to being remembered for her faith, Allen also wants to be remembered as a good teacher. Allen’s mother was deeply involved in 4-H when Allen was growing up, and Allen won a national 4-H award for one of her creations. Reflecting on a 4-H workshop and meeting that Allen attends with her mother, she writes, “She’s quite a teacher, I surely love her and am so proud of her. I hope my daughters and sons can be so proud of me” (*First Volume* 115).

On the pages of her journal, Allen positions herself as a wife and mother deeply committed to her family. One way of demonstrating this commitment is to reinforce it through written genres. The ideal Mormon woman, as mother and homemaker, is primarily responsible for being not only the physical (biological) link between generations, but also the guardian of the metalinks, the genres that establish, reinforce and in some sense “create” the historical memories of these links. Growing up in one of the oldest Mormon families, Allen sees herself as part of a tradition of record keepers, teachers, and storytellers. Allen describes family reunions in her journal pages detail, including moments she wants to remember or her children to remember.

Considering one’s children and grandchildren as an audience certainly shapes the kinds of topics one records and the way in which one records them. Given that Mormon women like Allen are expected in this time to be homemakers, they might write about events that transpire therein. Yet, my guess is that for many diarists, Allen included, the kinds of concerns and frustrations that arise at home would make for unsuitable material to record. If her husband and children are to read her personal journal, how should Allen broach the subject of marital difficulty? Frustration over her toddler’s behavior? Aggravation over a child’s illness or his trouble sleeping through the night? The necessity of constantly picking up after others? Discussing the home without causing hurt or offense could be a problem, a difficult constraint to overcome.

I notice that Allen refers in a passage above to her *sons and daughters*, plural. Allen has one son and one daughter. As she was only twenty-six years old when she wrote that phrase, she would have been expected to have more children and to think of her family in terms of these as yet unborn additions. As will be discussed in the following

section, Allen intimates (just) that she does not want more children. The reason for her reluctance, she states, is that she's had two cesarean sections already. It is reasonable to conclude, however, that there were other reasons she might not have wanted more children with her husband. For example, she was in love with her best friend, a woman, and not in love with her husband ("Telephone Interview"). At that point in her life, however, she didn't know how many children she would have, and she was expected to want more – so much so that she addresses multiple sons and daughters as her imagined audience.

She was also expected to present the *labor of motherhood* in a positive way. According to Thomas Monson, her "challenges" in 1978 were to sustain her husband, strengthen her home, and serve her God. Motherhood – not her political work for Pro-Family, for example – was meant to be her highest calling. Feelings of frustration, disappointment, fatigue, and anger at home do emerge on occasion in the pages of the journals, but Allen does not – cannot – dwell on these feelings without compromising her performance as a fulfilled, devout wife and mother.

### ***Dear Sisters***

Other Mormon women constitute an important audience for diarists like Allen. This audience authorizes the diarist to move beyond reiteration of faith in the Church and deference to priesthood holders as she projects herself into a broader, more textured historical landscape. A diarist might show her writings to close friends, grown daughters, or others in her circle. She might also posit herself in conversation with a larger public of Mormon women or a Mormon counterpublic. An audience of Mormon women enables the writer to step outside of her immediate "place," her home, and render herself engaged

in the life of the larger social group or community. At the same time, even as imaginative possibilities emerge for women journal writers as they position themselves in conversation with other women, the influence of external gatekeeper audiences forecloses the possibility of rejecting or challenging Church teachings and policies directly. Mormon counterpublics in the 1970s accept a wider range of *ethe* – deviations from and subversions of the ideal Mormon woman – while still maintaining gendered roles.

### *Intimate Friends*

Like others before her, Allen writes about her intimate friendships to a presumed audience of intimate friends. Her closest friend, Cheryl, gave her the first bound journal and inscribed it to her thus: “Sandra, My beautiful sister, I want you to know the love I have for you and your family. I would sacrifice my life for you and the family if needs ever be.” She closes the letter with “I love you Sandra. Cheryl” (*First Volume*). Allen positions herself as a woman deeply committed to other women, and a woman who loves other women – although Allen does not concede her feelings of love go beyond friendship in her journals.

Tight bonds between members of the same sex have been sanctioned by the Church and have developed as a consequence of longstanding practices. The way Allen portrays herself as an intimate friend in faith situates her journal writing within a tradition among Mormon women in the Church wherein companionship between women is highly regarded, discussed, and written about. According to Allen’s journals, Cheryl and Allen routinely say that they love the other. In December 1977, Allen’s friend Colleen tells Allen that she loves her, and shortly thereafter Allen gives Colleen a book – a book comprised primarily of LDS women’s journal excerpts that chronicle the spiritual power

of Mormon women called *Daughters of the Light*. Allen's relationships with these women are emotionally intimate, and in some cases physically intimate. "I had a marvelous visit with Cheryl. I showed her how to rub her feet to relax her whole body," writes Allen in one entry (*First Volume 4*). Allen goes on to say, "she is a beautiful young woman, physically and spiritually. I know this because I have seen her spirit and it is magnificent as well as beautiful" (*First Volume 4*). A few months later, in November, Allen writes:

Cheryl had a big down today at work and, she's going to sleep in the back room again tonight. I fixed the bed, finished the special journal entry, layed out a nightgown for her, and decided to wait up for her. I was so tired I held out until 1:45AM, but she came later. I woke up when she came in but my body was so tired that I just la[y] there until she turned out the light. I got the feeling that the special touches helped her feel better about the day (*First Volume 146-7*).

Cheryl stayed over and the two women slept in Allen's bed. Allen actually created a special journal entry for Cheryl and allowed her friend to read it.

On the pages of her journal, certain friendships with other Mormon women appear more intimate and important than her relationships with immediate family members. As an outside reader, the emphasis upon these intimate friendships struck me, and I wondered if it was unique to Allen. She describes helping her friends find work, sharing her spending money with them on movies and food, buying them gifts, and talking with them for hours, both in person and on the telephone. Her profound investments of space, time, and even money, reveal their deep importance. Was Allen's

focus upon these women an extension of her Mormon identity? Or was Allen performing another identity, for example, an evolving lesbian identity?

I have come to believe that while Allen's physical desire for her intimate friends is subversive in Mormon terms, her love for them and their relative importance in her life comes out of a long tradition in Mormonism. Feeling deeply for these few women, writing intensely about their relationships and positing them as her audience members in the journals is a way of performing a Mormon, gendered identity.

The supra-familial bond between women who are not blood relations has a precedent in Mormon tradition. D. Michael Quinn argues in *Same-Sex Dynamics Among Nineteenth-Century Americans: A Mormon Example* that one reason for this tradition of intense intimacy among Mormons of the same sex stems from the sex segregation among the first generations of Mormons and the homosocial environment in which most adult members found themselves. For early Mormons, social segregation by sex could be even more pronounced than for other "Victorian" Americans on account of Church callings, polygamy, and life on the frontier (Brady 165). Quinn states, for example, that most nineteenth century Mormon congregations were separated by gender (67). Moreover male missionaries were "expected to be sexually celibate and to remain in the constant company of a male missionary companion" during the two or more year mission service (Quinn 67), a practice which continues today.

These absences left women alone to seek comfort and companionship elsewhere, and some women clearly felt more for their women friends than their husbands. The practice of polygamy during the nineteenth century also meant that plural or sister wives occasionally lived under the same roof. Allen recounts a story from her own family

wherein two sister wives chose to live together, preferring each other's company over that of their mutual husband ("Telephone Interview"). At different times while Allen was keeping her journals, both Cheryl and Colleen lived in the spare bedroom with Allen and her family.

The purpose of cultivating these intimate relationships with other practicing Latter-day Saint women is couched in terms of fostering mutual spiritual growth. Allen sometimes received "promptings" to reach out. She recounts driving past Colleen's place one afternoon when the Spirit prompted her that Colleen "needed someone" (*First Volume* 148). With Bill's permission, she goes to see Colleen and sets the scene: "The late afternoon sun was warm but it was the cool of the breeze that told the truth..." about Colleen's spiritual state (*First Volume* 149). Allen made herself comfortable on the floor of Colleen's apartment, and Colleen took a seat nearby. "I told her," recounts Allen

that I had come to get to know her better and I was tired of our surface 'chit-chat.' She agreed. The Spirit burned strong in me and the message to be delivered was that the Lord loves and cares for her, and I was available to be her friend, sister, what-ever she needed, I was there. She could feel it and it was moved to express herself with tears. I know her & I know I am to be with her now. What a rich experience. (*First Volume* 149)

The introduction to the *Women's Voices* collection speaks to the "serious business" of "sharing among women" (Godfrey, Godfrey, and Derr 19). Although writing about an earlier time, the authors' statements reflect a cultural tradition of intimate friendships among Mormon women:

It was one means whereby they reaffirmed the reality and significance of their female culture. It was also often an opportunity for reaffirming a common commitment to the restored gospel. When faith entered into the sharing, the bonds of sisterhood seem to have been not only strengthened but sanctified. (Godfrey, Godfrey and Derr 19)

This long tradition of intense, spiritually motivated relationships between and among women in the LDS Church persists. Several important formal Church activities remain gender segregated, notably Priesthood and Relief Society, and informal gatherings, like family reunions and visits with other Mormon couples, often end up that way. Because Allen's husband often traveled to New Mexico for work, and because Allen clearly sought out the company of many young women due to more complicated romantic impulses, her case may be more pronounced. Still, Allen was not alone in perceiving as sacred gifts the bonds between her and her closest friends and depicted her deep connection and interest in other LDS women as spiritual – part of living her faith. “As we 3 sat together, arms around each other – I could feel the power of womanhood” (*First Volume* 101), Allen states describing a photo taken at a special event. The photo is meaningful to Allen – it is one of few she has pasted in her journal. When she receives a copy of the picture with an accompanying letter from Carol, she writes: “[Sister Carlson] a great and thoughtful person. I love her” (*First Volume* 147).

Writing about that same evening, Allen says that she and Cheryl drove around for a while, too “wound up” from the event to go to bed. They had a late night talk on the steps to Cheryl's apartment. Writes Allen: “We were so close. We could feel the eternities of our friendship. I know we've known each other before we came to earth. Just



like I know Bill and our children, because when we're together I can feel and see eternities – before and after" (*First Volume* 101). Allen's journals are filled with praise for the spiritual gifts and friendship of other Mormon women and the way these women enrich her life. Arguably, engaging in and writing about these intimate friendships with other women are *the* topic of her writing. Far more pages are devoted to describing her friends, their conversations, their activities, and their conflicts than any other subject. I estimate that seventy percent of her journals directly concern the formation, maintenance, and loss of intimate friendship with all of its attending joy and pain. On the surface, Allen's love for other Mormon women and her deep interest in their daily lives and faith reproduces gendered distinctions as she devotes her energy to an immediate sphere of acquaintance rather advancing publicly or professionally. Writing to and about women friends is also a way of not writing about one's husband, children, and household chores, which could undermine the ethos she wants to project.

But even while invoking such an audience would have opened up certain possible discursive explorations, there are limits to what Allen shares. She never reveals her fears of crossing an inappropriate physical line with Cheryl, for example, or confessing that the nature of her deep affection encompasses romantic love. When Allen and I spoke in Denver, I asked her what had become of some of these friends with whom she was once so close. When Cheryl learned that Allen was gay, she put a "Mormon curse" on her by throwing dust on her door. Allen broke down in tears when I asked about Carol Carlson. Allen never sought her out or spoke to her after word of her divorce and emerging lesbian identity spread. She stated that she (still) has so much respect for Carol that she doesn't want to disappoint her ("Telephone Interview"). As generous and giving as she imagines

her audience of intimate friends, she did not/ does not believe they would accept her sexual orientation.

*Mormon Women As Counterpublic*

Mormon women outside of Allen's circle of intimate friends would also constitute a possible audience for her journals. One monthly publication contemporaneous with Allen's journals, *Exponent II*, appealed to LDS women and provided a venue for its audience members to converse about important "women's" issues. *Exponent II* published a column called "Sisters Speak," wherein readers responded to the editor's call in the previous edition to address a specific theme or topic pertaining to women, most often one the editors found timely, relevant, or controversial. Women wrote-in about depression, passionate love, childbearing, community involvement, women's rights, marriage, ERA, and many other issues. In this section, they were invited to see themselves as connected to one another through their personal writings and as part of an ongoing conversation between and about women in the Church. The women who contributed to *Exponent II* shared with their "sisters" their struggles and arguments with the Church's teachings. While obedience and submission were held to be of supreme importance in the retrenchment era, even the most devout and "orthodox" women at times found themselves in conflict. This theme emerges repeatedly in "Sisters Speak."

The desire to demonstrate obedience and live in accordance with the principals of the restored gospel and the difficulty of contending with their full, tangible implications is a common theme among the published excerpts of women's journals in *Women's Voices: An Untold History of the Latter-Day Saints, 1830-1900*. The tension between the individual woman's desire and the Church's desire (or her understanding of what her

desire should be based upon Church teachings) constitutes a *topos* that emerges repeatedly in the edited journals. The struggle to obey and submit in the face of immediate personal unhappiness, which also emerges in Allen's writing, suggests that this was an appropriate subject to explore and common to the genre – perhaps even a necessary exercise for spiritual growth. In her journal, Allen writes on occasion of moments when, as a woman, she feels spiritually tested or challenged. As an example, she records a conversation with two close friends regarding birth control. One friend, Jennie, had just seen Prophet Kimball speak at the Manti Temple, which serves as the catalyst for the conversation:

[The Prophet] spoke of many direct things (one of which was Birth Control). That there is no approved means of birth control except complete restraint. And that we were to have as many children as possible. Health was no reason to refrain[] from child bearing. [...] I was really set back. Here sat we 3 women, Jennie & Sher having extreme problems with pregnancies, and me having them [caesarian]. They said some strong things that boiled down to 'it's going to be a very hard thing to take on faith - it may cost me much more than I want to sacrifice at this time.' I was stunned, but I couldn't bring myself to say 'I can not accept thing the prophet of the Lord has stated' because I haven't fasted or prayed about it nor do I know now if I can or can not do it. Who knows, maybe the Lord may help me if I obey - and if he will I didn't give both he and I a chance, there would be much eternal loss and sad[]ness.'

(*First Volume* 123)

Allen and the other women do not reject President Kimball's teachings outright (at least in Allen's recounting), but Allen does express her inner conflict: she believes that one course of action is right for her (not having more children) while the Prophet teaches that a different course of action (having as many children as possible) is correct.<sup>56</sup> What is interesting here is not just that Allen is able to talk openly with her close women friends about how the teaching affected each of them personally, but also that she recorded portions of the conversation. In constructing her ethos as a sister, Allen addresses a sympathetic female audience with the idea that her journal will touch other women in the immediate or distant future –close friends, her daughter and/or other women family members, or perhaps a complete stranger, a Mormon woman, who might come across the journal in an archival collection. What must be emphasized is that even here, when Allen expresses how “set back” she is, she plans to proceed through fasting and prayer. In spite of her difficulties in pregnancy, she ends on a hopeful note: “perhaps the Lord may help me if I obey.”

*Exponent II* was one publication among several at the time including *Dialogue*, *Utah Holiday*, and *Sunstone* that addressed a growing Mormon counterpublic. Although not necessarily “feminist,” this counterpublic emerged in the context of shifting American values in civil and women's rights, and shifting Mormon countermeasures, like retrenchment. As indexed above, this counterpublic formed, in part, out of an interest in “untold” Mormon stories, particularly histories of first and second generation Mormon pioneers. Published historical works in this time, both for a general and scholarly audience, demonstrate the preoccupation with primary source materials, and render the “ordinary” experiences of the past – conversion, continental migration, polygamous

families, frontier life, etc. – extraordinary. The accounts of some extraordinary women – accounts, which had been passed down and shared within a family – were now finding an eager public. Editors of the *Women's Voices* collection mention some of the notable examples: *The Early Autobiography and Diary of Ellis Reynolds Shipp, M.D.* (1962), *A Mormon Mother: An Autobiography of Annie Clark Tanner* (1973), *Dear Ellen: Two Mormon Women and Their Letters* (1974), and *Not by Bread Alone: The Journal of Martha Spence Heywood, 1850-56* (1978) (Godfrey, Godfrey, and Derr 2). *Uncertain Sanctuary: A Story of Mormon Pioneering in Mexico* by Estelle Webb Thomas, a member of Allen's extended family, was published by a regional press. As cited above, the Women's History Archives were actively searching for donors, and women who were (or perceived) themselves to be part of a tradition of women writers, storytellers, and participants in history, might have elected to donate their journals to the archives, potentially appealing to an audience of historians, professional and amateur, as well as educated, interested LDS women.

What many of these personal journals reveal are the far different attitudes and perspectives on gender held by the earlier generations of Saints. While it would be a mistake to characterize their views as “liberal” in the contemporary sense of the word, they were profoundly different from the views posited by the Church in the 1970s. These differences are attributable to the broader social context in which adults found themselves and the particular hardships in which the vast majority of early Mormons found themselves. Regardless, it would be difficult to immerse oneself in these personal journals and find therein justification for the retrenchment move to redefine women's roles. A second takeaway would be differences in gender performances across multiple

Mormon communities – a proliferation of Mormonisms thrived in earlier generations. In spite of Brigham Young’s outsized personality and coherent institutional vision, the Saints’ dispersal across an enormous swath of the American West in the time before communication technology meant the instantiation of local iterations of the faith. All of this is to say that the expectations of a Mormon counterpublic versed in these primary source materials and engaged in the recovery of “untold” stories would have deviated from the institutional ideal. This audience would have afforded Allen (and others) a wider range of acceptable *ethe* and gendered performances. Still in all, even this generous audience would determine what kinds of gendered identities could be Mormon embodiments. The fears and desires that find expression in Allen’s journals would have resonated, I’d wager, with this counterpublic. Her struggle with “gender issues” would have (in 1978) challenged even this audience.

### ***The Self as ‘Addressed’***

In spite of the tremendous pressure brought to bear upon journal writers in the Mormon Church to present an unproblematic, stable self as subject of knowledge over a period of time, accommodation to different audiences, inappropriate desires, and competing self-understandings do find expression. Personal journals constitute a mode that is conducive to the study of self-rhetorics: the way the individual engages in acts of self-persuasion or attempts to negotiate competing or incompatible positions (Harrison 244). Although we typically conceive of audience as “other,” Burke argues that audience also means the *addressed*, and as such, a woman may address herself. In short, just as individuals may be in conflict with other individuals, one aspect of the self may be in conflict with another aspect. This division constitutes an invitation to rhetoric.

Such a conflict between different parts of the self might erupt in a single instant. To return to an example, Allen and her friends discussed President Kimball's statements against the use of birth control. During that conversation, Allen recognized that her personal desire stood in contrast to the teaching of President Kimball. While she may have been depicting an external conflict: self vs. President Kimball, she was also depicting an inner conflict. Would she honor the part of her that did not want to have another child or would she honor the part of her that wanted to be obedient and belong? Writing about this inner conflict became a resource for her to process the information. Using Kimberly Harrison's concept of self-rhetorics, this journal entry becomes a site wherein Allen attempted to negotiate competing self-conceptions (244).

Conflicts between different parts of the self might be long simmering, as Allen's conflict between the aspect of her that wanted to remain a married member of the Mormon Church in good standing and the part of her that wanted to embrace (or at the very least acknowledge) her same-sex sexuality. Self-rhetorics come into play when the individual has internalized teachings and attempts to apply them to her situation. The application of these teachings is imperfect and impermanent due to the irreconcilability of divergent desires and needs. In a sense, the "dull, daily re-enforcement" of journal writing grants longevity to imperfect and impermanent identification. As successful as Allen often is in presenting herself in accordance with the expectations of her audiences, slips do occur that belie contradictory feelings. To return to an example above, she offers almost saccharine praise of her husband at one time writing: "I'm very proud of him – I'm the luckiest woman in the world. I would have been dumb to have married anyone else" (*First Volume* 100). However, immediately proceeding these sentences is the

phrase: “He surely works hard when he works” (*First Volume* 100). The qualification “*when he works*” (emphasis mine) could signal either a slip in the performance of an ethos or a deliberate unwillingness to characterize him in such glowing terms.

Allen employs self-rhetorics to convince herself that her behavior with Colleen one night was inappropriate in hindsight. Allen stopped by to see Colleen late at night, and when Colleen took a long distance phone call, Allen curled up and fell asleep on the floor. Colleen tried to wake her up, but Allen asked her to call Allen’s home number so she could talk to Bill. “I asked him if I could stay put,” she writes, and “he gave a very firm ‘no!’ He would come and get me if necessary” (*Second Volume* 178). Allen said that she was so “punchy” that “Colleen said if she didn’t know any differently she would have thought I was drunk” (*Second Volume* 178). Allen obeys Bill and gives herself a talking to: “Acting that silly and punchy is a pit for the people who have to see it – it’s not really funny to watch someone act that way”; after describing how she got home, Allen goes on to say that “I hope I never get that tired again – I can see the wisdom of getting to bed early” (*Second Volume* 178). In this journal entry, Allen admits that she lost self-control, chastises herself for imposing her behavior upon Bill and Colleen, and promises to do better. What is only partially concealed in this sequence is the tension Allen experienced between her desire to stay with Colleen – which led to her sleeping on the floor and calling her husband to ask his permission – and fulfilling her expected obligations as wife and mother. That Bill did not approve – that he emphatically objected – jolted her into a conversation within herself about her behavior. During this phase, Allen wants to spend nearly every moment with Colleen. The day following this confrontation with Bill, Allen writes about Colleen:



[She] was sick when she came home from work....I convinced Colleen to return home with me so she could get a blessing. Bill tried to reach some Brethren... After she received the blessing I put the children in the car and drove her to her c[ommunity] college class. About 10 pm I picked Colleen up and drove back to the apartment for some [postum?]. I enjoy our visits. It's quite a spiritual and an ego high. It's best expressed by Kahlil Gibran in *The Prophet*: Self knowledge; 'Your hearts know in silence the secret of the days and nights/But your ears thirst for the sound of your heart's knowledge./You would know in words that which you have always known in thought.' And this is what seems to be happening. We seem to be giving each other the 'self' feedback. It's coming so easy and smooth it makes me wonder. I wish all people everywhere could enjoy real friendship – I've really been blessed. (*Second Volume* 179)

The choice of the Gibran quote – which Allen copies onto the page – reveals her dilemma perfectly. Her ears “thirst for the sound of [her] heart's knowledge” but she does not yet “know in words” what she has “always known” in her heart: she feels closer to Colleen than her husband.

As previously touched upon, Allen's overtures for closeness to first Cheryl and later Colleen are couched in terms of sisterly love and concern for their spiritual growth and well-being. Such spiritual concern remains a touchstone, and even at times, a mask to hide behind – one Allen is not always conscious of taking on and off. Such demonstrations of piety could partially conceal unsettling revelations about one's self *to* one's self, as when Allen experiences “spiritual fantasies” about the women. These

fantasies are a way of putting her longing into the language of Mormonism: “only those voices from without are effective which can speak in the language of a voice within” (Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* 39). In these fantasies or visions, Allen describes entering a heightened spiritual, blissful state by looking at her beloved friend. On August 21, 1977, Allen sees Cheryl across the room and “my eyes (mind’s eyes) was seeing us in the Celestial Rooms at one of the temples – I don’t know how to explain it” (*First Volume* 84). These fantasies render her “inappropriate” feelings of romantic and sexual love “appropriate” to this and other normative audiences. But Allen has to contend with the intensity of her feelings – especially her feelings of sadness. And these feelings are not so easily disguised in Mormon terms. The despair Allen feels when she thinks about losing Cheryl – knowing that Cheryl will, like Allen, marry a man – leads her to try to prepare herself for the coming blow. In the immediate context of the entry that follows, Allen’s close friend Sher had just left after a short visit. “I watched TV until midnight – I was upset. It took a lot out of me when Sher left – but what hurts even more is the realization that Cheryl is going to be gone soon. When someone or something is such a part of my life, I find it hard letting go, sometimes.... Sometimes, I find myself angry at them for no other reason than the fact that they are leaving. If it wasn’t for the fact that I know my friends are eternal and that I will have eternities with them I think I would find myself quite a crusty person” (*First Volume* 113). Allen states that she knows she will have eternities with her friends, but that doesn’t change the fact that she finds herself angry with Cheryl because Cheryl will leave her in this life to be with a man. Allen attempts to accept delayed spiritual gratification as substitute for her intense present desire – a desire that could never be fulfilled in the context of their faith.

Her political involvement in ERA is the source of inner-conflict, resulting in self-rhetorics. In spite of the important role the “God nod” plays in fortifying Allen and allowing her to persevere as a spy, she does experience inner conflict over her political activism. This inner conflict surfaces on the pages of her journal in different guises. In the spring of 1978, Allen wrote of being in “darkness,” “feeling heavy,” “drained,” and experiencing the “weight of the world”; “Ever since I’ve decided to heed the calling of my spirit to this work,” she wrote, “much darkness has gathered to make my life heavy” (*Second Volume* 45). After attending the Democratic Convention wherein Carlson asked Allen to “snoop out” some rumors circulating from the pro-ERA camp, Allen states, “I had a very hard time. I don’t know if I could ever do that kind of stuff” (*Second Volume* 46). Yet, for the duration of the campaign, Allen does remain a loyal member of the Pro-Family Coalition. Allen blames her spiritual slump on several external factors, including her numerous responsibilities: home, Church, and the Pro-Family work. After the bishop relieves her of some Pro-Family responsibilities, Allen feels “far away from the Pro-Family staff” (*Second Volume* 56).

Allen’s “spiritual slump” has a negative impact on her “performance in the organization” (*Second Volume* 51). Partially relieved from some of her Pro-Family responsibilities, she wonders what might be bringing her down: “Oh, what am I doing that is so very wrong – or is it the blackness of Satan trying to discourage me?” (*Second Volume* 56). She does not consider the fact that she is experiencing an inner conflict. In the following conversation, which Allen recounts on the pages of her journal, she describes to a Mormon politician the physical toll her political involvement was having on her:

I even could tell her I had a knowledge of who we were actually fighting and what the full implications of this ERA battle was all about. Now I'll tell you how I found out: I was concerned because I was being so physically drained each meeting I went to. Bill was having to give me blessings just to help me physically, as well as mentally and spiritually through these meetings. One time I was sitting on the edge of the bed half dressed and dreading the meeting I was going to, and all of a sudden my mind was opened up to comprehend the basic plan and tactic Satan was using. The people (the biggies) pushing this plan are just tools of accomplishing much destruction to the family unit. (*Second Volume 105*).

Instead of using this information to question the "God nod" and the instruction she'd received from the Church, Allen interprets her physical and emotional symptoms as evidence of Satan's involvement. Satan becomes a device for externalizing her conflict and persuading herself that she is "doing nothing wrong" and that "it is only the blackness of Satan" that is discouraging her. In spite of the "knowledge of who" she was fighting, Allen struggles for the duration.

Certain omissions also signal the presence of inner conflict that cannot be articulated in the language of belonging. For one of her Pro-Family Coalition assignments, Allen is asked to visit a Planned Parenthood office. Allen felt nervous about this assignment and described her jitters. She overcame her nerves by sharing a laugh over her car trouble with a woman named Denise, the Planned Parenthood representative. Denise told Allen that she believed every girl should have a copy of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, analogizing it to the Bible. Allen succeeds in obtaining several copies of the

text and clearly read at least some of it. What Allen revealed in our interviews is that contrary to expressions of disgust over the book, she learned a great deal from *Our Bodies, Ourselves*: it was the first text that provided an overview of sex between women. Allen's instructions to burn the copies of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* are not mentioned in the journal. When I asked her whether she burned books, as she'd been asked to do, she said that she did not. It is possible that Allen presents herself as a woman disgusted with the text strictly for the benefit of her outside audiences. A parenthetical aside (cited in *Chapter One*), wherein she derides the book, might have been included to insure her readers knew exactly where she stood on the issue. Given her later disclosures, the parenthetical aside might also be understood as a kind of self-rhetoric, a talking back to the part of herself that recognizes the book as a valuable resource to her. She couldn't bring herself to burn *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, but could denounce it.

The personal journal must be understood as an audience-oriented document in the Mormon context. Far from being a place Allen could explore her points of identification *and* difference from the Church's teachings, her personal journals from this time were a place wherein she felt compelled to perform her identification for multiple normative audiences: priesthood holders, her children and their children, other Mormon women and herself. Moreover, due to her readers' expectations of the genre, these performances were not meant to appear as such. Allen was expected to construct these diaries "as if" they reflected her deepest, innermost "immediate" thoughts. In fact, from her written comments and her commentary upon these comments, I believe Allen disguised or elided her deepest feelings, including her physical attraction to Cheryl and Colleen, her marital dissatisfaction, her revulsion over aspects of the Pro-Family work, and her gratitude for

*Our Bodies, Ourselves*. In the following sections, I go on to explore the ways in which Mormon women's personal journals from this time, rather than offering women a private, exploratory space, should instead be read as an extension of the institutional space wherein they were required to engage in practices of self-discipline.

### **The Personal Journal's Relationship With/In Time**

One defining feature of the genre of the personal journal is its diurnal form. Jennifer Sinor in "Reading the Ordinary Diary" explains that time in the personal journal is characterized by a "tick, tick, tick" rather than a "tick, tock," meaning that personal journals are "all middles." Instead of a typical narrative wherein a ground situation builds to a climax and then finds a new point of rest in the form of a resolution (the "before" and "after," which Sinor describes as a "tick, tock"), the narrative in a personal journal cannot follow this pattern (125). Time is measured and ongoing: incessantly chronological ("tick, tick, tick"). Sinor suggests that because of the journal's relationship with time, the writer is afforded the opportunity to order in and out: the page of the journal constitutes a place where one might exert some control. Drawing connections between the revolution in chronometry that allowed minutes to be reliably measured and the pages of a diary, Sinor asks: "How is the relationship between measuredness and emptiness mutually defining? Empty minutes do not exist until the pendulum measures them into existence. Empty spaces in the diary do not exist until the diurnal form defines their existence" (127). Sinor is particularly interested in the way the personal journal serves for women writers a place that is at once empty and full: "its spaces are regulated by a diurnal discourse, as well as a host of other discourses: those of womanhood, motherhood, and illness" (128). As a feminist writer, Sinor is interested in the way women might capitalize

on the measuredness of the empty/full space. By the same token, Sinor comes to her conclusion about the affordances of the diurnal form through the work of Ralph Cintrón who sees the ordering of spaces as “an extension of systems that want to maintain boundaries, hierarchies, and privileges” (Sinor 128). The writer exerts control at the same time she herself operates within a series of circumscribed boundaries.

### ***Recording of Daily and Recurring Tasks***

Women writers who may not have much say over other aspects of their lives, including the way the majority of their time is spent, demonstrate agency as “ordering agents” in the spaces of their personal journals. This is not to say that women like Allen are “free” agents in their journals; time itself is a constraint, as are Allen’s audiences and her self-perception as a Mormon woman living in North Las Vegas in the 1970s. However, understanding the personal journal as a space wherein women impose order is particularly compelling in the case of the personal journals of Mormon women because active Mormon women are responsible for juggling a great deal: running a household, raising a family, and participating in Church. For many, volunteering in church-related endeavors and fulfilling various “callings” constitute a considerable investment of time. In Arrington and Bitton’s 1977, *The Mormon Experience*, the authors estimate that “active” Mormons spend an average of fourteen hours a week involved in church-related activities, conceding that many with special callings may spend twenty to forty hours engaged in church activities and related work (297).<sup>57</sup> Throughout the two journal volumes, Allen describes activities related to ward and stake obligations in detail. In a period of roughly two weeks, Allen plays the organ for the girls’ choir, goes on a visiting teaching assignment, attends the Stake Conference and sacrament meeting, holds a

nursery meeting at her home, and hosts her visiting teacher (*First Volume*). Allen has Church-related commitments nearly every single day. Allen was so frequently away from home that her Mormon husband complained of having a “part-time’ wife” (*First Volume*). In the preface to the journals Allen explains, “A Mormon woman is one of the busiest ... humans alive. Their family and Church come first in all things, and the two are not separate entities. The family is the Church and the Church is the family” (*Important Introduction 1*).

If the personal journal is the discursive place where one records how one’s time was spent, a relationship of mutual reinforcement comes into being between what one did and the discussion of what one did. Writing serves to validate how time was spent – the writer’s experiences – and the benefits engendered by those experiences. As an example, a list of chores accomplished – however mundane – may engender in the writer a sense of purpose. In the context of the Mormon woman’s personal journal where tasks undertaken in the service of a higher calling are concerned, the recording of responsibilities met in a given day is even more likely to engender a feeling of purpose. Because these often daily or near-daily responsibilities are undertaken with others, the writer acts together with other Mormons. Thus, the writer first participates in a practice of being Mormon, and then recounts the rewards of this belonging in yet another “spiritual” practice. The journal concretizes the hours in a given week devoted to Church activities connecting what was experienced through these callings and commitments (intimacy through friendship, for example) and the recapitulation of the investments. The recapitulation reinforces identification and amplifies the value of church engendered experiences.



The genre also lends itself to pre-scripture, writing that is forward looking and anticipates what will happen. The writer uses the page to look ahead in time. Ongoing commitments project into the future a litany of forthcoming obligations, tasks undone, responsibilities ahead, and standards unmet. Many of Allen's commitments were recurring. Sundays the family attended sacrament meeting and had separate church-related obligations, like Sunday school and Relief Society. Monday evenings she and Bill held Family Home Evening, wherein the whole family gathered, shared a meal, and spent time together.<sup>58</sup> Tuesdays Allen set aside for Relief Society. Allen recorded weekly scripture reading goals, citing the passages she intended to review in the *Book of Mormon, Doctrine & Covenants* and *The Pearl of Great Price*.<sup>59</sup> Allen received her visiting teachers and she herself acted as a visiting teacher. Based upon these ongoing commitments, which occur at regular intervals into perpetuity, Allen could count on her days being full. In the same way that reflecting upon past events undertaken in service of a special calling or religious obligation reinforces a sense of belonging, anticipating events perpetuates a sense of meaning and belonging. Representing commitments to come reinforces the idea that the identification will persist into the future – even beyond this lifetime.

The personal journal engenders another kind of future-facing self-discipline. Allen had the daily commitment of writing about her Church commitments. The Church, which teaches the idea of perfectibility, also encourages its members to constantly improve themselves: to do more, better. Embedded within this teaching is a message of hope and a challenge to continually learn and grow. The flipside of the coin is a message many Mormon women internalize: a message that they simply cannot do enough.

In the retrenchment era, Church pedagogies, including the lesson plans for Family Home Evening and Relief Society, Church publications, like *The Ensign*, Church directives to record and preserve family history, the Church's MTW all focused upon disciplining women's bodies. In practical, daily terms, this discipline means having children, devoting one's self to their care, and teaching them about Mormonism; being financially responsible and resourceful; cooking, providing, and stocking healthy food; maintaining an attractive appearance to remain sexually desirable for one's husband; being a generous and devoted friend who nurtures the faith; maintaining personal hygiene and cleanliness at home; deferring to priesthood authority – at home and at Church; and learning more about the faith through scripture study and other Church-recommended reading. Developing one's talents – only after one's commitment to one's family is met – is also encouraged, so long as they do not take women into the professional or public arena. Mormon periodicals refer knowingly to “that woman in the ward” who raises five children, maintains a spotless home, stays an “active” member, and somehow has time to bake fresh bread every day with a smile on her face. *Exponent II* describes the “‘Patti Perfect’ syndrome, so talked of in women's circles, where she can never meet the unspoken expectations which represents that ‘ideal Mormon woman’” (Davis 1).

In this period of time, it was not enough that Allen frequently stays up late into the night to juggle her volunteer work for the Church and the care of her two young children. She feels she needs to do more, better. As an example, she frequently describes steps taken to condition her home as well as her body. These disorderly spaces require her near-constant attention and improvement – to get into shape. Allen considers her post-Rachael figure a weakness to overcome and attempts, through various means, to

exercise and lose weight. She describes her “fat” problem and views her body as a perpetual reminder of her lack of self-discipline. Instead of accepting that, for her, keeping fit and keeping house are not as pressing as other responsibilities and pleasures, Allen struggles to keep up and despairs when she doesn’t.

In the pages of the journal, Allen reveals how she plans to regulate the future. She measures her current self in time against a better, more perfect self: a self better read in scriptures, a self with a better figure, and a self with a cleaner home. Allen gives a close friend a personal journal as a gift, so this friend may “keep track of her Spiritual and temporal growth” (*First Volume* 108). Implied is that Allen uses her journal in this way as well. Allen makes lists as one means of “keeping track” of spiritual and temporal growth. On September 4, 1977, she includes two columns: “5 chapters in *B. of M.*, 1 chapter *M. of F.*, talk religion to Marcia, Keep journal to date, 1 Children’s journal entry,” is written in the first column for “Spiritual” tasks and “Type Relief Society notes, Prepare home for Sher, teach Chris Left & Right, 2 letters written, Set up reading schedule” (*First Volume* 102) is written in the second column, indicating these are “temporal” tasks.<sup>60</sup> The way this list is organized reinforces certain claims made in this chapter. Journal writing is placed in the “Spiritual” column rather than the temporal column, where Allen has placed letter writing. It is also worth noting that Allen writes in her journal her intention to keep up with her journal and her intention to write a journal entry for her children. These tasks fall into the “Spiritual” category. In addition to inscribing her current spiritual reading schedule, she has given herself the job of creating (for the future) a reading schedule. Beside several – although not all – of these items is a check mark. This list demonstrates in a microcosm the recursive process of doing a task,

writing about it, and indicating in writing that there is a plan to do the task in the future, which may then, possibly, be written about. So committed is Allen toward achieving her goals, she creates in August of 1977 what she calls a personal *progress point sheet*, which may have been inspired by a genre encountered in other contexts.<sup>61</sup> Allen's personal *progress point sheet*, though not included in the archive and only referred to in passing, is focused on getting her home and life in order.

### ***Ordering In and Ordering Out***

Without making a totalizing claim about the way all Mormon women journal writers manage daily entries, the space lends itself to discussion of certain kinds of topics over others. As in the journal Sinor explores, order is a recurring subject in Allen's journals. Allen often writes down when she cleans the house, when she does the laundry, when she tidies up, and when she vacuums. She records on occasion what she made for dinner, and she mentions doing the dishes. She keeps track of how long she slept. When she exercises and for how long. What Church commitments she has on each day. The names of people she saw and spoke to, often first and last. Allen "orders in" order itself: cleanliness, sleep, food, exercise, commitments, chores, and names. While participating in the discourse of regulating domestic, feminine space, Allen is also engaging in "rhetorical work that Cintrón suggests all discourses of measurement attempt: 'holding the unstable at bay'" (Sinor 131).

This rhetorical work affirms "boundaries, hierarchies, and privileges" without appearing to do so. For example, in Allen's journals, trivial problems are often emphasized while intractable ones do not necessarily find expression. Allen frets over her weight, but never expresses concern over the viability of her marriage. She wonders how

to proceed when her dearest friend snubs her, but does not discuss her romantic feelings for this friend or physical longing for intimacy. Constraints imposed by the outside audience undoubtedly limit the range of topics Allen discusses and the way she discussed them – a point she has stated outright and that is made earlier in this chapter. Allen could not discuss marital instability or questions surrounding her sexual orientation without calling into question either her world-view or the impossibility of belonging in the way she wanted to belong. More subtly, these enormous dilemmas Allen faced in the late 1970s might have been too overwhelming to explore in detail or to attend to in the twenty minutes before bed.<sup>62</sup> In this regard, journal writing may encourage discussion of problems of scale, and even afford the writer an opportunity to “order out” all that she cannot control.

In the LDS tradition, there are prescribed answers to most problems: prayer and earnest supplication with or without fasting. Allen tends to present these answers to problems through a process repeated throughout the pages of the journal: she explains the nature of the problem, describes the anguish it is causing her, and then takes a form of spiritual action, like prayer. Allen habitually records and notes her prayers: when she prays, with whom she prays, what she prayed about, and her feelings before, during and after a prayer – whether she feels “the spirit was with her” or whether she is struggling to connect with Heavenly Father. As an example, the evening of October 2, 1977, Allen waits up for her husband to return from a priesthood meeting, and writes:

We had a big discussion about overcoming the large stumbling block we each have. His is being more of a father, by giving more time to the children – mine is my fat. We had a prayer, made commitments, Bill gave

me a blessing and we decided to fast. In the blessing he gave me a direct connection with the Lord and power to succeed. (*First Volume* 141).

After these kinds of steps, including prayer, counsel with Bill, and fasting, Allen either feels better or takes additional measures to resolve the issue. In this case, Allen returns repeatedly to the necessary steps for weight loss. Without diminishing the distress Allen's weight gain causes her, an uneven parallel seems to be drawn between Bill's "large stumbling block" – his fear that he is not thriving as a father – and hers: "my fat."<sup>63</sup>

Allen follows the Mormon solutions to the problems that emerge in her friendships with Cheryl and Colleen. In one entry, Allen becomes distressed when Cheryl suddenly acts distant, writing

I guess I've been holding it in and it's coming to a head. I hope I haven't pushed our friendship too far. I hope I can talk to her about it –she's quite defensive about anything when she's uptight...I'm quite lousy at expressing myself when it's my emotions I'm trying to state. I hope I can find some answers – I'm lost!!! (*First Volume* 117)

Allen appeals to a friend, Jenny, for advice and offers this result: "[Jenny] said: 'fast, pray, she said seek spiritual council from my husband and if needs be get a blessing'" (*First Volume* 117). Because Allen had just gotten over a stomach bug, she decides not to fast, but "prayed like I've never prayed in a long time" (*First Volume* 117). Bill does give her a blessing, which she records in the journal. Allen confronts Cheryl later in the evening, and describes the situation in detail:

I took a deep breath, said a short prayer, crossed my fingers and went to talk with her. We went to her room. I couldn't find enough courage to

make eye contact (which was bad, because then I was totally on the defensive). I couldn't catch what I was trying to say, my mind was running wild or blank. I felt like the Village Idiot. The harder I struggled, the more tears came, the less sense [sic] I made, the more confused and lost Cheryl got. I finally got to the point where I quit for a while. (*First Volume* 119)

On this occasion, Allen learns that Cheryl had upsetting news from her doctor. Allen had not "pushed the friendship too far." She feels tremendously relieved and give Cheryl her special necklace containing mustard seeds. Cheryl feels the gift is too significant, so Allen agrees that Cheryl should borrow it until she gets engaged. Thus, Allen's trouble with Cheryl is put to rest – at least temporarily. It might be said that Heavenly Father helped Allen through all of the problems she lays out in the pages of the journal, although she never directly reveals those challenging, intractable problems that most troubled her.

Allen told me that she was aware, even at the time, that she had "gender issues." Accepting she possessed this self-awareness, she might not have been fully cognizant of the *extent* to which she used the journal as a means of controlling and regulating the instability this awareness would usher in. She managed to order out aspects of these relationships, in part, by focusing incessantly upon the daily ups and downs. The way Allen presents upset in these relationships – even the conflicts that distressed or hurt her deeply - involve misunderstandings or a "miscommunication with a sister" that are often quickly and expeditiously resolved. This is not to say that Allen succeeds in "ordering out" the nature of her deep romantic love for first Cheryl and later Colleen. Even a cursory glance of the journals reveals Allen wrote copiously about these women and gave

her heart, time, and even money to keep them close. “What gets ordered out is never eliminated,” Sinor observes, echoing Cintrón, “It remains continuing to haunt, to threaten the fiction of order” (137–8).

### **Conclusion**

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints not only requires individuals to keep historical records, but it also teaches them how to do so. It prints genealogical charts; it produces and sells personal journals and templates for books of remembrance, suggesting how the space might be used. Church teachings describe the contents of these documents and their importance. Church archives provide examples. Church pedagogies instruct members on historical methods, including maintaining and protecting such documents. And Church authorities check to see if members are producing these documents. These institutional efforts engender recursive self-regulation – the individual’s constant effort to maintain identification with/in the community. These institutional efforts further engender tangible, usable products that are instructive and inspiring to future readers.

This chapter has been concerned primarily with the way that creating the required historical genres affords an opportunity for the writer to position herself in her immediate, extended, and religious family. She becomes so thoroughly engrossed in producing certain kinds of information and knowledge that others – even the most visceral, the most elemental – escape her notice or must be contained. Consumed in rendering the inner voice in a language the outer voices recognize as “Mormon,” that inner voice is forced underground. Engaging in a Mormon historical practice orients the writer to her own life in a way that may actually harm her or alienate her from her own needs and desires. The



writer's orientation to learning about and recording "the past" have personal as well as political implications in the present insofar as she is forced to deny the part of herself that seeks alliance with other women acting for women.

Kenneth Burke's argument concerning the importance of identification to effect persuasion and acting-together goes a long way toward explaining how certain historical practices as activities undertaken in the service of belonging overcome individual prerogatives. As examples, conducting genealogical research is a practice that constitutes an act of belonging and brings about a ritual of belonging: the living Saint becomes consubstantial with his ancestor in a process that links generations through Mormonism. Journal writing invites the writer to present herself as living the Mormon way to a variety of audiences. Thus, identification with the group is practiced – "reinforced" – daily. The more an individual invests in these practices of belonging, the more she believes she belongs, the more important it becomes to maintain this sense of belonging.

In short, it may be very well to be a Mormon woman who does her genealogy and keeps up with her book of remembrance and writes in her journal, but what prevents her from also recognizing the structural disadvantage of women in American society during the late 1970s? Hear the arguments of women who seek equal pay for equal work? Or believe in the rights of homosexuals, regardless of her own family arrangement? Why, in this time period, do claims for gender equality – more often than not – fall on deaf ears? Why did Sandra Allen, like so many others, actively work against the Equal Rights Amendment, and what did the historical, rhetorical practices outlined in this chapter have to do with her mindset?

Without offering a definitive answer, this chapter argues that engaging in these history-writing practices functioned to reorient the writer, constantly and persistently, through dull, daily reinforcement, to believe that one's biological sex is one's destiny. In doing history in this way, women are constantly educated in their proper function (reproduction) and their proper place (the private sphere): they are en/gendering a worldview. It's fair to say that keeping up with these historical practices in addition to raising a family, attending to other callings, and conditioning one's home and figure kept many women busy. The recursive process of living a church-dominated life and then recording it in the personal journal for an audience of believers affirmed a sense of purpose and belonging. The Church's move to redefine womanhood and the programs that emerged out of this institutional movement affirmed the choices that many women had made and re-produced the cultural values that engendered these choices.

The retrenchment movement came out of a belief shared among its leaders that the Church had moved too far into the mainstream during the first half of the twentieth century. One aspect of the retrenchment program involved increased historical production. Home historians churned out documents and Church archives continued to swell during the 1970s and 80s. The impulse behind retrenchment was to capture the unique identity of the Mormon people. Just as the early Mormons were admonished by Joseph Smith to keep records, so were these fifth and sixth generation Saints. This new outburst of historical production constituted a link to this early past. But these ever-expanding archives constitute, also, *lieux de memoire* or "memory spaces." As discussed above, documents become the constructions through which a society, culture or religious group wishes to be known to its members: a monument or reification of shared belief.

Creating and hoarding traces is a project that emerges out of an anxiety “about the meaning of the present” (Nora 13). The historical documents become a bolster against encroaching anxiety about one’s identity: a material proof validating the existence of a group. Writes Nora:

*Lieux de memoire* originate with the sense that there is no spontaneous memory, that we must deliberately create archives, maintain anniversaries, organize celebrations, pronounce eulogies, and notarize bills because such activities no longer occur naturally. The defense, by certain minorities, of a privileged memory that has retreated to jealously protected enclaves in this sense illuminate the truth of *lieux de memoire* – that without commemorative vigilance, history would soon sweep them away. We buttress our identities upon such bastions, but if what they defended were not threatened, there would be no need to build them. (12)

What Nora argues here is that the archives themselves – not their contents, though they be “jealously protected” – are the imaginative and historical resource upon which groups build their identity.

Producing lay histories and historical documents in home archives was meant to inspire continuity with the distant, pioneer Mormon past while deflecting attention away from aspects of the past that were no longer possible for a corporate, twentieth century and decidedly assimilated American institution: communal, cooperative living, structural equality among men, greater parity between men and women, and economic and political self-sufficiency. Because the Church was not advocating a return to the community Smith and his early followers envisioned – and took bold steps to create – retrenchment policies

emphasized genealogy, books of remembrance, personal history and family values. These enterprises had to substitute, in a sense, for the world-making enterprises of Saints before, and hence took on a profound importance.

As Burke argues, identification is necessary because of division. If women were not apart from one another – or internally divided – there would be no need for rhetoric to join them together. In considering the volumes of journals written by friend’s mother – the journals that were burnt – I have sometimes wondered whether she was afraid that the texts would lay bare for her children her division from the Church, her independence of thought, and if this was the prime source of concern or embarrassment. But I have equally wondered whether she feared her children would see her efforts to align herself with the Church, to perform the required *ethe*, as too accommodating. Did her individual needs and desires get lost, and if so, was she afraid her children would take away the wrong lesson in reading her diaries? While Allen has commented upon certain statements she made in her journals during our interviews, I would like nothing more than to ask her to re-read them and quiz her: does she see a devoted believer going through the requisite performances or a questioning lesbian, a lover of women, a nascent rebel?

Allen’s journals have become in their new institutional context a tool of resistance against a different institution, which, she believes, “used” her – and others – for the sake of its mission. In this chapter, Allen’s journals have provided us with information as to how and why she allowed herself to be used: to help build a world that was hostile to her gender and her sexual orientation. Like all other active Mormons at the time, Allen generated a trove of documents. In these documents, she persuaded her audience that she belonged, while the documents themselves stood as material proof of her faith and

belonging. But these documents acted upon her, also, persuading her (at least for a time) that the promise of eternal belonging was more compelling than the competing claims made by women and by Allen's own internal voice.

## CHAPTER 4

### On Forgetting

During the second of our two interviews in June 2011, Sandra Allen asked whether I had come across a certain document in the archive. It was an article published in a journal for librarians, alerting them to a plot hatched by the Mormon Church to purge library shelves of certain Mormon books. The article came up in conversation because we were discussing what Allen believed was a pattern of obfuscation designed to protect the Church's image and interests. This pattern, Allen contended, was encouraged – if not advocated outright – by its leaders and carried out by the faithful. Allen believed – to render my interpretation of her statements in my own language – that finding this news article and depositing it in the archive was important because documenting the ways the institutional Church has encouraged and perpetuated “acts of forgetting” is a project that must be undertaken by the researcher-historian in order to hold the institution accountable for its past (“Denver Interview”).

In March 2012, when I next returned to CSWR, I found two short pieces in the *Sandra Allen Collection* that had appeared in the publication, *Library Journal*. The first was published on November 15, 1978, not two weeks after the Nevada referendum vote on the Equal Rights Amendment, and the second on February 15, 1979. In the first piece, an Arkansas librarian

warns librarians to be wary of Mormons who offer to remove older books (usually on the Mormon religion) from the library promising to replace them with new and up-to-date editions. Their real motive, he contends, is to remove from public access “many counter-Mormon books and earlier

Mormon writings which now prove embarrassing to the Latter day Saints movement.” (“Mormons Are” 2281)

The *Library Journal* article states that “many of the books the Mormons are going after are valuable and should be kept as rare books” (“Mormons Are” 2281). Librarian Edward Sanders explains how this “nation-wide” effort unfolded in the Beaumont Memorial Library: “Two Mormon ‘elders’ went through the stacks and then asked the circulation desk to let them take the volumes they had selected and replace them at a later date with brand new editions” (“Mormons Are” 2281). After consulting with Bible experts on staff, Sanders discovered that he should not allow this “replacement” in any circumstances.

The second, later piece consists of a statement made by Heber G. Wolsey, the General Manager of the Mormon Church. He responds to the first article, stating that the “Mormon church does not condone alleged attempts by some of its elders to replace anti-Mormon books with items more favorable to the church” (“Mormon Book” 448). Wolsey offers the Church’s official statement:

Missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are often encouraged to place up-to-date books about the Church in the libraries. However, there is not, nor never has there been a policy of removing existing books from libraries. If there have been isolated instances of removal of books from libraries by Church members, these individuals have acted on their own. The Church cannot condone such actions. On the contrary, those actions are to be condemned. (“Mormon Book” 448–49)

I open with this story because it captures a critical moment in Mormon historiography and in the history of the institution. The scene of two young Mormon missionaries

attempting to physically remove books on Mormonism from libraries – histories, doctrinal tracts, anthropological or sociological studies, exposés or other genres – and replace them with “up to date texts” may be read on multiple levels. First, there is a physical, material rhetorical act: The Church is replacing certain representations of the past with other representations of the past. Second, there is a metaphor at work in this “replacement” that belies a larger trend. Third, it is reminiscent of Plato’s discussion of forgetting, and his overarching concern that true beliefs could, through sophistry, be replaced with false ones.

One question to consider in light of the story represented is who, in this story, is attempting to guard memory? The elders who seek to replace books on the grounds that they do not represent the Church or the librarian who prevents the replacement? While my answer may be a foregone conclusion, I approach the question from the point of view of the Church and its responsibility to “care” for the sacred past. Extending Plato and Aristotle’s thinking about memory, the chapter argues that the institution sought to stabilize and reproduce the past as a way of fostering stability in the present.

In the first half of the chapter I argue that the Mormon Church engendered identification through the promotion of a family history methodology once it became clear that professional approaches to history would undermine its ability to proffer *The Interpretation of (and stable reproduction of) the Past*. The Church implemented a plan to “take out of circulation” histories and counter-memories that undermined its authority, particularly with regard to its assertion of women’s essential nature and their private, circumscribed roles. While intervening administratively to thwart professional histories, the Church re-emphasized the production of lay, family histories. This family history



methodology fosters historical “memorylessness,” shielding its practitioners from knowledge about the past that could undermine the Church’s power in the present.

Multiple paradoxes are at work in any discussion of the rhetorical aspects of forgetting. The first is that forgetting is always accompanied by remembering. In “Recursivity: A Working Paper on Rhetoric and *Mnesis*,” Nathan Stormer argues that because of the recursive nature of discourse, forgetting accompanies all speech acts; remembering *and* forgetting cannot be uncoupled from discursive production. Suhi Choi argues that “[t]he selection of memory takes place on two planes: remembering *and* forgetting” (384). A second paradox that attends forgetting is that although forgetting is associated with individual fallibility, forgetting – like remembering – may be publicly enacted. A third paradox (explored in depth by Bradford Vivian) is that forgetting, contrary to its association with lacunae or absence, may be productive in rhetorical terms: It does something.

Stormer argues that in every discourse there is a struggle over how to discourse. This struggle reveals how forgetting is engendered materially. Stormer distinguishes between two different concepts introduced by Kenneth Burke to elaborate his argument. Burke’s concept of terministic screens enables us to identify what is remembered (reflected and selected) at the expense of what is forgotten (deflected). Thus, terministic screens help reveal *what* is forgotten or excluded in a discourse or discursive position. However, Stormer’s work suggests that Burke’s concept of logomachy is more useful in understanding *how* powerful institutional actors instantiate forgetting by instructing members in how to reproduce the past.

Institutional actors enact methodologies of forgetting by instantiating certain orientations to the past. These orientations to the past enable institutional actors to reproduce prevailing values and accomplish political goals in the present. In what follows, I demonstrate how the Mormon Church attempted to neuter potentially dangerous orientations to the past while fostering an institution-friendly orientation. The Church's family history works, paradoxically, to unite Church members in active engagement with their history while dis-orienting them to historical facts that could undermine their support for the institution's (then)-present political positions. Forgetting in this way becomes materially instantiated through home-history writing practices. During this time, the institution also engendered an orientation to the past by silencing dissenters. The Mormon Church instructed its members in how to forget through publicly "remembering" – then silencing – dissenting voices.

### **Introduction to Twentieth Century Mormon Historiography and the "Golden Age"**

Prior to 1960, Mormon historiography was dominated by trends that rendered Mormon history "boring" according to some of the twentieth century's leading scholars on the subject.

As a non-Mormon historian initially trying to get through this massive body of writing in order to better understand the controversial origin and early development of Mormon polygamy, I struggled to comprehend the basis for this seemingly pointless collection of data....What was it that made Mormon historical writing so deadly dull to an outsider...?

asks Lawrence Foster, author of *Religion and Sexuality* (41). Foster describes the typical historical work when he began his career as a Brigham Young University dissertation that

begins with “Joseph Smith’s first vision” and ends “with a stirring reaffirmation of the author’s faith” (41). Everything in between was “footnote which added more evidence to an already well-known and well-loved story” (41).

Mormon historical texts either argued for or against Joseph Smith’s account. Mario DePillis explains in 1966, “Persons who have studied Mormon history have always been Mormons, former Mormons, or anti-Mormons” (195). “Just plain non-Mormon researchers,” like DePillis himself, “have been very rare” (195). As a result, Mormon history has been consumed with proving or disproving Mormonism as a religion; the longstanding “*unstated concerns*” of Mormon historians include “the claims of Mormonism to a transcendent truth and a superior morality” (DePillis 197). The consequence of these claims is that histories (both pro- and anti-) demonstrate a “morbid interest” in the historical figures whose statements or actions threaten these claims (DePillis 197).

Jan Shippo,<sup>64</sup> former President of the Mormon History Association and author of the still-vital text, *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition*, describes Mormon historiography in three phases while largely supporting Foster’s and DePillis’s assertions. After the initial phase of Mormon history writing (1820s-1860s), a long *period of pure polemic* followed (“The Mormon” 55). During this time, “readers had to choose to believe either the more or less codified Mormon story or its equally patterned opposite” (Shippo, “The Mormon” 55). In the 1920s and 1930s, a more modern Mormon historiography began to emerge wherein some few outsiders (who were neither apologists for or hostile to Mormonism) grew interested in Mormon history and, drawing upon non-Church archives, began to write. Shippo argues that the “Golden Age” of Mormon history

began sometime in the early 1960s. She credits the establishment of this Golden Age to: (1) the Mormon History Association, (2) the new focus upon “methodology, professional standards, and the implications of doing research and writing according to acceptable canons of historical scholarship,” and (3) the publication of several important historical works by “Leonard J. Arrington, Paul Edwards, Robert Flanders, Davis Bitton, and Richard Bushman” (“The Mormon” 56).

Lawrence Foster gives his account of what gave rise to the Golden Age. He cites three developments in chronological order: “First . . . the founding of the Mormon History Association in 1965,” which represented all varieties of non/Mormon including LDS, RLDS, and interested professional historians of all faiths. Second, “was the establishment of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* in 1966”; “seeking genuine dialogue” between Mormons and non-Mormons of all stripes, the publication “has continued to tackle important and often controversial issues which could not receive full consideration by in-house [Church-owned] publications” (Foster 42). The third reason for the so-called Golden Age was Arrington’s appointment.

In *Mormons and Their Historians*, Davis Bitton and Leonard Arrington also recount some of the factors that gave rise to this era. A group of Mormon, professional historians who frequently worked together in the Church’s archival “library-depository,” got together to form the Mormon History Association in 1965 (133). Meanwhile, the Church decided to move its collection to a new location. The move heralded a change in the Church’s stance on the archives. Rather than simply preserving and protecting its holdings, it would turn its vast collection into a working archive. In 1967, the custodian, then-Apostle Joseph F. Smith, gave twenty practicing LDS historians unrestricted access

to archival records (136). When Smith went on to become Church President in 1970, he completed the transformation from depository to institutional historical archive. Soon after, in January 1972, Arrington, who had an impeccable reputation among American historians, was called to lead the new Church Historical Department as Church Historian.

In keeping with Mormon hierarchical structure, Arrington had two “counselors” or supports, James B. Allen and Davis Bitton. The three men worked together to shepherd the creation of twenty eight books or monographs on Mormon history, two hundred book chapters or peer-reviewed journal articles, and one hundred articles in semi-professional outlets (137). To make the archives usable to scholars, they oversaw efforts to create a full register and guide to the collections. Arrington founded The Friends of Mormon History Association in the hopes of securing from the Church complete and open access to its archives for professional and lay historians. According to one source, five hundred people unexpectedly showed up to the Friends’ one and only meeting in 1972; General Authorities quickly quashed the idea (Heinerman and Shupe 211). Although unsuccessful in opening the archives completely, the Church History Department: “inaugurated an extensive oral history program, offered fellowships to visiting scholars to do summer work, and assigned book projects to scholars in several universities” (Bitton and Arrington 137).

Another important project for the new Church History Department involved publishing parts of their most important archival papers, including the previously mentioned *Women’s Voices* collection, as well as *Letters of Brigham Young to His Sons* and *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* (Bitton and Arrington 137). It oversaw the writing of two different single volume histories of the Mormons, one for a Mormon

audience, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* by James Allen and Glen Leonard, and *The Mormon Experience* by Arrington and Bitton, an introduction to non-members. These remain important single volume histories still in use. It also established an in-depth multivolume survey of Mormon history, encouraged scholarly biographies of important Mormons and “ordinary” members (also called “localized” histories), and prepared teaching materials for the Church’s educational system. As discussed in earlier chapters, Arrington’s Department sought to expand, dramatically, the Church’s holdings on women (Bitton and Arrington 137–40).<sup>65</sup>

By 1980, the Mormon Historical Association had grown from eighty to eight hundred members. Opening up the archives to trained LDS historians created vast research opportunities for young Mormons interested in their history. Knowing that there were opportunities to work with new primary source materials, many attended graduate school. As Shipps argues in the quotation above, the emphasis on *methodology* among Mormon historians conducting archival work proved to elevate the status of Mormon writing in the academy. Together with new publishing opportunities, the proliferation of scholarly historical works created a specialized sub-discipline in American/Religious Studies: Mormon Studies.

Shipps and Foster as well as Bitton and Arrington neglect the impact of retrenchment in the aforementioned historiographies, and yet, I argue, retrenchment is the movement that gave rise to (and ultimately put a stop to) this historical renaissance. Given that both Arrington and Bitton were removed from their posts in 1982 but wished to remain Mormons in good standing, it makes sense that their 1988 book chapter on “The Professionalization of Mormon History” leaves out the broader ideological

discourses in which they became enmeshed (Bitton, does, however, address the situation in *Sunstone* and elsewhere). The retrenchment movement explains the Church's decision to open the archives and its decision to close them again just ten years later.

The goal of the retrenchment era programs was to reinterpret Mormonism – the Mormon past and its implications for the future – in an increasingly diverse, urban, and international context. The Church sought to instantiate Mormon peculiarity, emphasizing the ways in which Mormons are culturally different from American society and the societies in which they thrive overseas. As I argued in previous chapters, the Church asserted this “peculiarity” through a *re*interpretation of womanhood. The Church's retrenchment era interpretation of proper gender roles bore little connection to the way previous generations of Mormons performed womanhood. Simultaneously, the Church sought to foster identification in this new era through a renewed emphasis on the singular Mormon past.

Mormon history became another means of asserting a Mormon identity. One purpose of historical knowledge – whether acknowledged as such – is to confront for present purposes a transformative or controversial event, person, or period in a “symbolic contest for the communal meaning of ...identity” (Morris III 90). Historical knowledge could be used to re-establish Mormon identity in this new era. A new cadre of Mormon historians, inspired by the Church's emphasis upon the unique foundations of Mormon culture, could be counted upon to bring to bear a Mormon lens upon the transformative and controversial aspects of their own past. Mormon historians, the Church was convinced in the late 1960s, could be allies in fostering identification among an increasingly disparate group of people. The Church's vast archives must have appeared in

the dawn of the retrenchment era a vast, unexploited resource: a means of fostering cultural identity and flexing its counter-national muscle by providing a different interpretive lens upon American history.

Among Arrington and his colleagues, training in conventional academic historical research methods – what Byron Hawk would describe as the nineteenth-century model – was a point of pride. As an example, Bitton and Arrington devote three pages of their book to explain what graduate training in history tends to involve (126–29). Structuralism and deconstruction – intellectual movements that focus upon the presencing power of language and the situatedness of all knowledge – were not yet in vogue in American history departments. History was and arguably still is, by some, seen as “a chronological narrative of events as they happened” (15). Historians were not necessarily making arguments or taking positions, they were simply going into the archives to make “discoveries.” Writing about this methodology, Neal A. Kramer explains, “all the historian required for his task was tenacity, a set of rules for determining the validity of evidence, and access to the necessary sources. The past had become an object for scientific inquiry” (15). History was seen by those toiling in the Church archives to produce “objective” knowledge about the past. Certain “facts” could cast a good, bad, or indifferent light upon the Church, but because they were neither intending to prove or disprove Mormonism, these facts in their minds served to nuance, compliment, complicate and enrich an otherwise rich history. The historians themselves realized that certain discoveries could prove uncomfortable for the Church. Bitton argues that he believes these facts are “quite within the capacity of the institution to endure” (19).



Not long into the historical renaissance, Church leaders began to object to the new histories that were being written by Mormon historians using Mormon archives. These “ordinary” histories – to use Shipps’s term – revealed “all the ambiguity and complexity of the human experience” (“The Mormon” 57). The Church objected to these histories on the grounds that they attempted to portray the past “objectively.” By perseverating on intimate details and attending obsessively to contexts that gave rise to “sacred” events, these histories desacralized the sacred past. To this end, Church leaders expressed concern that historians would undermine the way the Church was representing “true” belief by (1) emphasizing the foibles and all-too human qualities of past leaders by drawing attention to their errors; (2) overemphasizing contextual causes of events rather than divine causes; and (3) undermining the faith. To these stated, recorded objections to the historical work underway in the Church History Department under Arrington, the Church also believed that renewed attention on women’s public contributions to and participation in the Church would undermine its current position on women’s roles generally and ERA specifically. Rather than actually buttressing retrenchment goals, these histories were – according to Church leaders – engendering cognitive dissonance.

Thus, although these Mormon scholars emerged out of and considered themselves part of an “exhilarating” Mormon moment, influential ecclesiastical leaders came to view their methods as dangerous. Historians could make truth claims about the past that were “objectively” true but that conflicted with the Church’s interpretation of events. Mormon historiographers argue that the Golden Age came to an end because the institutional Church felt that its interpretation of the past had to be upheld and protected from those who would mount challenges on any grounds. Writing about the Mormon relationship to

history in *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*, Patricia Nelson Limerick argues that “Probably no case better represents the problem of history in conflict with faith than does Mormonism” (324) insofar as the Church is “deeply vulnerable to new discoveries and interpretations of the past” (327). In the late 1970s according to Limerick:

Several church leaders had “been harshly critical of the methods and motives of [Mormon] scholars who attempt ‘objective’ histories of the Church.” Particularly troubling, they felt, are efforts to “place what are supposed to be divinely inspired church doctrines in a relevant social and historical context.” Mormon history, said Elder Boyd Packer in 1982, should be a sacred narrative, in which readers can “see the hand of the Lord in every hour and every moment of the Church from its beginning till now.” If that meant writing history “selectively,” so be it, said Packer, criticizing historians who “write history as they were taught in graduate school, rather than as Mormons.” (328)

Authorities like Packer warned against the writing of histories conceived without the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. While most of the historians who endeavored to write Mormon history were devout members intent on exploring their heritage and garnering deeper identification with their tradition, the fruits of their labor brought an anti-intellectual backlash. By the late 1970s, during the height of the Equal Rights Amendment ratification period, some influential members of the General Authorities were moving to shut down certain kinds of histories that challenged, undermined, or

complicated official versions. Mormon missionaries, taking cues from the Church, were taking books off of library shelves.

Mormon historians and intellectuals felt targeted and defended their efforts. Wrote Linda and Jack Newell, the co-editors of *Dialogue*, the aforementioned independent journal of Mormon Studies, “We are gravely concerned that the faith of any Latter-day Saint would be questioned on the basis of his commitment to legitimate scholarship” (“Several LDS” B2). Arrington was forced to step down from his position as Church Historian and “transferred” to another post. The Church’s focus upon protecting its historical claims reached a crescendo in the early 1980s. On August 23, 1983, the Church publicly rebuked its intellectuals, specifically members of the *Sunstone-Dialogue* community who, despite warnings, had continued to press for “unfettered historical and doctrinal inquiry” (“Mormon Church”). One article published in the Church-owned *Deseret News* reported on the crackdown, leading with “Mormon Church officials are warning church members to publish only ‘faith-promoting’ stories” (“Several LDS” B2). The Church strenuously objected to what Packer described as “graduate school” historical methods. Shipps implied in 1982 that “sophisticated methodology and objective history” had, in a sense, become “dirty words” (“The Mormon” 57).

The Church’s stated concerns – that objective histories could subvert sacred events – belied several less obvious but equally critical problems. First, a critique of the fallibility of past leaders could undermine the authority of current leaders. Bitton contends directly with this point by describing some of the constraints under which he and Arrington worked in the Church History Department. He states that as they parsed through “competing” accounts of events, a “reading committee” was called together

because “Church leadership recognized the possibility of problems from versions of history that did not fit the image they had in mind” (18). While negotiating competing accounts is part of the historian’s purview, Bitton felt that the “reading committee” placed undue emphasis on image, and that the image that Church leaders wanted to preserve was their own. “The idea that nothing negative should be said about past Church leaders was,” according to Bitton, “a natural consequence of the position that nothing negative should be said about present leaders” (18). The authors of the *Mormon Corporate Empire* dub this tendency in the Mormon Church “patriolotry” or the impulse to place above all else “veneration for its highest officials” (Heinerman and Shupe 209).

Another threat to which these new histories and their methodologies gave rise relates directly to the role of women, and has not, to my knowledge, been cited on its own as an important reason the Church made moves to restrict publication of all serious scholarly works of Mormon history. As the Church was reinterpreting womanhood, multiple, well-researched accounts of earlier generations of Mormon women were being published and circulating through an emergent Mormon counterpublic. This emerging, historically-minded Mormon counterpublic was sustained through publications including *Dialogue*, *Sunstone*, *Utah Holiday*, *Utah Historical Quarterly* and *Exponent II* – publications that the Church did not own and could not control directly. Although this Mormon counterpublic took on different kinds of controversies, during the mid to late 1970s, it focused heavily upon race and gender. This educated, articulate group pushed back against the notion that Mormon women’s activity had always been relegated to the private sphere, using the Church’s own archival materials as evidence. Much of the inaugural 1974 issue and a portion of subsequent *Exponent II* issues were devoted to

reprinting archival materials including the more eloquent speeches, statements, and articles first published nearly eighty years before in the defunct press owned, run, and operated by Mormon women: *Woman's Exponent*. The purpose of reproducing these archival texts was to give contemporary Mormon women access to the ideas and perspectives held by their foremothers. By implication, the audience would relate those voices from the past to present issues of concern, including the women's liberation movement. *Exponent II*, particularly, encouraged contemporary Mormon women to see themselves as part of a tradition of *rhetors* and public writers. Publication of earlier archival texts in conversation with topics like ERA constitutes a rhetorical recontextualization: *Dear Readers*, these re-published speeches seemed to say to the 1970s audience, *We believe Mormon women's voices should be heard in public.*

Simultaneously, the first generation of historians of Mormon women's history participated in what we have described in feminist rhetorical historiography as *rescue*, *recovery* and *re-inscription*. Women historians and doctoral students in the mid 1970s were captivated by many important female public figures. One in particular, Emmeline Wells, captured the imagination of Mormon historian Carol Cornwall Madsen. During this time, Madsen began publishing on Wells and her extraordinary *public* life. In researching, historians like Madsen found ample textual evidence that Joseph Smith intended for women to "share" in the priesthood and to work in partnership with the priesthood. Smith's vision for the Relief Society and significantly, his then-followers' interpretation of that vision, included the idea that it would do far more than "benevolent" public works like other women's auxiliaries at the time. Smith "affirmed the right of women to use spiritual gifts" including the laying of hands (to give blessings and heal the

sick), washing and anointing, and speaking in tongues (Madsen, “The Nineteenth Century” 9) Women also participated in temple work, and Smith even lectured in Relief Society about the ways priesthood ordinances should be performed in the temple (Madsen, “The Nineteenth Century” 10). How strange it must have been to “discover” these documents in the Church archives at precisely the same historical moment that the Church was usurping Relief Society funds, buildings, publications, lessons, and institutional autonomy.

Other examples of this historical work to recover women’s contributions during the 1970s and early 1980s include Jean Bickmore White’s “Woman’s Place is in the Constitution: The Struggle for Equal Rights in Utah in 1895,” published in *Utah Historical Quarterly (UHQ)* in 1974. Beverly Beeton’s 1978 piece, also published in *UHQ*, “Woman Suffrage in Territorial Utah,” came out of her doctoral dissertation in history. “Surprising Ladies: Utah’s Nineteenth-Century Women Editors,” written by Sherilyn Cox Bennion was published in *UHQ* in 1981. Miriam B. Murphy examined in 1978 “The Working Women of Salt Lake City: A Review of the Utah Gazetteer, 1892-93.” *Brigham Young University Studies* published Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery’s 1980 co-authored piece, “Sweet Counsel and Seas of Tribulation: The Religious Life of the Women in Kirtland,” as well as Leonard Arrington’s 1979 piece, “Persons for All Seasons: Women in Mormon History.”

Finally, an explosion of interest in polygamy, while neither proving nor disproving the Church’s argument regarding women’s proper “role” per se, indexed the changing and highly political nature of family configuration. One example of this scholarship is Lawrence Foster’s work “Polygamy and the Frontier: Mormon Women in

Early Utah,” which was published in 1982. The whole concept of polygamy undermined the Church’s claim to be returning to an earlier understanding of “family” in the Mormon tradition. As evidence mounted that their prophet had a radical view of familial relationships, the Church’s argument for a return to an American- “Victorian” ideal appeared all the more absurd. The Saints did not espouse this ideal in “Victorian” times.

In 1982, Church President Kimball “transferred” the members of the Church Historical Department by moving the majority of the archival collection to the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History at Brigham Young University. Arrington who was relieved of his calling to be Church Historian, served as the Institute’s director. James Allen became Chair of the History Department at BYU and Davis Bitton resumed his full-time professorship at the University of Utah. Although projects undertaken during this period continued to be published well into the 1980s, its symbolic if not literal end attended Arrington’s unceremonious relief. President Kimball stated that he believed (and some, like Shipps, concurred on this specific point) that historians engaged in scholarly historical projects on Mormonism should make the Church’s flagship university and not the Church’s headquarters their home base. In the process of ejecting its professional historian and moving its archives, the Church’s leadership, specifically the First Presidency, made several other changes with regard to archival access, dramatically impacting how Mormon histories could be written.

To conclude this section, retrenchment-era goals and programs are essential to understanding the institutional impulses that created and destroyed the Golden Age. In historiographies of the time, there is an emphasis – to my mind, slightly overstated – upon the Church’s belief that scholarly histories would undermine sacred history. Sacred

history is not so much written down as enacted through ongoing cultural practices designed to engender “true” belief: to keep the preferred memory alive. As Shipps and many others have pointed out, “faith promoting” histories are not “ordinary” histories. Those designed to “prove” or “disprove” Mormonism are pure polemic; they are boring, saccharine, propaganda. Historians countered (then and now) that history can be used to promote the faith and provide a meaningful, nuanced, and complex account of events.

The Church’s decision to dismantle the Church History Department assembled under Arrington’s stewardship is evidence of an evolving position consistent with the retrenchment ethos as *only* its leadership could interpret the Mormon past. Certainly, one aspect of institutional “care” of the past is furthering “true” belief by protecting sacred history. But the historical Golden Age drew attention to other aspects of the past that the Church did not want in circulation: the fallibility of its past leaders and the histories of Mormon women. There was one additional aspect of the past that the institution did not particularly want explored: the Saints’ early economic cooperative effort, which ran counter to the Church leadership’s unqualified embrace of free-market capitalism.

### **Institutional Efforts to Staunch “Professional” Histories**

In the previous section, I provided some indication of the leadership’s response to the Mormon historical renaissance. Several of the General Authorities, including Boyd Packer (quoted above), raged against intellectualism. Mormon historians were rebuked and called upon to write only “faith promoting” histories. Arrington was “transferred” out of Church headquarters to BYU. This move, I believe, was meant to appear even-handed and logical: a bureaucratic decision rather than a political one. But behind the scenes, the First Presidency and the Apostle who would become the next Church President, Ezra T.



Benson, accused the Arrington team of bringing “a humanistic philosophy” into the Church.<sup>66</sup>

According to the *Mormon Corporate Empire*, new measures were taken at BYU to severely restrict access to the Church’s archival materials. Both Mormon and non-Mormon historians were denied access to certain documents. Researchers reported that their research notes were censored (Heinerman and Shupe 210). Church presses suppressed or “edited” material and pressured other, non-Mormon regional presses that depend upon Mormon support (including, for example, book reviews in Mormon-owned regional publications like *Deseret News*) to reject works that did not project the requisite image. Along these lines, should such books or articles find publication, Mormon owned entities would be forbidden from citing them – even in footnotes (Heinerman and Shupe 210). In a stunning 1983 article called “Like the Tigers of Old Time: Powerful Institutions Often Coerce the Writer of History,” Davis Bitton laments (and finds historical precedence for) the Church’s extreme measures, which he lists:

1. Limiting access of researchers and writers to materials.
2. Allowing the materials to be examined but looking over the research notes and forbidding certain details.
3. Encouraging or discouraging publication through Church channels. . . .
4. Encouraging or discouraging works that have been published by carrying them or not carrying them in Church outlets. . . .
5. Letting it be known that certain works that are published are somewhat less than kosher. The procedure here ranges from talks to certain groups, phone calls, statements by secretaries and assistants, and the rumor mill. In

some societies, I would guess, such disapproval would be the surest way to guarantee the success of a work, but apparently it has rather good success in stifling historical writing.

6. Works that are published can also be kept from the knowledge of the reading public . . . (19)

To this list, he might well add, taking books off of library shelves and offering to “replace” them with newer editions. In 1982, word came down that “no manuscript materials, including papers, journals or diaries or record books of any General Authority member, past or present, living or dead, could be researched by any Mormon scholar other than those employed by the history division of the Church” (Heinerman and Shupe 214). Lawrence Foster writes in 1982 of the recent, dramatic changes:

As a result of [the institution’s] fears, the last few years have seen an increasing drive from some factions of the Church to restrict or even put a stop to serious historical studies of Mormonism. Leaders of the Church are now calling publicly for their historians to write only sanitized, saccharine accounts, treatments which would best be characterized as “propaganda” by an objective observer. Never in the past decade has the outlook for the serious writing of Mormon history appeared so grim. (44)

Mormon historians and the publishers of counterpublic periodicals grew increasingly concerned about their ability to remain Mormon and do their work. Heinerman and Shupe state in 1986 that several Mormon intellectuals they interviewed for the book stated that they had received “pressure” from Church authorities to self-censor (212). A Spring 1993 article in *Dialogue* by Lavina Fielding Anderson documented “over a hundred cases of

ecclesiastical pressure directed primarily at scholars and historians” (“Freedom” 198). Ecclesiastical abuses engender forgettings in myriad ways, a topic to which I will return. About the Mormon Church’s herculean efforts to control who accesses, reads, takes notes on, writes about, and publishes histories using its primary archival sources, the authors of *The Mormon Corporate Empire* state: “One is reminded of the sobering line in George Orwell’s novel, 1984: ‘Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past’” (Heinerman and Shupe 214–15).

### **Family History: A Church-inspired Methodology**

As demonstrated, the Church sought to discourage academic histories of Mormonism and objected to professional methodology. The Church’s critique was leveled against the fruits of this intellectual work and also against the “objective” interpretive lens brought to bear upon archival evidence. For professional Mormon historians, even when their “‘testimonies’ tell them that God may intervene in history[,] their historical training tells them that such a proposition is never provable and that they should be content with conclusions that can justifiably be drawn from the surviving evidence” (Bitton and Arrington 147). Church leaders objected to such a view, calling it “sophistry” designed to “demean that which is sacred” (Heinerman and Shupe 213). To paraphrase Apostle Boyd Packer’s speech on the subject, Mormon historians should write Mormon history as *Mormons*, people who believe in ongoing divine intervention in human affairs.

While criticizing “professional” history and its methodologies, the Church vigorously encouraged its members to produce certain kinds of historical narratives and historical documents at home under the retrenchment-era name of *Family History*

(described in *Chapter Three: On History*). It may appear paradoxical that the Church would charge every single Mormon to keep a history while dismantling its history department and claiming its institutional right to interpret the Mormon past. How could an incessant, Church-wide proliferation of lay histories buttress (rather than subvert) the Church's singular claim to the past?

In taking an anti-intellectual, anti-academic stand, the Church sought to establish identification through the production and circulation of certain kinds of histories: genealogies, books of remembrance, and personal journals. The process by and through which these documents are made is discussed at length in *Chapter Three: On History*. In what follows, I examine the ways in which family history as way of doing history – a history methodology forwarded by the Mormon Church – dis/ables ways of seeing the past. This way of doing history offers writers the opportunity to renew their faith through near constant re-appropriation of the past.

### ***The Family Group***

This orientation focuses first and foremost, upon the family as the most important sub-group within Mormonism. In other words, Mormons are a group of Mormon families. On its face, this might seem like a logical sub-grouping, but it is only one of many possibilities. Mormons could also group themselves by their class status, race, or gender. One reason a focus upon the family unit is so important as an interpretive lens for the Church is that it serves to conceal or diminish these other differences. For example, as I argued in *On Memory*, none of the thirteen statues represented “sisters” or women as peers in the Monument to Women. This omission, I believe, helps perpetuate the focus

upon the biological family as the primary social group and may prevent women from seeing as united their political, social, or economic interests.

A family-oriented methodology emphasizes gendered distinctions. Biological relationships supersede other relationships. This orientation to the past suggests first that women's most important function is reproductive: Woman is the physical link in time between generations. It may even reproduce the idea for women that one's life be *measured by* reproductive success. Genealogical histories encourage identification with one's blood relations on that basis. Genealogical continuity serves to foster the impression of continuity with the past. It directs the family historian's attention to presumed similarities based upon lineage instead of differences in respective historical contexts.

### ***Objectively True***

One's family history – in terms of the genealogy – is checked against official Church archives, before a new “link” may be established. This system gives the creator a means of verifying his or her past. Subsequent findings “about” an individual ancestor, however, are not necessarily tested or put in conversation with other historical facts from that time period. This results in a belief that one has “true” historical knowledge, but knowledge untethered to other historical events or discursive forces. Without necessarily having a context in which to interpret said facts, the system provides the historian (every Mormon) with a sense of objective and tangible access to his ancestors.

### ***A Resource in the Present***

In his 1979 monograph, *The Roots of Modern Mormonism*, anthropologist of Mormonism Mark Leone explains the ways in which this “sustained, do-it-yourself

system” constructs an orientation to and understanding of the past that conceals the role of the present in the entire enterprise:

History is usually thought to be objectively true by those who research and write about it. This is true whether the historian is amateur, professional, Mormon or gentile: history is taken to be independent of the writer and to have a life of its own. The objective independence that the past is thought to have hides both the role of the present in bringing it to life and the factors in the present that determine the shape of the past when it is resuscitated. (200)

Leone is asserting here that which historians know but don’t always acknowledge. Our interest in the past emerges out of unresolved questions in the present. In this way, what historians “discover” is some version of what they were looking for. Professional historians – even the most antiquarian among us – weigh the present when conducting our research and presenting our findings. In the last fifty years, historians have grown far more alert to the ways in which, to repeat my earlier assertion, history confronts for present purposes a transformative or controversial event, person, or period in a “symbolic contest for the communal meaning of ...identity” (Morris III 90). Phrased another way:

Concern over how much of history is revealed, and how it is presented, is the tribute paid by those who recognize that it is in fact relevant to the present. History is not the dead past, for it is not dead and, as someone has discerned, is in many respects not even past. (Bitton 19)

Such considerations on the kinds of present needs that engender history might escape the lay historian, who is, after all, responsible for earning her keep in other ways.

This, however, is precisely Leone's point: Material conditions in the present render it both difficult and problematic to reflect too much on what family history reveals (and doesn't reveal). Family history in the Mormon Church functions as a means of continually rewriting the past on an individual by individual (or family by family) basis to render it usable and meaningful to that person in the present. Explains Leone:

Given that the past is used in the service of the present and that the factors determining its use are unseen or disguised, the particular innovation in the Mormons' use of this otherwise universal process is that they locate it among all their people, where it functions unfettered to allow each person to find his or her own image in the past as well as a new image whenever that becomes necessary. (200)

This methodology inspires Mormons as individuals to interpret the present by accessing different facts, vignettes, anecdotes or other "data" about the past.

Particularly because of the family-centrism in the genealogy and the book of remembrance, Mormon lay histories tend to emphasize autobiographical identification with the past. Instead of recognizing the profound differences between what was then and what is now – the radical changes, breaks, and gaps – Mormons find similarity, progression, and continuity: "The more recognizable is the past, the more successful has been the effort at recovering it" (Leone 201). To sum up the view of Mormon lay history Leone presents: "all history is an individual's reflection; just as a mirror never tells Mormons what it saw yesterday, history never tells Mormons what they or their society looked like before. It cannot do so because the living Mormon is the image in the mirror" (201).

***Family History Conceals Structural Inequality***

The family history genres Mormons are required to produce garner a perspective on history that conceals troubling aspects of the past, like the nature of ongoing relations of structural, systemic inequality; these genres elide the profound discontinuity between the idealized Mormon past and the present. Leone argues that the do-it-yourself history fosters “memorylessness” because both the present and the past are in constant flux. He arrives at this characterization by foregrounding the role economic, political and material needs play in constructing the past. Mormon historiography is driven by present necessity:

[Mormons] shuffle and reshuffle the data of the past in order to bring about rapid adjustment to the continually changing conditions under which [they] live. Thus changes are rationalized, projected elsewhere, and hidden, and the Mormon’s actual condition, clearly characterized by Smith’s critique of society, lies with the rest of the Mormon past, disarticulated. (207)

Leone uses two examples as cases in point. First, he demonstrates how family and genealogical histories of the Arizona settlements he studied disguised the fact that while 80% of marriages took place within towns (endogamous), the richest 20% of Mormons married other wealthy Mormons, regardless of where they lived. Thus, leading families were able to maintain wealth and power. A second example concerns the Mormon history of Native Americans in the Southwest. Among the Arizona Mormons with whom Leone worked and who lived in close proximity to multiple American Indian tribes, few had been exposed to the widely accepted histories concerning (or believed when confronted



with) the diverse ethnographic backgrounds of the various, different tribes. Most accepted without qualification, the history of “Lamanites” or Native Americans presented in the *Book of Mormon*. This is troubling because “characterizing Indians as descendants of those who failed to keep God’s work and who were punished with red skins is a way of using a supposedly objective past to perpetuate social relations”; moreover, “it actively reproduces and extends [social relations]” (203).

Although Leone does not cite the status of women, it is plausible to extend his theory and argue that genealogical and family stories also conceal women’s economic immobility, relations of dependence upon male relatives, limited options in marriage and family arrangements, and lack of personal or professional fulfillment. By the same token, family anecdotes could glorify the accomplishments or experiences of specific women with whom the historian identifies. By focusing on a glowing or favorite exception, the lay historian might easily miss the rule.

***Family History Conceals Disconnect Between Mormon Past and Mormon Present***

What Leone means to suggest by the term “memorylessness” is that making family histories, or producing these home archives, is important, but being able to report accurately upon or to understand the past is not so. He calls this

the historical puzzle of Mormonism. It presents the circumstance of an entire population which has written down virtually every important, and unimportant, thing, put them all in one library, and given everybody access to them. This remarkable circumstance becomes even more puzzling upon discovery that, despite real use and familiarity with these

data, most Mormons, especially older ones, can report virtually nothing about the past. (209)

Leone explains this puzzle in two ways. One comes out of a general Mormon conviction that history is of limited value. History is only marginally useful in the Mormon worldview because everything that came before leads up to the restoration of the Church and its aftermath. The causes of history are part of a divine plan that was not visible before but now is.

But Leone offers another reason for the historical puzzle. While Smith and his immediate followers mounted a radical critique of American society – and sacrificed dearly to live their beliefs – much of that original critique was dismantled such that Church could survive and endure. Even as Mormon lay historiography shields members from structural inequalities that persist today among Mormons, it shields them from considering the structural inequalities that led to the creation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints one hundred and fifty years ago. What were Smith’s critiques of American society and what was his vision? Economic interdependence among the Saints, communal, self-sustained living, and equality of opportunity economic among believers; the implementation of patriarchal marriage – a radical redefinition of the social institution; a Kingdom of priests; a self-contained, self-governing political, economic, social and spiritual space within America. Members who looked closely at the past using the methodologies employed by professional historians might find that the Church – seeking that productive tension between accommodation and peculiarity –sacrificed visionary critiques of American society for a series of expeditious ones. Leone dubs this the “empty opposition.”

It may be useful here to return to Stormer's argument that scholars consider how institutions foster forgetting. The Church's family history pedagogy teaches members how to research the past in such a way that their discoveries will not threaten the present political order. Embedded in this remembering is also forgetting. Thus, in teaching members how to do history a certain way, the Church is engendering public forgetting.

What Church archives now defend, is the idea of a people, the Saints, but a people whose original purpose and ethos had been compromised with the accommodation policies that dismantled Joseph Smith, Jr.'s radical vision. Retrenchment policies fostered a sense that the group's sacred identity was safe, but that its way of life was not, although, in fact, the reverse is more accurate: no longer under threat from hostile forces due to its successful assimilation, Mormon peculiarity – Mormon identity – was (and perhaps still is) in question.

The Mormon obsession with producing historical documents, particularly during the retrenchment era, could, from one perspective, be interpreted as the encroachment of history upon memory. Pierre Nora explains that memory exists as an actual phenomenon in the present for the present; memory establishes a bond tying us to the eternal present, whereas history constitutes an escape from the present. For Nora, the present is commensurate with life. The archival impulse to save every trace, to commemorate, to memorialize, to build monuments to and hold celebrations "in honor of" constitute examples of the attempt to conserve the present through collecting external, material traces, while memory – and thus the living present – escapes capture. Looking at Mormon lay historiography through Nora's lens, I argue that these practices perpetually

foster forgetting: They constitute a way of avoiding engagement with the present and the past.

We see in Mormon culture from the late 1970s an example of incessant archiving. Families produce volumes including genealogies, books of remembrance, and journals in home archives, which then migrate into institutional archives. And these institutional archives – vaults bored into the earth – continue to expand to accommodate more and more records. Pierre Nora asks us to consider the cause of this proliferation of *lieux de memoire* because the drive to produce historical documents and archive them forecloses the eruption of memory – experience – in the present. Nora warns against this “eradication of memory by history.” This practice of constantly creating history denies both the past and the present: the trivial is remembered, the past, forgotten. Family history and the proliferation of migrant home archives constitute an escape. I see evidence of this in Allen’s journals. As I argued in Chapter Three, she is engaged in a disciplinary process that does alienate her from her present needs and desires. Allen is not alone. In my view, the Mormon family history methodology enacts an escape from the present as a discipline of historical production. As I have already argued, this discipline aims to control the body.

In apparent inverse of the idea that Mormon historical practices lead to an eradication of the present, Leone believes “Mormons lock themselves into the present more effectively than the rest of society” (201). Leone’s critique flips on its head the idea that the obsessive history writing distracts Mormons from the present. He believes their methodologies tie them to the present in such a way that the past disappears entirely. This thesis echoes the argument furthered by scholars of public memory studies: The past is

mobilized to serve the present. In Leone's reading of Mormonism, the present creates the past. By obscuring aspects of the past without appearing to do so, family histories may become reflections of the writer's immediate preoccupations. The focus upon the family as a group, biological kinship, and producing select objective facts en/genders identification with a certain kind of past, but it does not grant the historian access to broader movements and trends. Thus, this methodology conceals structural inequalities and discontinuities. This methodology is instrumental for the Church insofar as it is unlikely to reveal ongoing institutional dysfunction that perpetuates advantages for some over others.

Nora's and Leone's theses paradoxically work together to explain the advantage of lay family historical production. On the one hand, such practices conceal upsetting political exigencies in the present. At the same time, such practices conceal aspects of the past that could contradict or upend the Church's interpretation of that past. In short, by requiring this historical production, the Church proclaims its commitment to history while instantiating acts of forgetting. Unlike professional historical methodologies, the family history methodology would tend to work against political mobilization and organized resistance to the institution based upon past injustices. To the extent these injustices are recognized as such, the historian would tend not to see them as part of a pattern.

### **Women, ERA, and the Institutional Ethos of Silence(ing)**

This section considers the ways in which the institution attempts to cultivate public memory and eliminate competing counter-memories by engendering a practice of silencing. I return, now, to the opening anecdote about the Mormon missionaries, and the

way in which the story is reminiscent of the problem of memory. In the first section of *Memory, History, Forgetting*, Ricoeur recounts the “Greek heritage” of the problem of memory. Plato poses the problem of memory, and specifically its relationship to error, in *Theaetetus*, by offering a metaphor. Suppose, Socrates suggests in the dialogue, each person has in his soul a block of wax. Upon this wax we make impressions of those things we want to remember. Later, after the passage of time, we are then able to remember those things whose image remains upon the wax (Ricoeur 9). By contrast, “whatever is obliterated or cannot be impressed, we forget” (Ricoeur 9). “Forgetting,” in this model, “forces us to explore” the “alleged tie between image and imprint” (Ricoeur 415). Trouble begins once the image (an actual event, person, or experience) is separated in time from the imprint (the memory).

For Plato, the “disturbing threat” that hovers around memory might be characterized as *misremembering* or *misapprehending*. Plato, who was, above all concerned with the facility with which man will embrace false beliefs and render judgments upon such beliefs, saw in the unreliability of memory the capacity to mistake “an image as something that appears similar to a thing though it is not in reality that thing” (Phillips 211). “In all instances” explains Kendall R. Phillips in the article “The Failure of Memory: Reflections on Rhetoric and Public Remembrance”:

Plato is concerned with the potential for deception, for false opinion and judgment and in the case of memory for misremembering.

Misremembering can be seen as an almost primary instance of this deception in that in the act of misremembering we deceive ourselves by misapplying an image to the imprint left by past experience. (211)

Plato therefore sought to avoid the “active process of making knowledge claims about the past that are in error” (Phillips 212). Thus, in Phillips’s reading of the ancient Greeks, we would do better to oppose “memory with misremembering, or remembering differently” (217).

During this particular moment in the 1970s when Mormon missionaries attempted to replace some books in an Arkansas college library, the Church was concerned that the proliferation of “secular,” academic histories on Mormonism would undermine its sacred past; it was concerned that in reading these histories, its members would begin to “remember differently.” Plato’s concern in *Theatetus* is the possibility that a skilled *rhetor* will move audiences to embrace “false memory,” and in false memory, false belief. From this perspective, Plato goes on in *The Sophist* to “construct the relationship between image and imagination and in this way frame an understanding of how the sophists...can craft deceptive images that resemble truth while not being true” (Phillips 211).

In terms of our current discussion, the Mormon Church *qua* institution must keep “alive” in public memory Joseph Smith, Jr. and its interpretation of his story. Keeping the prophet present in the minds of an increasingly scattered and diverse group of Mormons arguably constitutes the Church’s overarching mission. And yet, memory is unpredictable, unstable, and capricious. The word memory comes from the Greek word *mermeros*, to care for something losable, something able to be lost. Memories are the living re-presentation of those people whose actions (and the events they transpired) are now absent (Scott 150); as Plato claims, memories are in constant danger of becoming lost or, worse, distorted. Plato’s concern is with the preservation and reproduction of

public memory in the service of maintaining true belief. As Phillips states, Plato's admonishment might be: "Never Remember Differently" not "Never Forget" (212).

The bulwark Aristotle builds against the prospect of misremembering is the art of recollection. Significantly, the purpose of this art is not only to safeguard the individual from his imagination – the prospect of misremembering – but also to safeguard the community from being led astray by those skilled in the art of speaking who would exploit the fluidity and fallibility of memory in the present for their own gains. Thus, the purpose of recollection is to re-present – collectively – the past as "stable" and "immutable" (Phillips 218). Phillips asserts that by re-presenting the past together, communities are engaging in a process of "care" for their culture.

Nurturing the appearance of public memory through, for example, cultural practices, is a way, then, of keeping a memory alive in a group. Cultural practices are one buffer against loss of memory. Culture, explains Charles E. Scott, shares a root with "cultivate," referring to the process of "breaking, preparing, and tending ground for planning and growth, for careful nurturance and production. In its broader usage, culture means, of course, development and transmission of practices, beliefs, and knowledges" (Scott 150). Through recurrence and repetition, cultural practices nurture continuity and stability by continually re-presenting that which is always in danger of being lost.

As a scholar writing in the early twenty-first century, Phillips does not assert that the process of recollection guarantees fidelity to the event, person, place or experience being recalled (as Plato and Aristotle would have hoped), only that it reproduces a certain "common form" or framework: an assumption or orientation to the past (one term Phillips uses is "fantasy") shared by a community that often serves to perpetuate the



status quo and enable a preservation of culture. Instead of lamenting the inevitability that memory will fail and the past might be represented *differently* than it “actually” was, we now accept that “the past occurred and was real, but that past is not contained by or equated with history” or, for that matter, memory (Vivian, “The Art of Forgetting” 551) There is no *arhetorical* means of representing the past. This means that “true” belief is always under threat; it may not even be true.

Looked at this way, the story in the news about the missionaries attempting to remove the books signals a fear that Mormon “true” belief was then in danger of being *misremembered*. Since we have already established that all representations of Smith and his actions are rhetorical, the story about the book replacements signals that the institutional Church’s interpretation of Mormonism was, at that moment, under threat. Taking out of circulation (literally speaking) those reifications of memory that reproduce “false” beliefs becomes in this context a material and rhetorical enactment of cultural care. Histories as material records of the past were perceived as challenges to the way the institution instantiated its interpretation of Mormonism. At the same time, the Church had to guard against counter-memories.

Scholars of rhetoric working in memory studies widely share a belief that rhetoric “provides the mechanism for instantiating a reified and solid sense of public remembrance and for disciplining subsequent recollections” and therefore, rhetoric *also* provides the “resources for challenging the established enthymemes of recollection and opening spaces for remembering differently” (Phillips 219). The “rhetorical work” that goes into constructing and also deconstructing frameworks of public remembrance is of

particular interest to those whose counter-memories and counter-narratives continue to be “forgotten.”

One of Allen’s overarching concerns was that her counter-memories (and those like her) would go unheard. What Phillips’s work suggests is that counter-narratives that challenge dominant myths or widely shared cultural values may be “disciplined” in public deliberative space. To this end, such counter-narratives may be dismissed entirely, altered to conform to preconceived ideas, refuted, or go “unheard.” As the scholar Suhi Choi emphasizes by highlighting the role the U.S. media played in “forgetting” the Korean survivors’ narratives of a massacre, institutions can and do play a role in engendering consensus about what happened in the past. Institutions marshal resources to preserve certain memories – such as organizing and financing construction of monuments and supporting the work of certain historians or history-writing practices – while also “disciplining” the emergence of others. Silencing is one way institutions like the Mormon Church aim to control the emergence of potentially disruptive counter-narratives in the public sphere.

Narratives may and sometimes do threaten institutions by calling attention to the way they distribute goods, merchandise, rights, duties, obligations, advantages, responsibilities, and honors. In the eyes of an historical actor or group of actors, an institution’s distribution practices may be just or unjust. Powerful stakeholders who oversee institutions and/or benefit from the way they distribute power and goods often resist attempts at transformation, in part, by silencing narratives and testimonies that would index unjust or unfair practices of distribution. Such silencing occurs through official and unofficial channels of communication, and one purpose of silencing is to

thwart certain voices from bearing witness to past injustices among the institution's stakeholders. By representing what has been forgotten through narratives, witnesses also provoke reflection on and possibly a reconsideration of shared or collective values.

As she was assembling her archive in the early 1990s, Allen was forcefully arguing that the Church acted unjustly by marshaling its resources to defeat the Equal Rights Amendment. Allen alleged and found documentation that Church funds, including special assessments of wealthy members in several states, paid for anti-ERA campaigns in other states; Church and Relief Society member lists and telephone trees were used to recruit campaign workers, demonstrators, and activists; Church buildings were used for anti-ERA and right wing meetings; anti-ERA political activists were given spiritual "callings" and their activities designated as special responsibilities; and members were charged from the pulpit in official and unofficial communiqués to oppose ERA and those candidates who supported its ratification. For these reasons, deploying its spiritual, human, and financial resources in the "battle" over ERA constituted in Allen's mind a two-fold injustice. First and most broadly, Church leaders and those in positions of institutional authority used the resources and contributions of *all* members in order to perpetuate male privilege and in American society resulting in the ongoing, unfair distribution of rights, duties, obligations, advantages, responsibilities, and honors among women and men. Second, the Church attempted – by codifying certain language practices – to conceal from its own members and American citizens (as stakeholders) that it was distributing its collective resources to codify and perpetuate this injustice. Exposing or attempting to expose unjust practices threatened the institution's own narrative and its

*ethos*. Thus, the institution had reasons to silence her and those who wanted to re-present aspects of the past that had been absent or forgotten in the official record.

To couch this observation in the language of rhetorical theory and memory studies, institutions emerge out of, depend upon, and also reproduce (intentionally and unintentionally) the dominant myths and fantasies of a culture. Certainly, some institutions are dedicated to challenging (some of these) closely held fantasies and myths. Some other institutions aim to preserve dominant culture out of ideological conviction and/or the benefits their powerful stakeholders reap in the (given and fragile) cultural context. Mounting challenges to culture(s) as well as caring for culture(s) requires rhetorical work. Scott draws attention to the care that goes into the preservation of culture insofar as the appearance of public memories draw attention to both presence *and* absence. In the language of memory studies, new memories – often in the form of testimonies or narratives – will always emerge to speak into gaps or silences, to represent the past differently. Still, institutions have access to resources not often available to individuals. As such, they have the ability to reach audiences and leverage these resources to perpetuate the appearance of certain memories over others; at the same time, institutions also have at their disposal tools to inhibit the disclosure of counter-narratives that could mount challenges to the myths, fantasies and culture that enables them to thrive and endure.

One way that the Mormon Church deployed policies to silence dissent and counter-memory during the ERA period is through foreclosing opportunities for women to speak in front of those in authority, the all male priesthood. In Sonia Johnson's memoir, *From Housewife to Heretic*, a book Allen admired for its portrayal of the

Mormon Church's anti-ERA involvement, Johnson provides a narrative of account of her growing awareness of the Mormon Church's unfair treatment of women. Johnson garnered national attention in August 1978 as the articulate and outspoken leader of Mormons for ERA who flustered U.S. Senator from Utah, Orrin Hatch, during a subcommittee hearing on the issue.

Ten years before Johnson became a political figure, in 1968, she sat in church "stunned" as the then-bishop for her Palo Alto, California ward, read "from the pulpit a priesthood directive sent out by the first presidency of the church prohibiting women from leading the congregation in prayer in the sacrament meeting of the church from that time forward" (85). Rather than extending or continuing a long-standing policy (as that of excluding women from holding the priesthood), the prohibition against women offering prayer in sacrament meeting constituted a *new* restriction designed to further limit opportunities for women to speak publicly in front of men. In one *Salt Lake Tribune* article from the *Sandra Allen Collection*, Johnson stated that she had been offering prayers at sacrament meeting since she could toddle (Rollins A9). As Johnson points out, 1968-1970 marked the beginning of Priesthood Correlation in which the women's auxiliary, the Relief Society, was subsumed and "stripped" of its institutional power (discussed in *Chapter Two: On Memory*). The Church's takeover of the Relief Society was portrayed as a means of standardizing Church programs. Correlation was not ideologically neutral; it was a method of redistributing power and resources to the advantage of men and disadvantage of women.

Of the new prohibition regarding prayer in sacrament meetings, Johnson observed: "I saw that the men of the church had arbitrarily taken away from women

rights and privileges that are ours from our Heavenly Parents and are therefore inviolable. I also realized that we are without recourse because we are without a voice in the policy-making of the church” (86). What Johnson means is that Church women, because they are denied priesthood authority and, as such, representation in the institutional bodies where such policy decisions are made, had no means of challenging the prohibition.

Cheryl Glenn explains in *Unspoken: A Rhetoric of Silence* that:

In any advanced society, opportunities to speak (while others listen) reside in rituals, gestures, and ceremonial occasions. Alongside these speaking opportunities are formal rules, laws, and contracts. Together, the opportunities and rules comprise the continued divisions in the social world as well as one’s personal identity. (27)

Glenn goes on to assert that this personal identity and “practical sense” are related to one’s power in political, economic, and social realms. In other words, explicit institutional policies that prevent certain stakeholders from speaking impose culturally accepted limits upon what perspectives are heard, whose interests are protected and whose memories are validated or honored.

In this case, the LDS Church made a move to restrict the venues available to non-priesthood holders, especially women, during a time when they were poised to offer counter-memories of women’s public capacities. Even as the LDS Church took over management of Relief Society funds and programs, it imposed limits upon the places where women could voice objections over such moves, or offer counter-narratives of their successful, public role(s) as leaders of and participants in a woman-run organization. Other institutional rules and procedures foreclosed the possibility of raising objections to

the new rules in public. Institutions, unlike individuals, engender, preserve, and alter rituals and ceremonies as a means of distributing authority and power and therefore validating whose stories may be heard.

A newspaper clipping in the *Sandra Allen Collection* from September 1978 reveals that the ban against women offering prayers in sacrament meeting was ultimately lifted. President Kimball, during the height of the national ERA debate – two months prior to the Nevada Referendum vote and a month after Sonia Johnson’s highly publicized appearance before the Senate Subcommittee – announced the change in official policy. According to a synopsis of his remarks, “women may now offer prayers in sacrament meetings – a privilege previously reserved for male priesthood holders” (“Mormon Women Given” 13). The article provides context for the decision, stating that the issue had become “a sore spot with some Mormon women in the debate of the Equal Rights Amendment”; Johnson’s group, Mormons for ERA, is mentioned by name (“Mormon Women Given” 13). Lifting the ban appeared to be a concession to women, some of whom described the ban “as an example of discrimination against women within the church” (“Mormon Women Given” 13). President Kimball explains in this speech to regional representatives – contributing credence to Johnson’s view that the ban was “arbitrary” to begin with – that there was no scriptural reason for it (“Mormon Women Given” 13). This particular reversal suggests, on the one hand, that Mormon women can, in certain unique cases, effectively use their voices to pressure the male hierarchy to reconsider anti-woman policies, and, on the other hand, that men can and do decide – sometimes on a whim – in what circumstances women are allowed to speak.<sup>67</sup> It is precisely the capriciousness of these kinds of institutional decisions that many women

resent, and which has led them to protest their exclusion from the priesthood. By blocking women's access to the priesthood and therefore any leadership position within the Church, the institution's stakeholders retain control over how its resources – material, social, and religious – are distributed. And the male leadership – in 1978 as now – rejects the possibility that women will “ever” hold the priesthood reserving their right, into the future, to allocate such resources as they see fit.<sup>68</sup>

Exclusion from the priesthood also means that Mormon women who protest the Church's unjust practices may lose certain privileges, like the ability to enter Mormon temples, retain a Church calling, or associate with other Mormons outside of church services; those who dissent may also face excommunication. Excommunicated Mormons may seek and gain readmission, but only if they repent, publicly abandon their critiques, and renounce their positions. In short, readmission requires that one “forget” one's experiences of injustice, abandon one's pursuit of justice, and renounce one's testimony or counter-narrative. Male dissenters also face similar forms of censure, however, due to their access to the priesthood, they may advocate for changes in certain forums closed to women, and, if “charged” with an offense against the Church, face a group of peers. Women, on the other hand, who speak out against policy face the “charges” against them in ecclesiastical courts wherein their male, priesthood-holding accusers also act as judge and jury. *From Housewife to Heretic* – as the title suggests – recounts Sonia Johnson's experience of being charged, found guilty, and excommunicated on account of her public critique of the Mormon Church's position on ERA, specifically, and its treatment of women generally. Her accuser, Ward Bishop Jeffrey Willis, was also her judge (Weiss 45).



During her testimony in front of the Senate Subcommittee hearing – two years before her excommunication – Johnson was asked by Senator Bayh whether she “expected difficulty within the Mormon church because of her strong statements on behalf of the ERA,” according to reporting in the *Salt Lake Tribune* and housed in the *Sandra Allen Collection*; “‘I hope there won’t be,’ she replied” (Arvidson B-1). She had already indicated that many Mormons expressed support for her views in private but wanted to remain anonymous because they are “afraid of what the church will do to them” (Arvidson B-1). Such fears of retribution or reprisal from the Church for holding an opposing view on the ERA are expressed in other documents in the *Sandra Allen Collection* as in “Mormons Dare Support the ERA” (Cooper 1). Shortly after Johnson’s testimony, two different Church spokesmen offered two different statements about the potential ramifications for active Mormons who make known their support for the ERA. Charles R. Gibbs spoke first in answer to questions from the media. He was responding to questions about a call for prayers issued by Utah Mormons for ERA, a group of dissenters that had been emboldened, perhaps, by Johnson’s appearance before the U.S. Senate. According to Gibbs, “members who oppose the Church’s stand could in some circumstances be released by local leaders from their Church callings or be denied temple recommends, which approve temple admittance”; Gibbs explained that “Church members are expected to give heed and counsel to Church leaders on matters such as opposing the ERA” (“LDS Church” A-7). A later statement, issued by Don LeFevre, struck a softer tone. LeFevre indicated members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who joined Utah Mormons for ERA (or, perhaps, similar groups) would lose temple recommends only in an “extreme case” (“LDS Church” A-7). Another article, also in the

*Sandra Allen Collection*, rephrased LeFevre's comments to mean that "the First Presidency had not made any statements about member-ERA supporters" ("LDS Leaders" B-2). These statements offer mixed messages, but not necessarily comforting ones for those who held pro-ERA views. Taken together, the messages seem indicate that Church leaders had little tolerance for dissent and would reserve the right on a case by case basis to determine whether or not a member would face punishment.

It is important to recognize that when institutions leverage their policies and authority – as in the Mormon Church's ecclesiastical justice system – to "silence" certain members, they are engendering both remembering and forgetting. The Church counts on events like the well-publicized coverage of Sonia Johnson's excommunication to be remembered so that those who have experienced injustice will "forget" their narratives and remain silent rather than join the accused in protest. Sonia Johnson's narrative – after her excommunication – became a national bestseller; she appeared on the cover of *People*; she garnered interviews and interest in multiple publications with national readership; she became a topic of conversation among Mormons and scholars in the nascent field of Mormon Studies. Her narrative could not be "un-told" to the public even though her punishment meant that she would never again be able to speak in Church. Her excommunication constituted a warning to those who shared some of her views. Institutions like the Mormon Church establish– through public acts of discipline – the boundaries of what can and cannot be said and done in the name of individual self-expression. This kind of silencing works through example, constituting a warning to others that they, too, must be silent or "forget" their counter-narrative to retain their good standing with the institution and retain their status as a member of the group.

Cheryl Glenn uses Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* to explain how this kind of silencing works. Silencing imposed by more powerful interlocutors, in this case, those with institutional authority, upon weaker ones who are "guilty" in Foucault's language, but "accused," "suspected," or "scapegoated" in Glenn's, serves

"to make an example, not only by making people aware that the slightest offense [is] likely to be punished, but by arousing feelings of terror by the spectacle of power letting its anger fall upon the [allegedly] guilty person" (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish the Birth of the Prison* 58). What is important . . . is not only that other people know about the punishment, but that they witness it, too. Silence is the perfect tool in its subtlety, for it can spread fear and hesitation. (47)

Thus, the Church hierarchy does not need to punish every single dissident in order to inspire a fear of speaking out or to make a dissenter hesitate before doing so. Instead, the Church may punish severely a few of its members in a public fashion in order to sufficiently silence the many.

When, in the spring of 1992, Sandra Allen gave a presentation titled "The Mormon Involvement in the Defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment" at the Western Regional Honors Conference at Arizona State University Tempe, Arizona, she was not concerned about excommunication or ostracism. Allen had already left the Church of her own volition, accepted her homosexuality and its consequences in the eyes of her former "sisters" and "brothers," started to reflect critically upon her experiences as a political operative, and conducted extensive research on the Church's political, economic and social influence worldwide. She was nearly done with her undergraduate degree, and

would soon attend graduate school and earn a master's degree in sociology. Although she knew that Tempe fell in the "Mormon belt," a swath of land between Utah and coastal California densely populated with Mormons, she did not necessarily expect a hostile audience of devout Church members to boo her, interrupt her, or challenge her testimony and scholarship. Typically (although not always), the speaker giving the presentation – the one who "holds the floor" – wields the majority of discursive or rhetorical power. Those giving papers at academic conferences, however, may expect members of their audience(s), as fellow or peer scholars, to challenge aspects of their methods, research, or findings, and thereby undermine the ethos of the speaker. Still, aspects of Allen's account are unusual insofar as members of the audience did not follow typical cultural norms of waiting for her to finish giving her presentation before speaking (interrupting) and calling her names (ad hominem attacks). Moreover, she was challenged by a *group* within the audience who had appeared to attend her reading of the paper for purposes of discrediting her claims and undermining her ethos.

The description Allen gave of her presentation at the Western Regional Honors Conference, which transpired at a major public university, was so unusual that, in spite of Allen's offer to put me in touch with a number of conference attendees from UNM, it was not until I read Martha Bradley's narrative of a similar experience that I regarded Allen's experience as not just plausible but likely. Both women were verbally attacked in academic settings in 1992 for discussing the Church's controversial involvement in women's issues in the late 1970s. What follows is Bradley's account of the experience in the introduction to her book:

Fifteen years after Utah's IWY conference, I delivered a paper in October 1992 on my experiences there at the LDS Church's Brigham Young University. This paper was based on a series of interviews my students and I had conducted with women who had helped plan the IWY conference, who had attended the conference themselves, or who were delegates to the national convention. The room at BYU was packed with women, many of whom I recognized. There were several women from the LDS Relief Society general board including Aileen Clyde, my personal heroine. Most of them I did not know; and I assumed, somewhat naively, that they were there because they were interested in the story. I was wrong.

After sociologist Marie Cornwall and I had delivered our separate papers and opened the session for questions, the room exploded into bedlam, it seemed to me. Accustomed to the traditional civility of academic discourse, I was surprised and dismayed. Women in the back and at both sides stood up and shouted sneering questions and criticisms that pierced the air like spit balls. I began to feel irrelevant to this exchange that seemed in some ways to be scripted. I felt as if I were disappearing into the wall behind me, and I wished I could. The anger, the division, the bitterness, and the suspicions surrounding the IWY conferences and the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) were being reenacted in front of my eyes. I found out later that many of these women had come to our session with the express purpose of disrupting it. Some

had sent letters to the university president complaining about the topic and challenging the research money granted to support the research. (viii–ix)

I have asked myself whether these two different events could be part of a coordinated effort, if Church leaders in 1992 admonished members from the pulpit to challenge women academics or liberal academics who were representing the past in a way that threatened the institution's official record. I do not know the answer to this question, although it appears that during this time period, Church leaders were engaged in a renewed effort to quash dissent. Six prominent Mormon intellectuals were excommunicated in September of 1993, including Lavina Fielding Anderson, feminist, historian, writer and critic of "ecclesiastical abuse." Although Anderson agrees she might well have been excommunicated for her feminist historical work, it was her record on drawing attention to ecclesiastical abuse on which she was "tried" and found guilty (Anderson authored the aforementioned 1993 *Dialogue* piece which recounted the one hundred incidents). Anderson defines this abuse in "Freedom of Conscience: A Personal Statement" as "when a church officer, acting in his calling and using the weight of his office, coerces compliance, imposes his personal opinions as church doctrine or policy, or resorts to such power plays as threats and intimidation to insure that his views prevail" ("Freedom" 197). She borrows from what Paul Edwards terms "the Sumo Wrestling School of Administration" to illustrate the dynamic at play: "throwing your weight around while trying to cover your rear" ("Freedom" 197).

It is not necessary to establish a conspiracy in order to claim that active Church members, in the interest of maintaining group identification in the face of real or perceived threats, also establish boundaries around what can and cannot be remembered.

Many who grow up Mormon have a strong sense of loyalty to the Church and a deeply internalized sense of group identity, fostered through a shared history of persecution, high participation barriers, and a feeling of separateness or distinction from mainstream American society. Thus, in many ways, Mormons seek to foster and embrace their “peculiarity” by establishing simultaneously their consubstantiality with other Saints and difference(s) from Gentiles. Mormons who disavow Mormon beliefs or political positions, like Sonia Johnson, face official sanction as well as unofficial rejection or ostracism. Such boundary maintenance among a social group constitutes a powerful example of rhetoric as identification. Even those who are willing to face an ecclesiastical court might not be willing to risk the respect and friendship of their fellow Mormons, and therefore keep their counter-memories to themselves. In some cases, a desire or need for consubstantiality with the group may even engender forgetting within the individual.

Individuals who themselves hold dissenting views circumvent prohibitions against self-expression or community or institutional policing, offer disclaimers meant to enable audiences to “forget” the implications of counter-memories. One stirring example of the dual move to offer counter-narratives or counter-histories while fostering a forgetting of their potential implications occurs in the *Author’s Preface* to a book that Allen held dear in the late 1970s. According to writing in her journal, she gave a copy to a best friend, Colleen. In *Daughters of Light*, published in 1973, Carol Lynn Pearson uses the diaries and letters of early LDS women in order to re-present to her audiences aspects of their stories, which have been “forgotten.” Pearson is particularly focused upon the spiritual gifts of Mormon women, gifts which her peers were likely not aware of and which have/had fallen out of favor within the Church. The titles of her chapters include “The

Gift of Tongues and the Gift of Interpretation of Tongues,” “The Gift of Prophecy,” “The Gift of Revelation,” “The Gift of Faith to Heal,” “The Gift of Faith to be Healed,” and “The Gift of Power Over Evil Spirits.” According to our interview, Allen thought of herself as well-educated in the history – and abilities – of early Mormon women. However, she was shocked to learn from this book that Mormon women once had their own temple days. In her preface, Pearson speaks to her audience directly, stating of the Latter-day Saint woman that while “her powers are enormous” – “beyond the wildest dreams of the most aspiring women of our day,” that “there are two things this book is not intended to do”: In the first place, the book does not “suggest deviation from or rebellion against the authorized chain of priesthood authority,” and the “second thing this book is not intended to do is to encourage seeking after a sign” (Author’s Preface). Thus, the author at once presents the historical Mormon woman as empowered and privileged in ways that contemporary women might find shocking or even radical, and yet she cautions women that knowledge of these stories is not intended to foment rebellion, unrest, or even the re-emergence of certain spiritual gifts and practices.

Pearson’s *Daughters of the Light* demonstrates the bind in which some Mormon women found themselves at this time. Pearson had knowledge of women’s counter-memories and belief in women’s value and capacities. She wanted to share them with her sisters, but had to acknowledge that publicizing these accounts posed a threat to the Church. More insidiously, such long forgotten memories might have had the power to unite women in a counter-movement and reject claims made by the Church’s male leadership over how and on what grounds privileges, rights, responsibilities, honors and authority are distributed. What Pearson’s preface maintains – even if aspects of the book



itself undermine her direct statements – is that the culture and practice of male privilege be maintained. Pearson, in effect, claims that the examples of extraordinary women do not disrupt the dominant framework and should therefore be heard without censure or retribution.

### **Conclusion**

In the conclusion I return to one of the most important observations made by twentieth century thinkers and historians: the present always informs our exploration of the past and the nature and shape of our discoveries therein. This observation applies to both professional and to lay historians. Arguably, as professional historians we may approach our work with additional self-consciousness, but the fact remains we may “discover” a past that supports our desire for change or justifies our present conditions. If the “truth” of any history is provisional, circumscribed, and ideologically loaded, can we justify, by relative degrees, differences? And is it fair to characterize a whole body of work – memoirs, journals, family histories, books of remembrance, genealogies – as politically naïve based on a methodological critique of such work?

While I argue that family historical practices serve the institution’s interests, the materials thereby produced have inspired and instigated meaningful political action in the present. Allen’s own journal is a case in point. The historical rescue, recovery, and reinscription of women’s writings done by Mormon women historians including Carol Cornwall Madsen, Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, Jane Bickmore White, Linda King Newell, Valeen Tippetts Avery, and Carol Lynn Pearson (a partial list), constitute fine examples of the ways in which Mormon women have put history to work *for* Mormon

women. This historical work has been politically dangerous. These historians have leveraged claims that “touch[] a tender nerve” (Bitton 15).

Even the most faithful of women, it must be said, assert in their personal journals their unique intelligence and conflicts with/in orthodoxy. I have made it a point to examine these moments of *esprit de corps* in Allen’s journals: her eruptions of spiritedness, her communion with a body of women, and her celebrations of her own embodiment. In places, I believe her body offers its own wisdom and rebels against the institution’s moves to impose upon it gendered categories and disciplinary practices.

Mormon women historians, like feminist historians of rhetoric, are moving beyond these initial phases of rescue, recovery, and reinscription. They are examining the categories that excluded women from History in the first place. In her 1990 Presidential Address to the Mormon History Association, Madsen (the first President to address Mormon women’s history), explains that as a field of study

it is not only a matter of inserting an additional body of facts into the historical canon. It is also a process of applying the female component to the already known facts, which necessarily rearranges them, like the twist of a kaleidoscope, into new patterns, new configurations, and new interpretations. (“Presidential Address” 46)

Madsen considers the ways in which a study of women’s history has necessarily led to a study of women’s cultures, her changing and varied social roles, and her membership in and among her other group identities (ethnicity, race, religion, to name a few). Central to these investigations, part historical, part anthropological, have been women’s diaries. Madsen emphasizes their profound importance:

The master key to unlocking women's long-hidden history, however, is their own self-representation. "Diaries are the flesh made word," one biographer has written. They are a record of the muted moments and private passages that make the substance of life. Moreover, as another scholar has observed, these gendered narratives serve as our cultural memory . . . . While these personal writings express the characteristics of a single writer and the details of a single life, such details enable us to gain access to a wider female experience and deeper universal truths.

("Presidential Address" 58)

Madsen emphasizes the tension between the journal writer's desire (and, by extension, I believe, her own desire) to be both distinct from and consubstantial with a community of women within a community of Mormons. I read in Madsen's address her struggle to balance what she sees is her right, ability, and desire to interpret the past alongside her desire to embrace an uncomplicated identity in her sociocultural, religious context. To the extent her histories have proffered critiques of the institutional Church – and to the extent they have not – are products of these competing impulses, and, above all, a desire to find a place for women like her in the Church.

I want to close by returning to Lavina Fielding Anderson, who has undertaken a different kind of historical work cum institutional critique. Anderson's position on whether and how to challenge the Church's institutional authority has evolved in interesting ways. In 1981, she reflected upon "where women fit" in the contemporary Church. After sounding some alarm bells about trends derived from nine specific examples, she suggests that such trends may be due to increasing levels of Church

bureaucracy and an emphasis upon the priesthood. Of the situation, Anderson advises her audience, “I suggest we beware of attempts to gain institutional power. To do that or to use what influence we have to gain more is to play bureaucratic games by a bureaucracy’s amoral rules. Such forces will cut us off from the forces of heaven” (“Contemporary Women” 15). Rather than petition the institution, she argues, women should petition God. She registers her concern, but sees the futility in challenging the Church on its terms.

Yet Anderson does not remain silent. In the wake of the Church’s actions to put a stop to the work of Mormon intellectuals and scholars, Anderson begins to record a history: a history of ecclesiastical abuse. This history is published in the spring of 1993. After documenting one hundred cases of ecclesiastical abuse and releasing her results in *Dialogue*, another one hundred or more Mormons approached her about “their own experiences of injustice, usually suffered in silence, bewilderment, and anguish” (“Freedom” 198). Before the year was out, the Church excommunicated Anderson. To this day, she attends LDS services and remains as active as her status will allow. She has not given up her faith. For her, however, taking a stand was a matter of “conscience.” Discussing the situation with a friend, Anderson asks

“How many times in our lives do we get to take a stand on a question of conscience? So much of what we do is choosing degrees of political correctness or balancing ethical standards against social constraints, or being ‘reasonable’ or ‘realistic.’ I feel lucky. This is a privilege that doesn’t come to everyone.” I did not realize, until I said th[ose] words, how deeply I meant them and felt them. I also did not realize until I

received the notice of excommunication the next morning that, no matter how well prepared I was or how carefully chosen my commitment, the blow would be so heavy. (“Freedom” 199)

As a non-Mormon, an outsider, I believe that many women in the Church remain therein not because they are ignorant to the institutional forces that attempt to limit their horizons, discipline their bodies, and undermine their self-worth. They remain because the God in which they believe is larger than these forces, and because the women that they love need their support and friendship.

## CONCLUSION

*Spirit is a substance that is material but that is more pure and elastic and refined matter than the body . . . . It existed before the body, can exist in the body, and will exist separate from the body when the body will be mouldering in the dust.* Joseph Smith, Jr.

This dissertation offers – to borrow and twist a phrase from Jan Swearingen (242–43) – a history, a history of rhetoric, and a rhetoric of history in answer to two variations on a single line of inquiry: First, on the national, institutional (macro) order, the project explores how a particular institution, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, used rhetoric to engender cooperation among its stakeholders in order to further its most pressing political agenda in the late 1970s, the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment. Second, on the local, personal (micro) order, how the leaders of this same institution persuaded individual women like Sandra Allen to act against their own<sup>69</sup> social, political, economic, material, and even psychological interest(s).<sup>70</sup>

The dissertation, insofar as it answers the first question, is a history of institutional rhetorics. To this end, I was primarily concerned with the way the institution and its representatives used language and other communication modes in a specific context in order to “get things done”: to unite its membership behind a common goal and to motivate members to take (in some cases radical) political action, while, at the same time, preserving its ethos among its Mormon and non-Mormon American stakeholders. In the second chapter, I employed memory studies as a critical lens to focus on specific kinds of language practices: those that aimed to leverage public memory to garner support for a political position in the (then) present. The third chapter is concerned

primarily with the way histories, as reifications of the past, and history-writing practices engender identification and cooperation. Thus, Kenneth Burke's concept of identification informs that chapter. The fourth chapter is concerned with the ways language practices are used to foster "forgetting" and to silence dissenting voices that raise counter-narratives and counter-memories. Memory studies, narrative theory, and feminist rhetorical theory help explain how forgetting and silence are effected in the discursive context under examination.

This dissertation is also a history. I examined the historical data that Sandra Allen included in her archival *Collection*; I then analyzed and interpreted these data with the aim of creating a narrative account of "what happened" in a particular time and a particular place. Histories of the Equal Rights Amendment – and the debate it engendered in the late 1970s – will continue to be written, even as the future of the ERA remains to be determined. My presentation is partial and colored by my own ideological and political commitments. As a history of the ERA debate, my dissertation offers scholars new angles of view: it emphasizes the role a particular and powerful institution, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, played in defeating the amendment; it offers new explanations why the LDS Church's rhetorical strategies proved compelling to its members; and it challenges vernacular histories of who is "responsible" for defeating the Equal Rights Amendment and why such vernacular histories persist.

For scholars of rhetorical historiography, those interested in the rhetoric of history, the dissertation furthers several conversations underway in the field including whether certain representations or remembrances of the past are more ethical than others, suggesting some criteria for evaluating iterations of the past in the present; it argues that

personal journals and home archives may, in certain cases, constitute extensions of rather than challenges to institutional power; and it synthesizes scholarship on forgetting, furthering arguments that forgetting is fostered through rhetorical acts. Perhaps most importantly, the dissertation takes as its premise a foundational principle in memory studies, i.e. that representations of the past address present political needs, and this dissertation extends this principle by arguing that representations of the past are *pedagogical*. Representations of the past may be used to bring people together in the present *and* to instruct them in how to think (and act) in the present. In *On Memory*, institutional leaders attempted to harness eruptions of public memory surrounding the erection of the Monument to Women in Nauvoo in order to foster identification during a politically tumultuous time; simultaneously, the monument provided (arguably still provides) a script for its audience regarding the way women should think about their roles. *On History* argues that home history-making practices and their material consequences engage active church members in acts of self-discipline that instruct writers in how to live the Mormon way. *On Forgetting* argues that by instructing members in how to orient themselves to the past, the Church instantiates rhetorics of forgetting.

On a “micro” level, Allen identified with the Mormon Church and sought to perpetuate this identification. She was moreover motivated to act against the ERA because of how she was taught to see and interpret “the past.” Many scholars of rhetoric and communication have indexed the ways that sites of remembrance are rhetorical, designed to engender certain memories in their audiences; my reading of Allen’s experiences also argues that such sites are also pedagogical, positing believers like Allen learn lessons and come to specific conclusions through their active engagement with



these sites. Skillful *rhetors* use these sites strategically, employing enthymematic reasoning to bring about feelings of identification and consubstantiality, to marshal agreement about the implications of the past on the present. Such representations of the past influenced Allen. Allen personally engaged in several discursive practices that reinforced her identification with members of her faith community and disciplined her interpretation of and (re)production of the experiences and texts she encountered.

Although Allen repeatedly emphasized the fact that as a devout Saint during the late 1970s, she had “no choice” but to accept the word of the Church’s senior leadership (“Denver Interview”), on matters like the Equal Rights Amendment, the General Authorities themselves did not rely, so to speak, on this assumption. Instead, they implemented multiple methods of curtailing the production of outlier or dissenting scholarly historical texts while requiring the production of lay historical texts (as described in *On Forgetting*). Through the production of home archives, individual Mormons daily committed themselves to their faith community and engaged in discursive practices of self-discipline. Still, I believe that while the *family history methodology* serves institutional needs, the institution cannot control the emergence of counter-narratives and counter-histories. Mormon women will continue to advocate for themselves through history writing, even under threat of official censure.

The *Sandra Allen Collection of Papers on Mormonism* at the Center for Southwest Research and two interviews with Sandra Allen constituted the archive and primary sources for this project. In fact, Allen’s collection inspired this research project and provided direction and supporting examples as I formulated my claims in answer. *Chapter One* provides an exegesis of the archive and my approach to reading and

interpreting it; this section also provides an introduction to the theoretical lenses through which I read and interpreted the archival materials and therefore how I arrived at conclusions regarding their meaning and place in larger histories of the Equal Rights Amendment and rhetorical histories. Above all, I was guided by a belief that rhetoric is embodied and enacted materially.

I consider this dissertation to be a feminist research project.<sup>71</sup> This project provides insight into how institutions interpret and shape the past to mobilize stakeholders to act together in present political dramas – information that is vital to those who seek to mount rhetorical challenges to their influence. An understanding of how and why institutions like the Mormon Church “speak” effectively and garner influence in the public sphere provides social activists an important perspective. In Allen’s words, “those groups of individuals that are working for more social reform, or involved in a less conservative/right wing form of politics have no idea as to who or what they are up against in the political arena” (*History* 1). Thus, Allen believes, and I agree, that many of the rhetorical strategies the Mormon Church developed and used in the fight against the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, its tactics and its claims, continue to be used because of their efficacy.

In a 1991 document, Allen stated that the LDS Church was concerned about the gay rights movement and would become increasingly engaged in fighting advances in civil rights for gay Americans. Twenty years later, in 2011, when I first got in touch with Allen about the prospect of interviewing her for this dissertation, she suggested I watch a documentary called *8: The Mormon Proposition* about how the Mormon Church advanced an anti-gay ballot proposition in California. She stated that the tactics and

claims used by the Mormon Church to forward Proposition 8 were honed in earlier political contests, especially the one over ERA. The First Presidency of the Church declared thwarting gay rights a “moral issue” on the grounds that the advancement of gay marriage constituted a dangerous threat to the nuclear family. As we have seen in the context of the Equal Rights Amendment, such a claim from the First Presidency cannot be refuted or dismissed as merely “an argument” by believing Mormons. Rather, “moral threats” have historically paved the way for Church leaders to mobilize (and justify mobilizing) linguistic as well as financial and human resources to advance their stated position. As in the ERA fight, Church leaders used similar rhetorical strategies in the Prop 8 fight to unite and mobilize members. Furthermore, the Church leveraged institutional resources, including the threat of excommunication, to quash (and justify quashing) dissent.

Moreover, many of the claims furthered by the Church during the ERA debate – claims that have re-emerged in the recent contests over gay marriage – remain unanswered by progressive leaders seeking to expand civil rights protections. Although this dissertation does not examine the principle arguments forwarded by leaders of the women’s movement during the debate over the Equal Rights Amendment, it does assert that the Mormon Church tapped into widely shared fantasies, memories, identities, and frameworks of understanding that appealed to its members, and, at points, to the American public more broadly. Differences in biology and physiology between the sexes constitute the starting point for such arguments, which then lead to interpretations of the meaning and significance of these differences. Such claims romanticize and stabilize differences in sex, and provide a comforting and reassuring narrative about the God-

given order of things and the threats “women’s lib” and gay rights pose to this order. The Mormon Church – and other socially conservative religious and social groups – warned (and continue to warn) their membership about the hazards of eliding such differences and the perils of a gender-neutral society. These arguments imply that if true equality prevails, women would become more masculine and men more feminine; women would leave their homes in droves to “compete” with men in the workforce rather than have children; they would join the military; they would – in order to efficiently do the work men do – dress and act in unfeminine and undesirable ways, trade skirts for pants, eschew make-up and self-care, and defecate in the same (public) bathrooms. Men, on the other hand, would not be able to have or raise children given the absence of willing women partners and the limitations of male anatomy; they would be forced to accept lower wages in a saturated workforce; rather than strive to impress, provide for, and protect women, they would have to view them as rivals for the same limited resources. Moreover, men would no longer want to be with their women “comrades” – romantically and sexually speaking.<sup>72</sup> There would be rampant sex outside of marriage, homosexuality, and abortion, leading to social, political and economic instability, and, of course, fewer children. Women’s groups did not in the late 1970s (and have not to this day) developed cogent answers, counter-narratives, or compelling myths, fantasies, and frameworks to challenge essential differences arguments or alternatives to the gender-neutral dystopia; instead, they have tended to stick with arguments in the liberal vein – appeals to equality and fairness (Foss). A second strategy deployed by progressive women has been to insist that the perils of passing the ERA have been greatly exaggerated. My project suggests

that until women and social progressives come up with or tap into more compelling myths, narratives, and frameworks, the status quo will prevail.

Lionizing the power of institutions and one particular institution has not been my goal. However, I have found – and have, I hope, convinced the reader – that the Mormon Church mobilized its rhetorical resources to great effect during the Equal Rights Amendment debate. Above all, the LDS Church fostered identification among a rapidly growing and geographically diverse population during a time of tremendous social and political upheaval. My project may be viewed as a cautionary tale for those fighting for gender equality as well as a study in how institutions wield power and influence political discourse.

All along, however, I have not meant to suggest that an institution's rhetorical prowess, however compelling and/or coercive, fosters complete identification and consubstantiality. To paraphrase Kenneth Burke, identification is always compensatory to division. We remain separate from one another; we remain *within ourselves* of “two minds” – divided – about certain issues. The vigor with which the LDS Church fought ERA and implemented rhetorical strategies to shore up support within its own ranks belies its concern over division. During the ERA ratification period, Sonia Johnson became the public face of this division: Johnson once described herself as a “Mormon down to her toenails,” and yet refused to adopt either the LDS Church's position on ERA or to agree publicly with United States Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah who proclaimed that 99% of Mormon women opposed the ERA. We may never know how many Mormons privately supported Johnson's position or came to support her position later, in retrospect. It is likewise impossible to count those who came, like Allen, to regard either the

Church's participation in fighting passage of ERA – or their own participation on behalf of the Church – as misguided, unethical, or even wrong. Many who to this day object to the Church's treatment of women continue to remain silent, fearing official excommunication or sanction (an unpleasant prospect, no doubt, even for dissenters), ostracism from fellow ward members, and negative repercussions for their family members. For every Mormon who takes her objections public like Sandra Allen, many more guard their opinions; some remain active Mormons while others do not.

I conclude by considering the relationship between institutional power(s) and discursive production as it relates to the institution. This dissertation is the last piece of writing I will produce for the University of New Mexico, an institution with which I have been affiliated for close to twelve years. I have written alongside and taught writing in dozens of UNM classrooms with/to hundreds of UNM students. This project has forced me to consider the ways in which these writing practices have and continue to extend asymmetrical power relations and reproduce physical and material embodiments. I have argued vigorously that the Mormon Church's home history writing practices disabled ways of seeing in the present in order to foment group cohesion and to galvanize political action. I would like to think that public universities – universities that cater to a diverse and powerful group of stakeholders like UNM – operate differently than the Mormon Church.

Yet we do ask our students to adopt certain positions from which to write and to reproduce certain genres in response to teacher-driven exigencies. We subsequently evaluate the quality of the production based upon a discrete set of values – values our students (and stakeholders) may or may not share. All of this is well-ploughed ground in

the field of rhetoric and writing. Still, even allowing for our self-conscious consideration of our role(s) as institutional representatives, we have little opportunity (or place within the institutional framework assuming we do not hold tenure) to question how our assignments reproduce structural inequality and (dis)empower our students and their ability to assess their positions in the world. This realization is unsettling. To what group are we asking our students to belong? To what political purpose do we ask them to apply themselves? To what angle of vision on past do we ask them to turn away?

If there is one thought that comforts me, it is the thought that the mission of the public university remains contested and ambiguous. The Mormon Church understands its role to be (re)producing Mormons, but what kind of people do public universities (re)produce? Citizens? Industrialists? Consumers? Intellectuals? Scientists? Within this struggle over purposes is a struggle over how to talk about (and frame) purposes. It is my conviction that my colleagues and I in rhetoric and writing will resist closure on this point for a long time to come.

## AFTERWARD

Perhaps the reader of the project has been asking when, how, and why Sandra Allen decided to leave the Mormon Church. This is not an irrelevant question for students of rhetoric. What arguments, stories or experiences – persuasive, language-based practices – cause a person to change her mind? How do *rhetors* address those who, like Allen in 1978, so deeply identify with an institution that entertaining rational arguments made by the other side poses significant challenges? Rhetoricians are charged with seeing, in a given situation, the available means of persuasion. At the very least, we might wonder by what means Allen was persuaded to leave the Church to which she was at one time devoutly committed.

It is my own view – a view that appears to be gaining traction and acceptance within the scholarly community of which I am a part – that the Western rhetorical tradition, as it has been interpreted by way of the Enlightenment, cannot fully answer these kinds of questions; our tradition places too much emphasis upon *logos* and the presentation of “rational” appeal.<sup>73</sup> Sharon Crowley makes a case for the limits of rational argument in bridging the divide between those who tend to subscribe to liberal, Enlightenment values and those who subscribe to fundamentalist Christian values in *Toward a Civil Discourse*. Although Mormons are not Christian fundamentalists, these two cultures have found enough common ground to forge lasting political alliances on social issues. One of Crowley’s primary objectives is to explain why religious, social conservatives have not been persuaded by logocentric arguments. She argues:

Liberal rhetorical theory has also inherent shortcomings that severely limit its potential as a means of adjudicating disagreement. First, it takes



understanding as its primary goal, and because it privileges understanding it can elide the possibility that audiences who grasp a rhetor's message perfectly well may nevertheless resist it. Second, liberal thought separates values from reason. (36)

In the liberal tradition, discussion of *certain* values is relegated to home or private spaces, a premise rejected by those whose political actions are expressly guided by their deeply held moral (and often religious) convictions.

Theorists in memory studies also highlight the importance of attending to the non-rational in rhetorical performance. Our fantasies, feelings, and ideas about the past often prove more compelling than the data about that past provided by historians and even witnesses, the counter-narratives offered by those who remember differently. Public memories are often mobilized to preserve rather than upend the status quo. Memories that disturb the status quo tend to fall upon deaf ears: They may be voiced but not *heard*.

With regard to the ERA debate specifically, at least two scholars in rhetoric and communications highlighted the incongruence between liberal, rational appeals to pass the amendment, and mythological, pathetic (pathos) appeals to prevent its passage. One compared the messages sent to potential donors and voters in materials prepared by NOW (the National Organization for Women) and STOP ERA. Rather than finding “parallel” if opposing messages, the author found NOW struck a formal, professional tone and relied upon evidence-based argument, whereas STOP ERA employed a chatty, conversational tone and relied heavily upon emotional appeals and logical fallacy (Smith). Martha Solomon presented a remarkable exegesis on the rhetorical power of the “positive woman.” Her analysis described the widespread appeal Phyllis Schlafly's

concept of the positive woman. This female archetype proved more compelling than the alternative archetype projected by feminists (Solomon). In *Toward A Civil Discourse*, Crowley comes to the conclusion that those arguing in the liberal tradition and those in the Christian fundamentalist (or tradition of passionate commitment) are speaking two different languages.

How, then, do rhetoricians contend with an ideologically, linguistically, culturally diverse audience? As a field, we are increasingly sensitive to the ways in which the “goal” of rhetoric, or “successful” rhetorical appeals and practices, forge agreement and, to some extent, “sameness” or hegemony. As a stark example, in ancient times, women and slaves were excluded from both speaking and listening to the rhetorical deliberations that transpired in the courtroom, senate, and other public places; moreover, they were not able to voice their opinions, perspectives, and interests. An ancient Athenian *rhetor* could, therefore, be “successful” in persuading “the public” while ignoring the majority of those who actually lived in his community. Today, writers and speakers may summarily dismiss as “less than,” irrelevant, or monstrous those who would harbor doubt, resistance, or obstacles. Rhetorical “success” – the ability to forge identification, however temporary, however imperfect – relies heavily upon different kinds of exclusion according to Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede (818). *Rhetors*, moreover, may exclude or forget inconvenient facts, experiences, or points of view in order to foster agreement or adherence to certain statements. In fact, interplay between remembering and forgetting may be *the* hallmark of discourse (Stormer 28).

Can rhetoric and *should* rhetoric (and its theorists and practitioners) transform thinking? Engender radical change? Unite those who are divided by ideological, cultural,

linguistic and material differences? How do we foster identification – and (re) define rhetorical “success” – without eliding or erasing difference(s) between us? Is there an ethical approach to persuasion? I offer no answers, but reiterate the questions, lest we forget them.

As I have contemplated how and why Allen changed her mind – decided to leave the Mormon Church and to become an activist for women’s and gay rights – I have come to the conclusion that it offers few satisfying or simple answers to students of rhetoric. Much of our tradition teaches us to think in terms of what an individual may accomplish in a single speech or text. Allen’s experience offers little to those who would hold fast to the role individual agency plays in persuasion. Her transformation moreover seems to resist agonistic modes.

I do believe Allen’s radical transformation suggests some ways of theorizing how language and communication practices may ethically engender new identifications. As I move toward a consideration of how and why Allen changed, I myself shift into a different register, less scholarly and more narrative-contemplative. I make statements about Allen based upon my interviews with her and my interpretations of her point of view. In what follows, I proceed in a speculative mode, attempting to “fill in” the lacunae missing from the archival documents.

Feminist historians of rhetoric engage in what Kirsch and Royster have called “strategic contemplation” and “critical imagination” in order to posit tentative hypotheses to address lacunae in historical records. I employ these concepts liberally and self-consciously. My intention was (and has always been) to provide Sandy Allen a copy of this dissertation and solicit her comments and feedback. I have not – as of April 2015 –

been able to renew contact with her. And because she has not read and commented upon these speculations, I leverage them with extreme caution and leave them open to (her) revision and consideration. I offer what follows in honor of Allen and not in spite of her. I am mindful (and grateful) for her generous spirit – for sharing so much of what *mattered*.

### **Janus As Heuristic**

To explore – and offer as heuristic – how I am theorizing the relationship between rhetoric and radical ideological transformation, I will employ the concept of an ancient Roman god, Janus. First, however, I offer a definition of rhetoric. In keeping with Chaim Perelman, I submit that rhetoric be “concerned with *discourse* addressed to *any sort of audience* – a crowd in a public square or a gathering of specialists, a single being or all humanity”; Perelman goes on to clarify that rhetoric “even examines arguments addressed to oneself in private deliberation” (5, emphasis original). Because rhetoric is concerned with matters over which audiences will inevitably disagree – questions of value – the goal of rhetoric is not, in Perelman’s view, persuasion in an absolute sense, but rather to foster within the audience a degree of acceptance, or even a new openness to a claim previously rejected outright. Perelman accounted for the ways in which arguments (i.e. configurations of language) as well as audiences (people as individuals) are always situated, and therefore, the ways speakers use language, the methods by which they proceed, must shift and evolve. The reverse is also true: Speakers are used by language as much as they use language. Rhetoric in this way should be seen as the process by which speakers and language come into various and sometimes innovative

combinations to foster adherences, i.e. temporary and even partial agreements, over what is or should be respected, esteemed, honored, or important.

The Roman God Janus here provides a heuristic for theorizing ethical rhetorical engagement between interlocutors who adhere to radically different values. My rendering of Janus has been informed by the dissertation of Bessie Rebecca Burchett. Her project, completed at the University of Pennsylvania and published in 1918, *Janus in Roman Life and Cult: A Study in Roman Religions*, examines the origin of the Janus cult and its religious role(s). Because I am using Janus as heuristic (unlike Burchett, whose purpose is also to debunk some of the misunderstandings regarding the God and his domain), I engage some of the ways in which the concept of Janus has been appropriated and used over time, even as these concepts diverge from his origins. In short, my work employs Janus as a tool to expand thinking about rhetoric; I am not attempting to use rhetoric to expand understanding of Janus.

### **The Doorway**

Janus was first and foremost the spirit who lived in the doorway (3). The doorway constituted an important strategic place for the Romans because “it was the place which attacks from foes were most to be expected” (4). Janus became associated with protection, and therefore became coded male in the Roman religious imagination. As a male spirit indwelling the Roman home, he also became associated with generation (i.e. procreation, the planting of seeds), trade, and war. Janus never completely lost his association with war because of the Janus archway, a gate in the Roman forum. It was the custom to close the gate during peace and open the gate during war. This tradition persisted long after the Greek God, Mars, had ascended as the predominant war god.

As the god in the doorway, Janus originally occupied a physically liminal space between the outside (public) realm and the inside (private) realm. He guarded the home and offered protection in the form of a threshold that required crossing. His primary role was to keep unwanted intruders on the public (out)side of the threshold in order to maintain the safety of those inside. The image of a guardian in the doorway suggests that individuals expect to encounter enemies and strangers upon their thresholds, and are not likely to invite them in.

The metaphorical “spirit in the doorway” constitutes the first obstacle for *rhetors* attempting to connect with an audience likely to view them as enemies or strangers. Even as such an observation appears obvious and simplistic, our current understanding of rhetoric offers few prescriptions or solutions. Even recent works in rhetorical theory by Sharon Crowley and Krista Ratcliffe address the problems faced by those attempting to communicate with untrusting audiences and offer first steps.

My reading of Allen’s experiences has also led me to (re)consider the rhetorical challenge of crossing the threshold. In Allen’s discussion of how and why her mind began to change about the Equal Rights Amendment and the fight for gender equality, the speakers, writers, and story-tellers Allen recognized and trusted as a result of their Mormon credentials seemed to make much more of an impact than those in the women’s liberation movement whom proffered liberal arguments. Allen attended several lectures given by accomplished, pro-ERA and pro-women’s movement speakers during her tenure as a “spy” in the late 1970s (as recorded in her personal journals). Unlike many of her Mormon peers, Allen encountered these speakers and their arguments firsthand, unmediated by news reports or through other Mormons who sought to discredit their

perspectives. However, even though she heard several speeches, she has not once identified these public addresses, in her writing or in our conversations, as compelling or instrumental in changing her mind about ERA (“Denver Interview”; “Telephone Interview”). The arguments at the time did not challenge her own viewpoint or cause her to rethink her values. During one event Allen attended as a spy on September 16, 1978, she asked a question to re-direct the speaker and deflect negative attention away from the Church (*Second Volume*). Rather than take in the speaker’s argument or play what Peter Elbow would call the “believing game,” Allen would be on alert for possible Mormon backlash.

This does not mean that such addresses had no impact or that the speakers “failed”; in all likelihood, the speakers geared their comments to those in attendance whom already shared their beliefs or whom were inclined to accept their arguments as a means of shoring up support. As a “spy,” Allen was therefore not part of the intended audience of the rhetorical performance. In Burkean language, such speakers intend to garner identification. The fact that these speeches did not seem to inform Allen’s transformation suggests to my mind the over-emphasis scholars place upon the importance of the single *rhetor* forwarding claims in the context of a single public address in bringing about persuasion or adherence to new values.<sup>74</sup>

Based upon my interpretation of her statements, Allen’s ability to consider critically her own actions as a spy and the actions of the institution whose orders she was fulfilling emerged in part out of her engagement with a chorus of dissenting voices within her closed community. Strident dissenting voices – like Sonia Johnson’s – were, to take

Allen's word, *too* strident at the time. Allen was particularly harsh on one speaker she encountered on a panel:

My impression of Jan Taylor [of Mormons for ERA] was as follows: One who is in love with personal greatness wrapped in a thin but v[ul]nerable coat of humility. She spoke as the 'peace-offering' Mormon[.] I truly believe that she were to ever see that she's being used as a pawn by a group that is not concerned about anything but using her as they will I think it will really shake her up. And when her mind is opened to the impact of what she is doing – it will be another re-run of the story of Alma the Younger. . . (*Second Volume* 105)

Rather, her older female relatives who told stories around the campfire at family reunions, and the Mormon woman writer-historian who supported the absolute authority of the priesthood (if her disclaimer was sincere) were, figuratively speaking, welcomed into Allen's "private" or deliberative space ("Denver Interview"). Reflection and reconsideration was instigated and fostered by, in the first place, multiple speakers – a community or chorus of women – and those whom she trusted in the second. Instead of seeking to glorify the individual, or the Enlightenment notion of the self-knowing subject of knowledge, feminist rhetorical scholars have moved to investigate *communities* wherein women circulate ideas, cultivate communication skills and even theorize rhetorical strategies. Although Allen was not fully aware of the organized existence of such a counterpublic (and their periodicals, for example) until she had taken several steps away from the Church, she was exposed – through a network of women, to some of the arguments circulating and developing within this counterpublic. (Allen stated in our



Denver Interview that she did not know about *Sunstone*, for example, until she moved to Salt Lake City.)

Throughout the dissertation, I have argued that the leadership of the Mormon Church leveraged the past in multiple effective ways to forge identification. Yet alternative accounts of the past did and do continue to circulate in Mormondom, and these accounts – as the Church’s leaders are well aware – may undermine, subvert, or challenge their accounts, and therefore pose a threat. Counter-narratives and counter-memories about the past exist and thrive within communities, even communities where there is tremendous agreement about the nature and meaning of past events. No institution or movement can entirely silence or disable the retelling and representation of new memories.

Allen stated in both of the interviews that the stories and memories her female relatives told at family reunions sowed some important seeds of doubt about the Church. Such stories refused to forget unsettling aspects of the Mormon past. For example, during the period of Mormon colonial expansion in the west, high-ranking Saints in a given community used their influence to further their own personal agendas – to maintain their own status, wealth and power. Her mother’s family were very early converts to Mormonism, of strong Welch stock, jokesters and story-tellers, and through the generations they kept alive memories of building homes for the rich and powerful Saints before they could build homes for their own families, schools, or infrastructure that would benefit the entire community. This story demonstrated that the Church’s leadership could act in ways that were clearly materially self-interested. In her family’s version of

events, the Webbs moved to Mexico as much to forge a more egalitarian Mormon community as they did to continue the practice of plural marriage.

Allen's mother's female relatives – many of whom were educated and experienced schoolteachers – also kept alive among the younger generations stories of the old and early days in a different sense: They were able to describe a time when women had more authority and power among Mormons, when women's labor – often on farms or in rural communities as midwives, teachers, nurses to the sick and dying, and producers of home goods – was essential and therefore greatly respected. These relatives represented for Allen, with authority and humor, a past wherein women exercised power and influence. It must be said that certain stories and memories, like those Allen's relatives told, would not find expression in ward houses or Sunday school given their subversive or at least controversial elements. In spite of their "private" rather than public character, the memories and stories circulated among those assembled at family gatherings and were interpreted as compelling and believable counter-narratives to Allen.

Listening to self and others constitutes a rhetorical tool, a way of actively engaging in public debate and discourse. Above, I furthered an argument that Allen was not significantly impacted by the rhetoric of certain pro-ERA speakers or panelists she encountered. It is possible that she was not able to listen to – or to hear – their claims at that particular time. However, she was able to hear certain kinds of dissent: dissent furthered by her devout, educated, and well-spoken Mormon relatives at family reunions, for example. She also heard the claims made by Carol Lynn Pearson in her book, *Daughters of the Light*. I see Allen's reading of *Daughters of the Light* to be an example of rhetorical listening. A recent turn in feminist rhetorical scholarship furthered by Krista

Ratcliffe argues that rhetorical listening is a tool *as* if not more important than furthering arguments. Rhetorical listening paves the way for new kinds of identifications, and ultimately, new kinds of relationships, alliances, and institutions.

In *On Forgetting*, I discussed Carol Lynn Pearson's disclaimer at the beginning of *Daughters of the Light*, which stated her wish that readers avoid drawing subversive or authority-challenging conclusions from her text. Yet if the disclaimer is put aside, the text provides its readers with excerpts of archival materials that may be used as evidence of the LDS Church's (changing) stance with regard to women. Pearson employs women's personal, archival writings to highlight the spiritual gifts earlier generations of Mormon women received and practiced. For example, Mormon women were once able to heal others through a "laying on of hands"; currently (and in Allen's time), only members of the priesthood (men) may perform this ceremony. Pearson also provided historical evidence that previous generations of Mormon women had certain rights and privileges denied (or ignored) by the LDS Church. For example, Allen had been "shocked" to learn that women had dedicated temple days – days set aside for their own religious ceremonies wherein men were not allowed to enter the temple or participate ("Denver Interview"). Although Allen did not leave or challenge the Church solely based upon encountering this one book, it made a profound impression Allen cites her coming into contact with this text as an "aha!" moment in her journey ("Denver Interview"). In spite of Pearson's protest that the book not be read as a challenge to the Church's authority, Allen listened to the testimonies in the book and came to her own conclusions about their significance in her life. Proverbially speaking, Allen allowed other Mormon women into

her private space and listened to their views, even when they countered the Church's official position. Thus, Allen's doorway was open to some kinds of dissent.

We might also understand Janus as one who provides a safe space for the emergence of internal thoughts and the exploration of visceral, bodily (private) experiences. Janus protects the indweller from unwanted attacks and guards the space for self-exploration and reflection. I speculate based upon her statements that her interior, private, and even unconscious experience(s) also moved her to change her mind. By virtue of her situation in an orthodox Mormon community of women – one wherein women circulated and re-presented stories – Allen gained access to variations in belief (*doxa*), including access to arguments, perspectives, and ways of situating her own experience. In *On History*, I argued that in the Mormon tradition, women's journals in general and Allen's journal specifically became a site of self-rhetoric. The personal journal was a place wherein the writer engaged in acts of self-persuasion, a place where she sought to convince herself and others of her identification with the Church and its membership. Even as I argued that journal-keeping should be understood in this context as a means by which an institution extended its power into private spaces through a specific discursive practice, the writer's identification with the institution and its goals is never complete. Personal journals like Allen's also provide space for the rehearsal of new ideas – ideas that might be perceived as variations or improvisations on accepted *doxa*. These variations and interpretations emerge as personal desire and her indissoluble difference emerge in language. Her love and sexual desire for other women emerges again and again. Her physical revulsion at spying also comes to the fore.

At the time she was keeping these personal journals, Allen interpreted her experiences through conventional Mormon language and terms available to her; however, by virtue of her situation in a rich, story-oriented community and her discursive practices, she could not help but discover new variations and adherences. Thus, in addition to forbidding known enemies access to the hearth and home, Janus may protect the indweller in certain moments from even invited or accepted outside influences that challenge inner knowledge and inner experience.

Although many of the logocentric arguments Allen encountered at Equal Rights Amendment rallies, events, and speeches during her time as a spy for the Pro-Family Coalition did not (and perhaps could not) cross the threshold, certain subversive discourses about the past, like her aunts' tales about the old days, and private or "self" talk entered her consciousness, engendering new adherences and different values. While Allen appeared to dismiss the voices and arguments of outsiders, she developed and practiced rhetorical listening within her own community; she even (ultimately) developed a practice of self-directed rhetorical listening. What this suggests for theorists of rhetoric is that communities themselves engender arguments and claims that have the power to undermine their very foundations. *Rhetors* seeking to cross the threshold will not likely succeed posing as insiders, but can immerse themselves in the arguments, metaphors, stories, and language circulating within counterpublics to learn what kinds of claims are engendering counter-adherences and openness to new agreements.

### **Circulation: Trade and War**

Although Janus was a god who occupied the role of guard or protector of the home for the Romans, he was also associated in ancient times with trade. It might be said that Janus presided over the point of contact between different peoples who encountered one another out of necessity. This two-faced deity appeared on Roman coinage (the *as*), and thus Janus served as silent witness to the negotiating, deal-making, casual patter, joking, and exchange of news and conversation that accompanied monetary transactions. Janus was also associated with the harbor. His association with the harbor may be due to an extension of the idea of the doorway (as the port is a kind of gate) or it may be because as Burchett explains, summarizing various stories accounting for Janus' placement on the coin, he is thought to have brought from Greece certain technological advances: "Janus, either on his own initiative, or under the influence of Saturn, introduced into Italy a knowledge of the arts of civilization, of religious rites and of coinage. The writers [of these accounts of Janus] realized that this culture originated in Greece and came to Italy in a ship" (41–42). For our purposes, it is important to recognize Janus facilitated multiple kinds of exchanges between peoples, particularly the exchange of goods and ideas.

What Janus as rhetorical heuristic suggests is that discourse accompanying business transactions can prompt reflection upon deeply held beliefs. Interlocutors engage over some economic purpose, and in the course of their encounter, exchange words that reveal different – and potentially intriguing – worldviews. Ideological differences may emerge without being the *raison d'être* of the conversation; moreover, these ideological differences do not necessarily constitute impediments to the transaction.

The success, then, of the deal from an economic standpoint is not dependent upon identification or adherence to a worldview. Both parties may be satisfied without requiring the other to change. What a Janus heuristic would suggest in this case for rhetorical theorists is to consider the place of indirect or “side-long” conversation over direct, “head-on” communication or confrontation.

Janus was also associated in Roman times with war. In fact, the “true representation of Janus” was the arch in the Roman Forum called “*Ianus Geminus*, the gates of which were opened in time of war and closed in time of peace” (37). War is sometimes considered the antithesis of rhetoric, and we often understand war to be a failure of rhetoric. Those whose minds cannot be changed through language must be killed; Burke argued that to kill someone is to fail to transform them by other means. Using force to change the mind of another constitutes a kind of coercion rather than persuasion. But the idea that the *Ianus Geminus* was open during war and closed during peace gave me pause to consider the ways war extends beyond the field of battle. War involves the movement of men through and into new terrain. Armies take and occupy territory. They transgress old boundaries and call for new ones to be drawn. War means violent engagement, but it also engenders all manner of other engagements among and between enemies. To suggest a few examples, war means that whole armies of men will travel to new places, learn new languages, and encounter different peoples. Some fall in love and become united, legally and symbolically, with those whom they might have otherwise sought to kill or destroy. Occupying forces may depend upon local populations for food, water, shelter or other resources. In nearly all cases, some degree of trust and collaboration is ultimately established between individuals across conflict.

Allen viewed the conflict between the Mormon Church and the “libbers” as war – an intense conflict that justified certain acts. Allen was set apart by her religious leaders, and “armed” to engage with the enemy. Still, even as a “Spy for the Lord’s Army” or a “solider in battle,” she had far more occasion than many of her Mormon women peers to interact with members of the opposition because of her role. Although she was not immediately impressed with their arguments, their organizational acumen, or their outreach, she personally liked some of the women she encountered and described some (few) moments of levity and consubstantiality.

In one example, Allen and some of the other Mormon women who were part of the Pro-Family Coalition made a birthday cake for one of the members and brought it to the democratic women’s luncheon. Allen was not yet acting as a spy, and came to the meeting with Carol Carlson and others. Still, theirs was a hostile presence as by then the Pro-Family Coalition was actively involved in taking over democratic precincts in Las Vegas so as to seat delegates and force the greater Nevada Democratic Party to abandon its pro-ERA position. The cake fell apart on the way to the meeting, and Allen describes the tension evaporate as she and the other Pro-Family members passed around pieces of the ruined cake to everyone’s amusement.

Allen appeared to connect with Darlene who worked at the Planned Parenthood. Allen, who was instructed by the Pro-Family Coalition to present herself as a lesbian running a lesbian group in order to take stock of the center’s resources on homosexuality, was, perhaps doubly nervous approaching Darlene given her own (growing) awareness of her attraction to other women due to her intense friendship with a woman named Cheryl. Allen recorded her trepidation approaching the Planned Parenthood, and her explanation



of her “purpose” in seeking information. Darlene provided Allen with some copies of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, and told Allen that every girl should have a copy – it should be like the Bible. Allen recounted shock at this analogy in the pages of her journal, and described *Our Bodies, Ourselves* as a “pretty gross book.”

Although Allen does not offer much of a description of Darlene or their conversation, she does say that her nerves were dispelled during the encounter as the two women were able to laugh together about car trouble. What Allen explained in our interview was the context for her assignment to Planned Parenthood and the result of her meeting with Denise and the book. Allen and others she knew were instructed to find and destroy as many copies of this book as possible, which explains, at least partially, her derisive commentary. Some women, Allen knew, followed this directive without reading the text, which they believed – through messages received by the priesthood – was inspired by Satan. The Mormon Church was, according to Allen, “scared” of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*. In our interview, Allen joked that the Church was “right” to be scared of it – “I read it and look what happened to me!” The book provided Allen with information about her body and her desires: It explained how women have sex with other women. The primary purpose of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* was not to further pro-Equal Rights Amendment arguments; it was, however, associated with women’s liberation as it not only provided explicit factual information about women’s bodies – information that could be used by women to make choices regarding sexual choice, family planning, and medical care – but also argued that women have access to this information so that they could articulate these choices to medical professionals, lovers, and even themselves. That Allen read the book in the late 1970s took courage given the warning received from the

pulpit about the book's corrosive nature. How much of Allen's decision to read and keep copies of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* is attributable to Darlene's ability to forge a connection with Allen and convince her of the benefits of the text is impossible to gauge. What is clear is that without such an assignment engendered by the Church's "war" against the Equal Rights Amendment and women's liberation, Allen probably would not have had reason to engage with Darlene or to seek out copies of the text.

Allen's assignments brought her into close personal contact with women who, like Allen herself, were passionately committed to a set of values. Allen was taught to think of those who held opposing beliefs as under Satan's influence – a belief she held and maintained for some period of time but did not or could not ultimately sustain. Allen did not accept their arguments, but she did acknowledge – possibly because of the nature of her assignments which brought her into a period of intense contact with the "opposition" – their humanity and their commitment to a different position on ERA (and women's rights). Allen grew to see the conflict over ERA as one about different values and orientations to the world as opposed to one about good versus evil. In short, the fight over ERA became a subject over which reasonable minds could disagree: a question worthy of philosophical discussion, of rhetoric. A Janus-inspired heuristic may encourage rhetoricians to think more broadly about indirect discourse and *kairos*: opportunities between those with conflicting worldviews emerge within the context of daily business transactions and intense conflict.

### **Two-Faced**

Janus is widely represented as the god with two faces. Depicting him thus may have been an extension of the idea of a spirit dwelling in the doorway, facing both inside

and outside, and occupying a liminal space. Because he faces two directions at once, Janus is thought to look to the past while he looks to the future. But being two-faced has a more common meaning: presenting one face to some and a different face to others (being a spy would be an extreme example). Sometimes we adopt different faces to enable social interaction, but often times because we hold overlapping and even contradictory identifications, realizing that to gaze in one direction is to turn our back on another important aspect of who we are. Such “contradictions” or competing desires may initially be unwelcome, as was Allen’s dawning realization of her same-sex attraction given the Mormon Church’s view that homosexual desire is incompatible with Church teachings. Other competing identifications may emerge accidentally, as when an individual pursues her curiosity or passion. The devout believers who initially pursued historical knowledge about Mormonism only to discover their findings contradicted official leaders’ version of the past. Gazing in two directions at once sometimes forces us to choose which way we are to go, or, alternatively to live in a *detante*. Many of the Mormon women historians and intellectuals demonstrate integrity by attempting to embrace this uncomfortable position. By so doing, they give courage to others.

### **Germination**

In my conversations with Sandra Allen and in her archive, no single moment emerges as “the moment” when she turned away from the LDS Church; no single moment emerges as “the moment” she embraced her orientation as a lesbian, scholar, photographer, feminist, or queer activist. In fact, Allen marks a number of incremental movements and not a single turning point. For scholars of persuasion, such a disclosure could prove troubling. In Allen’s case, there was no single stirring speech, no pamphlet,

no single fact, no eruption of public remembrance, no performance, no authority, no anecdote, and no single argument delivered at a *kairotic* moment that changed her mind.

Janus, as the male god dwelling in the home, became known as the god of germination. Although he was not principally a male fertility god, he remained in the Roman pantheon associated with seed-planting. Much can happen between the sowing and reaping: it is a period of both careful cultivation and profound uncertainty. In the western rhetorical tradition, we tend to focus upon the preparation and acumen of the individual *rhetor* in a given situation and his ability to perceive what arguments will succeed – which will take root. Even as we theorize the kinds of appeals that may engender identification or which methods will move audiences to form new adherences, we neglect the complex factors – including the interplay of time, other texts and discourses, personal and lived bodily experiences and shifting external contexts – have in effecting changes in values. Seeds are small things. Yet given the right material conditions, they grow.

## NOTES

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 INTRODUCTION

<sup>1</sup> “The phenomenon of the Octalog came into being at the 1988 CCCC when James J. Murphy, with support from Theresa Enos and Stuart Brown, proposed and chaired a roundtable composed of eight distinguished historians of rhetoric who gathered to discuss the methods, subjects, and purposes of scholarship in rhetorical history” (Agnew 237). The “Octalog” project has been taken up twice more with two different panels of eight: in 1997 and in 2010.

<sup>2</sup> “Enduring” is an imprecise word, meaning at least since the first Octalog in 1988.

<sup>3</sup> Ralph Cintrón shares this concern that the revisionist language of “empowerment” redeploys neoliberal ideologies (126-7).

<sup>4</sup> This interest is far from new as multiple collections and articles index its genealogy in rhetorical studies.

<sup>5</sup> Lauren E. Obermark introduced the phrase “pedagogy of memory.”

<sup>6</sup> The National Women’s Conference transpired in Houston, Texas, in November 1977. The Mormon Church emerged on “the forefront of an explosive national campaign” in the wake of the Utah selection meeting, subjecting it “to the most intense media scrutiny since the days of polygamy” (Gottlieb and Wiley 203).

## CHAPTER 1

<sup>7</sup> Quest was a “Mormon” political entity formed in advance of the 1976 elections in Nevada.

<sup>8</sup> Like the Relief Society, the Pro-Family Coalition organizational structure was modeled after the priesthood organizational structure: a president supported by two counselors. Allen was originally called and set aside to be one such counselor.

<sup>9</sup> Although Allen ceased to be as involved with the Pro-Family Coalition after the ERA referendum, one target was Planned Parenthood. The evening of the Pro-Family Coalition’s ERA “victory,” Carol Carlson told “rabid pro-Planned Parenthood” Assemblyman Lon Channey that “[w]e’re going to talk about Planned Parenthood sometime soon” (Allen, *Second Volume* 111).

<sup>10</sup> Carol Carlson urged her to bring up unisex bathrooms and homosexual teachers because they were “fear buttons,” Allen said in the Denver interview. With openly homosexual teachers, for example, her audiences could leave believing that their children would be introduced or “taught” homosexuality, or worse, molested by pedophiles due to

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the strong if uniformed link many traditional, religious leaning women made between homosexuality and pedophilia.

<sup>11</sup> This particular “cover” complicates the issue somewhat as Allen did know, even in the late 1970s, that she had gender issues (“Denver Interview”). The materials she gathered from this Planned Parenthood office instructed her in important ways about lesbian sexual relations.

<sup>12</sup> In her marginal gloss, Allen wrote “Mormon” beneath the photo of Victor L. Brown, Jr. Above Brown’s bio she also wrote “Announce newsletters sign up/ 2<sup>nd</sup> hour introduce” (Pro-Family Coalition 3). This gloss suggests that she introduced Brown; no markings appeared by Seiler’s bio and photo.

<sup>13</sup> The Institute for Studies in Values sought to prove that “homosexuality can be changed” (Huffaker). “The Institute for Studies in Values and Human Behavior was established in 1976. Its sole director was Dr. Allen E. Bergin, with Robert K. Thomas sometimes serving as Acting Director in Dr. Bergin's absence. The Institute served as the experimental arm of the Comprehensive Clinic. The Institute was also allied with the Dept. of Psychology. The Institute was also closely tied to LDS Social Services. The Institute closed its doors in 1985” (“Institute for Studies in Values”). According to the official BYU website and contrary to the claim made on his bio, Victor L. Brown never served as director or acting director of the Institute. However, at least one publication states the “BYU’s Institute for Studies in Values and Human Behavior, headed by Victor L. Brown, Jr., helped prepare a rebuttal to the Payne letter in the form of a preliminary statement on a study the institute was doing on homosexuality” (Huffaker). Sometimes called the “Values Institute,” it “was established to gain an accurate understanding of how the LDS people behave, and then to first prevent and second to change behavior that leads LDS people away from eternal life. These behaviors included alcoholism, crime, adultery, and, most heavily focused upon, homosexuality” (“Institute for Studies in Values”). The Institute was implicated if not in providing then knowing about aversion shock treatments to gay students (Cowan; Huffaker).

<sup>14</sup> Notes Pierre Nora: “No society has ever produced archives as deliberately as our own, not only by volume, not only by new technical means of reproduction and preservation, but also by its superstitious esteem, by its veneration of the trace” (13). Bradford Vivian argues that our increasing access to digital memory means that we can store and disseminate every digital event; some people now record every moment of their lives (*Public Forgetting* 36). While our writings, photographs, emails, and blogs are individual and unique, are they rare? Nora explains, our anxiety about the meaning of the present and impulse to archive means that “the most humble testimony, the most modest vestige” is granted “the potential dignity of the memorable” (13).

<sup>15</sup> While archives housed in academic institutions remain a primary starting place for historical research, historians have for some time articulated the need to broaden both the conception of the archive to include traces preserved, by accident or on purpose, in

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alternative “profane” spaces like used bookstores, book sales, and public libraries. Moreover, I wish to emphasize the relationship of the home “private” space to the archive. Archives were once synonymous with private homes where public documents were kept. It is not surprising, then, that historians of rhetoric and composition have also located archives in attics, basements, and desk drawers. The essays in the recent volume, *Beyond the Archives*, “show that researching family archives and local stories can and does lead to sustained scholarly work and contributes to new knowledge, both in and outside of academe” (Kirsch and Rohan 3). Many scholars doing research in the history of composition and rhetoric write in another recent collection, *Working in the Archives*, about how they have found and created archives.

<sup>16</sup> These documents concern a host of “problems” to be solved for the Mormon Church and range from African Americans and the priesthood, to proper dress for women, from hosting a Native American student in one’s home to whether a Brazilian man must demonstrate genealogically that he does not have African ancestry. The list goes on.

<sup>17</sup> The self-reflexive move I undertake here and throughout the project has been particularly championed by feminist rhetorical historiographers to index the ways personal backgrounds, values, biases, and experiences shape histories. Kirsch and Royster suggest three categories as heuristic for conceptualizing a feminist practice in rhetorical historiography: critical imagination, strategic contemplation, and social circulation. The first of these terms, critical imagination, is in part concerned with the way scholars address their own stake in a given project. In *Traces of a Stream*, Royster also links critical imagination to strategic contemplation, as both heuristics foreground the minds, bodies, and souls – the materiality and the material conditions – of women’s rhetorical production (Royster 275). Employing these heuristics implies, in part, a deep consideration of the real constraints that govern personal, political, and discursive choices. Kenneth Burke’s hermeneutics have also guided me. Because as humans we are enmeshed in language, it is impossible to situate ourselves outside of language and adopt an impartial or unbiased perspective. In spite of his belief that there is no position of objectivity, no place outside of language upon which to stand, he does not subscribe to a hermeneutics of suspicion. Burke’s theory of discounting accounts simultaneously for the fact that we do not and cannot take things at face value, while, at the same time, we must trust others if we are to get along in the world. In short, that “the enlivening tension of all mature interpretation” consists of the fact that on the one hand, we resist being duped, and on the other, we gather what is going on (Crusius 82).

<sup>18</sup> As Allen agreed to be interviewed, she also served as what in ethnography would be called an “informant”; her insight proved invaluable.

<sup>19</sup> I am not arguing here that the Mormon Church is a total institution or a totalitarian institution per Erving Goffman’s (of which he includes boarding schools and boot camps). Bourdieu does not examine total institutions particularly, but finds examples of this “implicit pedagogy” in cultures generally. Goffman suggests such pedagogies are found particularly in institutions that are hierarchical, have high entrance barriers, require

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high levels of participation, and inform nearly every aspect of one's life. In this sense, the Mormon Church does display some aspects of a total institution.

<sup>20</sup> After giving a presentation on this work in progress at *Feminisms and Rhetorics* at Stanford University in 2013, Cheryl Glenn suggested the term "refugee archive" might be more appropriate to describe the *Sandra Allen Collection*.

<sup>21</sup> Allen specifically believes that LDS Church Security was responsible for causing the disappearance of her research materials. While the LDS Church acknowledges the existence of a Church Security Department, very little information about it is available to the public.

<sup>22</sup> The night before Allen left to present "The Mormon Involvement in the Defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment" at the Western Regional Honors Conference in 1992 at Arizona State University in Tempe, many materials she collected went missing ("Telephone Interview"). She traveled to the conference anyway and delivered the paper to what she described as a very hostile or "stacked" audience. Tempe is densely populated with Latter-day Saints, and Allen suspected the Church was interfering in her research to discredit her. When Allen retraced her steps to retrieve the documents that were taken, investing in hours of locating sources and filling out ILL slips, she received notices that the materials did not exist or could not be found ("Telephone Interview"). My examination of the slips indicates that some small percentage called for documents exclusively housed in Church owned and controlled collections, as in the BYU archives. Regarding the other unfulfilled requests, because the research process has been transformed in the last twenty years, many materials have been digitized and are available through other channels. The documents Allen did manage to retrieve were kept in CSWR. Again, they disappeared, this time only for a week ("Telephone Interview").

<sup>23</sup> Ferris's version of events differs than Allen's, although she acknowledges that Allen had genuine concerns regarding keeping the materials safe. A more troubling discrepancy is that the "Manuscripts Processing and Conservation" document lists the accession date as April 1991; Allen went to the conference in 1992, approximately a year later.

<sup>24</sup> The archive was processed by another student worker under the supervision of CSWR archivist Beth Silbright; it was in process until the fall of 1997.

<sup>26</sup> Ferris indicated that researchers could have requested and seen the *Sandra Allen Collection of Papers on Mormonism* prior to November 1997, but that it is unlikely any had actually done so since there was no finding guide.

<sup>27</sup> Ferris indicted that the collection was processed by the end of September 1997 and that Allen received a letter indicating that it would be made available to the public. In November 1997, CSWR received Allen's personal journals and the other documents now filed under the series *Additions to the Collection*. Ferris speculated, based upon the timing, that Allen had sent these documents after receiving the letter that the collection



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had been fully processed. The Additions to the Collection were processed immediately and added, possibly in the same month (Ferris).

## CHAPTER 2

<sup>28</sup> Leadership positions in the Relief Society are modeled after leadership positions in the priesthood. The position of “president” is supported by a first counselor and a second counselor. Collectively, these three officers are known as the “presidency.” The president of the entire Relief Society Organization is known as the General Relief Society President to differentiate between her position and that of a president at the ward or stake level; the three women who head the entire organization are referred to as the General Presidency of the Relief Society. The donation was made in Cottonwood I, a ward located in the Prescott, Arizona Stake. At the time, Loa A. Merrill, Allen’s sister, was that ward’s Relief Society President.

<sup>30</sup> Newell and Avery make the case that Joseph Smith, Jr. intended to instruct a “select” group of women in the manner of the priesthood. According to minutes from the first meeting, Smith told the members of the Female Relief Society, “The society should move according to the ancient Priesthood...[I will] make of this Society a kingdom of priests as in Enoch’s day – as in Paul’s day” (109). In spite of this compelling statement, Smith’s early intentions with regard to the Relief Society never came to pass, perhaps because the “select” group swelled rapidly to include hundreds of women, or because of the internal conflict over polygamy. Regardless, the meaning of this statement was questioned and the possibility of a female kingdom of priests rejected (Newell and Avery 111).

<sup>31</sup> Armand Mauss expressly denies that domestic pressure influenced the Church’s decision to reverse its position on men of African descent entering the priesthood. His main argument concerns the timing of the revelation, which came several years after pressure upon the Church from civil rights groups peaked (117). Others argue that it was not pressure from Civil Rights groups in the U.S. that caused the Church to change course on the issue of black men. In keeping with its policy that members in good standing produce genealogical records that go back four generations, missionaries required Brazilian converts to do the same. However, because the population of Brazil is made up of indigenous, European, and African peoples, new members also had to indicate the racial identity of their ancestors. This proved to be a practical and political impediment to ordaining Brazilian men to the priesthood.

<sup>32</sup> Allen stated in our phone interview that she was thrilled about the revelation. In an August 3, 1978 editorial in the Salt Lake Tribune, Jan Markland wrote: “I am overjoyed that all worthy male members of the church can hold the priesthood. It thrills me that I can witness this in my lifetime” (A-19)

<sup>33</sup> As examples, a full-page advertisement questioning the revelation and titled “Concerned Latter Day Saints” appeared in the Salt Lake Tribune on July 23, 1978. See

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also the August 10, 1978 “Blessings Risked” letter to the Salt Lake Tribune signed by Jared N. Sorenson, Dennis L. Welker, and Dale R. Wright (A-14) and the July 3, 1978 letter by Robert Schneider dubbed “Two More Revelations” (A-11).

<sup>34</sup> Publicly, the Church opposed same sex dormitories and bathrooms; the Church also stated that if the new law passed, women could be forced into selective service, which it opposed; same-sex marriage was a concern as was the likelihood that women would be pressured or enticed to neglect the home and eschew childrearing, which would, they argued, mean more extensive use of all forms of birth control including abortion. The Church stated simultaneously it favored equal pay for equal work.

<sup>35</sup> Decisions regarding all of the leadership positions in the Relief Society were and continue to be made by members of the priesthood. The General Presidency positions have tended to be filled by the wives of prominent Mormons, often wives of General Authorities. Still, however, the Relief Society was “legally incorporated under a separate name, The National Woman’s Relief Society, to conduct business on its own, with its own set of trustees separate from the church itself” (Gottlieb and Wiley 192).

<sup>36</sup> The importance of the IWY Conference in Utah cannot be overstated, and has been covered in numerous scholarly and popular articles as well as in book-length histories. Historian Martha S. Bradley suggests the Utah IWY Conference became a testing ground for the Mormon Church’s approach to defeating ERA; it also served to draw national attention to the Church’s position and its political muscle.

<sup>38</sup> Pamphlets, which were made available to press covering the monument and those visiting the site, described the content and meaning of each of the statues. Because the same descriptive words and phrases appear in multiple publications, I am assuming – without having seen the pamphlet – that many reporting on the monument borrowed language.

<sup>39</sup> Nothing about the statue suggests that the woman could not be the mother of the children with whom she appears. Given the number of publications that use this language to describe the relationship depicted, the pamphlet, other literature, and interviews must have explained that the woman in this statue was not intended to be the mother of the children. Given the ongoing “problem” of single women in the Church, making this distinction must have been important.

<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, given Emma Smith’s outspoken criticism of patriarchal marriage and the fact that Relief Society was dissolved before, not after, Joseph Smith, Jr.’s murder, it is possible that Smith realized the organization could mount a serious threat to the teachings of the priesthood leaders and spoken more circumspectly about its role vis a vis the priesthood.

<sup>41</sup> As previously mentioned, the March issue of *Ensign* was the “women’s issue,” explaining the delay between the delivery of President Kimball’s remarks in Nauvoo and

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their publication. Quotations and summaries of the other speakers' remarks and the musical production have been gathered from published eyewitness accounts. I have relied heavily upon Claudia Bushman's report in *Exponent II* and Janet Brigham's report in *The Ensign*. Both women counted themselves as Mormons; however, *Exponent II* was an independent, non-affiliated publication aimed at a progressive audience of LDS women. *The Ensign*, as discussed, is the official magazine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

<sup>42</sup> Kimball refers to Nauvoo and Utah respectively.

<sup>43</sup> This new emphasis on "the family" affected men as well as women. Unmarried young men had long been perceived to be nuisances and troublemakers and been the subject of scrutiny and suspicion. Men were encouraged to wed in their early twenties, to act as sole breadwinners for large families, and to assume leadership positions in the Church even as their peers were postponing marriage, sharing financial responsibility, and having fewer children.

### CHAPTER 3

<sup>44</sup> Because his disclosure was made without full knowledge of my research project, all names in connection to this anecdote are withheld.

<sup>45</sup> Active Saints are frequently reminded of their "responsibility" to do genealogical research and maintain a "book of remembrance" celebrating family history. All members are "encouraged to keep a personal history" (Arrington and Bitton 304).

<sup>46</sup> By 1981, genealogy was classified as a "priesthood activity," which is interpreted to mean that it is a responsibility (and privilege) reserved for men (L. F. Anderson, "Contemporary Women" 11). In practice, doing the family's genealogical work might or might not fall onto the man. Sandra Allen writes about genealogies; genealogical lessons are given in Relief Society; children are taught how to do genealogy. This may have been a way to signal its importance.

<sup>47</sup> *LDS Church News* interviewed Brother Flick of Brigham Young University who was teaching a course on compiling books of remembrance as part of a "summer school" program for Mormon adults seeking instruction. Flick recapitulated some of his advice to his students, suggesting that included items be carefully chosen; it should not be confused with a scrapbook or catchall for mementos. He especially suggests including important family testimony and spiritual experiences: texts that would be considered scripture for an individual family.

<sup>48</sup> Individuals holding certain callings, like missionaries, are required to keep personal journals; this responsibility comes with the role for the duration.

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<sup>49</sup> In studies of the personal journal, scholars chart the concurrent rise of modes of self-expression, self-exploration, and self-construction (O’Sullivan 60). Writing in *The American Archivist*, for example, Catherine O’Sullivan argues that starting in the nineteenth century, the pages of the journal increasingly became a space to “discover the individual self” (60). Around the same time, the journal emerged as a site of discipline and “testimony of sustained virtue” (Jane Hunter qtd. in O’Sullivan 61). While today we tend to ascribe qualities of self-exploration to the personal journal, the genre is better understood as a site of self-construction and self-discipline in the Mormon tradition. In this sense, the personal journal specifically and the home archive generally constitute a discursive monument to one’s Mormon faith.

<sup>50</sup> What appeared as “cooperation” with others in the Church to defeat the ERA upon reflection appears as “exploitation.” Burke asks: “When two men collaborate in an enterprise to which they contribute different kinds of services and from which they derive different amounts and kinds of profit, who is to say, once and for all, where ‘cooperation’ ends and one’s ‘exploitation’ of the other begins?” (*A Rhetoric of Motives* 25).

<sup>51</sup> While Mormons posit the soul is eternal, they also believe is also possible – and desirable – to perfect the soul and progress. This apparent contradiction (is the soul unchanging or is it perfectible?) is not experienced as a contradiction although outside observers may recognize the tension inherent in these two concepts.

<sup>52</sup> “In contrast to the informality and bustle of the wardhouse, the temple is the solemn dwelling place of the Lord, the site of the Saints’ most important and secret rituals, and the place where the full meaning of their religion is explained”; to enter the temple, however, a “computer system checks each member’s plastic temple recommend card to see if admittance has been authorized” (Gottlieb and Wiley 216).

<sup>53</sup> Such a statement raises certain questions about how to interpret her journals and whether her statements at the time, statements like “I am very proud of him,” made on September 1, 1977; “I’m the luckiest woman in the world. I would have been dumb to have married anyone else” should, in fact, be ignored altogether or whether her more recent, superimposed interpretation is the more valid one (*First Volume* 100).

<sup>54</sup> Allen expresses joy and excitement about being “called” to the Relief Society Presidency, explaining that such an honor and responsibility is usually given to more mature, older women. Allen states that she became emotional and cried upon hearing that she was being “relieved” from the calling. The meaning here is ambiguous. An educated surmise is that she was quite disappointed, but her feelings about the situation are not discussed.

<sup>55</sup> Gentile is what Mormons call non-Mormons. Allen more often tended to characterize the Mormon world as “light” and the Gentile world as “dark.”

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<sup>56</sup> For a more thorough history of birth control in the Mormon Church, see Lester E. Bush, “Birth Control Among the Mormons: Introduction to an Insistent Question.”

<sup>57</sup> Allen’s work as a Relief Society Counselor constituted a special calling; her work for the Pro-Family Coalition was also a special calling.

<sup>58</sup> The LDS Church during this period provided a yearly manual of “topics, activities, games, and visual aids” for Family Home Evening to insure that such time is well-spent (Arrington and Bitton 295).

<sup>59</sup> When Allen began keeping the journal, she maintained this practice relatively consistently, but did not maintain it.

<sup>60</sup> *B. of M.* almost certainly stands for *Book of Mormon*; *M. of F.* likely stands for *Miracle of Forgiveness*.

<sup>61</sup> This sheet may have been inspired by the Church’s Young Women’s Personal Progress Program, as later Allen mentions her “Treasures of Truth” binder. Alternatively, after mentioning this “progress point sheet,” she mentions a “self evaluation sheet” that had been provided by the bishop to assist “all officers, teachers and workers in the ward” on how to gauge their eternal progression (*First Volume* 108).

<sup>62</sup> Allen tends to write at night; she often states the hour and her intention to go to bed following completion of the entry.

<sup>63</sup> After swimming at the YMCA for an hour, Allen wrote: “I hope it’s helping my body. I want to have me look like I live the *Word of Wisdom* rather than just say I do and have people trust me. I also owe it to my family as well as myself” (*First Volume* 114). From this entry, it is clear Allen perceives the current state of her body to be a problem for herself, for the Church, and her family. In this sense, her figure constitutes a stumbling block, but one she has some control over.

#### CHAPTER 4

<sup>64</sup> Jan Shipps is a professor emeritus of history and religious studies at Indiana University Purdue-Indianapolis. She was the first woman and first non-Mormon to be elected president of the Mormon History Association.

<sup>65</sup> Mario DePillis describes Hosea Stout’s diary as “localized” (195)

<sup>66</sup> As the Saints’ economic history was Arrington’s area of expertise (he co-wrote *Building the City of God*), Arrington, particularly, was in Apostle Ezra T. Benson’s sites (Heinerman and Shupe 211).

#### CONCLUSION

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<sup>67</sup> Given the national publicity Sonia Johnson garnered in the wake of her appearance before the Senate Subcommittee, it seems likely that the Church changed its policy as a result of unfavorable national media attention, not as a result of “hearing” the protests of Mormon women.

<sup>68</sup> As recently as last year, a group of Mormon women attempted to enter a meeting open to priesthood holders held during the Church’s semiannual conference. The women were denied entrance but drew attention to the way women are excluded from leadership decisions that have direct impact on the lives of all church members. The leader of the group that organized the demonstration, Kate Kelly, was excommunicated in June 2014.

<sup>69</sup> I take for granted that the Equal Rights Amendment would benefit women as a category of people, a claim its opponents deny regardless of their sex.

<sup>70</sup> The phrase “like Sandra Allen” may be variously interpreted. I do not mean to imply that all other women who fought the Equal Rights Amendment are “like Sandra Allen,” only that she is one of many.

<sup>71</sup> I do not here wish to take on the multiple possible meanings of the word “successful”; I mean only that the Mormon Church worked to defeat the Equal Rights Amendment and that the amendment was not ratified.

<sup>72</sup> Members of the radical right like the Freeman Institute and the John Birch Society explicitly linked the women’s movement to communism.

<sup>73</sup> In keeping with Perelman, the use of the terms “rational” and “logical” do not belong in rhetoric in a formal sense.

<sup>74</sup> Such rhetors and the arguments they furthered may have had a tremendous impact on Allen; however, she is not conscious of this impact. The relationship between conscious and unconscious thought and persuasion is also poorly addressed by the western rhetorical tradition.

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