A community's dominant religion: A counter definition

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A community's dominant religion: A counter definition

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University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1990

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A COMMUNITY'S DOMINANT RELIGION:
A COUNTER DEFINITION

by

Geremia Veglia

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

Religious orientations, practices, and attitudes held by people relate in many ways to their behavior in secular society. To evaluate these various relationships several questions were considered. To what degree do religious beliefs influence an individual's daily attitudes and behaviors? Is there a segment of society that benefits from religious practices? Is a part of society harmed by these beliefs? These questions were addressed in an in-depth study of a small community with a population of four thousand.

Seeking to eliminate the possible effects of diffusion and acculturation, a rural town with a dominant religious ideology was chosen. Of the hamlet's four thousand people approximately seventy-five percent were Mormon. The town had seven Latter Day Saints Church wards with congregations of about four-hundred and fifty people each. In order to provide a concise interpretation of the data gathered, we included in the discussion a review of the literature pertaining to the roles and functions of religion and a brief summary of the history and some of the doctrines of the L.D.S. Church.

The data was compiled using a complete participant
observer research strategy. A pair of researchers, one male and one female, spent a year in the field gathering the data. While observing the daily interactions within the community, the male acted as an historian allowing for interviews to be openly solicited. The ability to openly interview the local residents enhanced the quality of the information gathered. The female researcher provided the "family look" while at the same time observing and clarifying the daily observations. Due to the type of data collected the presentation is in ethnographic configuration.

The field notes collected were placed within the framework of functional analysis for interpretation. We observed how the people of the village lived their daily lives then analyzed how the doctrines functioned for the people and the community.

Upon completion of the analysis, the tentative conclusions we reached revealed that the doctrines of the Mormon Church appeared to be dysfunctional for this community. The dysfunctionality seems to stem from a structural change in some of the Church's policies.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. THOUGHTS ON THE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF RELIGION
   Theorists of the 19th. & Early 20th. Century 1
   Modern Thoughts Pertaining To The Sociology Of Religion 19

2. THE COMMUNITY 37
   TABLE 1. Area Demographic Data: AGE IN PERCENT 41
   TABLE 2. Area's Dollar Income by Households: IN PERCENT 42

3. MORMONISM: UNDERSTANDING THE DOCTRINES 44

4. METHODOLOGY 62

5. SEARCHING FOR PATTERNS 77
   Patterns Of Exploitation 78
   Patterns Of Exclusion 82
   Patterns Of Deviant Behavior: Consumption Of Alcohol 86
   The Prodigal Sons And Daughters 90
   Religious Rewards For Secular Success 93
   Structural Divisions In The Community's Wards 96
   Patterns Of Family Living 100
   Education Of The Young 105

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6. THE ANALYSIS 111

7. THE TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS 129

REFERENCES 140
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CHAPTER 1

THOUGHTS ON THE ROLES AND
FUNCTIONS OF RELIGION

Theorists Of The 19th. & Early
20th. Century

With the arrival of the Age of Enlightenment, many members of the intelligentsia of Western society felt that the institution of religion was obsolete. The need for moral order, the harmonizing of an individual’s wants and needs with those of society’s, and the answers of profound questions could be accomplished by reasonable means. The roles and functions that religion played and performed in society were to be taken over by a new social construction. The need for superstition was eliminated and the world now had science, a much better explanatory tool. A leading proponent of this philosophy was Auguste Comte. In the nineteenth century Comte attempted an objective examination of the various social roles of religion. Taking an historical perspective, he produced a typology of the developmental

1) Comte’s work that addresses the roles of religion is The Positivist Philosophy of Auguste Comte, trans. by Harriet Martineau in three volumes. Bell & Sons, 1896

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stages of religion that coincided with the divergent stages of man's political and social evolution (Comte, 1896 vol.3).

Comte saw that as societies matured in increasing intricacy, religion changed in practice, structure, and societal function. Beginning with the theological/fetishism stage, which was encountered in man's most primitive types of societies, he noticed that

"At first it was only inanimate nature that was the object in its more conspicuous phenomena, even the negative ones, such as shadows, which no doubt terrified the nascent race as they now alarm individual children and some animals: but the spontaneous theology soon extended to embrace the animal kingdom, producing the express adoration of brutes, when they presented any aspect of mystery (Comte, 1896:10).

Comte felt that this type of religion was "as suitable to the moral as to the intellectual state of the infant human race" (1896:10). The concept of levels of religious development equalling stages of social development was one of the more influential contributions Comte was to have upon the sociology of religion.

When early anthropologists (Andrew Lang 1898, 1899; James Frazer 1909, 1955; and Sir Edward Tylor 1873) produced their works, they

turned to the study of "primitive" peoples living in the far corners of the world because they believed that these cultures represented what amounted to an
earlier evolutionary stage in our own cultural development (Lessa and Vogt, 1979:1).

However, these early anthropologists did no actual empirical studies in the field. They relied on reports from European missionaries and explorers who had visited these cultures. Lessa and Vogt note that into this "cluster of ideas [Bronislaw] Malinowski brought some new insights—insights that were based for the first time on extensive firsthand field experience" (1979:38). Comte's idea that the complexity of religion's structure was developed in conjunction with the level of complexity developing in secular society was reinforced by Malinowski:

> magic is to be expected and generally to be found whenever man comes to an unbridgeable gap, a hiatus in his knowledge or in his powers of practical control, and yet has to continue in his pursuit (1959:635).

Thus according to Malinowski, religion's function in primitive societies was to be explanatory on an individualistic level, even though he felt that the "myths of primitive peoples also have important functions in social life" (Lessa and Vogt, 1979:38).

However, Comte felt that religion performed more than an explanatory function for individuals. He saw religion accomplishing an expanded set of functions for society. Comte developed in detail this expanded set of roles and
functions while in the process of explaining the roles that fetishism had played in primitive societies:

Why fetishism admitted of no priesthood, properly so called, is obvious. Its gods were individual; and each resided fixedly in a particular object; whereas the gods of polytheism are more general by their nature, and have a more extended dominion and residence. The fetish gods had little power to unite men, or to govern them. Though there were certainly fetishes of the tribe, and even the nation, the greater number were domestic, or even personal; and such deities could afford little assistance to the development of common ideas (1896:13).

The discussion of polytheism brings to light what Comte saw as the important roles that religion would have to play in more complex societies. He felt that religion would, and in fact did, develop common ideas which help to unite men thereby making it easier to govern them. The supposition that these roles were indigenous to a polytheistic or monotheistic structure was to be questioned later by Arthur R. Radcliffe-Brown:

Amongst the members of a society we find a certain measure of agreement as to the ritual value they attribute to objects of different kinds. ... the totems, and the myths and rites that relate thereto, have a specific social value for the clan: the common interest in them binds the individuals together into a firm and lasting association (1979:51).

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Unlike Radcliffe-Brown, Comte was working without firsthand experiences from which to draw his conclusions. The inferences made from empirical evidence by Radcliffe-Brown in the future could not have been anticipated by Comte.

From the data available to him, Comte saw an increasing division of labor and complexity in social organizations. He saw that as humanity gained complexity—by evolving from hunting and gathering groups, to tribes and clans and then to city states—religion also expanded its structure and developed a new form: polytheism. As societies evolved into even higher levels of sophistication, an even more adaptable form of religion appeared, monotheism, which was the model that Comte felt was necessary to expand religion's social roles to include teaching.

Comte realized that although there was a certain amount of education being performed by the priesthods of polytheistic societies, it was not in the priesthood's own self-interest to do so because many of the leaders of these priesthods were considered gods. The division of labor had not progressed sufficiently to allow what Comte felt was absolutely necessary to form a pure intelligentsia: social roles had not fractionalized enough.

Although many leaders of polytheistic religious states attempted to become teachers, the wielding of state power occupied the majority of their time. Comte also noted within these polytheistic societies a lack of intellectual
development in many of these leaders, these 'men of action':

The most vivid interest and the most unqualified gratitude are extracted by practical success, military or industrial, though such achievement requires far less intellectual power than theoretical labours (1896:83).

What was needed then was a separation of the duties of church and state, which Comte felt was best accomplished by a monotheistic religious structure. With a monotheistic religion, a duality of power could be established. There was no reason for the head of the priesthood to also be the head of state. The burden of intellectual pursuits and endeavors was eliminated from the role that the men of action had to play.

Separating church from state freed a class of people to pursue intellectual tasks without the encumbrances of public service, allowing religion to expand its function to the education of the populace. According to Comte.

the function of the spiritual power is, in the first place, to educate, according to the ordinary sense of the word, and to keep up and apply in the social practice of individuals and classes, the principles, which education had prepared for the guidance of their life (1896:89).

This separation of religious/intellectual and state duties had the ability to expand the lifetime of a specific religion beyond the tenure of a particular leader, for a
separation of temporal authority was a problem for a society with a polytheistic religion. Comte saw that with a monotheistic structure, a society with its new duality of authority could develop a religion that would outlast the lifetime of a leader who was a god:

The uniformity of belief proper to monotheism, and enforced by it, admits of the establishment of a single theological system among peoples too important and too diverse to be long kept together under one temporal government (1896:83).

Having developed this typology, Comte found the transition to the establishment of a social religion based upon the cannons of modern science a logical progression:

He elaborated a complex blueprint of the good positive society of the future, a society directed by the spiritual power of priests of the new positive religion and leaders of banking and industry. These scientific sociology-priests would be, as were their Catholic predecessors in the theological age, the moral guides and censors of the community, using the force of their superior knowledge to recall men to their duties and obligations; they would be the directors of education and the supreme judges of the abilities of each member of society (Coser, 1977:12-13).

The antithesis of religion was voiced by Karl Marx in 1843-44. Though Marx was an atheist and sought to abolish religion, he saw that throughout history religion had performed certain functions for society. However, Marx was to
find serious fault with these functions. He felt that although religion was born of the society in which it was practiced, the functions that religion performed were the perpetrators of a false-consciousness within that society. Marx saw that historically the ruling classes of various societies supported religion and religious beliefs among the masses. They used religion as a means of reinforcing their advantageous position. Marx concluded that,

> ...religious suffering is at the same time an expression of real suffering. Religion is the sigh of an oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of men, is a demand for their real happiness. The call to abandon their illusions about their condition is a call to abandon a condition that requires illusions. The criticism of religion is, therefore, the embryonic criticism of this vale of tears of which religion is the halo (1978:54).

According to Marx, the functions religion performed for the masses were a detriment to social action. They were an illusion that suppressed the revolutionary spirit necessary for social changes. He felt that religion was an institution nurtured by the ruling classes for the benefit of the

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2) This critique was published in 1844. The title is "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction". 

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ruling classes. Marx perceived religion as a master-link in a chain of bondage that was wrapped around the working class. It was a link that needed to be broken in order to free the proletariat from exploitation by the bourgeoisie.

Other social theorists did not view religion the way Marx did. Herbert Spencer felt that religion had many positive roles. Unlike the typology of religion developed by Comte, Spencer not only defined how religion's roles functioned but also how they aided in the evolutionary development of systems. Spencer describes religion's unity role:

As furnishing a principle of cohesion by maintaining a common propitiation of a deceased ruler's spirit, and by implication checking the tendencies to internal warfare, priesthoods have furthered social growth and development. They have simultaneously done this in sundry other ways: by fostering that spirit of conservatism which maintains continuity in social arrangements; by forming a supplementary regulative system which cooperates with the political one; by insisting on obedience, primarily to gods and secondarily to kings; by countenancing the coercion under which has been cultivated the power of application; and by strengthening the habit of self-restraint (1969: 632).

Spencer explains how religion's unity role has, according to modern functional theory, both a manifest and latent function to perform for society. The manifest function of keeping alive the vengeful character of a past ruler by ritual conciliation of his spirit allows for the latent
function of reducing internal strife to occur. Insisting upon obedience to doctrine and ritual, stability is incorporated into the social body. This conservatism aids the political structure by teaching obedience first to the gods and then to the political powers. The teaching function Spencer alludes to is accomplished not just by verbal preaching but rather through ritualistic worship. The habit of self-restraint Spencer speaks of is advanced by the discipline of asceticism. ... we may trace in it the latent belief that God is pleased by voluntarily-born mortifications and displeased by pursuit of gratifications. ... we shall see that it has had a use [self-mortifications] and perhaps a great use. The common trait of all ascetic acts is submission to a pain to avoid some future greater pain, or relinquishment of a pleasure to obtain some greater pleasure hereafter. In either case there is a sacrifice of the immediate to the remote (1969:627).

Therefore, through ritual, religion unifies a society by providing it with a set of common ideas, educates the population as to the value of obedience, and teaches delayed gratification, all of which make a population easier to govern.

The contributions of Spencer and Comte serve to

3) For a more complete discussion of manifest and latent functions see Merton's Social Theory and Social Structure.
establish much of the framework for functional theory's perception of religion; however, it is from the works of Emile Durkheim that most of the modern day thoughts about the role of religion in society originate. Durkheim's studies of suicide and aboriginal religion were the first to offer empirical evidence of the effects of religion upon an individual's daily affairs.⁴

The enlightenment had all but dismissed the role of religion in society. The intelligentsia of the time looked upon religion as either a superstition or as a form of hierarchic tyranny, a part of mankind's past but not destined to be a part of his future. Durkheim did not agree with this assessment of religion's future role. He used religion

and the category of sacred to explain not merely the binding character of the human bond, not merely the origins of human thought and culture, but the very constitution of the human mind (Nisbet, 1965:73).

In his work, Suicide, Durkheim noticed that Protestants committed suicide proportionately more than Catholics and Jews. He concluded that even though each religion is

⁴ Durkheim's two prominent works on religion are Suicide: A Study in Sociology., and The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life.
adamantly opposed to suicide, the Catholic and Jewish faiths create a stronger social cohesion among their believers. Durkheim felt that the more cohesive the religion is, the less suicidal its practitioners are:

If religion protects man against the desire to kill himself, it is not because it preaches respect for his person based on arguments sui generis, but because it is a society (1985:102).

Durkheim then concludes that if religion forms a type of society, any other type of social group (family, civil society, etc.) can perform the same function of integration for the individual. However, some religions are structured in such a way as to provide a more integrated personal environment than others. By so doing, they provide a protection against the development of an "egoistic" attitude, which can lead to self destruction within an individual (Durkheim, 1985:106).

With the argument he presents in The Elementary Forms Of The Religious Life, Durkheim expands religion's role by stating that human capacity for intellectual activity was formed and stimulated by the practice of religion:

If philosophy and the sciences were born of religion, it is because religion began by taking the place of the sciences and philosophy. But has been less frequently noted that religion has not confined itself to enriching the human intellect, formed beforehand, with a certain number of ideas; it has

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contributed to forming the intellect itself. Men owe to it not only a good part of the substance of their knowledge, but also the form in which this knowledge has been elaborated (1965:21).

Thus, Durkheim proposes that religion was the methodology mankind used to develop its capacity for intellectual thought.

Even in the early 1900's, the modern age of science, Durkheim felt that religion had an important function to perform for society. Despite its superstitious label, the final resting place for religion was not to be the archives of history, for Durkheim recognized that although the burden of explanation of natural phenomena had shifted from religion to the various scientific disciplines in order to "spread itself or merely maintain itself, it [religion] must be justified" (1965:478). He perceived that the justification and continuation of religious practices lie in the fact that

faith is before all else an impetus to action, while science, no matter how far it may be pushed, always remains at a distance from this. Science is fragmentary and incomplete: it advances but slowly and is never finished; but life cannot wait. The theories [religious doctrines] which are destined to make men live and act are therefore obliged to pass science and complete it prematurely. ... Thus religions, even the most rational and laicized, cannot and never will be able to dispense with a particular form of speculation which, though having the same subjects as

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science itself, cannot be really scientific: the obscure intuitions of sensation and sentiment too often take the place of logical reason (Durkheim. 1969:479).

In summary, Durkheim felt that religion helped humans form intellectual thought processes. Religion also performs necessary functions for both society and its citizenry. On a societal level it functions to maintain a form of social cohesion among the members. For the individual, religion provides a closure or theory for all types of phenomena for which science does not yet have an answer. Indirectly then, religion provides people with a generalized impetus or motivation for social action.

Religion also can affect social life in other important ways. The examination of these other important religious influences was undertaken by Max Weber. Many of Weber's thoughts have been incorporated into modern functional theory. One of his major contributions to the sociology of religion comes from his discussion of religions which had developed a professional clergy. He saw that once the professional clergy developed, a de-mythification process was soon implemented. Weber perceived primitive man as looking at the world around him with a degree of belonging and participation in its naturally occurring events. Another researcher described primitive man's assessment of nature as "neither merely theoretical nor merely practical; it is sympathetic"
(Cassirer, 1953:109). However, where professional priesthoods began developing, the myths of primitive man were being replaced by a rationalized metaphysical form of religion. These priesthoods were in the process of building rational theologies:

The development of both a metaphysical rationalization and religious ethic requires an independent and professionally trained priesthood, permanently occupied with the cult and with the practical problems involved in the cure of souls (Weber, 1963:30).

The priesthood therefore became the avenue to God. For unlike the primitive myth structures, where everything had its mystical aspects, the professional priests made God not of this world but removed from it. With God no longer embodied in everyday processes and things, the professional clergy gradually began to rationally develop ways by which man could obtain salvation. They became involved with moral ethics, which determined what was to be done and what ought to be done; in other words, the professional clergy generated doctrines.

These doctrines became a part of the education function of the priesthood. It was these teachings, when accepted by the lay practitioner of the religion, that became the means to attain salvation by returning to the presence of God. As these doctrines directly governed an individual's behavior, many of these doctrines soon became the society's proper
behavioral goals. Weber not only observed the rationalizing process, but he also noticed an increasing trend toward asceticism in the Protestant denominations. According to O'Dea.

Weber saw that trend in Protestantism which tended towards asceticism as having far-reaching effects in the elimination of magical and mythical elements from its religious outlook and correspondingly focusing men's attention and energies on action in the world (1966:45).

Observing the asceticism of rationalized religions, Weber focused upon the impact of Calvinism upon economic life. As peoples' lives focused on the "thisworldly" aspects of religion, Calvinists emphasized the world "as an arena for man's active mastery" (O'Dea, 1966:46).

In The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Weber presented a means by which religious doctrines could directly influence secular society. He argued that the teachings and doctrines of the Calvinist faith was the impetus that propelled the fledgling capitalistic system into the position of economic dominance in today's world. Weber found that within Calvinism's doctrines existed a means by which the secular world could be influenced and motivated in a particular manner:

For the "Saints' everlasting rest" lies in the next world: on earth, however, man too must. if he is to be sure of
being in a state of grace, "work the
works of Him that sent him, while it is
day." Not sloth and enjoyment, but only
activity, according to the unambiguously
revealed will of God, serves to increase
His glory (1978:141).

Weber's research demonstrated that the industrious attitude
required of people to participate successfully in a capital-
ist system was to be found in the doctrines of Calvinism,
for Calvinists believed that to "waste time is thus, the
first and, in principle, the worst of all sins" (Weber,
1978:141).

Weber discovered how religion could be an impetus for
social action when he unearthed the parallels between the
writings of Adam Smith and the doctrines of the Calvinists.
Weber noticed that Adam Smith felt that the division of la-
bor, "because it gives scope for the skill of the worker,
leads to quantitative and qualitative increase in the
performance of work and so serves the common good" (Weber,
1978:146). One needs only to superimpose "God's pleasure"
upon Adam Smith's capitalistic ideas of "common good" to see
how closely they are echoed in the teachings of Calvinism
that Weber encountered:

Above all, how useful a calling is and
how pleasing it is to God, depends first
on its moral benefits, secondly on the
degree of importance for the community
of the goods to be produced in it, and
thirdly (and this is naturally the most
important from the practical point of
view) on its 'profitability' for the
individual. For, if the God whom the Puritan sees at work in all the coincidences of life reveals a chance to profit one of His own, He has a purpose in so doing. Consequently, the faithful Christian must follow this call by turning it into good account. If God show you a way in which you may lawfully get more than in another way (without wrong to your soul or to any other), if you refuse this, and choose the less gainful way, you cross one of the ends of your calling, and refuse to be God’s steward, and to accept His gifts and use them for Him when He requireth it: you may labour to be rich for God, though not for the flesh and sin (1978:147-148).

The parallels between capitalist ideology and Calvinist doctrines are almost a perfect one-to-one correlation. People—by adhering to the religious doctrines of profit, hard work, and production of goods for society—can be seen as having a substantial influence upon the secular society in which these doctrines were practiced.

It was from Weber’s analysis of the Calvinist doctrines that the teachings of various religions became recognized as possible influences in the development of social/economic relations. However, it is important to note that Durkheim shares credit with Weber for having restored religion to a central role in the study of man. Weber saw religion as an area of motivation for change in the development of society (Nisbet. 1965:74).

Weber’s analysis of religion, together with Durkheim’s.
point to the increased sociological importance of religion's role in society. Durkheim understood the role of religion to have "symbolic and integrative properties in social and intellectual systems" (Nisbet, 1965:74). However, since Weber, the focus of any sociological study of religion should include an analysis of diverse religious doctrines within their respective social systems. Weber makes us cognizant of the fact that no explanation of an individual's behavior can be true without understanding what motivates them.

Modern Thoughts Pertaining To The Sociology Of Religion

Much of modern sociological thought about religion derives from functional theory based upon the profuse and diverse concepts developed by Durkheim and Weber. Durkheim's concept of religion and the social functions it performs for society seem to be the basis for the modern functionalist supposition of religious practice as a functional requisite for any society. According to one sociologist,

It is an axiom of functional theory that what has no function ceases to exist. Since religion has continued to exist from time immemorial it obviously must have a function, or even a complex of functions (O'Dea, 1966:4).

One of the most respected modern functional theorists.
Robert Merton describes the concept function as,

those observed consequences which make for the adaptation or adjustment of a given system; and dysfunctions, those observed consequences which lessen the adaptation or adjustment of the system (1968:105).

However, Merton felt that the above description of a function was somewhat problematic. He saw that a subjective category of motives could be, and often were, confused and subsequently used in functional analysis erroneously.

Therefore, Merton introduced a new conceptual framework to functionalism, a framework that could help the researcher to avoid analytical mistakes:

The second problem (arising from the easy confusion of motives and functions) requires us to introduce a conceptual distinction between the cases in which the subjective aim-in-view coincides with the objective consequence, and the cases in which they diverge.

Manifest functions are those objective consequences contributing to the adjustment or adaptation of the system which are intended and recognized by participants in the system.

Latent functions, correlatively, being those which are neither intended nor recognized (1968:105).

Many modern sociological researchers have adopted Merton's concepts and have subjected their data to a Mertoniai, style of functional analysis.

Although many modern researchers of religion have
adopted the Mertonian model of functional analysis, many also realize that

human activity is not simply adaptive and manipulative. Men also express feelings, act out felt needs, respond to persons and things in non-utilitarian ways, and enter into relationships (O'Dea, 1966:4).

An understanding that human activity is not merely adaptive has enabled functional theorists to identify a set of conditions that these thinking, feeling, and acting individuals have to cope with in their daily endeavors. These very conditions are the reason functionalists feel the average person needs a religious structure in his or her daily life:

Functional theory sees such need as the result of three fundamental characteristics of human existence. First, man lives in conditions of uncertainty; events of crucial significance to his safety and welfare are beyond his prevision. Human existence in other words, is characterized by contingency. Second, man's capacity to control and affect the conditions of his life, although increasing, is inherently limited. At a certain point, man's condition with respect to the conflict between his wants and his environment, is characterized by powerlessness. Third, men must live in a society, in a society there is an orderly allocation of functions, facilities, and rewards. It involves both a division of labor and a division of product. It requires imperative coordination—that is, some degree of superordination and subordination, in the relations of men. Moreover, societies exist amid conditions of scarcity—the third fundamental characteristic of human existence.
The requirements of order in scarcity cause differential distribution of goods and values, and thus relative deprivation. Thus functional theory sees the role of religion as assisting men to adjust to the three brute facts of contingency, powerlessness, and scarcity (and consequently, frustration and deprivation) (O'Dea, 1966:5).

Functional theorists believe that religion can balance these negative aspects of human existence mentioned by O'Dea through six functions that religion performs for society. The first of these functions provides an individual with emotional support and consolation in times of need. Religion can also help to reconcile a person after he or she experiences a catastrophic event or personal loss. Functionalists believe that by "doing this, it supports established values and goals, reinforces morale and helps to minimize disaffection" (O'Dea, 1966:14).

The second function of religion, titled the priestly function, through ritual, gives persons the ability to transcend their earthly problems and become 'One with God'. Self-help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous use the principles of the priestly function by advising their members to "turn their will and their lives over to God, as they understand him."5 A.A. can be almost as authoritarian as most

religious sects. Older members assert that one cannot gain sobriety without attending meetings regularly, finding a sponsor, and following the Twelve Steps of Recovery. Therefore A.A., by virtue of its claim to be a spiritual program, can be viewed as performing the priestly function of teaching a set of values to their members. A.A. also provides a set of normative references in the confused world of the alcoholic. Thus, A.A. "contributes to stability, to order, and often to the maintenance of the status quo" (O'Dea, 1966:14).

Religion's third function makes sacred the norms and values of secular society by "maintaining the dominance of group goals over individual wishes, and of group disciplines over individual impulses" (Davis, 1948:529). Because it sanctifies secular values, religion functions to legitimize the social order and the way society allocates its resources. It also allows for a deviant member to feel guilt and consequently to repent and return to the system. In so doing, religion functions as a means of social control.

The prophetic, or fourth religious function, allows an individual a socially acceptable means of critiquing the social system. This function was observed world-wide during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's when not only black, but various other church leaders became involved in protest activities.

The fifth function of religion infuses a sense of iden-
tity in people. The doctrines and values internalized by a participant in a religion are "the beliefs about human nature and destiny associated with them," which help, "develop important aspects of their own self-understanding and self-definition" (O'Dea, 1966:15). Catholicism, for example, gives people an idea of who they are and what is valuable to them. This sense of identity is important in modern society with its rapid social changes that often tend to threaten a person's sense of individuality.

Religion's maturation function helps the individual to attain a mature self-direction. Through its teachings, religion provides a continuity that allows for the passage through the various stages of social life. An infant needs to develop trust. A child must master how "to stand on one's own feet; and later still one must learn to defer satisfactions and to discipline impulses in pursuit of socially approved ends" (O'Dea, 1966:15). These six functions of religion deal with how religion's manifest function is to satisfy the emotional requirements of societies' individuals. When these needs are fulfilled, the latent function of aiding in maintaining social control is concluded.

The foregoing discussion of religion's functions demonstrate that both Durkheim's ideas about religion's solidarity role and Weber's view of doctrine possibly influencing secular society continue today in sociology. Because of the possible influences religion could have, many of the
sociological studies of religion in the past two decades has focused on religiosity, or how often and to what degree people are involved with religion. Recent studies (Moberg 1965; Dittes 1969; Roozen 1980; Caplovitz and Sherrow 1977; and Wuthnow and Mellinger, 1978) discuss declining religious activity during an individual's teen years and an increasing activity in their late twenties and early thirties. Babchuk et. al. (1967) credit this increased religiosity in people in their thirties to their need to secure religious training for their children. While studying the relationship between spouses of different religious affiliations, they found that "if among those who have not changed to a common affiliation prior to the birth of their first child, such a change occurs relatively soon after this time (1967:552). The decline in religious activity in the teenage years may be due, according to Caplovitz and Sherrow (1977) and Wuthnow and Mellinger (1978), to the influences of higher education toward secular values. Disaffiliation may be due to ideas other than the influences of higher education. however. Both Hartman (1976) and Roozen (1980) maintain that possibly personal contextual reasons, the maturation process, and even a personal sense of meaninglessness could be significant factors contributing to the reasons people detach from religious affiliations and/or relationships.

Recent sociological studies have also focused upon conversion as well as disaffiliation. Reasons for conversion
or a change of religious affiliations have received considerable attention in recent years. The research by (Babcuk, Crockett, and Ballweg 1967; Roof and Hadaway 1977, 1979; and Hadaway 1978, 1980) have made important contributions to the literature on religious conversion. These studies indicate a variety of reasons for conversion. The rationale ranges from alternative ideologies to emotional highs reached at a "pentecostal revival meeting" (Ward, 1980:1-22).

A recent book also re-kindled interest in Weber's classical discussion of Calvinism. William Buxton presents the works of Talcott Parsons in the context of a personal calling. Buxton argues that Parsons "can be best viewed as an activist thinker whose practical concerns derived from his commitment to the redemptive principles of liberal Calvinism" (Buxton, 1985:iii). In his confrontations with the instabilities of the capitalist system, "Parsons sought to found a practical standpoint from which the professionalized social sciences could contribute to the rationalization of the capitalist social order" (Buxton, 1985:intro). Buxton reasoned that the activist portion of Parsons' work was driven by the principles of Calvinism; Parsons argued that Calvinism was "thisworldly as distinguished from otherworldly," since "secular society was the field in which the religious mission of the individual was to be carried out" (Parsons, 1962:147). Buxton thus concludes:
Since Parsons supported the dominant value system, his own orientation—by virtue of his calling as a social scientist—flowed from his commitment to it. This implies as well that his orientation to social-scientific activity embodied the standpoint represented by liberal Calvinism (1985:18).

Buxton sees Parsons as a person who was raised in the Calvinist tradition and motivated by it to accept a calling. Parsons observed that "the calling is not a condition in which the individual is born, but a strenuous and exacting enterprise to be chosen by himself, and to be pursued with a sense of religious responsibility". 6 Parsons alluded to his own calling by attempting to make "some kind of contribution to the building (not merely the maintenance) of the good society" (Parsons and White, 1970:196). With his discussion of Parsons' Calvinistic disposition, Buxton has reintroduced the Weberian emphasis of religious doctrine as a motivating factor in social life.

Because our research focuses upon the effects of religion on peoples' lives in a small town, a review of modern literature's concern with the impact of religion in equivalent areas is necessary. Paramount to the investigation of the impact of religion upon the members of a community in the United States is to recognize that most Americans tender

6) From the foreword by R.H. Tawney, in Weber's The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. (1958)
a belief in some form of god. A national survey by Stark and Glock (1968) reports that 97.5 percent of the general population claims a religious affiliation. When we attempt to account for the innumerable "variations in human behavior," religious beliefs are likely to confer a considerable influence in the variations found in individual behavior (Stark and Glock, 1968:23). However, in the United States, the majority of socio-political groupings (towns, cities, states etc.) are heterogeneous as to their religious composition. The Detroit study by Lenski (1961) reports four major socio-religious groups: white Protestant, white Catholic, negro Protestant, and Jewish. The religions that fall under Protestantism's divisions are many and varied, ranging from denominations such as Lutherans and Methodists, to sects such as the "Foursquare Gospel and Jehovah Witnesses" (Stark and Glock, 1968:30). Aided by the religious freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof ...." most towns or communities have a wide variety of ways an individual could worship (Katz, 1961:164).

The variety of religious affiliations in Yankee City led Warner et. al. (1963) to view churches as centers of ethnic concentration. An individual's reason for attending one church rather than another was the focus of the religious aspect of Warner's research. Warner, studying this
phenomena partially by socio-economic status but primarily by ethnic origin, viewed the churches of this community as upholding the identity function of religion. He noted that "Only the church is more significant as a basis for defending the integrity of ethnic patterns" (Stein, 1960:78).

Warner seemed only interested in the length of time required for recent immigrants of an ethnic minority to assimilate into the dominant culture. The researchers interest in religion was limited to the socio-economic status of church members and the gains or losses of higher status members. Warner used these gains or losses as a measure of the speed at which ethnic group members were integrated into the community's main-stream culture. The Yankee City researchers did not seem to gather any data as to the motivational aspects of religious doctrines.

The community study entitled Middletown by R. Lynd and H. Lynd (1929) reported that in the 1920's, religion and secular life were diverging:

As changes proceed at accelerating speed in other sections of the city's life, the lack of dominance of religious beliefs becomes more apparent. The whole tide of this industrial culture would seem to be set more strongly than the leisurely village of thirty-five years ago in the direction of the "go-getter" rather than in that of "Blessed are the meek" of the church; by their religious teachers Middletown people are told that they are sinners in need of salvation, by speakers at men's and women's clubs they are assured that their city, their

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state, their country are, if not perfect, at least the best in the world, that it is they who make them so, and if they would but continue in their vigorous course, progress is assured. Meanwhile, secular marriage is increasing, divorce is increasing, ... Rotary which boasts that it includes all the leaders of the city will admit no minister. (1929:406).

Though almost everyone in Middletown purported a belief in God, and most expressed a belief in Christianity of one denomination or another, the roles of religion seemed to be relegated to a position of dealing with the beyond. Church services are held and "remain, fundamentally unchanged since the nineties" (R. Lynd and H. Lynd. 1929:398). The ministers say that their congregations are not actively involved in religious messages. One such minister told the Lynds: "My people seem to sit through the sermon in kind of a dazed, comatose state" (R. Lynd and H. Lynd, 1929:371). When a church meeting was scheduled to discuss an upcoming election for mayor, a veteran church worker stated, "this subject isn't the kind of thing we're used to in church" (R. Lynd and H. Lynd 1929:373). When the Lynds went back and produced Middletown in Transition a few years later, they found that religion's roles in the community had declined even further:

the superficiality of religious participation persisted in spite of the presumed greater need for solace during the depression. Ministers remained on
the periphery of local power circles while their standardized sermons became even more remote from the affairs of the day than they had been in 1924 (Stein, 1960:61).

The Vidich and Bensman (1960) study titled *Small Town in Mass Society* defines religion as subservient to the local political structure: even though "churches organize much of the social life in the community ... the ministers also defer to the invisible government" (Stein, 1960:291). However, the active membership in "Small Town's" churches is only "300-400 ... just a small portion of the 1,700 adults involved in the life of the community" (Vidich and Bensman, 1960:233). Vidich and Bensman also noted that the ministers of the churches were similar to the "Middletown" ministers, in that they stood on the periphery of their community's social structure. Nevertheless, this was attributed to their denominational and other strong social ties outside the community. The minister's "outside connections are as meaningful or perhaps more meaningful to him as his local ties" (Vidich and Bensman, 1960:238). Thus, the role of religion in the last three communities reviewed involves a concern with the beyond and is not considered as a motivating factor in an individual's daily life.

The Gaston County study reported in *Millhands and Preachers* by Liston Pope (1942) does offer a look at the effects of religious ideology on the development of textile
The interaction of religion with secular life in Gaston County sharply differed from the irrelevance found by the Lynds in "Middletown." Where the clergy was excluded from intimate interaction in Middletown, in Gaston County the churches were an integral part of the economic development process. Although there was a plurality of churches in Gaston County, a mill owner once stated, "I want to tell you that Gastonia owes more to Christian religion than we owe to any other cause" (Pope, 1942:17). The mill owner made that statement because of the exchange process that continued between the mills and the churches: "pronouncements from religious bodies sanctioned, almost without exception, the rise of industry in the region" (Pope, 1942:24). The mill owners also benefitted from prohibition sponsored by many of th-
churches. Pope argues that "[t]he greatest contribution of the churches to the industrial revolution in the South undoubtedly lay in the labor discipline they provided through the moral supervision of the workers" (1942:29).

In payment for their assistance, the mills established many of the new churches in Gaston County. Pope reported that "Nearly every mill in Gaston County donated one or more lots for the erection of churches, and has given appreciable percentages of the costs of construction" (1942:37). The churches built were often of the denominational preference of the mill owner. Though many of the mill owners were either Lutheran or Presbyterian, other denominations were actively involved in successfully soliciting funds and land for new facilities.

Thus, a variety of religious ideologies exist in this community. Nevertheless, they act in harmony by sanctioning certain workers behavior while actively supporting the textile mills in the area. However, they do so in good part for their own gains. Churches, Pope concludes that

\[ \text{unless they find economic standards, as such, other than those of the economic culture from which they draw immediate substance, they will not be able to stand in effective judgment or criticism} \]

(1942:334).

What Pope illuminates is that in a small community, even with a plurality of religious beliefs, religion can be
a motivating force in secular society. Nevertheless, in the case of Gaston County it seems that it was not the complete doctrines of the churches that were the motivating factors but rather the selective use by the local clergy of specific doctrines that supported the purposes of the mill owners. Pope has also shown us that the policies of support and endorsement of economic segments of secular life by religion can and will lead to a criticism of the various religions, a critique that religion will have difficulty withstanding.

It should be noted that the literature produced on the subject of religion's roles and functions and their effects upon society are almost inexhaustible. However, no definitive explanation or answers about these roles and functions seems forthcoming. Comte saw religion as a form of social glue, the roles of which could be administered by sociologist priests. Spencer argued that the ghosts of leaders or martyrs were a necessary part of a religion's myths in order to provide a sense of fear in the population of believers. He believed that a sense of fear helped to promote attendance at rituals, which established a conservatism in the congregation which served to resist change and aided in maintaining the status quo.

Marx saw essentially the same roles and functions performed by religion as did Comte and Spencer. But rather than viewing them as socially beneficial, he viewed them as a blanket thrown over the revolutionary spirit of man. and
smothering it. Durkheim realized that religion could fulfill people's social needs. He viewed religion as a social support system that could help them endure life's various deprivations by establishing a sense of community for individuals. Religion, according to Durkheim, was also the catalyst for man's intellectual expansion.

Building upon Durkheim's thoughts, the functional theorists who followed him identified the six functions required for religion to perform for society and, according to functional analysis, in fact does perform. There is also the body of recent literature that examines change and involvement in religious behavior. This literature was, no doubt, greatly influenced by Weber's analysis of Calvinism. Researchers began to appreciate religion's ability to produce qualitative changes in secular society. The idea that religious doctrines have the ability and power to change society has become almost an axiom in modern sociology.

The recent literature has also seen the re-introduction of the Marxian concept that religion has a negative effect upon the majority of members in a capitalist society. Discussing how religion's roles and functions work to preserve the existing power relationships in a capitalist system, Albert Szymanski states:

Religion provides a consolation for the suffering people on earth and a deflection of one's hopes into the future.
Combined with its advocacy of the earthly status quo, religion thus typically serves as a powerful legitimizing force for upper-class rule. Further, most religions especially those of the working class and the poor—Baptism, Methodism, the Messianic sects, and Catholicism—in their sermons typically condemn radical political movements and preach instead either political abstention or submission to governmental authority (1978:253).

Szymanski's analysis of religions' roles and functions re-addresses Marx's questions about who really benefits from religious practices. Can religion have a dysfunctional impact upon society? Is religion a vehicle for social criticism and change; or is it just a legitimizer for existing economic power relationships?

Consequently, the debate continues. From many different perspectives, both positive and negative views are voiced over religion. Some sociologists are concerned with religion's functions for society in general, while some are interested in the effects it has on peoples' daily lives. There is the idea that religion may have a positive effect upon society in that it can help to maintain the existing social order. Others hold the position that those very same relations may be detrimental to many individuals residing in the social system. These are the questions our research will explore.
CHAPTER 2

THE COMMUNITY

The Utah community, the focus of this study, was settled, as were many Mormon settlements, when water for irrigation was made available. It began and still remains basically an agricultural community. The first settlers who consequently became the first property holders were the people who built the dams and irrigation ditches. When the irrigation projects were completed, the land was divided among the workers by shares earned through labor in the irrigation project. The shareholders drew lots for various sections of land as soon as irrigation water became available. In this manner, these Mormon pioneers set about building a new community.

A spirit of cooperation was needed to conquer the physical problems and demands of settling the new area. Having to overcome many adverse conditions helped these people to develop a sense of equality where the common struggle for existence allowed no distinctions between high and low and where success attended effort rather than the fortune of inherited privilege (Neibuhr, 1963:137).
This attitude of consideration and cooperation was displayed by one of the Mormon Church's first bishops called to this area. The first bishop in the community was a farmer, who hired people to work for him. He hired them even though he did not have a real need for extra labor. He did, however, find something for them to do. This man's kindness and charity often provided a few day's work for anyone who needed temporary assistance. Notwithstanding his charity, he was not known as an extravagant man. After achieving a degree of financial success, he began to build his permanent home:

he hired some men to work for him for fifty cents a day. They went on strike for higher wages; they quit working until he gave them sixty cents a day (DeMille. 1976:146).

What became generally known to the people in the area was that if anyone needed work, though it would not pay all that well, he could count on the Bishop until he found something better.

At first, this little community was to depend upon larger, more established neighboring towns for their supplies. It was not until the early 1920's that a store was established that could provide for most of the community's needs. The merchant who started the store was also an active member of the L.D.S. Church and soon came to be called to the Bishopric. With the establishment of a store, the
area's social and economic structure soon improved. The community experienced a period of growth in the early twenties. Soon following the store's opening, a farmers' co-op was started. These two businesses, along with the addition of a hotel, transformed the little community into something other than just a collection of homes where farmers lived in close proximity; it was becoming a town. Public services and a school system were also expanded during the decades of the twenties and thirties.

Nevertheless, the community was not to experience any substantial expansion until after the Second World War. It was after the war that three more service stations were built to meet the demands caused by the increase in the number of automobiles in the area. Due to the natural beauty of the state, the increase of automobile sales after the war, and the roads that the federal government built during the war to move defense materials, Utah began to experience tourism, a new industry. The town, in addition to the service stations, saw an auto parts store open to meet the needs created by the influx of tourist traffic. Soon a branch bank from a neighboring town was opened, followed shortly by a pharmacy and two small restaurants. Much to the chagrin of some of the community's residents, a tavern was erected on the edge of town as well. A manufacturing plant that produced prefabricated building supplies was founded that provided work for men returning from the
military. The plant employed about fifty people in the production process when it first opened. However, today it has become automated to the point that only about thirty people work there, most of whom are office staff.

The late fifties, sixties and early seventies saw many non-Mormons move into the area. This immigration was good for the construction industry in the community. Land prices kept pace with the rising rates of inflation in the rest of the nation; yet land was still less expensive than in neighboring states. Many elderly non-Mormons took advantage of these low land prices and retired there. In addition, many Mormons resettled in the area after raising their families in a more lucrative economic environment. Augmenting the retirees, some younger people—with families who were disillusioned with the turmoil and unrest taking place throughout the country, especially in the sixties—found this small town in a farming area quite attractive. These new people provided an economic windfall for the town's businesses.

The town currently has grown large enough to support seven wards.7 According to The 1988 Sourcebook of Demographics and Buying Power for Every ZIP Code in the USA, the population in the area is about 4,400 of which about seventy-five percent are members of the Church of Jesus

7) Wards, are the L.D.S. equivalent of a parish.
Christ of Latter Day Saints. In an interview, a local L.D.S. Stake President stated:

We try and keep wards down to a membership of between 400 to 450 people. Not to say that right now there are not any of the seven wards with a higher membership: but we will wait until there is an extra 400 members available before we establish another ward.8

With a population of 4,400 people and a L.D.S. Church membership of 3,200 (7 wards at 450 ea.), our criteria of an area dominated by a particular religion was fulfilled.

Looking at the community today, we see a lethargic economy. Forty-six percent of the population is under seventeen years of age (see TABLE 1.). The population growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE GROUPS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-11</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-17</td>
<td>12.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>10.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>10.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
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<td>55-64</td>
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<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75+</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 1988 Sourcebook of Demographics and Buying Power for Every ZIP Code in the USA. pg.355C.

8) From an interview with a L.D.S. Stake President for the area, January, 1988.
of the late sixties and early seventies has ceased. In fact, many of the newcomers emigrated in the last few years. Although another grocery store, along with a variety store and two fast food restaurants, opened during the boom of the early seventies, the area does not exhibit an economic vitality (see TABLE 2.) and has not experienced any real economic growth since. Youngsters finishing school have to move away to find work because the region's economy remains based upon a stagnant form of agricultural production.

TABLE 2. Area's Dollar Income by Households: IN PERCENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>10,000</th>
<th>15,000</th>
<th>25,000</th>
<th>35,000</th>
<th>50,000</th>
<th>75,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LESS THAN</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000 to 14,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15,000 to 24,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000 to 34,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35,000 to 49,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000 to 74,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MORE THAN 74,999</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 1988 Sourcebook of Demographics and Buying Power for Every ZIP Code in the USA. pg.355B.

The reasons for our decision to use this community for our study were due to its parity with other towns in the area. This town is very similar in size to the others, particularly with respect to economic structures and conditions; however, and most importantly, Mormonism exists as a dominant religious ideology. It is important to note at this time that any dominant religion would have been

9) For a demographic and economic comparison of towns in this area see: The 1988 Sourcebook of Demographics and Buying Power for Every ZIP Code in the USA, pgs. 355A-355D.
acceptable for this study which deals with Mormonism only because of the proximity of the community and the predominance of Mormonism in many communities in the inter-mountain area of the western United States.
CHAPTER 3

MORMONISM: UNDERSTANDING THE DOCTRINES

The Mormon Church was founded in 1830 by a young man of twenty-six, who, to­gether with his followers, offered claims to combine a restoration of prim­itive Christianity as it had been lived in the time of the Apostles with modern revelation from on high (O'Dea, 1957:2).

This twenty-six year old man was named Joseph Smith, Jr., the son of a poor family of Puritan ancestry. His teenage years in the early nineteenth century were spent in Vermont and Upstate New York. The Smith family had a histo­ry of belief in personal revelations. Linn discovered that Joseph's mother's brother was a Seeker: "Seekers of that day believed that the devout of their times could, through prayer and faith, secure the gifts of the Gospel which were granted to the ancient apostles" (1923:9). When Vermont and Upstate New York became "the scenes of considerable reli­gious agitation" in the early 1800's, Joseph Smith experi­enced a sense of religious frustration with the claims of the various denominational revivalists (O'Dea, 1957:2):

He was struck one day by the import of the first chapter, fifth verse, of the Epistle of St. James: "If any of you
lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and unbraideth not; and it shall be given him." Inspired by this passage, he "retired to the woods" to ask wisdom of God. Joseph Smith held that his petition was answered and that two personages appeared to him. They were, he said, the Father and the Son. They counseled him to join none of the contending denominations but rather to prepare himself for important tasks, the nature of which would be made known to him in the future (O'Dea, 1957:3).

These important tasks, supposedly assigned to Joseph Smith, were the processes of translation which, upon their completion, the Mormon Church was founded.

Joseph was supposedly instructed in a visitation by an angel named "Moroni" as to where some lost scriptures were hidden. It was Joseph Smith's task to recover these scriptures, in the form of golden plates, and translate them (Linn, 1923:32). The supposed translations from these plates constitute the Book of Mormon, the Restored Bible of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Claiming that this book was a reinstated scripture and claiming to have received continuing direct revelations from God, Joseph Smith began to assemble a following. However, the following was small, as the 'book' was not received well. The book... did not sell. The local community took it no more seriously than they did Joe himself and his family (Linn, 1923:49).
The new Church did not begin to grow until 1831 after the group moved to Kirkland, Ohio. From Kirkland, new converts were sent on "missions" right after their baptisms. But zealous proselyting, combined with some "land speculation and questionable financial ventures", angered many of the Kirkland residents and eventually forced the Mormons west to Missouri (O'Dea, 1957:42).

Albeit not professing but in fact actually practicing polygamy caused the Mormons to be expelled from Missouri. The fact is that "plural marriage was practiced in Nauvoo; however, until 1852 in Salt Lake City, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints denied that it harbored any such doctrine" (O'Dea, 1957:61). Because their behavior was similar to theirs in Ohio, the Mormons and their new found political power angered the local population around Nauvoo. They were propelled further west when a local non-Mormon lynch mob killed Joseph Smith.

The leadership of the group was assumed by "Brigham Young who led them to Utah in 1847" (O'Dea, 1957:41-84). Disliked and often even thought of as offensive by a majority of U.S. society, the Mormons, upon their arrival in the Salt Lake area, tried to keep themselves separated "from the gentiles" (O'Dea, 1957:166). Over the years since the move to Salt Lake, converts were told to make their way to Zion (Utah) where they became obedient "to God's command," devoting themselves "to the work of subduing the earth"
(O'Dea, 1957:44). Separated from the mainstream of American society for many years, Mormonism, through its belief in revelation, has developed various doctrines different from the policies and teachings of the majority of the religions practiced in the United States.

Nevertheless, an accurate evaluation of Mormonism's impact upon the community we are studying requires an understanding of its doctrines limited not to the evangelical feverish understanding that emerges in the converts mind, but inclusive of the knowledge of how the doctrines could influence daily behavior. Ever since Weber's analysis of Protestantism, many sociologists have placed an emphasis upon the development, through a professional clergy, of rationalized theologies. Weber argues that the idea of a transcendental God necessarily calls for a professionalized priesthood, which in turn calls for a rationalized theology. It is neither clear nor really important for our purposes as to which comes first, the transcendental God or the professionalized clergy. What is important is the manner in which the professional priesthoods can influence peoples' behavior. The professional clergy began the construction of pathways by which men or women could become worthy of God's salvation in the after life. However, when we look at the Mormons, we see a religion that claims no professionalized priesthood. Some sociologists believe that the absence of a professional clergy would mean the absence of a set of
rationalized doctrines:

An interesting example of this can be seen in American Mormonism, which claims no professional clergy and where rationalization of belief has lagged despite genuine theological problems within the content of Mormon belief (O'Dea, 1966:44).

Despite these claims, we argue that Mormonism is a Pentecostal type of religion with a rationalized fundamentalist structure. The argument for pentecostalism is based upon the Mormon ritual of Fast and Testimony meeting: the definition of pentecostalism is presented by an ordained minister of a self-proclaimed Pentecostal ministry. The argument for a fundamentalist structure will be based upon a review of Mormon doctrines, the comparison between those doctrines, and the definition of fundamentalism by a self-proclaimed minister of a fundamentalist sect.

The recent problems within the television ministries have produced some revised definitions of pentecostalism and fundamentalism in religious ministries. In March of 1987, Ted Kopel of NBC's "Nightline" interviewed people associated with Jim Baker: Kopel also interviewed Jerry Falwell. On that program, a sharp distinction was made between a Pentecostal ministry and a fundamentalist one. According to their own perceptions, an associate of Jim Baker's claimed that a Pentecostal ministry was one in which members of the audience or congregation experienced an emotional religious
awakening. An emotional religious awakening could occur by being healed of a pathology by a faith healer, or by accepting salvation through 'Our Lord Jesus Christ' usually at a revival meeting. History tells us that at one time in the United States

The religious revivals were the most powerful imaginative influence of their time... men and women remained all night, rushing from group to group at the rumor that livelier things were happening here or there. Then those who caught the spell began to fall. They writhed and finally became rigid, in what was regarded as a religious trance (Werner, 1925:54-55).

Though more subdued than the description of a Pentecostal revival in the 1800's noted above, the Pentecostal ministries of today direct themselves toward people who feel, or wish to feel, this emotional 'rush'. They also appeal to the chronically ill hoping for a cure.

Whereas emotional highs are not actively sought after by a fundamentalist ministry, fundamentalists believe in a literal translation of biblical scripture and a strict behavioral adherence to it. The fundamentalist minister, Jerry Falwell, contended that in order to obtain salvation the devout must live a life-style that follows Bible doctrines literally. It is not the feelings that overcome one at a revival meeting that is important, but it is rather strict adherence to the laws and doctrines that brings
about salvation.

Using these definitions of pentecostalism and fundamentalism, we will examine first the Pentecostal aspects of the L.D.S. Church. Having emerged in the "age of revival," Mormonism gained much of its early notoriety from its ability to attract converts (Werner, 1925:54). However, some sociologists claimed that "in the midst of enthusiasm, the new religion sought converts through logical argument" (O'Dea, 1957:148). Nevertheless, most historians of the early years of Mormonism recorded mostly the Pentecostal aspects of the new religion, and justifiably so. For what did they hear and observe?

They heard of a young man in Upstate New York, who claimed to have had visions and visitations from angels, someone worthy enough to be given a long lost scripture in the form of golden plates to translate and publish. Within this rediscovered scripture it was told that miracles and prophecy were not things of the past:

O all ye that have imagined up onto yourselves a god who can do no miracles.
I would ask of you, have all these things passed, of which I have spoken?
Has the end come yet? Behold I say unto to keep you. Nay: and God has not ceased to be a God of miracles (O'Dea, 1957:30).

Here was a man who spoke directly to God, received direct revelations, and was given the keys to eternal salvation.
through the priesthood as a gift from an angel. Here was a man who could, through faith, heal the sick and cast out devils. These claims brought the people to Palmyra, New York and later to Kirkland, Ohio, to hear the message of these modern day miracles. The idea of miracles being performed was what attracted the attention of the historians. This ministry was dynamic, and people flocked to Ohio to join the new religion. Converts full of emotional zeal were used to expand the growing membership: "As soon as man was converted he was sent forth to convert others" (Werner, 1925:72).

The notion of prophecy and revelation, in addition to faith healing and the casting out of devils, is Pentecostal in structure. If there was an appeal to logic in the process of conversion, why were the newly converted fresh with enthusiasm sent out on missions? And why are the young men just out of high school sent on missions by the L.D.S. Church today? Could the answer lie in the enthusiastic Pentecostal fever they emit?

Nevertheless, the Mormon religion is not a pure Pentecostal ministry because it does not attempt conversions in a group setting. There are no revival meetings for a non-Mormon to attend in order to be converted. The missionaries contact people in their homes. However, Mormons do hold a form of revival meeting, but that meeting is reserved for the initiates.
The first Sunday of each month is reserved for Fast and Testimony meeting. At this meeting, the members stand and 'bare their testimony' in front of the rest of the congregation. The function this type of meeting performs for the Church will be addressed in greater detail in the following chapters. Revivalism need not be entirely spontaneous. It has been described as a structured type of behavior with its own socialization process. Studies of revival meeting behavior show that

rather than being at a loss as to proper behavior upon conversion, seekers were knowledgeable about the content of role performances during revivals. As might be expected, one's proficiency in exhibiting "outward signs of inward grace increased over time (Ward, 1980:8).

When we analyze the Mormon practices of individual proselyting and ritualistic re-affirmation of belief, we see a conversion process that could be labeled as enthusiastically logical with a ritualism that is structurally revivalistic. Therefore, the L.D.S. Church cannot be labeled as a true Pentecostal ministry but rather a neo-Pentecostal one, a term which seems more appropriate.

When we examine the fundamentalistic appearance of Mormonism, we see this aspect of its approach to proper religious behavior structured much the same way as the Pentecostal semblances were. In the early studies of Mormonism, many historians noted the fundamentalism of the
L.D.S. Church. However, it was often glossed over except for where it pertained to polygamy.

Almost everybody between the years of 1830 and 1850 took the Bible literally, but not quite so literally as the Mormons, who, as we shall see, wished to revive some of the practices as well as the precepts of the children of Israel and the contemporaries of Christ (Werner, 1925:47).

Today polygamy is no longer a major issue in main-stream Mormonism. However, a strong fundamentalist philosophy remains in the L.D.S. Church, not a fundamentalism that stems from the Old or New Testaments of the Bible but from the revelations of Joseph Smith and the prophets who were to follow.

The content of these revelations were fundamentalist in nature in that they ordered the faithful to adhere to certain rules in their every day lives. The first rule of which was that of tithing. At first, consecration was attempted by Joseph Smith, but

it was found necessary to abandon consecration of property for a system of tithing, by which ten percent. of a man's possessions went to the Church when he joined it, and ten percent. of his annual income was to be devoted to the Church (Werner, 1925:76).

However, tithing was not a practice exclusive to the Mormons or to any other fundamentalist sect for that matter: in
fact, many religions laud it. Tithing is also voluntary; no one is forced to pay it.

Nevertheless, because the Mormons professed a prophet who received direct revelations, doctrines could, and often were, changed as the situations arose. Church policies such as tithing could be linked to rituals such as temple work, which is necessary for a member's spiritual salvation. Members may request a recommendation from their ward bishop to gain entrance to the temple but if they have not paid their tithes, the request is refused.

The Church administration also used tithing as a means of measure in other matters. When, in Southern Utah at the turn of the century, a canal project to irrigate the Hurricane valley was in need of financial support, the members of the canal company went to the Church for assistance:

President Smith then said, "I see that you have the signatures of five bishops on your petition. Are all of those five wards interested in this canal?" ... Then President Smith asked, "How much tithing do these wards pay?" I replied on that question I was not informed. John R. Winder, Counselor to President Smith, said he could soon get that information. This he did. The amount came to about $5,000.00. just the amount we had asked for. ... A motion was quickly made to have the Church take $5,000.00 in stock in our company. There was a quick second, and without further discussion the motion was carried (Larson, 1961:39).

The following is a postscript to this account:
indeed, without it the story is not complete. The people were told by L.D.S. Church President Joseph F. Smith that if they would pay their tithing the canal would be a success. Raymond explained, "President Smith and prophets ever after have told us that. There's lots of people here who think that our tithes protect the canal from storm and nature's enemies that keep comin'up from year to year. Ferra Leamon says that as soon as we quit paying tithing, it will melt and fall down into the river (DeMille, 1976:14-15).

Obviously, this historical account is the Church's transition from linking tithing with spiritual salvation in the beyond to encompassing tithing as a means of securing and even insuring material rewards in secular society.

Thus, we find within Mormon doctrine and policies a dynamic form of fundamentalism that stresses a literal interpretation of, and a strict behavioral adherence to, Church doctrine. But these are fluid doctrines that are contrived to fit the situations as they arise. This ability enables the L.D.S. Church to modify the doctrine that the members are obliged to follow, which justifies its label of neo-fundamentalism.

The Mormons have found it very useful to have a president who is also a prophet over the years. For any word that is uttered by the president could become scripture, he need only say "this came to me from the Lord." These revelations were often used to reinforce a policy that came 'under fire' from non-Mormons. One such instance was the
condemnation of polygamy by mainstream Americans. In order to silence the charges of immorality and satyrism directed at the practicing polygamists of the Church, the Mormon leader had a revelation that made marriage a bonding for "time and eternity" (Werner, 1925:281). In Temple marriage ceremonies even today, husband and wife and their offspring are sealed to one another not just for the rest of this life but for all of time and eternity. To reinforce the idea that a form of Puritan polygamy was necessary, a Mormon revelation declared that

God instituted polygamy solely for the purpose of multiplying the number of righteous, and not to satisfy the carnal desires of man. A large part of the Mormon celestial world is inhabited by spirits who go about, like Maeterlinck's souls of the unborn in The Blue Bird, searching for tabernacles. It is absolutely necessary to their resurrection that the spirits should have tabernacles, or earthly bodies (Werner, 1925:286).

Throughout Mormon history revelation was not necessarily "original." When establishing a mechanism of social control, Brigham Young had a revelation that justified the establishment of a policy called "blood atonement" (Werner, 1925:402). In this instance, Bible scripture regarding the atonement of man's sins through Christ's martyrdom on the cross is used to reinforce the revelation:

There are sins that men commit for which
they cannot receive forgiveness for in this world, or in that which is to come, and if they had their eyes open to see their true condition, they would be perfectly willing to have their blood spilt upon the ground, that the smoke thereof might ascend to heaven as an offering for their sins; and the smoking incense would atone for their sins. whereas, if such is not the case, they will stick to them and remain upon them in the spirit world.

I know, when you hear my brethren that telling you about cutting people off from the earth, that you consider it is strong doctrine; but it is to save them, not to destroy them (Werner, 1925:402-403).

This Mormon revealed doctrine has found its way into secular society as well. The State of Utah has a statute that allows a person convicted of a capital offence and sentenced to death to request execution by a firing squad. This means of execution was established to allow for the Mormon doctrine of "blood atonement."

There are other, less consequential revealed doctrines that the believers need to follow on the road to salvation. One of the better known is the "Word of Wisdom," a ban on the use of alcohol, coffee, tea, and tobacco, a most salient mark of membership in the church. Together with tithing, it separates the loyal from the Jack Mormon and the halfhearted. Abstention from the practices forbidden the Word of Wisdom appears to have replaced plural marriage as the badge of Zion (O'Dea, 1957:146).

Nevertheless, the Word of Wisdom and other Mormon pathways

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to salvation only strengthen the argument that Mormonism is a neo-fundamentalist structured religion. These revelations from the Mormon prophets are rationalized doctrines. They are presented to the membership as the methodology required for them to follow so that they can earn their way back to the presence of God. Mormon scriptures state, "if you will that I give unto you a place in the celestial world, you must prepare yourselves by doing the things which I have commanded of you and required of you."10

A discussion of Mormonism's adoption of many of the Calvinist attitudes relating to work and profit presents the final argument for a rationalization of the L.D.S. Church's doctrines: "Yet as we have seen, righteousness will lead to worldly prosperity—'in as much as ye shall keep the commandments of God ye shall prosper in the land'" (O'Dea. 1957:27-28). The Mormon teaching that God shall show how righteous persons are by their success in the secular world are the same as the Calvinists'. Mormon teachings also support the philosophy of the sanctity of private property. Brigham Young once sermonized that

[i]f you want to know what to do with a thief that you may find stealing, I say kill him on the spot, and never suffer him to commit iniquity (Werner. 1925:242).

10) *Doctrines and Covenants* of the L.D.S. Church p. 78. v. 7

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The Mormon advocacy of private property and capitalist endeavors is easy to understand if one takes into account both Joseph Smith's and Brigham Young's family backgrounds. Both Mormon leaders were born to parents of Puritan descent who were not devout church members. Both families were also quite poor. Descended from the English Puritan, Robert Smith, Joseph Smith "came into an ultra-poor family" (Werner, 1925:16). Brigham Young's "family poverty made thrift a necessity, and it is therefore not surprising that in later years it became in Brigham Young's mind the greatest of virtues" (Werner, 1925:4-5).

Nevertheless, it was the Calvinist attitude of Brigham Young's, more than those of Joseph Smith's, that translated the Calvinist rectitude toward work and work's rewards into L.D.S. doctrines. If we compare Mormon posture regarding idleness with that of the Puritans, we can see the similar, but somewhat simplified teaching of Mormonism: "In his (Brigham Young's) opinion, the most wicked of evils was idleness and the most stultifying of all indulgences was leisure" (Werner, 1925:418). The viewpoint one might call "the cornerstone of Mormonism" was work (O'Dea, 1957:143). Hard work and a fair profit was the doctrine Brigham Young preached. The sentiment of the Mormon leadership toward work has been similar ever since:

It admonishes its adherents to be active and to be oriented toward accomplish—
"Drifting about in life" is dangerous. "It is dangerous to both the vocational and to the spiritual welfare of man" (O'Dea, 1957:136).

If work for the Mormon had a definite Calvinist philosophy behind it, then it was for good reason. Similar to their Calvinist counterparts, the Mormons actively tried to "build on this continent a place for Christ's Second Coming in which they and the Indians and whom they should gather from the ends of the earth would play a central role" (O'Dea, 1957:144). To this end the L.D.S. leaders actively engaged in capitalistic ventures:

This was a great blow to the Gentile merchants, after its organization Brigham Young was known among them as The Profit.

Zions Cooperative Mercantile Institution was a great weapon in the hands of Brigham Young. The Church as a corporation and Brigham Young personally were both large investors in the enterprise, and the magnitude which the cooperative institution soon attained increased Brigham Young's power in the community and also enabled him to find employment for his numerous sons and their large families. The cooperative soon established its own factories and workshops, and before long became the largest organization of its kind in the West. No Mormon who had not paid his tithing was allowed to invest in the cooperative store, and this became a bludgeon in the hands of the Church tax collectors, for investment in the institution soon proved profitable and advisable (Werner, 1925:437).

With the creation of the cooperative (known today as
ZCMI, a large department store in Utah) and the ability of the membership to invest in and profit from it, the early Mormon leadership tied religious and secular life closely together. The creation of the Zion cooperative also provided the average member with the opportunity to follow the Mormon teaching based on Calvinism, the well known doctrine of "accept[ing] his gifts and us[ing] them for Him when he requireth it" (Weber 1978:148).

Because of the Mormon belief in and use of revelation, in addition to an insistence upon strict adherence to scripture both ancient (the Christian Bible) and new (the Book of Mormon), the Mormon religion can be described as neo-fundamentalist. Upon examination of the discussion presented in this chapter, we can argue that Mormonism contains elements of both pentecostalism and fundamentalist doctrine imbedded within its operational structure.

Having discussed the religious functions within society, the historical background of the community in which our research was pursued, and the Pentecostal and fundamental aspects of Mormon doctrine, we can now proceed with the introduction of how the empirical data was gathered.
CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Following a long tradition in sociology beginning with Louis Worth (1928), and continuing with (R. Lynd and H. Lynd 1929, 1937; Faris and Dunham 1939; Ware 1935; and Park 1952), the present ethnography describes in considerable detail the lives of people in a particular community. Although descriptive research of this type can be problematic in terms of hypothesis testing and theoretical explanation, many prominent sociologists have argued that the ethnographic method results in a more "precise measurement and reporting of the characteristics of the population under study" (Babbie, 1989:101).

Both nominal and operational definitions will be established. Nominal definitions, such as the labels of neo-pentecostalism and neo-fundamentalism discussed in Chapter 3 and operational definitions of what exactly we plan to observe, will be used. Although the study is descriptive and somewhat exploratory, an attempt will be made to employ the theoretical explanations for the described behavior. Therefore, the research goals of the present study are to provide an initial familiarity with the effects of L.D.S. doctrines
upon the population of a small community that is predominantly Mormon. Other goals of our research are to provide an accurate description of those effects upon these people and to "seek to explain why" the doctrines affect these people in the ways described (Babbie, 1989:82).

The data gathered for this study was by means of a participant observation conducted over a period of one year. A qualitative approach was selected in order to "develop a deeper and fuller understanding" of the phenomena being studied (Babbie, 1989:262). It was thought that by using a qualitative type of research design, the attitudes and behaviors of the people could be more accurately determined. Also, given the nature of the data collected, a qualitative analysis seemed preferable to quantification as the best means of presentation. The subjects' "subtle nuances of attitudes and behaviors" might prove to be unobtainable if a quantitative methodology was attempted (Babbie, 1989:283). However, some researchers feel that attitudes and subtle behavior patterns can be solicited by questionnaires and then quantified. Nevertheless, an awareness of how some people interact with social researchers influenced our decision to use a qualitative approach:

We find that the social world in which we live, especially American society, is a complex, conflictful, and problematic world in which people, both unintentionally and purposefully, often (but not always) construct complex ways of hiding
important parts of their lives from the outside public, especially researchers. Social research methods must always be constructed in accord with the basic idea of truth in this kind of social world (Douglas, 1976:3).

The decision to use a complete observer technique was made because the study focused upon religion's effects on peoples' roles and their behavior within those roles. The very personal nature of religious beliefs and the strong emotional feelings that might be elicited from individuals regarding their religious preferences determined our technique of gathering data. The argument presented by two prominent research methodologists further explains the advantages of the complete observer technique and the reasons we adopted it for this study:

The nature of the group led the authors to believe that if they presented themselves as researchers, then entry to the group would be denied. Consequently, they posed as individuals interested in the activities of the group and became full-fledged members trying to be "non-directive, sympathetic listeners, passive participants who were inquisitive and eager to learn whatever others might want to tell us (D. Nachmias and C. Nachmias, 1976:92)."

Using a complete participant observer technique, we assumed that entry into the community could be easily accomplished. It was further assumed that if we were to act in a non-directive manner, be sympathetic listeners, and appear eager to learn whatever others might want to tell us, we...
could use a complete observer technique effectively. Based upon arguments presented by some contemporary researchers, we felt that using a complete participant technique should increase the validity and reliability of our research as no researcher deceives his or her subjects solely for the purpose of deception. Rather, it is done in the belief that the data will be more valid and reliable, that the subjects will be more natural and honest if they do not know that the researcher is doing a research project (Babbie, 1989:265).

There is an abundance of genealogical libraries throughout Utah because of the Mormon doctrine of sealing family members to one another for time and eternity. Many small towns as well as larger cities have L.D.S. Church sponsored and maintained genealogical libraries for use by members of the faith. Mormons use these libraries to trace their ancestors who can then be baptized by proxy in the L.D.S. Temples and subsequently sealed to their progeny for the purposes of reunion in the afterlife. The availability and quality of these collections attract many non-Mormon historical researchers who use them on a regular basis.

Cognizant of the use of these libraries by other researchers, I let it be known upon my arrival in the community that I was a graduate student engaged in a history of the local area. Posing as an historian, I was able to remain a complete participant. Nevertheless, I also had the
freedom to ask direct questions required of a "participant as observer" (Babbie, 1989:264). Realizing that the local history is a history of early Mormonism, I as historian took notes openly and in some cases recorded on tape some interviews with respondents. The ability to take notes at the time of the interview and tape others reduced some of the methodological problems commonly associated with a complete participant technique.

The dual enigma of "selective bias and distortions through memory" were mostly avoided by our capability to record responses immediately. By assuming the role of an historical researcher for this study, I minimized the problems described by Nachmias and Nachmias. As researchers, we did not become so self-conscious about revealing [our] true selves that [we were] handicapped when attempting to perform convincingly in the pretended role; [nor did we] "go native". incorporating the pretend role into our self-conception and losing the research perspective (D. Nachmias and C. Nachmias, 1976:92).

Aware of the many problems associated with an independent field research design, we employed another primary researcher. Because some respondents tend to modify, hide, or change their behavior when they know they are subjects of a research project, even supposedly an historical one, we were mindful that a second researcher could gain information
that could be withheld from the original interviewer.

By using a female as the other investigator, we created a family-like appearance which reduced the "reactive effects of observation" (Denzin, 1970:202). A family man may be perceived as less intimidating to many females, thereby increasing the chances of positive interaction with females in the community. The inclusion of another primary researcher also increases the reliability of the study. According to Douglas,

[t]he most important implication of this argument for all social research is that we begin with and continually return to direct experience as the most reliable form of knowledge about the social world. ... If we want the most reliable truth we can get about the social world, which is what is commonly meant by scientific truth or data, then we want as much direct experiences as possible through the direct experience of field research, followed by checking it against the independent direct experience of others, and tested out and checked out by us as being true within certain limits in terms of our direct experience and our reasonably reliable, vastly complex ideas of truth-telling in this society (1976:7).

My research partner holds an undergraduate degree in sociology and was trained in observational techniques. Her observational role was one of complete observer. At no time did anyone in the community know that she was a researcher. Her role allowed her to listen to various interviews in which I was engaged and when they were completed, to ask
probing questions of the respondents in an informal manner. Betsy's story and other valuable data was gathered from or about females in the area by her in this informal manner. We gathered most of the data together, often observing the same phenomena concurrently and listening to the same accounts related by respondents at interviews. At the end of each day while compiling the day's notes, we validated each other's findings or corrected each other's errors.

While conducting the research in this team manner, we were careful to avoid the problem of a "participant observer[s] inevitably introduc[ing] some degree of reactivity into the field setting," thereby reducing the internal validity of the study (Denzin, 1970:204). We did not attempt to modify, influence, or alter life in the community in any way. Our influence upon the behavior of the subjects was minimized by the choices of activities in which we participated. When we attended church services, we did not make any attempt to join the L.D.S. Church and become an integral part of the Church's organization. We did not register to vote in the community. Although I attended three town meetings of a political nature, I refrained from making any comments at any of these gatherings.

During the year spent in the community, we made observations and conducted interviews regularly. Participant observations were accomplished through normal family living. We attended local cultural events, such as the county fair
etc. and shopped in the local markets. Our observations were not affected by many of the problems encountered by most researchers who use participant observation techniques. As complete observers, we were not dependent upon informants. Due to the frequency of visits by gentile historical researchers, the role of respondent was familiar to many of the local residents.

My partner and I constantly evaluated a respondent's tone of voice, his or her interest or disinterest when being questioned, and his or her willingness to answer queries. These evaluations were considered when reporting statements, thereby minimizing the possibility of problems with reliability. Where possible, respondents' reports were validated by our direct observation and/or the collaboration of another person of the phenomena reported. The rechecking of a respondent's report against another's further reduced the problem of "subject bias" (Denzin, 1970:203). Our status as graduate students who were required to be on campus for three days a week curtailed the potential problem of "going native and incorporating the pretend role into [our] self-conception and loosing the research perspective" (D. Nachmias and C. Nachmias, 1976:92).

These weekly breaks, combined with the discussions with my research partner, helped keep our data consistent. When we compared the early field notes with the notes gathered at the end of the study, we saw very little change in the
manner with which the data was recorded. The data seemed to retain the same level of objectivity throughout the year. The combination of using a unique participant observation role, having a colleague in the field, sustaining interaction with university faculty through weekly attendance, and subsequently disengaging from the field brought about by attending university contributed to keeping the problems of "observer changes" to a minimum (Denzin, 1970:204).

"Subject mortality" was not problematic since we were not dependent upon informants for continued contact with the group we were studying (Denzin, 1970:203). However, during the course of our daily interactions within the community, four people who could be classified as neo-informants were acquired, from whom many interviews were conducted. These four informants supplied about fifty percent of the background data about the community. These four people are called neo-informants because they never knew the exact purpose of our research. Nonetheless, these people often rendered the same services as cultivated informants who ideally trust the investigator; freely give information about their problems and fears and frankly attempt to explain their own motivations; demonstrate that they will not jeopardize the study; accept information given them by the investigator; provide information and aid that could jeopardize their own careers (Denzin, 1970:202).
Even though Carl, Ron, Jim, and Buddy behaved in the manner described above by Denzin, they were only knowledgeable to a finite degree as to the purpose of our study. They all knew the research was focused on the Mormon religion and that we were not Mormons and were therefore not interested in converting. They all realized to some extent that our findings, even in an historical context, could be critical of the local people and their beliefs. This realization did not discourage them. In fact, over the last few months they acted as "true mature informants" (Denzin, 1970:202). These four individuals often assisted us by acting as "de facto observer[s]," providing us with "unique inside perspective[s] on events" that we were still outside of: serve[d] as a sounding board for insights, ... open[ed] otherwise closed doors and avenues to situations and persons: and act[ed] as respondents (Denzin, 1970:202). These "are ideal characteristics, and distinguish the informant from respondent" (Denzin, 1970:202).

However, close relationships with informants can prejudice their reports. We constantly guarded against any bias that the relationships developed with the informants might introduce into their reports. Informants' reports were verified by another source or direct observation of the phenomena recorded. If there was no way to verify the response empirically, the information was compared to an earlier or "baseline" response, and a decision was made as to the
truthfulness of the report. If the reported data seemed questionable, it was discarded. When the informants could not supply any more information on a given subject, the technique of "snowballing" was used (Babbie, 1989:43-44). A total of twelve additional respondents were contacted, and valuable data was obtained in this manner.

The backgrounds of the four informants is quite varied and will be elaborated upon in the next chapter. However, it is interesting to note that Buddy was the brother of and Carl was the son of a Mormon bishop. Also, one of my respondents, from whom a good deal of data was obtained about the disenfranchised brothers of Mormon bishops, was himself a bishop's brother. Buddy also arranged the interview with the local L.D.S. Stake President, who supplied the demographic data for the local wards.

The problems of situational analysis that often accompany research designs that rely heavily upon interviews were encountered in our study. Despite the fact that our study was conducted as naturally as possible in every day settings, we were concerned with the "dynamics of these settings, the rules of etiquette that apply to them, the categories of participants who interact in them, and the varieties of action that transpire within them" (Denzin, 1970:204). This information about these factors was recorded, and the truthfulness of the reported data was weighed against the prevailing norms of the setting. To
further guard against these problems, we used formal documents and other related published research to "detail these settings" and "interviews to elicit standard meanings" persons (in the area) hold toward them (Denzin, 1970:204).

We were always cognizant of problems of validity and reliability and worked at maintaining the standards of scientific investigation:

> If one's findings are to be incorporated into the scientific body of knowledge, one's observations must be carried out with reference to three crucial queries: (1) What to observe, (2) where and when to observe, and (3) how much to infer when recording observations (D. Nachmias and C. Nachmias, 1976:95).

Deciding what to observe was determined by the focus of our study which was based upon the theoretical and methodological literature reported in the previous chapters. We focused upon a person's religious attitudes and the effects of these attitudes on their daily life functions. Thus, our observations were not only confined to behaviors but also to an individual's attitude toward those behaviors that he or she believed was influenced by L.D.S. Church doctrine.

Where and when to make these observations was an on-going process for the entire year spent in the field. For example, when the Friedland study aired in June of 1988, it did not present a problem for us as the economic observations in the area had been made previous to its release. However.
had it been aired while we were collecting our data, there might have been some different responses to our queries. We were sensitive to any such fluctuations in the social system and adjusted our observations accordingly.

We have an example of data that we did not include in our findings because of contextual problems. Midway through our field work, there was a confrontation between a polygamist family and the authorities over the bombing of a L.D.S. chapel in another Utah town. The bombing, along with the subsequent shoot-out during the siege of the polygamist's home, was the subject of both national television news broadcasts and local media coverage. At the time, the few questions we asked about the continuing practice of polygamy elicited very strong condemning remarks from the locals concerning the practice of plural marriage and its practitioners. We decided not to pursue this avenue of investigation at this time because we realized that the public controversy was influencing people's responses. We had seen other polygamist families in the area, and one of our non-Mormon respondents noted that the attitude shown toward polygamists was not normal. The local people were normally either friendly to or at least tolerant of polygamists.

Choices much like those that presented themselves in the polygamist situation were numerous, and they became an ongoing enigma that we had to deal with for the entire year. We constantly found ourselves returning to the
concept detailed by Douglas when we questioned whether or not to continue with a particular avenue of investigation.

... substituting a multiperspectival conception of methods which argues that our choice of methods must always be made in the light of the degrees of reliable truth we are seeking and the problems we face in the concrete settings we are studying. We shall see that this method makes the researcher, the live and socially situated individual, the ultimate "measure of all things" (1976:4).

Due to the nature of the research design, an inductive form of analysis will be used. Observations will be made, interviews conducted, and the data organized to see if any patterns are established. These patterns will then be subjected to a functional analysis which will focus upon the positions the patterns occupy, if any, in the performance of religion's "six functions" noted earlier (O'Dea, 1966:14-15). It can then be critically ascertained if both the manifest and latent functions (as described by Merton in Chapter 1) actually function positively or negatively (dys-functionally) for the people of the community (Merton, 1968:105). However, our conclusions will be only "tentative because the observations we have made cannot be taken as a test of the pattern[s]—[these] observations are the source of the pattern[s] we've created" (Babbie, 1989:43-44). Therefore, by claiming only tentative conclusions upon completion of our analysis, we should be able to avoid the
third and final area of possible errors invading our study as to "how much to infer when recording observations" (D. Nachmias and C. Nachmias, 1976:95).

We regret that we have not complied entirely with the practice of voluntary participation. However, the fact that we do not divulge any person's actual name or even the name or exact location of the community should satisfy the ethical requirements for this study.
CHAPTER 5

SEARCHING FOR PATTERNS

We began to observe the impact of Mormon doctrines on the lives of residents of this small community within the first few minutes after our arrival. Naturally, our first task was to secure a dwelling. While examining the rental advertisements in the local newspaper, we noticed that many of the listings included the phrase, "L.D.S. standards." Not sure of what L.D.S. standards were, we made a call and arranged a time to inspect an apartment. When we arrived, the owner, after speaking to us for a few moments, stated that he would not rent to us. Surprised, I asked him why he did not want us as tenants. He stated that I smoked cigarettes and that L.D.S. standards only would be accepted. He would not tolerate tobacco, alcohol, or coffee on his property. Although we did not have to be members of the Church, he insisted on these conditions as part of any rental agreement. This rental policy could have been problem, as I was not about to relinquish my coffee or tobacco for a year. I asked this gentleman if the other landlords in the area felt this strongly about coffee and tobacco. He assured me that if they advertised L.D.S. standards, they meant it. After
answering a few other classified adds that did not specify L.D.S. standards, we found suitable accommodations.

Our home for the next year was to be a small but unique duplex on the edge of town that was originally an old stagecoach stop. It had been converted into a restaurant and finally into a duplex. There were three other dwellings on the property: the other part of the converted restaurant building, the cook's quarters, and the owner's home. The landlord occupied the old owner's place and rented the others. Orchards surrounded the houses and occupied two of the ten acres that constituted the property. Ron, the landlord, and his wife, Ginny, were not natives; they had moved into the area and purchased the property about two years previous to our arrival. Ron proved to be a very amiable, open type of person who began to relate his experiences in the area even as we were moving our furniture in.

Patterns Of Exploitation

Ron's Story:

Like many non-Mormons who try to conduct business in the area, Ron found that he could not make a living. A late middle-aged man, he was a real-estate agent in California during the land boom years. When he purchased his present property, he thought that he would be able to rent the other dwellings on the land to cover his mortgage payments while
selling real-estate in town to cover his living expenses. After securing a commission only sales position with a local real-estate broker, Ron began a frustrating first year in the community. He spent the year sitting open house, making calls, and trying to obtain new listings. He abandoned the position because he had not sold one house or any other piece of property in that year.

As there was no salary involved with the sales position, his wife, Ginny, had to work at a fast-food restaurant in a neighboring town to generate some disposable income. It hurt Ron to see his wife, who was close to sixty, working as hard as she did. His inability to obtain another position that would bring some money into the household bothered him excessively. Ron's problem was exaggerated when he had a vacancy in the rental units: he had to withdraw funds from his small savings account to pay the mortgage.

Ron became quite discouraged; he wanted to sell out and return to California. However, he found it difficult to leave the area since he discovered that it was almost impossible to sell the property. When he purchased the land, he unknowingly purchased it without its full water rights. Water on the property came from a well. Because irrigation was used extensively in the area, the Federal Bureau of Land Management monitored the amount of water used by each well owner. There is a record of how many acre-feet of water each parcel of land is allocated. The monitoring was
necessary to prevent over use of the available water in the 
underground streams in the area. The previous owner, know­
ing that 'he had a Californian', sold a large portion of the 
water rights to someone else, thus devaluing the property. 
Ron could not use his well to water the orchards properly; 
the loss of the water rights had devalued the property to an 
extent that Ron could not sell it without suffering a large 
financial loss.

Ron was quite bitter about the business dealings that 
he had with local Mormons. He even wrote a letter of pro­
test to the Church authorities in Salt Lake City which he 
asked me to type for him; in this letter he reflected upon 
his social and business dealings with members of the L.D.S. 
Church in the community:

After we moved in the people seemed nice 
 enough. They invited us to their church 
 suppers and events like that. However, 
 when they saw that we were not interest­
ed in joining the Church, they seldom 
 even spoke to us anymore. They surely 
 wouldn't do business with me.

Ron's story is not an isolated one. A study conducted 
by a Utah television station found that many non-Mormons 
from other states see Utah as, "a state in which one must be 
a member of the L.D.S. Church to successfully do business" 
(Friedland, 1988:14). My informant, Buddy, during an inter­
view later in the year, related the same perception of the 
locals business philosophy that Ron had complained of:
The people will patronize a "good Mormon" run establishment first. If they cannot get what they need there, they will go to a "Jack Mormon's" place. It is only then, after they have exhausted these avenues, then they go to a non-Mormon's place of business.

Not only was there a lack of support for non-Mormon run businesses, there appeared to be a prevalent attitude in the community that it was acceptable to exploit a non-Mormon when engaged in business dealings. Ron's experience was likely to be repeated if the following conversation—overheard in the grocery store between a service station owner who was trying to sell his failing business and a good Church member—proceeded in the manner proposed:

Why don't you go down to California and find yourself a mechanic who has saved up some money. Bring him up here—you know you have the perfect set-up with that house next door—and sell the place to him. Of course he'll starve to death, but you'll be out from under.11

An attitude of exploitation was not only acceptable, but it was almost desirable as the conversation above indicates. It was as though any outsider was considered fair game. The members of the community seemed to gain a measure of status

11) Overheard in a grocery checkout line. The nominal label of "good Church member" was used because the speaker was identified as the first counselor to the bishop in one of the local L.D.S. wards.
with each 'coup' collected. Linked to this attitude of exploitation of outsiders was a xenophobia we observed after living in the community for about a month.

Patterns Of Exclusion

While the locals seemingly looked forward to exploiting non-Mormons, at the same time they exhibited a fear of them. Similar to many people in small towns across the country, the locals were suspicious of any newcomers. But, providing the new person's behavior remained within acceptable boundaries, he would be accepted in time. However, behavior considered acceptable in other areas of the United States is not necessarily accepted in this town. Something as normal as drinking coffee in a cafe often could label an individual as undesirable. In this area, people who used tobacco or drank alcohol were also generally avoided.

One evening on my way home, I stopped for gasoline in a town about fifty miles from home. I became engaged in a conversation with the owner of the truckstop where I was fueling. He complained about the difficulty he was having both obtaining and keeping help in his cafe. He related that the local bishop at a Church priesthood meeting recently said:

You should not let your daughters work at that the E..... Truckstop. It is an immoral place filled with smoking.
coffee drinking immoral people. If you don't want your wives and daughters led astray, don't let them work there.

There was a dualism in the local bishop's statement that added to the truckstop owner's anger. Although he was made to appear as though he were operating an immoral establishment, a Mormon-owned truckstop at the other end of town which served coffee and allowed smoking received no such admonishment from the Bishop. Because Mormonism's family structure is patriarchal and because this town, much like the town that was the focus of our study was predominantly L.D.S., the Bishop's directive had the force of restrictive legislation. Those admonishments and directives caused the truckstop owner a multitude of problems with hiring and retaining waitresses and other employees.

The account recorded above is not an isolated incident. The attitude of the local Mormons' toward people who were not Mormon was avoidance. In our community, the people exhibited a reluctance to speak to us. Nevertheless, it was more than just a feeling of exclusion. It was not as if we were just unacceptable; rather, we felt that women and children were especially frightened of us. As I am a large man over six feet tall and weigh in excess of two hundred pounds, I thought at first it was my size that was intimidating these people. However, my partner who is a pleasant appearing woman of medium height and weight in her early
forties, experienced the same type of fearful reactions from people. Since there was no home mail delivery on the outskirts of town, we had to pick up our mail at the post office. It seemed that we had an ability to make the post mistress cease all conversation, especially if she was talking with another woman when either of us walked in. I asked Ron about the post mistress, and he said: "Ginny and I seem to have the same effect on her."

We also sensed that our neighbor's children feared us. During the entire time we lived there, despite the fact that two of our neighbor's children went to school with my daughter, none of the fourteen siblings initiated a greeting to either me or my partner. If either of us saw the children and said "Hi" to them, they turned their heads down, offered a half-hearted wave, and quickened their pace as they moved away. During the last month we spent in the area, my partner offered the twelve-year-old Nelson boy a two-mile ride home from town. Despite the fact that it was almost one hundred degrees outside, he refused the ride. I mentioned the incident to Buddy and he laughed:

Don't take it personal. In fact I'm surprised you haven't mentioned it before. The Church is always preaching to the people not to be involved with gentiles, except if you are trying to teach them the Gospel. I don't know if it's because when folks get involved with a non-Mormon they seem to lose interest in the Church, or if they move away from here.
they often drop out; but whatever it is
they sure don't trust a non-Mormon.

Carl, the son of a former bishop, confirmed the local Mor-
mons' fear of non-Mormons. It seems that although there was
not an official doctrine in the Church, the small town
bishops tried to keep alive a tradition of separatism from
the gentile world. Carl related that his father still ad-
monished him for associating with those other than the
faithful:

Look what's happened to you since you
left Zion to work in another state. You
started to drink, you're now divorced,
you should have followed the Church's
teachings and stayed home with the good
people.

Carl stated that every time he saw his father he received
the same lecture "give or take a few words." As Carl re-
ported, there is no official doctrine of separatism in the
L.D.S. Church; but there is an extensive history of it in
Mormonism.

O'Dea records that Mormons were "to be gathered out of
Babylon unto the New Jerusalem" (1957:113). Even from the
beginning of their early history, Mormons have held the at-
titude that people who are not Mormon or will not convert to
Mormonism are to be feared and avoided. Some of the locals
say that the forcible expulsions from Ohio and Missouri have
contributed to this separatist attitude. What ever the rea-
son, the fear of outsiders is felt throughout all segments of the community. This fear's most ardent expression manifests itself in the protective way that Mormon men encourage women and children to avoid contact with non-Mormons.

Patterns Of Deviant Behavior: Consumption Of Alcohol

The weekend following the encounter with the truckstop owner, we decided to test the local Mormons' intolerance of a non-L.D.S. lifestyle. I visited one of the few taverns in the area and spoke to a patron inside. He related that a majority of the Mormons believe that using tobacco, coffee, or anything alcoholic places people on the road to hell. This attitude is especially prevalent pertaining to the consumption of alcohol. This intolerant attitude toward the use of alcohol seems to have established a strong sense of fatalism in the local people who were involved with the Church but who now drink. This fatalism seems to manifest itself in an attitude that is often expressed in a way similar to the attitudes of Jim, the patron in the tavern:

I'm damned if I have just one drink. So damn it. I might as well get good and drunk. It ain't going to make any difference.

The majority of the people who drank openly did not associate with others in the community, including family

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members. One patron of the tavern supported and provided a residence for his mother-in-law who was a devout Mormon. The mother-in-law stayed in her basement apartment whenever he was home. She would not even come up to eat with her daughter if he was around. Another patron of the tavern refused to visit his wife's family because they would not speak directly to him. "Hell", he stated; "they act as though I'm not even alive."

We decided to purchase a six-pack of beer at the local grocery store in an effort to validate the information obtained from the patrons at the tavern about the intolerance of local Mormons toward the users of alcohol. The beer did not seem to elicit any adverse reaction from either the clerk or the elderly lady at the checkstand. However, when we encountered the same lady upon future visits to the store, she appeared nervous and moved rapidly away whenever we greeted her. The clerks, despite our efforts to be friendly for the entire year, did not show an interest in getting to know us; however, they all got to know or at least acknowledged another new family that was L.D.S. who moved in about two months before we left. It seemed that if it were known that anyone used alcohol or tobacco, he or she was not recognized other than in the most perfunctory manner. Though this is not very conclusive evidence, it was only after we purchased the beer that the clerks seemed to become even more distant.
The intolerant attitude toward alcohol could also be observed in Utah's liquor laws. These laws restrict a person's ability to purchase alcoholic beverages. These laws do not seem to limit the amount of alcohol an individual can purchase but rather the quality and style in which it is consumed. There are no mixed drinks sold in taverns, nor can one purchase a glass of wine. Only 3.2% beer can be sold over the bar. However, a person may bring in a bottle of whiskey and purchase a set-up (a glass of ice, soda etc.) and mix their own drinks from their own bottle. Jake, a non-Mormon who had purchased the local tavern after retiring from the printing trade in another state, commented:

This is the damndest state I ever saw. They won't sell you a drink; but they sure as hell will sell you a drunk. The idea of having to bring a bottle of whiskey into a bar, and then buying the use of a glass to drink it out of is crazy. I've seen more people stumble out of my bar after drinking half a quart of whiskey. It's ridiculous; and I can't do anything about it. They can pour as much as they want into their glasses. I can't control it.

The right to purchase other than a set-up or a beer had undergone some revision while we were in Utah. Not wanting to discourage out-of-state tourists because the income generated by them is really needed in the state, the Utah legislature recently approved a law allowing restaurants to sell alcoholic beverages at the table. Anyone may ask for a
drink (one has to ask because the restaurant is forbidden by law to offer), and they will bring a mini-bottle to the table. However, until the time we left the community no establishments had, or even applied for, a mini-bottle licence.

Some of my informants related that closet drinking, along with some of the problems associated with it, was possibly encouraged by these restrictive liquor laws. The combination of a desire not to be recognized and the inability to purchase other than 3.2% beer locally (the town did not have a State Liquor Store) caused many people to drive long distances to drink. According to Carl,

I was tending bar in (a neighboring state) and Bishop (X's) brothers used to come in at least once a week if not more. They were some of my best customers. And they drank; they always were quite intoxicated by the time they left. I don't know who drove them home because they were never in any shape to drive when they left the bar.

Jim and Buddy also informed us that many other "good Church members" often visited a neighboring state to drink there.

Additionally, these informants related that many "closet drinkers" drove to towns as far away as fifty miles to purchase liquor. They pointed out that many of the one-car accidents on the local highways involved these very same people who were drinking on the way home. Most of the people we spoke to about alcohol consumption expressed a
concern for highway safety which stemmed from their perception of local drinking habits.

Although some of the people who frequented the local tavern were not Mormon, the majority of them were. These "Jack Mormons" were undesirable members of the community in which they grew up. Realizing that people often wish to return to previous lifestyles, and who in this case become once more accepted members of the community, we became interested in the reinstatement policies of the Church.

The Prodigal Sons And Daughters

Unsure how to broach such a delicate subject as reinstatement, we began asking questions in a very casual manner. What surprised us was the openness of the people's response. The first queries were made to a customer at the tavern early one Friday afternoon. The respondent was a male about forty-five years old who had been excommunicated from the L.D.S. Church for some time. He commented, "I wouldn't go back to the Church now and have to spend at least a year with everyone looking at me like a freak." Another patron sitting next to us overheard the conversation and muttered. "Amen to that." While I was speaking to this person, two females entered the establishment and sat down next to my partner. The women overheard my conversation as well. They started to nod in agreement over some of the
remarks my respondent was making about the Church's reinstatement processes. My partner very casually began to inquire about the religious background of these women to find out if they had also been excommunicated. They affirmed they were former Church members who had been excommunicated. These two women also stated that they would never go through the reinstatement process.

These casual inquiries eventually led us to an in-depth interview with a disenfranchised female. During the year we were to spend in the area, we observed or interviewed thirty women who, through various transgressions, had become disenfranchised from the L.D.S. Church. None of these females considered reinstatement. For them the thought of undergoing the reinstatement process was very distasteful. Many of these women shared certain characteristics. Although they ranged in age from twenty-one to sixty or seventy, many were divorced and displayed a somewhat cynical attitude. They correspondingly displayed signs of what could be inferred as low self-esteem. These women were often observed and described as women who were not very discriminating about whom they left the tavern with at the end of the evening. Jake introduced us to one of these women whose name was Betsy whom we interviewed for a two-week period.

Betsy's Story:

Betsy was about thirty years old and was staying with her parents. She had returned to live with her parents for
about three years after her divorce. Though raised in the Church, she wanted nothing more to do with Mormonism despite the fact that her parents are active in the Mormons faith:

I was a member of the Church in another town. We attended services regularly. When my husband and I began having problems, I quit going. After the divorce, I went back once. I had been seeing another guy; and when I went to Church, the Bishop accused me of sleeping with this man. I told him that it was none of his business if I was or not and left.

Betsy feels that she will never be a member of the L.D.S. Church again. She said, "I would not subject myself to the embarrassment of having been excommunicated, having to attend church regularly and not be a full participant for a year." Betsy stated that if a person who had been excommunicated wished to become reinstated, they had to "attend church every week for a year. However, they were not to partake of the sacrament for that year and could be rebaptised at the end of that time." Other excommunicated women to whom we spoke all expressed the same feeling of embarrassment at the thought of being singled out in front of the other Church members, carrying the label of transgressor for a year.

Thus, Betsy spends her time when she is not working as a waitress in a local restaurant at the tavern looking for someone to come along and "take me away from this damn town." When asked why she didn't just move away, she became
evasive and could not provide a convincing rationale as to why she stayed in the area. However, she did say that she was fearful of living in another part of the country, but she did not know why. Betsy did not seem to feel secure enough in her abilities to care for herself in another environment. Betsy's story and others like her's were encountered often over the year we spent in the community.

Religious Rewards For Secular Success

A phenomena that soon became apparent was the link between secular success and appointment to bishop in the Church. Members of the priesthood who held the highest socio-economic status in a L.D.S. ward are very often appointed Bishop. With the exception of the first two bishops in the community who were farmers, their successors, including the present seven bishops, have been either professional men or business leaders. Business people similar to the auto parts store owner, the grocer, and professional people such as doctors and college professors are or have been bishops. There has never been a telephone repairman, an auto mechanic, or similar working-class person called to be a bishop in this area. Since an appointment to the rank of bishop seems linked to secular success, our curiosity led us to investigate the relationships that existed between bishops and their male siblings.
Although they do not constitute a large portion of the population, many of the brothers of bishops both past and present were disenfranchised from the Church. More importantly, they usually became inactive in the Church only after their brothers were called. Up to the time of their brothers' appointment, they were active members. After their brothers became bishops these men not only left the Church, but many later were reputed to be either heavy drinkers or alcoholics. The story of one of these men was related in part to me by Carl.

I met Carl, who was a bishop's son, while talking to one of my contacts who worked at a local filling station. Carl was a jack-of-all-trades type of person who had a few cattle on a small ranch near by. He was not active in the Church and disdained interaction with those who were. He was quite talkative, and it seemed as though he knew almost everyone in town and many who had moved away. Carl often moved to a neighboring state for a year or so when he could no longer support himself with the few cattle he raised and with other odd jobs. He sensitized me to the stories about the brothers of the various local bishops. He related the story of a school friend of his who was the brother of a former bishop:

Bob married a local girl and started a family. When his brother made bishop, shortly thereafter he moved (to a neighboring state). I was working there a few
years later and I remember one Saturday morning while I was at work; someone came in and told me that Bob had taken his three boys out earlier that morning rabbit hunting and shot himself in front of them. He had quite a drinking problem, you know.

Two other respondents who were brothers of bishops both drank regularly and heavily. Of the other disenfranchised brothers, only one has ever been able to gain a measure of financial success in this town. He managed to obtain the rights to distribute a popular soda-pop in the area and is doing quite well. The information available about the other male siblings of the area's bishops indicates that they not only rejected spiritual aspects of Mormonism, but they seem to have rejected the Mormon work ethic as well. These men also appeared to refrain from any social interaction with most of their relatives who are active in the Church.

At first it seemed that the animosity shown by the disenfranchised members toward the L.D.S. Church were reactions resulting from their own experiences with the Church, which resulted from some transgression on their part. However, other inactive members had a different view. These people were not transgressors. Many still held to the "Word of Wisdom" and neither smoked nor drank. They were primarily poor but hard working people.

It seems that only a few years ago, people of various socio-economic statuses co-mingled in the wards. There were
fewer wards and though they had geographic divisions, people from every economic status were zoned for each ward. But as the town expanded, the congregations grew larger. Approximately seven or eight years ago, they divided the large wards to make smaller ones. This division was achieved through geographic zoning. The new geographic zones served to divide the town along economic boundaries as well. The division of the wards along these boundaries resulted in two wards whose members belong to a higher socio-economic status than the rest.

Structural Divisions In The Community's Wards

The bishops in these affluent wards were the professional or highly successful business people in the town. The less affluent wards were led by school teachers and an agriculture department agent. The less affluent wards, even though they had the same number of members on their rosters, seemed to experience a lower attendance at regular meetings. Upon observing a difference in attendance, we counted the vehicles in the respective parking lots on various Sundays for the next four months. The less affluent wards had a mean of sixty vehicles at meetings in the lot on any given Sunday. The more prosperous wards averaged about eighty vehicles. It was also noted that in the "working class" wards, more women and children without male escort were
observed leaving when church services were over. In contrast, families with more adult males left the more prosperous wards. It was interesting to note that though there were more males with their families at the more affluent wards, the number of children per family was less.

Two of my informants and one of their friends still claimed to be Mormons but were inactive. They did not attend services but when questioned as to their religious affiliation, they stated that they were Mormon. When asked why they stopped going to church, their answers were all similar to Jim's:

I can't stand to go and hear those holy'er than thou s.o.b.'s talk about the Gospel on Sunday, and turn around on Monday and give you the shaft when you have to do business with them. I'm supposed to go to the (one of the affluent) ward. Those b.....'s just make me so angry I just don't go anymore.

Roland, Jim's friend who was zoned for one of the less affluent wards, stated: "I'm glad I'm not in the same Ward as Jim and his family. I couldn't stand to see my wife trying to dress our kids like they do over in that ward; I'd go broke." Roland's family still goes to church, but he does not. He did not state the reasons that he did not attend instead, he just stated that "except for special occasions like Christmas, I just can't be bothered." Buddy's reasons for his inactivity seemed to stem from his low income.
status:

I don't want you to get this wrong. I believe that the Gospel is true. But the Church provides nothing for me. All they seem to want is ten percent of what little I make. I told them if they needed the money that much to go get it from the people in the (two more affluent) wards. They can afford it, I can't.

Though not as wealthy as many in the United States, the relatively prosperous people of this town are much better off than their immediate neighbors. According to The Sourcebook of Demographics and Buying Power for Every ZIP Code in the USA :355C-D, 70.4% of the households in the community have an income of under $25,000, and 21.8% of the population live in poverty. These economic conditions have contributed to a developing sense of relative deprivation among the less affluent Mormons in the area. Some of the poorer Mormon males, though not ready to denounce their association with the Church, are becoming inactive.

Proceeding with our research plan of verification wherever possible of reported phenomena, we attended two church services at wards that were reported to have two different socio-economic statuses. The first visit was to a ward that was reported to be one of the "poorer" ones. This ward was to have the friendlier atmosphere of the two. The people were mostly small farmers and lower working class people. Most of the males were ruddy complected from outdoor work.
and most arrived in farm ravaged pickups. Contact was initiated by the males in the form of an extended hand and a "how do." The women nodded a greeting, excused themselves, and moved off as soon as possible. The meeting was Fast and Testimony Meeting, a ritual similar to a Pentecostal revival, only it was reserved for the initiates. It was at this meeting where members of the congregation rose and 'bare their testimony.' Their testimonies were usually a description of the problems they have encountered and an affirmation that their beliefs in the Gospel are what helped them through the hard times. This meeting lasted about two hours. In that time, many young children became restless and began to cry. Mothers constantly took these children out and returned when the restless youngsters quieted down.

Almost all of the members with whom I spoke invited us to come to the next Church sponsored social event. However, when they discovered that we were not potential converts, the interaction turned cooler. In spite of this realization though, the invitation to the social event was not withdrawn. One older gentleman, upon hearing that we were not potential converts, was quite blunt and asked, "if you're not interested in joining the Church, what are you doing here?"

When we visited the other ward, we found the people less friendly than the other group. A few members of the congregation recognized us from their places of business and
knew that I smoked. They mentioned that I would have to give up smoking "when I joined the Church." When I replied that I was not interested in converting but was just interested in the way services were conducted, they refrained from further interaction. There was no invitation offered to any social event as there was at the first ward visited.

The meeting was a regular Sunday School meeting in which the congregation was divided according to a hierarchy based on levels of scriptures studied after the ritual of sacrament was performed. Once more we observed the comings and goings of mothers attempting to quiet noisy and restless children. The noise was not noticed as much after the sacrament ritual was concluded and the people divided into various classrooms. When the meeting was over, I was approached and questioned by the Bishop. He asked me what I did for a living and where I lived. I replied that I was a graduate student working on a historical project and that I lived on the edge of town. His rejoinder was a somewhat half-hearted and implied that though I was welcome, it would be better for us to attend services at the ward we were zoned for.

Patterns Of Family Living

Descriptions of family life have been interspersed throughout the discussions of other aspects of life in this
community. The family is one of the most important social institutions of this citizenry because the family is one of the focal points of Mormonism's rationalized theologies. The number of children per family is the first and most obvious component of family life we observed. Mormon families tend to be large. We became cognizant of family sizes in the area as we were moving in. Ron pointed out our neighbor's place about seventy yards away and said, "that's the Nelsons: they have thirteen kids and ten still live at home."

A short time after we moved in, Ron leased the other half of the duplex to an L.D.S. family in their mid-twenties with four children. The children ranged in age from six months to seven years old. Rod was a farmer whose land was at a much higher elevation than where we resided. They rented the duplex because the family often became snowed in during the winter. Rod and his family resided in the other half of the duplex for about four months. During that time they seldom interacted with us. Ron related that this family seldom interacted with him or Ginny except to pay the rent. Whenever we were about, both Ron or I called a greeting when we saw them arrive; however, they seldom even acknowledged a "good morning."

Rod seemed to use an authoritarian parenting style that we were to observe others use regularly throughout the year. He enforced his commands with a smack when the children did
not obey fast enough to suit him. His wife was the recipient of his authoritarian mannerisms as well as the children. She walked about with her head held down in a subservient way whenever he was home. Much like the children, she scurried around whenever he barked an order. We only had the opportunity to observe Rod's family for about four months: despite the woman's objection, for it was her wish to live in town, they moved back up to the house on the farm for financial reasons.

We observed other males who exhibited an authoritarian parenting style such as Rod's often in the year we were there. One afternoon in the early autumn at a fast food restaurant, we watched a family with three boys enter for lunch. The father asked the family members to read the menu posted on the wall and decide what they wanted. The boys' ages were between ten and twenty. The youngest spoke first. The father turned around and dropped the child to his knees with a backhand to the side of his head, and said: "you wait your turn." His wife did not protest the blow delivered to the head of her son, nor did she make any motion to console the now sobbing youngster. Public places such as the grocery store afforded many opportunities to view the enforcement of command followed by a blow. This was especially prevalent on the weekend when males were often with their wives and children. If a child did not comply with a command fast enough to suit the father, the command was quickly
followed by some form of corporal punishment.

Upon comparison of the field notes regarding the authoritarian males, we noticed that most of the males we had seen acting in this manner were with four or more children. We wondered if the authoritarianism and the speed with which these males followed an order with a cuff was the result of frustrations developed by trying to keep order in large households. Recognizing that the Mormon doctrines encouraged large families, we decided to try and get to know the Nelsons. We were quite curious about the pressures on males in these large families.

The Nelson's Story:

Al Nelson was from Wyoming and had moved to Utah after a cattle ranch he owned went bankrupt. His wife was a rather large woman about thirty-eight years old, who looked worn down the few times we saw her. Similar to the descriptions recorded above, women seldom interacted with a non-Mormon either male or female. She did not speak to us if Al was not around. My partner went to the Nelsons alone a few times to speak to her, but even she could not engage her in a conversation. She was polite but always was too busy to talk to my partner. However, if Al was home and either of us went over to speak to them, Mary was always pleasant but she did not initiate any conversation or elaborate upon any question asked of her.

Al worked on a county road repair crew. Since the
average laborer on the county road crew earns about five-fifty to seven dollars an hour, his annual income could not have exceeded fifteen thousand dollars. None of the older Nelson children were working in the immediate area. Occasionally, one of the Nelson boys, who was about twenty, went to a neighboring state to work. But the work was never steady; it only lasted for few months at a time. It is doubtful if any of his earnings found their way home. Nevertheless, whenever he was out of work he returned home to live. Al spent much of his free time cutting and selling firewood while Mary sold eggs from the chickens they raised in an attempt to supplement their income.

Al's county job did serve them well in that it provided them with medical insurance when their fourteenth child arrived on New Year's day. They received considerable local publicity for having the first baby of the year in the community. However, the publicity was not appreciated by some of the other children in the family. A short time after the child was born, my partner interviewed some school children who mentioned the embarrassment shown by the Nelson children when teachers and other children commented about the new baby. Contrastingly, the local ward Bishop praised the Nelsons in the local paper for "the wonderful work they were doing for the Lord."

During our stay there, two of the older Nelson girls who were married, each with a child of her own in tow, moved
back home. The Nelsons had four bedrooms with a full basement and two bathrooms. When we completed our field work and moved away, the Nelson household consisted of two adults, twelve children and two grandchildren; four of those children were in diapers. We do not know if either of the married daughters were receiving any form of support or state aid, but the family lived in poverty like conditions.

Al was comparable to the other males observed as far as parenting style was concerned. He spoke to the children in a curt demanding fashion and was quick to strike one of the children if he was not obeyed immediately. Living in a low wage economy, together with Church doctrines that encouraged large families, seemed to make Al curt with his children. It should be noted that Nelsons’ situation is not unique. Many people are in the same financial condition because of their family size. Statistics show that the average family's economic condition remains marginal at best: just 25% of the population falls within the prime earning years of twenty-five to fifty-four. 45.8% of the population is seventeen years of age or less, and only 30.2% of the women in the area are employed in wage earning jobs (Sourcebook of Demographics, 1988:355A–C).

Education Of The Young

Since the town consisted of so many young, school-aged
children, the education system became the next focus of our investigation. Again, the Church plays an important role in this segment of community life. The area schools are all 'serviced' by a seminary located nearby. The town's high school children have shorter class periods than those in non-Mormon neighboring states. These shorter academic classes allow an extra class period to be included in the daily school schedule. The students are required to either take seminary or to choose an extra elective class. No other religion other than Mormonism is offered.

The Mormon children are allowed to leave campus and go across the street to the seminary where they received religious training by Mormon missionaries. They were not graded by the school system for this instruction, nor did these classes count as credit toward their degrees. Nevertheless, the classes taken by the non-Mormons were evaluated and did count toward their education requirements. Having to take an additional formal class constitutes a form of structural discrimination directed at the non-Mormon child. The educational benefits or detriments of this "seminary or additional class" policy is not what we focused upon. Rather, we concentrated on the visible and isolated position of the non-Mormon student. The gentile students are placed by structural means in a position that sets them apart from the majority of the other students. This serves as a daily reminder to both the other children and the teaching staff
that the non-Mormon child is different.

Not only can a structural policy that increases the visibility of the few be detrimental to that minority but in the case of this small community, it might be having economic repercussions as well. This area desperately needs the influx of some type of investment capital. However, many small businessmen from other states feel that even if they could do business in Utah, they are reluctant to do so. They feel that if they do locate their businesses in Utah, their families will experience problems of rejection and isolation. The Friedland report states that "non-L.D.S. children may have trouble being fully accepted among their majority L.D.S. peers" (1988:15).

The institution of education is also the focal point of a different debate in Utah at this time. Though not discussed often within this township, the demographic reality of large families, the stagnant economy, and the cost of education have a large impact upon the community. A shift in the Mormon doctrines that occurred in the 1950's toward an outward expansion rather than "to be gathered out of Babylon unto the New Jerusalem" is contributing to the problems this community is experiencing (O'Dea, 1957:113). Unlike the historical account of the Hurricane irrigation project discussed in Chapter 3, the L.D.S. leadership seems to be abandoning its constituents in Zion. At one time when the Church could be counted upon to support a reasonable
community project with either loans or direct investment in the venture, today the Mormon Church does not seem to do so:

The Church is certainly one of Utah's major corporations, measured by assets, yet its investment policies are made privately. In recent years, the Church's focus has turned outward, toward its international mission. This has removed capital and valuable leadership from the Utah economy. And with the new international focus of the Church, there is less attention to Utah's economy. Recent Church statements have implied that Utahans will have to fend for themselves in economic decision making (Friedland, 1988:15).

The outward focus of the Church means that it no longer places its emphasis upon building Zion in Utah. Instead, the funds collected from tithes etc., that had been available for various economic ventures in Utah are now going into the building of Temples and other structures where the new converts reside.

In spite of this new outward focus, the Church has not changed its doctrine pertaining to the "spirit children in the pre-existence waiting to be born" (Linn, 1923:287). The doctrine of the "spirit children" pressures the Mormon faithful not only to have many children but to have them as late in life as they are able. It is well known that having children late in life can be a contributing factor in children born with Down's Syndrome and other types of genetic problems, the costs of which are borne to a great extent by
the entire community Mormon or not. In the local high school there were twelve "special students" in a school that draws from a total population of only four thousand.

The economic demands made upon the school system by the large families are quite apparent. Schools are in financial trouble as are other state-funded institutions. The State is placed in the unenviable position of asking for more funds from the local population at the same time that the Church has withdrawn itself as a source of available revenue. The Friedland report was aired two months before we finished our field work and was broadcast on a local television station, emphasizing that "Utah's fiscal crisis is well known by now as is its major cause: the high cost of educating our children" (Friedland, 1988:15). Despite the media attention, there was no public discussion of these issues in the area in spite of the fact that the area has "the second highest birthrate in the nation and one of the highest teacher-student ratios" (Friedland, 1988:7-8).

Students interviewed at the local high school complained about the out-of-date text books they had to use. Their parents must have correspondingly heard the same complaints. The town did recognize that its schools were in trouble. A town meeting was called to review local school taxes. At this meeting the all-Mormon school board was confronted by a non-Mormon resident. He complained that the large L.D.S. families were placing a financial burden upon
all in the community. Mormon and non-Mormon alike. A member of the school board who was also a counsellor to a ward bishop said, "it was God's will and directive that we have as many children as possible." No further discussion about family size occurred at the meeting.

These are the observations we made in the year we spent living in this area. The record of the attitudes and behaviors of the residents of this community as they lived their daily lives is presented as objectively as possible. Our next task is to place these recorded opinions and behaviors we ascertained into an analytical framework.
CHAPTER 6

THE ANALYSIS

Our critical analysis of life in this small town will consist of comparing the daily behaviors, attitudes, and concerns of the people within the community to the influential policies and teachings of the L.D.S. Church. The Mormon doctrines will be placed within the framework of functional theory. The "six functions" of religion will be used as an analytical tool for a critical comparison of the social interactions observed and Mormon ideology.

The most recognized of religion's six functions is the buttress function. Many people seem to need some outlet when they require reconciliation or consolation. Religion has often been the social institution that has provided this service. In this community, structurally, the hierarchy of the L.D.S. Church, primarily the local bishop, is supposedly the provider of this service. As was noted earlier in the text, a professional clergy does not exist in the Mormon Church. However, the bishop, by virtue of his calling and ordination, will be capable to minister to his congregation. If a Mormon experiences the death of a loved one, he or she can turn to the local bishop for support. The bishop
in such a situation is equipped with various doctrines that are offered as structural supports for his personally shown sympathy.

The ritual of sealing a husband and wife and their offspring for time and eternity is one such doctrine. The bishop offers the bereaved the reassurance that the loss is only a temporary one. He reminds them that if they follow the teachings of the Church, they will be united in the hereafter. The doctrine of baptism after death that can seal worthy members of the Church to a non-Mormon family is another consoling doctrine because it gives the bereaved the prospect that any of their lost loved ones, Mormon or not, is waiting for them in the beyond. Although a member of the Church would be aware of these doctrines, hearing them from a Church authority should provide a reassurance in their time of need.

When reconciliation becomes necessary because of a transgression, the L.D.S. Church has policies which allow for atonement and subsequent reinstatement. In an interview with a L.D.S. bishop, the subject of reconciliation was discussed as follows:

Oh yes, we have our problems with people committing adultery and other sins. But we have a way by which, if they so choose, they can return to the Lord's path. For instance, there was a woman who was caught in an adulterous situation. She was excommunicated immediately thereafter. However, she was told that
if she wished to be reinstated it would take a year. For that year, she would have to first repent of her sins, live a pure life, attend church regularly even though she could not partake of the sacrament, and she must be re-baptized at the end of the year.

When I asked him if the process was too severe a punishment, he replied, "If you commit a sin in the eyes of God, you must expect to pay for it."  

12 Structurally, Mormonism provides a policy of atonement. This policy should allow for reconciliations to be accomplished when a member becomes alienated from the Church for behavioral reasons.

Therefore, the policies of atonement and the doctrines of sealing families together for time and eternity should fulfill the manifest aspects of the buttress function. They should provide a means of reconciliation and consolation. The latent elements of the buttress function should correspondingly be served by these policies and doctrines. They should help support established goals and values, reinforce morale, and minimize disaffection.

The empirical evidence we have gathered confirms that the consolation portion of the buttress function worked well in the community. Many of the faithful, and even some of the Jack Mormons, were able to receive consolation in times

12) From an interview with a bishop of a ward in the town in April, 1988.
of need. This was evident in times of severe illness or death of a family member.

However, the reconciliation policies of the Church appear problematic. The most obvious pattern we detected concerning the reconciliation process was the individual's distaste of it. The Church's intolerance of other than a strict adherence to behavioral doctrines and long penance requirements for violations, seems to discourage people from seeking reconciliation. Unlike the official attitude related in the interview with a bishop above, some Mormons, particularly females, feel that the penance requirements for reinstatement are both too long and too demeaning. They felt embarrassment at having to interact with others who viewed them as sinners. Mormons from this hamlet who 'strayed from the path' preferred disenfranchisement and the stigma that accompanied it in the community because they had some control over the amount of interaction with those who thought less of them.

Apparently, the Church's neo-fundamentalist attitude of requiring strict adherence to the prescribed life-style and their punitive policies for transgressions have contributed to the creation of an out-group in this community. Rather than help members return to the assemblage, the reconciliation requirement has aided the creation of a group of outsiders.

The latent aspect of the buttress function includes the
support of established values and goals of society. The question remains as to which society, however. We observed a conflict between the established values present in the mainstream of American society and the effects of the doctrines and practices of the L.D.S. Church in this area. The xenophobia observed in the community, reinforced by the constant reminders to follow the directives of the Church and not fall prey to the sins of the greater society, has created a fear in these people of non-Mormons and has conditioned these people to view any gentile as an immoral sinner. This attitude appears to hinder the economic development in the community. The reluctance of non-Mormon business to locate in the area may be partially attributed to the people's posture toward non-Mormons. Thus, Church policies and doctrines seem to foster support for local social values but not mainstream American society.

The second function that religion performs for society is termed the priestly function. Mormonism should be able to fulfill this function by having a "living Prophet." Through the revelations issued by the prophet, a transcendent relationship with God is maintained, and the authority of the Church hierarchy is maintained by means of this belief. A lay priesthood requires a mechanism by which authority can be rationally distributed. By virtue of the Office of President, who is correspondingly a prophet, the subordinate positions within the Church's structure can then
be legitimately occupied by declaring that they have been "called from above." An individual cannot claim to be bishop and take control of a ward of his own volition. With a lay ministry where every member is ordained a priest, the policy of calling leaders from above, assures the membership of legitimate rule.

Furthermore, through the Prophet, the problems of everyday life are addressed regularly. The Church administration regularly issues directions and policies for implementation at the local levels. The bishops counsel the local membership on these policies over a period of time. Then the L.D.S. Church broadcasts a biannual conference on both radio and television around the world. At this conference the President and other leaders issue directives to the members as to how to conduct themselves when certain situations arise. Vocalization of these directives by Church leaders reinforces the policies that the local bishops have been presenting to the membership.

A neo-fundamentalist structure, which states that the way to God is to follow the directives of the Prophet, reassured the members that their spiritual interests are secure. Additionally, the charismatic effect of a having a leader who speaks directly to God should install a sense of pride in belonging to the Church. In this manner, the manifest function of providing "security and [a] firmer identity" is accomplished by the Mormon belief in a President who is also
a Prophet (O'Dea, 1966:14).

Since the doctrines and teachings of the L.D.S. Church come from God on a regular and updated basis, the prophecies should tell the people when they need to change anything. It is not the decision of the individual or small group of individuals to initiate any changes. This on-going guidance from the Church stabilizes the social structure and provides for the "maintenance of the status quo" (O'Dea, 1966:14).

Many of the local Mormons seem to believe they are well served by the L.D.S. Church. They respond with a degree of pride that they are a Mormon. Many of the inactive people still refer to themselves as Mormons. Some of these inactive members even confer the label of "Jack Mormon" upon themselves as well. However, there is a division occurring between the wards along socio-economic lines. The status consciousness developing in the small farmer and working class wards, vis-à-vis the more affluent ones, may indicate the beginnings of a loss of identity within the Church body.

This forfeiture of identity that is happening to some of these people may be partially attributed to the outward expansion policies of the L.D.S. Church. Although the locals do not seem mindful of the deprivation of direct financial investment or support from the Church, the absence of investment funds is noticed within the community. The average Mormons in this community were once secure in their outlook toward the future; however, today there is a feeling
of apprehension. At one time these people were fiscally self-sufficient; today they are becoming dependant upon outside resources, but they do not want to admit it. If this trend continues it could undermine an individual's security and pride in being a Mormon.

The latent facet of the priestly function seems to be working with inordinate efficiency. The status quo is extremely well preserved. However, the status quo is detrimental to the economic life of the community. For years, and continuing through today, local Mormon leaders have encouraged the isolation of their constituents. The exclusionist attitude of the Mormons has resulted in the reluctance of non-Mormon businessmen to locate in the area. We observed a growing economic stagnation developing in the area because businessmen with investment capital are discouraged from entering the local economy. The economic stagnation is further aggravated by the Church's expansionary policies which have left little or no investment monies available for local use.

Historically, Mormon ideology has always sanctified the norms and values of capitalism. The incorporation of the Calvinist work ethic assured Mormonism's accomplishment of religion's third function. The brief description of capitalism offered below should elucidate the parallels between Mormon values and the mainstream of American capitalistic culture:
Capitalism is a socio-economic system geared to the production of commodities by a rational calculus of cost and price, and to the consistent accumulation of capital for the purposes of reinvestment. But this singular new mode of operation was fused with a distinctive culture and character structure. In culture, this was the idea of self-realization, the release of the individual from traditional restraints and ascriptive ties (family and birth) so that he could "make" of himself what he willed. In character structure, this was the norm of self-control and delayed gratification, of purposeful behavior in the pursuit of well-defined goals (Bell, 1976:xvi).

The value of private property, accumulation, and investment mentioned earlier in the text by the Mormon leader, Brigham Young, serve to illustrate the Church's sanctification of capitalistic values mentioned by Bell. Mormonism's support of the unequal division of rewards in secular society, based upon the rights of recipients to obtain them due to their righteousness, legitimizes the distribution of these dividends. Although Mormon society is competitive, the doctrine that only a righteous person will obtain worldly prosperity should help "maintain the dominance of group goals over individual wishes" (O'Dea, 1966:14). Even the concerns mentioned by Durkheim of an egoistic individualism that can be nurtured in a capitalistic society should be dampened by the Church's practice of tithing.

Correspondingly, in every group or community there are people who have not been able to attain the outward measures...
of success. Religion needs to offer a method by which the subsequent alienation and guilt associated with failure could be alleviated. The idea that they are contributing to the building of a society for "Christ's Second Coming" should reassure the alienated (O'Dea, 1957:136). The practice of local bishops giving public compliments concerning a member's family should allow those individuals to feel that they are contributing toward God's greater goal.

The patterns we ascertained relating to sanctification of capitalism are unusual. The local Mormons have an inordinate rationality regarding their business dealings with non-Mormons. It is a short-sighted rationale because it seems to be succeeding in keeping much needed non-Mormon businesses out of the locality. Stories such as Ron's are common in the region. However, many of the local Mormons do not view the exploitation of outsiders such as Ron as detrimental to the town. Possibly the local merchants in particular might feel that a constant moving in and out of people like Ron is good for business. These shopkeepers are not cognizant of the fact that fewer people are moving into the region.

The rationale that allows for the continued exploitation of outsiders proves to be a factor in the economic woes of the community. The attitude in the community is that if an outsider is 'fleeced', or the person's business fails, it is due to the personal deficiencies of that individual.
Some local folks view the exploitation of an outsider as God's punishment of a non-believer. The belief that it was only a shortcoming or due to God's disapproval is reinforced if a "good Mormon" happens to benefit from the exploitation or business failure of a gentile. The local businessmen lack any real investment capital. They need an influx of capital from outside of Utah. Nevertheless, they insist on maintaining this short-sighted attitude of righteous exploitation of non-Mormons.

Evidence of religion's prophetic function was not extensive during our tenure in this township. There were no instances of the official L.D.S. leadership or members of the priesthood critically examining any of the norms of the community. The only observation of this function was through the media on a state level. Local television stations broadcast that various Mormon groups were protesting an AIDS education program in the public schools. These groups did not want to have their children to see the AIDS program because it advocated the use of condoms.

However, local bishops issued extensive critiques unofficially. Much like the criticism leveled against the truckstop owner, these critiques related to the gentile segments of American society and foster the xenophobia prevalent in the locale. It must be reiterated that it is the local Church leadership that keeps the fear of outsiders alive in the people. No official policies have been issued
from the authorities in Salt Lake pertaining to interaction with the gentiles who are either living in or visiting Utah.

Mormonism has had a long history of problems with the prophetic function. Local leadership has interpreted the wishes of their prophet in an inappropriate manner in the past. Due to the fact that the Church's local authorities have received no standardized formal training in the interpretation of doctrines and since everyone who holds the priesthood can receive direct revelations, the local Mormon leaders have considerable autonomy within their wards.

Shortly after the settling of Southern Utah, a local Stake President felt that the interests of the Church would be served best if the anti-Mormon members of a wagon-train were killed (Linn, 1923). Thinking that the killings were Brigham Young's wish, John D. Lee led a group of Mormon settlers and local Indians against the wagon-train. The results of this venture were chronicled as the "Mountain Meadows Massacre" (Linn, 1923:517).

Religion's fifth function involves the establishment of a self identity. The "Word of Wisdom" that has been labeled "the badge of Zion" should allow Mormonism to fulfill the identity function (O'Dea, 1957:146). Compliance with the Word of Wisdom helps Mormons to understand "who they are and what they are" (O'Dea, 1966:15). Even those who are not active often relate their identity by labelling themselves and others like them as "Jack Mormons" (O'Dea, 1957:146).
The doctrine of sealing families for time and eternity seems to further aid in a person’s sense of identity with the distant past and the limitless future. It expands his ego by making his spirit significant for the universe and the universe significant for him (Davis, 1948:531).

Ideally, the identity function is further manifested by the use of rituals. Mormon rituals should help retard the development of an egoistic attitude in an individual. An egoistic attitude emerges when "the individual ego asserts itself to excess in the face of the social ego, and at its expense" (Durkheim, 1985:100). Mormonism's monthly fast and testimony rituals, with its pentecostal spirit, should effectively retard egoistic feelings.

However, in a small segment of the community, we ascertained a distinctively egoistic sentiment that had developed in spite of the fact that these people still identified themselves with the L.D.S. Church. The 'slippery slope' logic exhibited by the Jack Mormons and was characterized by the attitude of, "I'm damned if I take just one drink, so I might as well get good and drunk," is common. Furthermore, the disenfranchised members' feelings that the penance required for reinstatement as excessive could be a factor in the development of an egoistic attitude.

The patterns of disenfranchisement that we detected in this community are corroborated by the findings of Albrecht.
and Cornwall in a paper they presented at the Pacific Sociological Association's Annual Meeting in April, 1988. Using a sample of Mormons only, Albrecht and Cornwall discovered that "negative religious experiences tend to reduce belief" (1988:16). They go on to explain that it is not just negative religious experiences that can produce a loss of religiosity but any negative life occurrence can have the same results:

While not as strong as is the case for religious life events, the pattern is clear and consistent. The experiences of negative life events (serious illness, separation or divorce, unemployment, etc.), relationship changes (personal relationships with spouse, other family members, friends, etc.), and situational changes (work situation, financial and living situation) is consistently related to lower religiosity (Albrecht and Cornwall, 1988:17).

On the occasions that we encountered disenfranchised Mormons, we usually found evidence of the negative life occurrences specified by Albrecht and Cornwall. Though small in number, many of the brothers of bishops stayed away from the Church and constitute one example. In a social structure such as the one in this vicinity, success in secular society leads to possible religious promotions. However, if anyone was worthy yet not called because of a lack of financial achievement, he would suffer a negative religious experience. The dual rewards, both secular and religious, that
accompany prosperity in a Mormon community also place dual sanctions upon the person who fails to attain that mastery. As one brother gains status through secular success, primarily through Church promotions, his circle of interactions expand. With the new status, however, comes a decrease in the interaction with his brother(s), for they are no longer equal.\textsuperscript{13}

Since a poor economic situation prevails in the region, negative life experiences abound. When we first arrived we assumed that the people not on the registers of the local wards were non-Mormons. However, after a while we realized that the 1,200 non-Mormons living in the town were actually inactive or excommunicated Mormons. When we compared the percentage of people living below the poverty line (22% of 4,200 = 924) to our estimated number of 500 people who never were associated with the L.D.S. Church, we discovered 200 more inhabitants than the total listed on the Church's roster. We cannot conclude from these figures that the inactive Mormons have all experienced negative life events, nor can we state that those living below the poverty line are inactive members. What we have ascertained, though, is that many of the disenfranchised have experienced what Albrecht


Contributing to the maturation of an individual is theoretically religion's sixth function. The Church's policies and doctrines—primarily the policy of lay ministry, the Word of Wisdom, sealing family members together for time and eternity, their ideology regarding work and the subsequent building of God's Kingdom on Earth—should all play a role in accomplishing this task for Mormonism. In early youth a person needs to develop a degree of trust in other people. The doctrine of sealing families for time and eternity should help children to feel that they will never be abandoned. Parents, guided by the knowledge that the child will be with them forever, can reinforce the youth's feelings of security, which aids in the building of trust. Throughout the life cycle there will be times that an individual will need support to overcome problems that can arise. Mormonism, with its lay priesthood, provides its members with the ability to receive revelation, which conceivably grants the member a readily available buttress.

Not only do human beings need to establish a degree of trust in others, but they must also acquire a sense of autonomy. The Mormon attitude toward work should help them advance autonomous abilities in an individual. This work ethic could also foster the establishment of the posture that one must be responsible for one's own behavior.
However, some theorists question the validity of this function for religion:

But does religion support and encourage maturation, the development of autonomy, and self-direction? Or does it provide a too-authoritarian and over protective setting which inhibits maturation and tends to keep individuals dependent upon religious institutions (O'Dea, 1966:15).

From our data collected in this community, the answer to O'Dea's question about religion supporting and encouraging maturation cannot be answered in a positive manner. Rather than encourage the maturation of its individual members, Mormonism appears to keep individuals dependent upon Church authority.

Thus, by placing the Mormon doctrines within the framework of the six functions of religion and comparing them with data gathered, we can see some discrepancies between how the doctrines should function and how they actually function in the practical setting. The data we have collected and analyzed indicates that Mormonism, as it is practiced in this community, seems to be dysfunctional in several ways. In the final chapter, we will examine further the dysfunctional aspects of Mormon doctrines and practices as it relates to this community's social reality. We will attempt to explain how badly the present society
functions, how people's private frustrations stem from the social structure, how unnecessary and oppressive the present institutional arrangements are, and how much better an alternative social order would work (Szymanski, 1968:105-106).
CHAPTER 7

THE TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

Albert Szymanski suggested that a counter definition of the "social reality be elaborated" which will illuminate the structure or portions of the social structure from which "people's private frustrations stem" (1968:105-106). We have ascertained that a portion of the social structure of this community contributes to people's frustrations. We are not the first to use this reproach of the L.D.S. Church and its policies. Even before it was possible to view the impact of the outward expansion policies of the L.D.S. Church, there were criticisms of the functionality of Mormon life:

The plateau visible in contemporary Mormon life is, for these observers, a subtly inclined plane leading to extinction. ... The Church, these critics claim, is an elaborate pioneering mechanism, a vast sociological apparatus, nicely modeled for tasks now finished, leaving it functionless (O'Dea, 1957:258).

The empirical evidence gathered in this study indicates that the critics mentioned by O'Dea are only partially correct. The Church itself is not functionless, but in many ways its doctrines and practices are dysfunctional both for the
faithful and for the Church itself.

The pattern we have detected is that if a change of Church practices is not followed by a change in doctrine, the point where practice and doctrine intercept, then the site where the doctrines operate becomes dysfunctional. The Mormon doctrines and their interdependence upon one another for their equilibrium is elucidated when the neo-fundamentalist posture of the Church is examined. Focusing upon the discontented Mormons in the community, we gathered data indicating that for these people the Church no longer provides a meaningful context for them. These sentiments resulted from the separation of the affluent wards and the poorer ones in town and also from the resentment expressed toward the more affluent wards by the working class Mormon. Situations such as this exemplify the escalating attempts of the Church to adjust its policies to accommodate them to modern situations while still insisting that the brethren implicitly follow its mandates such as tithing.

Albrecht and Cornwall (1988) report the Mormon tendency to remain away from church services and even accept disenfranchisement when they have either a negative religious occurrence or negative life experience. The tendency of the bishops' brothers to become disenfranchised could be seen as constituting a negative religious event. However, because of the relatively small number of these instances, the occurrences have been attributed to the personality faults of
Besides, disenfranchisement in years past was not the problem that it is today because in years past the mode of production in Utah was a labor-intense form of agriculture. Life was considerably arduous even with a family and other community support groups around. It was quite difficult for individuals to move out on their own with no support; however, they remained in the Church because of the lack of other religious groups and employment opportunities in the area. In today's society, with its diversity of employment opportunities and modern transportation, people who find a situation uncomfortable have more choices. They can either move away or join another church without suffering complete social isolation as they would have in the past. There is also an increasing number of disenfranchised people in the various communities which form a small support group for possible interaction with the newly ostracized.

The opportunities available for individuals to remain away from the Church today makes its neo-fundamentalist posture dysfunctional. The attitude of the transgressors toward reconciliation is an example of the self-defeating potential of the Church's doctrines. Instead of providing a spiritual haven for some members of the community, the L.D.S. Church, with its strict and punitive bearing, seems to alienate some of its members.

The economic situation in this small town is obvious.
Since almost twenty-two percent of the people live in poverty and seventy percent of the households earn under twenty-five thousand dollars annually, the economic predicament is the source of people's primary frustrations. The economy is meager and there appears to be no viable solutions. Aside from small farming and the small building supply plant, the only other industry in the region is tourism.

Tourism may prove to be quite profitable for the owner of a restaurant or a motel. However, their employees working at minimum wage are subjected to a subsistence level lifestyle. Our data shows that this subsistence level constitutes the average economic status of most of the working class in this community. Our observations have correspondingly shown that many of the attitudes and behaviors displayed by the people in this township result from compliance with, or belief in, the doctrines and policies of the L.D.S. Church. Because most of the population is Mormon, the policies of the Church have a direct impact upon the lifestyles of non-Mormons as well. In order to focus properly on the economic impact of the L.D.S. Church policies in this community, a brief historical review is essential.

Mormonism began as a sect,
a voluntary society composed of strict and definite Christian believers bound to each other by the fact that they have all experienced "the new birth" (O'Dea, 1966:68).
In its formative years, the Mormon sect attempted to isolate itself in a series of moves that culminated in the establishment of a separate state of Zion in what is now Utah. The unique experiences of the early Mormons, combined with the doctrines the Church developed in the process, prompted O'Dea to conclude that Mormonism has avoided the structural problems that have been encountered by most sects, those of "denominationalism and sectarian stagnation" (1954:285). He argues that this combination of experiences and doctrines allowed the Mormon Church to establish "an ethnic group formed and brought to awareness here in America" (1966:70).

O'Dea's description of the Mormons as an ethnic group is similar to the impression we were to develop of the people in this locale. However, the Mormons from this small township are more like those of an ethnic group living in a large American city that was run by a political machine. The parallels between the Church's General Authorities in Salt Lake City and big city political bosses are quite apparent.

The history of the canal project in Southern Utah serves to illustrate this analogy. Just as a ward boss from Tammany Hall would approach the mayor, a local bishop went to the Church Authorities in Salt Lake soliciting patronage. And just as a boss politician would determine if the petitioners actually voted and otherwise supported the political machine, the Church President checked to see how much tith-
ing the appellant's wards were paying. When the Church President confirmed that the wards were contributing the expected amount of annual tithes, he granted the request. The story of the canal has been replicated, in fashion, in hundreds of ward political offices throughout the United States for years.

Nevertheless, it is not the cosmetic correlation between the L.D.S. Church and boss politics that is important. Rather it is how the Church functioned to make the small communities in Utah independent from the rest of American society. In the process of attaining this degree of independence, the people in these small towns became economically dependent upon the Church in Salt Lake.

Because of its structure and procedures, the L.D.S. Church fulfilled a positive latent function for all the small communities in Utah for years. The L.D.S. Church, with its rationalized tax collecting structure and sizable business investments, amassed a considerable reserve of capital. These capital reserve funds functioned in the same way as a local savings and loan or credit union. There was no need to develop a means of securing investment capital from the rest of America: Mormons borrowed their own money when they required it.

This community's problems actually began when the Church turned its mission outward in the 1950's. No longer were the tithes collected from the people that were readily
available to them when the need arose. However, the effects of the policy change were not noticed for many years due to the rapid expansion of the general American economy for the next thirty years. It is only recently that some Utah economists have realized what has happened: the outward expansion policy has served to make the L.D.S. Church behave almost imperially toward their own people in this and other comparable Utah communities. The Church is taking money from these people, who have very little, and then leaving them "to fend for themselves in economic decision making" (Friedland, 1988:15). Furthermore, the most negative aspect of this situation is that the years of economic isolation have poorly equipped the people from these small towns to effectively promote investment from the gentile world.

During the time that the Church functioned as an investment banker, its doctrines and other policies remained in equilibrium. Since the Church's outward emphasis withdrew access to its funds, the practice of tithing became dysfunctional. In a region that is in desperate need of investment capital, tithing removes ten percent of its meager resources and further increases their economic problems. The Friedland report states,

We are trapped in a vicious cycle. Utah is a relatively low-wage economy. The ratio of working adults to children is one of the lowest in the nation. Which
drives down per capita income, and makes our tax base extremely fragile. The Utah Foundation estimates that Utah's unique combination of large families, and high charitable contributions, primarily for Church tithing, makes our tax base 19 percent lower than other states with comparable tax rates. This means that Utah must make up an almost twenty percent shortfall, just to stay even with other states. This is an almost intolerable burden on economic development (1988:12).

When technology was limited, the small Mormon farmers actually benefited from the doctrine that there were spirit children waiting to be born. The youth were a source of much needed labor. Today, however, world, this doctrine, with its emphasis upon building large families and its emphasis upon the practice of tithing, created a dysfunctional situation in this community. Friedland observed that "Utah's fiscal crisis is well known by now, as is its major cause: the high cost of educating our children" (1988:12).

The final dysfunctional aspect of Mormonism is the exploitive and xenophobic sentiments it has fostered and is nurturing in this community. The Mormons, at least in this community, seem to have forgotten that there has always been an American tradition of concern for the "public good." As James Madison once said:

the public good, the real welfare of the great body of the people, is the supreme object to be pursued; and that no form of government whatever has any other
value than as it may be fitted for the attainment of this object (Bellah, 1985:253).

The "rules of the competitive market" are the "real arbiters of living." whether in this community or anywhere else in the country (Bellah, 1985:251). Nevertheless, there has always been a tradition of common good that prevailed in the rationality of American capitalism. The tradition of common good has tempered the rationalized accumulation of capital that a true market economy produces. Even if an individual or corporation forgets the tradition, many governmental regulatory agencies have been established for the deliberate purpose of reducing the negative social effects of capitalism's excesses.

However, to the Mormons in this community the only commonalty recognized is membership in the L.D.S. Church. The only common good is that which is good for a Mormon. This posture is detrimental to the economic structure in the area. Because of the outward turn in Church policy, the ethnic group status of the Mormons is no longer one of independence. In order to survive, the people must interact with non-Mormon society. No longer can they remain in isolation, they need outside capital to create jobs for the local residents.

Nevertheless, they are finding it quite difficult to attract businesses from out of state to locate anywhere in
Utah. The pervasive xenophobia, along with the unfair preference we observed in their business dealings with gentiles, seems to have given the people in this area a negative image in the minds of non-Mormon businessmen who perceive Utah as a state in which one must be a member of the L.D.S. Church to successfully do business. This hurts the relocation of smaller, non-national corporations to Utah. For national corporations, there is a sense among some executives that Utah is a closed society, and a place that non-church members will not be welcome. There is also a perception that large families encouraged by the Church will keep Utah schools in a state of poverty, and make them poor choices for the education of newcomer’s children (Friedland, 1988:14-15).

The descriptions recorded in the previous chapters show how the Church's doctrines and policies have helped to foster the xenophobia and exploitive attitude in this hamlet. The empirical evidence suggests that the doctrines and practices of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints are becoming increasingly dysfunctional ever since the outward expansion began in the late 1950's.

In summary, we realize that further research is required to test conclusions drawn by this study. However, our data suggests that the dominant religion in this area, Mormonism, is becoming dysfunctional for both practitioners and non-believers. We can see "how unnecessary and oppressive the present institution arrangement" is in this
community (Szymanski, 1968:106). Ostensibly, Mormonism has transcended even Marx's opinion that religion is "the opiate of the people" (1978:54). Marx saw religion as being used to support and uphold the human spirit in spite of oppressive social conditions.

On the other hand, when we examined the situation in this Mormon community, we noticed a growing number of people turning away from the Church in times of need. We do not know how Church doctrines are functioning outside of Utah. We do not know if they perform positively for the new converts or not. But in this small town, the Church's "elaborate pioneering mechanism" is no longer needed (O'Dea, 1966:70) because some of the descendents of those pioneers and the converts who immigrated into the area now belong to a church that is becoming dysfunctional. Unless the Church undertakes a massive re-education of its fellowship and re-orientates their attitudes toward a tolerant and humanistic perspective, the Mormon Church will probably continue on "a subtly inclined plane leading to extinction" (O'Dea, 1966:70) not because the structure of Mormonism has become functionless, but because Mormon doctrines contradict their own policies and render those doctrines dysfunctional.
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