

“For the Education and Elevation of the Youth”: *The Juvenile Instructor* and the
Construction of Gender Roles in the Mormon Church (1869-1872)

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Introduction

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was founded by Joseph Smith in 1830 in upstate New York. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) claims to be the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, meaning that the LDS church models its teachings and organization according to the practices that Jesus Christ established when he lived on earth. Thus, Latter-day Saints believe in modern-day prophets, apostles, and the concept of revelation because these principles existed in New Testament times. Jesus Christ's church was said to be restored by Joseph Smith in 1830, after Smith received a vision from God and Jesus when he asked which church to join out of the many that passed through his rural town of Palmyra, New York during the Second Great Awakening (1800-1850). When Joseph Smith received the answer that none of the churches in existence were God's true church, he took up the call to restore the gospel of Jesus Christ and establish the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. After a series of visions, Joseph Smith uncovered The Book of Mormon, a set of scripture that recounts the histories of the ancient people who lived in the Americas at the time Jesus Christ lived, died, and was resurrected. Joseph Smith translated The Book of Mormon and the book exists as a set of scripture that complements the Old and New Testaments. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is often referred to as Mormonism and its followers as Mormons because of this book of scripture, but the terms Mormonism and Mormons are not official titles.¹

The Mormon Church was created during the height of the Second Great Awakening in America (1800-1850), attracting both a wide membership and conflict with various state governments. Many held prejudices against the Saints for their "outlandish" beliefs and claims of

1. This paper will use the terms Latter-day Saints, LDS, and Mormon interchangeably as both terms are correct and commonly used today.

being the one true church in existence. Prejudice often turned to discrimination, which prompted violent mobs to attack Mormon settlements, and the practice of tarring and feathering Mormon leaders. Facing religious persecution from states such as Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, and Idaho, the Saints began their trek westward in February 1846, aiming to find land where they could settle. In April 1847, the Latter-day Saints (LDS) arrived in the Salt Lake Valley and created permanent settlements in the Utah territory.

Historically, the beginnings of the LDS church occurred concurrently with the phenomenon of the cult of domesticity and the concept of separate spheres in the Victorian Era (1837-1901). The prevailing ideology in the United States and Great Britain in the late-nineteenth century was that women were virtuous beings who held sacred duties to their families and home life separate from the roles that men had to be providers for their families. “Women were to uphold the four cardinal virtues: piety, purity, submission, and domesticity.”² Men were to exist in society and women were to exist at home and accept their subordinate role to men. A man was judged by his ability to provide for his wife and family and a woman was seen as virtuous if she did not work outside the home. Women were also considered the center and religious beacon for the family, as women were deemed more religiously inclined than men by nature.³ Based on the belief that women had a natural religious inclination, women were responsible for the religious education of their children during this era.

The Victorian gender roles and ideals paralleled the early Mormon gender values, and some argue that polygamy was an extreme of these gender ideologies. Mormons are most known for their highly controversial practice of polygamy which was publically acknowledged

2. Barbara Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860,” *American Quarterly* 18, no. 2, (1966), 152.

3. Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood,” 152.

beginning in 1852 and officially banned in 1890.⁴ Polygamy, or plural marriage, was the practice of one man marrying and having children with multiple wives. Many scholars view polygamy as an oppressive practice towards women, with men exercising dominance, especially sexual dominance, over many women.⁵ The American public largely deemed polygamy a sadist practice that threatened the American values of a monogamist, nuclear family.⁶ Many Americans held the fear that once men experienced sexual liberation, traditional Victorian structures of family and society would crumble.⁷ Other scholars echo the belief that Mormon men who engaged in polygamy were seen as sexual deviants and dangerous to the women they married.⁸

Although Americans largely held an anti-polygamist sentiment while it was practiced by the Mormon church, some scholars argue that the practice of plural marriage by Mormons in the 1850s to 1890 gave women more rights than their female counterparts throughout the United States. Scholars argue that Joseph Smith began experimenting with the practice of polygamy in order to preserve the family and due to its ties to the Old Testament.⁹ According to this perspective, the purpose of polygamy was to expand “kinship ties and social solidarity among Mormons.”¹⁰ Due to the fact that Mormon society was organized around marriage and family

4. Plural marriage was officially banned by the LDS church in 1890 in Official Declaration 1. Plural marriage is still practiced today by some religious groups who broke away from the official Mormon church after plural marriage was officially banned, the most common being Fundamentalist Mormons.

5. Charles A. Cannon, “The Awesome Power of Sex: The Polemical Campaign against Mormon Polygamy,” *Pacific Historical Review*, 43, no. 1 (1974), 65.

6. Cannon, “The Awesome Power of Sex,” 62.

7. Cannon, “The Awesome Power of Sex,” 65.

8. Sarah Barringer Gordon, “The Mormon Question: Polygamy and Constitutional Conflict in Nineteenth-Century America,” *Journal of Supreme Court History*, 28, no. 1 (2003), 14.

9. Lawrence Foster, “From frontier activism to neo-Victorian domesticity: Mormon women in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,” *Journal of Mormon History*, 6 (1979), 6.

10. Foster, “From frontier activism to neo-Victorian domesticity,” 7.

ties, especially when crossing the American frontier in the journey to Utah, polygamy was seen as a way to strengthen the family unit and build a more cohesive community.

Those who hold a pro-polygamist perspective also argue that the nature of living on the frontier while practicing polygamy gave women more rights than other women living in the United States at the time. Due to the fact that men were often gone from their wives and children while visiting their other wives, women were able to run farms and businesses independently from men, which was rare or even unheard of in the rest of the United States.¹¹ Due to the nature of frontier life, it was necessary for women to join in the effort to build and settle society in Utah. Out of pure necessity, women were given more opportunities to participate in the creation of businesses, government, and societal policies. Women were allowed to participate in public meetings, vote on proposals, and organize and operate their own women's organizations.¹² Mormon women living in Utah were provided more opportunities to participate in life outside of the home due to the nature of frontier life and the space provided by polygamy to live independently from male authority.

Women's social relationships outside of their polygamist marriages flourished. Mother-child relationships were prioritized due to their husband's frequent absence, and women-centered community networks developed.¹³ Women created supportive communities for each other in times of trial because their husband was often absent either with their other wives or on foreign church missions. Following this pattern, Mormon women also founded formal women's organizations in order to support each other and their communities.

11. Foster, "From frontier activism to neo-Victorian domesticity," 9.

12. Foster, "From frontier activism to neo-Victorian domesticity," 8.

13. Lawrence Foster, *Polygamy and the Frontier: Mormon Women in Early Utah*, (1982), 279.

In 1842, what is known as one of the oldest and largest women's organizations, the Relief Society, was founded to bring together Mormon women into a cohesive community for the purpose of serving others.¹⁴ The motto of the Relief Society is "Charity Never Faileth," and the original purpose and mission for the Relief Society was for Mormon women to organize in order to serve their communities and teach others about the LDS gospel.¹⁵ When first created, the Relief Society served as a unique women's-only space within a patriarchal society. Mormon women were actively working to serve others and garner a good name for the Mormon Church through the Relief Society's charity work. Although sponsoring a women's organization was a progressive move for the church at the time, the Relief Society only provided women opportunities for leadership roles within the women's organization, not in the church as a whole.

Despite the church's doctrine on the divine nature of gender roles and the practice of polygamy, male leadership in the church in the late-nineteenth century supported women's suffrage and enabled the creation of women's organizations. Prominent church leaders George Q. Cannon and Orson F. Whitney did not see women's suffrage as a threat to their male authority in the church or in society in general. The general sentiment from male church leadership was "if women had the vote they could more effectively aid in the constructive reform and strengthening the family."¹⁶ Women were given the right to vote in Utah 1870. Although the reasoning for granting women's suffrage was for women to have a say in legislation related to the family and to make a statement that polygamy did not oppress women, Utah was still at the forefront of granting women's suffrage in the United States. Political opponents of polygamy worked hard to

14. "The Purpose of Relief Society, *lds.org*, January 29, 2018, <https://www.lds.org/callings/relief-society/purposes?lang=eng>.

15. "The Purpose of Relief Society, *lds.org*.

16. Foster, "From frontier activism to neo-Victorian domesticity," 11.

repeal women's right to vote in Utah because the women did not move to end polygamy with their newfound political power. In 1887, the U.S. Congress repealed women's right to vote in Utah based on political pressure from anti-polygamists.¹⁷

In 1870, the same year that women's suffrage was passed in Utah, the Young Ladies' Department of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association was founded as a branch of the larger Relief Society organization.¹⁸ The Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association was formed at the behest of the then-current prophet, Brigham Young, in order to simplify processes of "meal preparation, housekeeping, and clothing" for Mormon women.¹⁹ According to President Young, Mormon women had become too extravagant in their dress and in maintaining their homes, so he wanted the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association to get local churches, or Wards, to commit to streamlined standards of modest behavior. There was a Senior and Junior department of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association and the Senior department functioned to encourage the Young Ladies' contingent to lead the way in establishing the norms for dress and behavior for Mormon women.

At the same historical moment when women's suffrage was passed in Utah and the Young Ladies' Department of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association was founded, *The Juvenile Instructor* was being disseminated to the youth of the church. *The Juvenile Instructor* was issued from 1866 to 1929 and focused on inculcating the youth of the LDS church in doctrinal principles and church history. George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency of the LDS church was given the assignment to oversee the education of the church's youth and

17. Foster, "From frontier activism to neo-Victorian domesticity," 12-13.

18. David Golding, "The First Fifty Years of Relief Society: Key Documents in Latter-day Saint Women's History," (2017). <https://www.churchhistorianspress.org/the-first-fifty-years-of-relief-society/part-3/3-18?lang=eng>.

19. Golding, "The First Fifty Years."

the Mormon Sunday School movement.²⁰ During this early era of the Mormon Church, it was unclear to church leadership and membership how long the church would continue. By the 1850s, the religious revival of the Second Great Awakening had waned and Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Founder of the LDS church, had died. Directly after Joseph Smith's death, members were unsure if the church would go on or who the new leader would be. The period from Smith's death in 1844 and Brigham Young's rise to power as the new prophet and leader of the LDS church in 1847 was one of great uncertainty that caused many members to leave the church.²¹ The huge risk and sacrifice of crossing the American Plains in the same year also caused church membership to significantly decrease, both by death on the Plains and people voluntarily revoking their church membership. Once settled in isolation in Utah, the LDS church faced another moment of uncertainty. How long would this radical church experiment last and would the next generation of Mormon children continue to uphold Mormon religious principles?

The publication of *The Juvenile Instructor* was a key tool for teaching the youth of the church Mormon religious principles and inculcating them to the cultural values that the church held. According to church historians Ronald W. Walker, David J. Whittaker, and James B. Allen, "Cannon's labors to promote education and refinement greatly strengthened the church's youth during a period when Mormonism was widely misunderstood."²² The misunderstandings centered around debates about polygamy and other issues that state governments and individual

20. Ronald W. Walker, David J. Whittaker, and James B. Allen, *Mormon History* (University of Illinois Press, 2001), 8.

21. Ronald K. Esplin, "Joseph, Brigham and the Twelve: A Succession of Continuity," *Brigham Young University Studies*, (1981), 301. There was a clear procedure established for the line of succession for becoming the next Prophet of the LDS church; however, many members campaigned for Sidney Rigdon to become the Prophet over Brigham Young. Brigham Young was named the Prophet three years after Smith's death and Rigdon eventually left the church.

22. Walker, *Mormon History*, 17.

people took up with Mormons, such as their belief in modern religious revelation. The LDS church made a concerted effort to communicate with its members what their beliefs were and address any misconceptions. Due to the fact that many Mormons remained on the east coast in smaller settlements, migration throughout the western American territories, and growing church membership in England, the church used print publications to communicate church doctrine, revelation, and counsel to all its members.

Although not initially an official publication of the church, *The Juvenile Instructor* was published and distributed in order to ensure that a cohesive doctrine and message was conveyed to the children of the church. In order to maintain consistency in the church throughout the years, the LDS church generated media to distribute to its members.²³ The church used media in order to regulate the experiences that LDS members had within local wards. *The Juvenile Instructor* can also be seen as a form of media that was used to regulate the instruction of children in the LDS church. At a time when the U.S. government was in a battle with the church over the issue of polygamy and the general population tended to take issue with LDS church members, the LDS church was relying on creating a new generation of Mormons who ascribed to the church's religious and cultural principles. By reading from the same magazines and learning religious principles from them, the youth of the LDS church learned a common religious identity.

This thesis explores the complexities of gender roles in the LDS church during an era of instability in relation to the rise and fall of polygamy, the implementation and revoking of women's suffrage within the Utah territory, and the encouragement and limits placed on women's organizations and expressions of women's gender roles through the Young Ladies'

23. Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A history of the Latter-day Saints* (University of Illinois Press, 1992), 207.

Department of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association. The complex gender roles were inculcated to the youth of the church through *The Juvenile Instructor*, which was aimed at educating the youth of the church regardless of gender, yet inscribed explicit gender roles that would persist throughout the church to this day. The first chapter of this thesis will explore the specific gender roles that *The Juvenile Instructor* inscribed on the youth of the church in an attempt to reproduce traditional cultural values. The second chapter will explore the resolutions of the Young Ladies' Department of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association as published in *The Juvenile Instructor* and the standards of dress and behavior this organization attempted to implement. The third chapter will discuss how the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association included a focus on increasing women's intelligence, but how this intelligence was limited to religious knowledge. The fourth chapter will examine how the gender ideals within the LDS church have largely stayed the same since the Victorian Era. The fourth chapter will also discuss the persistence of the complexities of gender roles today in the LDS church, as women are encouraged to gain an education, but only use that education for serving one's family.

Chapter 1

The Endorsement of Traditional Gender Roles by the LDS Church

The Juvenile Instructor was one of the very potent child instruction magazines of our early days. Even when I was growing up in my home the one magazine that I read and that my parents read to me was *The Juvenile Instructor*.²⁴

-Elder Mark E. Peterson, *Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*

The Juvenile Instructor was a popular and widespread periodical that was issued from 1866 to 1929 and functioned to educate the youth of the LDS church. Inscribed on the title page of each issue of *The Juvenile Instructor* was the message “designed expressly for the education and elevation of the youth.”²⁵ *The Juvenile Instructor* was issued to the youth of the church based on the motivation to provide children with wholesome material to read that communicated the standards of behavior, thought, dress, et cetera of the Mormon church.²⁶ The publication of the periodical provided the church with a platform to convey messages of religious doctrine and Mormon cultural values. Not only was *The Juvenile Instructor* a tool for teaching the children of the Latter-day Saint religion about religious doctrine and morals, but it also taught children distinct gender roles. This chapter examines how gender norms and ideals were among the principles indoctrinated to the youth of the church through the publication of *The Juvenile Instructor*. The articles that this chapter draws on were published from 1869 to 1871, providing a snapshot of how the LDS church spoke about gender and the gender roles that were communicated to the youth of the church when women’s suffrage was passed in Utah in February of 1870. The articles included in *The Juvenile Instructor* during this era upheld and

24. Lawrence R. Flake, "The Development of the Juvenile Instructor under George Q. Cannon and Its Functions in Latter-day Saint Religious Education" (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1969), 1.

25. *The Juvenile Instructor*, January 1869 issue no.1, 1.

26 Flake, “The Development of the Juvenile Instructor,” 5.

inculcated particular gender roles for women. The articles present in *The Juvenile Instructor* focused on manhood and fatherhood and its contrast to womanhood and motherhood and the differences in their respective duties.

In articles and poems included in the 1869-1871 issues of *The Juvenile Instructor*, traditional gender norms for men and women are expressed. The gender norms that are endorsed align with the Victorian Era separate spheres ideologies where the man and husband of the home worked to provide for his family, while the woman and wife functioned to support her husband and work inside the household. *The Juvenile Instructor* upheld these separate spheres gender norms through the publication of many articles that portrayed men and women enacting traditional gender roles in a positive light and fulfilling their divine missions.

Published in the 1869 issue of *The Juvenile Instructor* is a poem titled “Comforts of Home.” In the poem, the author, Joseph J. Gough, articulates how the mother’s function in the home is to provide comfort to those who live in it. Gough articulates the role of the mother in the home by stating: “What is it makes the home pleasant? Why a mother’s loving smile/When she breathes those words of comfort.”²⁷ The mother’s role in the home as expressed by this poem is to make the home comfortable and pleasant through her behavior and uplifting demeanor. The poem goes on to say that the words of comfort that the mother provides are “Come, dear partner/rest awhile;/Come and give us words of counsel, now your daily toil is done.”²⁸ The mother of the poem is speaking to her husband to give the family counsel based on the belief of the man’s moral authority in the home. The mother also functions as a comfort to the father after his long day of work by encouraging him to rest and be served by the mother. This poem

27. Joseph J. Gough, “Comforts of Home,” *The Juvenile Instructor*, January 1869 issue no. 3, 24.

28. Gough, “Comforts of Home,” January 1869 issue no. 3, 24.

communicates distinct and traditional gender norms where the mother functions to please the family and her husband while the husband is out working to provide for the family.

Another poem in *The Juvenile Instructor* that explicitly relates to gender roles in the issues published in 1869 is titled “Father is Coming.”²⁹ This poem has a similar subject and expresses a similar sentiment to “Comforts of Home,” which was in the January 1869 issue of *The Juvenile Instructor*. The speaker of the poem praises her husband for his hard work and kind qualities and prepares the home for him to return to after work. “And we’ll do what father likes;/His wishes are so few;/Would they the more, that ever hour/Some wish of his I knew!/I’m sure it makes a happy day/When I can please him any way.”³⁰ The speaker of the poem, who is the wife of the father returning from work, expresses her desire to serve and please her husband because of his ability to provide for her family. The wife’s wish and function is to serve her husband who serves the family by working. This poem also hints at the traditional male gender ideal of having the father’s main function to be to work to provide for the family and have no other “wishes.” The mother of the home works to please her husband while the father works to provide for the family.

The December 1870 article titled “Sweet Temper” portrays the gender ideal of the female as a docile and obedient caretaker. “Sweet Temper” discusses how “no trait of character is more valuable in a female than the possession of a sweet temper.”³¹ According to this article, a woman functions as a calming force in the lives of her family members in order to serve her husband and children and is said to have a “soothing influence over the minds of the whole family.”³² “Let a

29. “Father is Coming,” *The Juvenile Instructor*, May 1869 issue no. 11, 88.

30. “Father is Coming,” May 1869 issue no. 11, 88.

31. “Sweet Temper,” *The Juvenile Instructor*, December 1870 issue no. 26, 204.

32. “Sweet Temper,” December 1870 issue no. 26, 204.

man go home at night, wearied and worn by the toils of the day, and how soothing is a word dictated by a good disposition!”³³ The ideal woman is presented as an emotional servant to her husband in order to improve his mood after a long day of work. The gendered ideal of having a working husband is also portrayed in this article. Clear gender roles in terms of the ideal functions and personal qualities are conveyed in the articles of *The Juvenile Instructor*; females are expected to be sweet, calm, and ready to serve her husband, whereas men are expected to be responsible, hard-working, and dedicated to their families.

An article titled “Allegorical,” displays a portrait of a woman using factory machinery and how this image is an allegory for manufacturing.³⁴ The purpose of the article is to explain what an allegory is and describe common examples of them. For example, the article states that “a female, often some goddess of the ancient Greeks or Romans, is generally used in such pictures as the principal figure. For instance, a beautiful young lady with red cap is usually designed to represent liberty.”³⁵ Other common allegorical symbols the article describes are of a woman with a shield by a seashore representing Great Britain and the woman Helvetia representing Switzerland. The article gives examples of how the image of a woman is used in society and throughout history to symbolize different professions. All of the examples the article provides are of female allegorical symbols for countries and professions. This article is about images of powerful women and women representing countries and professions through the use of allegories, but it is only a representation. Women are used as the symbols of manufacturing, painting, or lady liberty, but the women are not actively participating in these tasks. This article

33. “Sweet Temper,” December 1870 issue no. 26, 204.

34. “Allegorical,” *The Juvenile Instructor*, January 1870 issue no. 1, 8.

35. “Allegorical,” January 1870 issue no. 1, 8.

conveys the message to children that an image of a woman by factory equipment is a symbol for manufacturing, rather than a depiction of a woman's actual participation in manufacturing.

The poem "Watch, Mother" in the February 1870 issue of *The Juvenile Instructor*, speaks about women's role in "nature's plan."³⁶ The poem speaks about the "divine role" that women have of motherhood. The poem addresses the joys of motherhood and how it should not be taken for granted. The poem also serves to give mothers guidance in how to treasure their motherly duties. "Never count the moments lost,/Never count the time it costs;/Guide them, mother, while you may,/In the safe and narrow way."³⁷ This particular passage highlights how women should embrace their motherly duties and not dwell on the sacrifices that mothers make for their children. This passage also expresses the belief that it is the mother's responsibility to raise her children to follow the principles of the LDS gospel, or the "safe and narrow way." "Never dare the question ask--/'Why to me the weary task?'/The same little hand may prove/Messengers of light and love."³⁸ In this passage, the author of the poem articulates the principle that mothers should never question their divine role of motherhood and complain about the responsibilities of motherhood, because children provide "light and love" to the world. Mothers are also encouraged to not shirk or resent their motherly duties but embrace the duty of rearing the next generation of the church. "Mother, watch the little heart,/Beating soft and warm for you;/Wholesome lessons now impart;/Keep, O keep that young heart true./Extricating every weed,/Sowing good and precious seed:/Harvest rich you then may see,/Ripen for eternity."³⁹ The poem ends with a plea for mothers to raise their children well, to keep them wholesome, have

36. "Watch, Mother," *The Juvenile Instructor*, February 1870 issue no. 3, 23.

37. "Watch, Mother," February 1870 issue no. 3, 23.

38. "Watch, Mother," February 1870 issue no. 3, 23.

39. "Watch, Mother," February 1870 issue no. 3, 23.

true hearts, and keep an eternal legacy of righteous families. From the perspective of this poem, mothers are responsible for the emotional and spiritual well-being of their children, and the eternal legacy of the family, but mothers should not resent this task, for it is their duty.

Revisiting the January 1869 poem titled “Comforts of Home,” the author, Joseph H. Gough, expresses the gender ideals for males in the church as well as females.⁴⁰ Through Gough’s structure of the poem, he highlights the separate roles that mothers and fathers have within a family. Gough starts the poem by explaining the father’s role in the home. “What is it makes the home sacred? Why a father’s watchful care,/As he kneels before the altar and breathes the family prayer.”⁴¹ For Gough, the father’s role is to be the spiritual leader and authority of the home. This conflicts with the True Womanhood ideal of the wife being the religious leader of the home. In Mormon doctrine, women were thought to be more spiritually inclined and spiritual in their temperament, but men were the ultimate religious authorities in their home.

In the January 1870 issue of *The Juvenile Instructor*, there is an article titled “How to Be a Man.” The article tells a fictional story about a young son who gets a job to support his family. When asked what he does with his money, the child responds by saying, “Well, you see, there is mother, sister, and me; and mother takes in sewing...so I help her all I can.”⁴² This quote indicates that the family is being raised by a single mother, and the eldest son has taken on the role of supplementing the family’s income. The man interviewing the son for a job comments to his colleague

He will make a man, that boy will. A boy who is determined to do something; who gives his mother all of his money to lighten her burdens, who does not use tobacco, and does

40. Gough, “Comforts of Home,” January 1869 issue no. 3, 24.

41. Gough, “Comforts of Home,” January 1869 issue no. 3, 24.

42. “How to Be a Man,” *The Juvenile Instructor*, January 1870 issue no. 1, 7.

not go to the theatres; who spends his evenings in study after working all day,--such a boy would make a man.⁴³

In this quote, the son is being praised for his determination to fulfill the patriarchal role that is lacking in his family. This boy will grow into a proper and decent “man” according to this male figure. According to the quote, Latter-day Saint men were held to particularly unusual standards for what made an “ideal” man, like not attending the theater or using tobacco. Mentioning the use of tobacco hearkens to the Mormon belief contained in the Word of Wisdom prohibiting tobacco use.⁴⁴ The alignment of praising the boy for not using tobacco, his diligent work effort, and his feelings of financial responsibility for his family, signals that the LDS church values these skills and considers them proper behavior for men to follow.

In a February 1870 issue of *The Juvenile Instructor*, there is a short and untitled article about children who stand for right and children who stand for wrong. Although the article is aimed at children’s actions in general, the language switches to speak specifically about boys and their actions. The article uses the language that boys specifically can use their influence for good or for evil, and that this influence will determine which sort of man that the boy will become.

The boy, who always takes a bold stand for the right, and sets a good example for others, is using his influence for good, and will, if he lives to become a man, see the good results...while the boy who has not sufficient moral course or stamina to take a course of this kind... exerts his influence for evil and will in after years of experience the results, in sorrow to himself and others.⁴⁵

The boy who uses his influence for good will see the rewards of his good influence as a man, whereas the boy who uses his influence for evil will experience sorrow as a man. The message is also conveyed that if a boy is not pursuing what the church deems as worthy and good tasks, then

43. “How to Be a Man,” January 1870 issue no.1, 7.

44. *Doctrine and Covenants* Section 89 [1835] (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2013), 175-176.

45. Untitled, *The Juvenile Instructor*, February 1870 issue no. 3, 18.

the boy would be considered evil. No neutral option is expressed. The beginning of the short article uses language like “all of us” and “we,” but when transitioning into the examples of what will happen when one influences others, boys and men are specifically mentioned.⁴⁶ This shift in language seems intentional in that the author of this article, who is unnamed, believes that boys and men have the power to influence others by their actions, while girls and women are intentionally left out of the rhetoric of this portion of the article.

Included in the February 1870 issue is the poem “Only a Boy.” In “Only a Boy,” stereotypical gender attributes for young boys are described, like reckless behavior, rambunctiousness, and offensive speech.⁴⁷ “And as hard to manage as—what? ah, me!/'Tis hard to tell,/Yet we love him well.”⁴⁸ Although boys are described as hard to manage in the poem, the “we” of the poem still holds affection for the boy, meaning that the difficult behavior is both expected and tolerated from boys. “Only a boy, with his wild, strange ways,/With his idle hours or his busy days;/With his queer remarks, and odd replies,/Sometimes foolish, and sometimes wise,/Often brilliant for one of his size.”⁴⁹ This portion of the poem seems to accurately depict the adolescent male for whom it is difficult for the others to relate. The boy is odd and strange, yet also wise and brilliant, and it seems that the positives outweigh the negatives for the speaker of the poem. “Only a boy, who will be a man,/If Nature goes on with her first great plan—/If water, or fire, or some fatal snare,/Conspire not to rob us of this our heir,/Out blessing, our trouble, our rest, our care,/Our torment, our joy!/'Only a boy.”⁵⁰ The last stanza of the poem is particularly striking. According to the speaker of the poem, it is nature’s great plan for this

46. Untitled, February 1870 issue no. 3, 18.

47. “Only a Boy,” *The Juvenile Instructor*, February 1870 issue no. 3, 20.

48. “Only a Boy,” February 1870 issue no. 3, 20.

49. “Only a Boy,” February 1870 issue no. 3, 20.

50. “Only a Boy,” February 1870 issue no. 3, 20.

reckless and difficult young boy to turn into a man, who will be a blessing and bring joy to the speaker. From the language used in the poem, the speaker is the parent of a boy, and although the boy is troublesome and torments the parent, he also brings joy and blessings due to his male gender.

The poem “Only a Boy” addresses common male gender norms that have long-existed in American society. The common phrase “boys will be boys” excuses a lot of males’ behavior because people prescribe acting out to being a male. Since this poem was written at a time when society was heavily dominated by the patriarchy, the bad behaviors of young men were tolerated in this poem because these young men would grow into men who would oversee the patriarchal society and “bring blessings” due to nature’s plan. In this case, nature’s plan is living in a patriarchal society. According to this poem, it is nature’s plan for men to rule society, so their bad behavior as boys is brushed off and tolerated.

The ideal characteristics for males to possess as conveyed by *The Juvenile Instructor* are for men to be hard-working, dedicated, and moral. In the article “Be a Man,” the author gives young men advice on how to grow up to be a stand-up gentleman. According to the article, men must work hard in life so they are neither poor nor idle. They must save money, help others, and make smart financial decisions. There is also a stress on men having a sense of individuality. “Be your own master, and do not let society or fashion swallow up your individuality.”⁵¹ Throughout the article, there is a clear emphasis on men making their own way in the world and being hard workers. The emphasis of man’s not following the rest of society relates to the message conveyed to women through the discussions and articles on fashion and style. However, in this

51. “Be a Man,” *The Juvenile Instructor*, April 1871 issue no. 7, 52.

case, men are encouraged to not follow trends in terms of their careers and comparing themselves to other men.

The distinct and traditional gender roles expressed in the poems and articles included in *The Juvenile Instructor* from 1869 to 1871 advocated and endorsed traditional separate spheres ideologies that were popular during the Victorian Era. The inclusion of these articles and poems in *The Juvenile Instructor* signaled the Latter-day Saint church's approval and endorsement of the separate spheres ideologies that these articles and poems express. The traditional gender norms and ideals were communicated to the youth of the church from a young age in an effort to reinforce these gender norms to the next generation of church members. Women were to be caretakers, comforters, and spiritually inclined, while men were to follow church standards for moral behavior and provide for their families, while also serving as the religious authority in their homes.

Chapter 2

In the World, But Not of the World

In May 1870, the Young Ladies' Department of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association was formed as a branch of the Relief Society, the Latter-day Saint church's organization for women.⁵² The Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association was formed in light of instruction given by President of the Church, Brigham Young for the purpose of simplifying women's dress, extravagant meal preparation, and home maintenance practices, so women would focus their time on their religious educations. In July 1870, the first Ward's resolutions were published in *The Juvenile Instructor* and for the rest of the year's issues, a different Ward's resolutions were included in the periodical each month.⁵³

The resolutions issued by the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association resonated with the Mormon doctrinal principle of being "in the world, but not of the world." The origin for this religious belief came from a prayer given by Jesus Christ to his apostles in John Chapter 17. Christ states, "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world...I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."⁵⁴ These verses describe how Jesus was living in the world, but was ultimately a spiritual being who held himself to God's standards, rather than the world's. The "world" is depicted as evil and a source of temptation in which Jesus' followers should not partake. Mormon doctrine interprets this religious principle as being

52. Golding, "The First Fifty Years"

53. Flora L. Shipp et al., "The Young Ladies' Column," *The Juvenile Instructor*, July 1870 issue no. 15, 119.

54. John 17:11, 14–15, King James Bible.

able to live in the world, but not follow the world's standards.⁵⁵ Mormons should value holding themselves to godly standards, rather than worldly standards. This doctrinal notion is drawn upon in the rhetoric of the resolutions published by the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association.

The first set of resolutions for the Young Ladies' Department of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association came from the Salt Lake City's 13th Ward and articulated the women of the Ward's commitment to the goals of the larger women's organization. The resolutions state that the women committed to the modest standards of dress and would ignore worldly customs and fashions.

We will conform to no customs, inconsistent with true taste, delicacy and judgment; but the adornment of our persons *shall be compatible* with becoming gentility, regardless of the fashion plates of the day, and we will place before the world an example worthy of imitation.⁵⁶

In order to show a morally superior commitment to religion, the 13th Ward's resolution articulated a new standard for Mormon women as a way to set themselves apart and not be influenced by contemporary fashions. The newly created women's organization worked to create a new standard for dress and behavior that was "becoming to women professing to be Saints."⁵⁷ Mormon women would not follow the customs of the world, but rather set a new tradition of modest fashion that held Mormon women to a higher standard.

The 8th Ward's resolutions reveal the motivations behind the creation of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association. The 8th Ward's resolutions state, "we will show by our

55. James A. Cullimore, "To Be in the World, but Not of the World," (January, 1974), <https://www.lds.org/ensign/1974/01/to-be-in-the-world-but-not-of-the-world?lang=eng>.

56. "The Young Ladies' Column," July 1870, 119.

57. Julia M. Horne et al., "The Young Ladies' Column," *The Juvenile Instructor*, August 1870 issue no. 16, 123. The term "Saint" refers to one's membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, rather than referring to members as sacred beings.

daily walk and conversation, also by our dress that we are that light.”⁵⁸ According to this notion, the Latter-day Saint women were striving to set themselves apart from the rest of the world through their dress and behavior as women of God. Unlike other religions, the Latter-day Saint church did not adopt a specific mode of dress in order to distinguish its members from people of other religions, like the Jewish yarmulke. Rather, the church set overall standards for behavior and dress that would distinguish members from the fashions and customs of the rest of the world. Through their high standards of dress and behavior, Mormon women aimed to show that they held the light of truth within them.

Included in the Young Ladies’ column of *The Juvenile Instructor* was a speech given at the General Meeting of the Ladies’ Co-operative Retrenchment Association by Sarah E. Russell in September 1870.⁵⁹ Russell’s speech specifically focuses on the dress movement within the Ladies’ Co-operative Retrenchment Association and how it was necessary for the “mutual improvement” of Latter-day Saint women.⁶⁰ Russell’s basic point was that although dressing modestly was not popular, beauty was found within the soul. Russell acknowledges the role that men could play in the movement for increased modesty. “We call upon all who feel in interest in the future welfare, not only of Zion’s daughters, but her sons also, for that which is a benefit and blessing to the one is the same to the other.”⁶¹ Russell called upon men to join the movement because they would be blessed through the righteous actions of their wives and mothers and the

58. Clara E. Robinson et al., “The Young Ladies’ Column,” *The Juvenile Instructor*, October 1870 issue no. 20, 160.

59. Sarah E. Russell, “The Young Ladies’ Column,” *The Juvenile Instructor*, September 1870 issue no. 19, 150-151.

60. Russell, “The Young Ladies’ Column,” September 1870 issue no. 19, 150-151.

61. Russell, “The Young Ladies’ Column,” September 1870 issue no. 19, 150-151.

support of men in the movement for more modest dress would encourage women to follow the newly set standards.

We call upon the young men to aid us, for they can do much; if they would have wives and sisters worthy of the name, they should help to teach that which constitutes true womanly worth; they should not in the ball room pay attention to the ruffles, thus encouraging the wearing of them, and discouraging the plain and modest dress.⁶²

Russell highlights how men and their actions could influence women and men should have encouraged women to follow the dress standards set by the church.

Russell's speech also sheds light on the intentions behind the dress standards that were not explicitly addressed in the resolutions printed in *The Juvenile Instructor*. "A few in our midst have watched with pain the rapid growth of the power of fashion and frivolity, have seen with sorrow our young, and many of mature years drawn into this whirlpool, which soon will bring misery and ruin to its victims."⁶³ The logic from Russell's speech is unclear how following fashion trends could lead to misery, but this was the belief of Latter-day Saint leaders at the time, and a popular movement for women to wear more modest dress stemmed from this belief. From the resolutions included in *The Juvenile Instructor*, women were committed to creating and following standards of dress and behavior in order to set themselves apart from the rest of the world and mark themselves as distinctly Mormon women. Latter-day Saint leaders held the belief that following popular fashion and spending excessive time on frivolous activities was a moral pitfall that should be avoided, but they also saw it as an opportunity to create a moral standard for the rest of the world to envy and want to follow.

Articles contained within the 1872 issues of *The Juvenile Instructor* about female standards of dress and the notion of fashion also reveal the motivations behind the creation of the

62. Russell, "The Young Ladies' Column," September 1870 issue no. 19, 150-151.

63. Russell, "The Young Ladies' Column," September 1870 issue no. 19, 150-151.

Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association. In the article "The Follies of Fashion," the author warns readers about the physical and moral dangers of keeping up with fashion trends. According to the author, "to be clean and neat, looks well, but to be extravagant in dress and to 'put on style,' as some call it, is not useful, and often brings poverty and ruin."⁶⁴ The disdain for the preoccupation with trends and fashion that the author has echoes the perspective the mission of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association. The author believes that an interest in clothing and appearance brings about fiscal destruction and moral sin. The main focus of the article is to attack the notion of fashion as distracting, a waste of money, and harmful to one's health, in order for the audience to commit to the standards of dress and behavior set by Mormon culture. People who spend their time in caring about their appearance are seen as spending "their lives in frivolity, [living] only to be seen, and not to be useful, and are of little worth in the world."⁶⁵

In the poem, "Pride in Dress," the speaker of the poem expresses jealousy over those who wear nice, rich, new clothes made out of fine materials in the first stanza.⁶⁶ In the second stanza, the speaker states "Then will I set my heart to find/Inward adornings of the mind;/Knowledge and virtue, truth and grace,/These are the robes of richest dress."⁶⁷ This poem expresses a similar sentiment to the article "The Follies of Fashion." Rather than focus on outward appearance, these authors endorse the idea that one can set themselves apart through knowledge and inward qualities. The qualities of knowledge, virtue, truth, and grace are valued as critical qualities for elevating one's standing and appearance without relying on outward appearance. The purpose of

64. "The Follies of Fashion," *The Juvenile Instructor*, June 1872 issue no. 11, 87.

65. "The Follies of Fashion," June 1872 issue no. 11, 88.

66. "Pride in Dress," *The Juvenile Instructor*, August 1872 issue no. 16, 128.

67. "Pride in Dress," August 1872 issue no. 16, 128.

this poem is to discourage women from focusing on outward appearance. Two years after the creation of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association, articles in *The Juvenile Instructor* began to echo the overall mission of the organization in terms of critiquing those who waste their time and money on fashion and "the ways of the world," rather than devoting their time to religious growth.

The resolutions published by the Young Ladies' Department of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association also speak about a notion of sisterhood that bound Mormon women together in the creation and commitment to these new standards of dress and behavior. The 8th Ward's resolutions utilize a rhetoric of sisterhood and gendered duties. "It is our duty as daughters of Elders in Israel, to most truly and sincerely sustain and enter into the Co-operative Association... and we do unitedly pledge ourselves to uphold and sustain the Sisterhood in doing good."⁶⁸ The women of the 8th Ward promised to abide by the principles and resolutions set out by the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association based on their notion and commitment to a greater sisterhood of Latter-day Saint women. In the 16th Ward's resolutions, it states

That we, the daughters of Zion... realizing in a measure, the sacred duties devolving upon us in the gospel, and the great responsibilities that rest upon us as present and future wives and mothers of Israel...will not be one whit behind our sisters...in carrying out practically, all just and righteous principles.⁶⁹

The resolutions of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association of the 16th Ward speak more to the notion of sisterhood and the religious duties of women. The women of this Ward agreed to these resolutions based on their roles and responsibilities as wives and mothers; for them, their religious role rested in their gendered duties. Mormon women were united in their

68. Robinson et al., "The Young Ladies' Column," October 1870 issue no. 20, 160.

69. Julina L. Smith et al., "The Young Ladies' Column," *The Juvenile Instructor*, September 1870 issue no. 18, 138.

commitment to these religious principles based on their commitment to serving the larger sisterhood that the Latter-day Saint community created for them.

The Smithfield Branch's resolutions were also published in the 1871 issues of *The Juvenile Instructor*, due to the group's later formation in May of 1871.⁷⁰ The Smithfield resolutions focus on how the organization is made up of "Young Ladies" who need counsel and guidance from their leaders and older peers. "That as we are young and liable to be led into error if we trust in our own strength and judgment."⁷¹ This quote draws on the stereotype of young women being naïve, easily-influenced, and inexperienced with leadership and making decisions. The Smithfield resolutions state that due to their innocence and lack of experience leading an organization, the young women need to rely on the counsel of "those who are called of God to preside over us."⁷² As young women, they state their support for the male leadership to guide and direct them in their women's organization. The Smithfield resolutions close with their pledge to "embrace all that is ordained of God to lead to truly noble and refined womanhood."⁷³ The women of the Smithfield Branch appear to have embraced the ideals and standards of behavior that the organization set forth, especially in terms of their resolution to listen to male authority and encompass the ideals of female behavior to achieve a "refined womanhood."⁷⁴

The resolutions published by the Nephi, Utah Ward illustrate the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association's commitment to ultimately trusting male authority. For example, the resolutions state "it shall be our daily duty to gain wisdom and knowledge that we may become

70. A "Branch" is similar to the regional organization of a "Ward," but is smaller in the number of attendees.

71. Louisa L. Greene et al., "The Young Ladies' Column," *The Juvenile Instructor*, July 1871 issue no. 14, 111.

72. Greene, "The Young Ladies' Column," July 1871 issue no. 14, 111.

73. Greene, "The Young Ladies' Column," July 1871 issue no. 14, 111.

74. Greene, "The Young Ladies' Column," July 1871 issue no. 14, 111.

useful in doing good.”⁷⁵ The diction of “becoming useful” indicates that the women were not useful before they were encouraged to form their own branch of the Ladies’ Co-operative Retrenchment Association. Created based on the orders of Brigham Young, the women of this particular organization seemed to have suddenly found their purpose after being encouraged to gain knowledge and do good through this organization. The resolutions also state that the women will “uphold and sustain those that are placed in authority over us.”⁷⁶ At this time in the Latter-day Saint church, men exclusively held leadership positions in the church. Although the Young Ladies’ Department of the Ladies’ Co-operative Retrenchment Association and Relief Society had women presidencies, male authority in the church was considered the ultimate authority.⁷⁷ In the creation of this women’s organization, the women still made it clear that they were committed to following the male leadership of the church.

Although sometimes oddly specific in their resolutions, like the banning of ruffles or any haughty dress, the overall goal of the Young Ladies’ Department of the Ladies’ Co-operative Retrenchment Association was to set a standard for Latter-day Saint women’s behavior.⁷⁸ The 20th Ward’s Resolutions, published in the October 1870 issue of *The Juvenile Instructor*, highlights this point. “That we, realizing that all will be judged according to their actions here below, will cease to be heady, high minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, and walk with a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God a great price.”⁷⁹ These women believed that they were being judged on every aspect of their lives on Earth, and chose to live by

75. Thurza Maria Harley et al., “The Young Ladies’ Column,” *The Juvenile Instructor*, January 1871 issue no. 1, 3.

76. Harley, “The Young Ladies’ Column,” January 1871 issue no. 1, 3.

77. Golding, “The First Fifty Years” (2017).

78. Russell, “The Young Ladies’ Column,” September 1870 issue no. 19, 150-151.

79. Kate Sharp, “The Young Ladies’ Column,” *The Juvenile Instructor*, October 1870 issue no. 21, 163.

standards that encompassed their daily lives, including dress, grooming, and behavior in order to set themselves apart from the rest of the world and serve God. This commitment stems from Christ's teaching in the Book of John that followers of Christ should be "in the world, but not of the world."⁸⁰ Mormon women should be active members of their community and "live in the world," but should set themselves apart through their tightly bound sisterhood that followed unique and specific standards of dress and behavior that was different from the standards that the world held.

Although the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association was a woman's organization and all-female presidencies were writing and publishing resolutions for their organization, the women of this organization ultimately trusted and valued male authority in the church. The women were counseled by male church authorities to join together in a sisterhood and transform the standards of dress, but they valued what the male leadership told them to value, like the focus on inward beauty and knowledge, rather than outward appearance. Although the creation of the women's organization was progressive for the historical era, the women still functioned to support the patriarchy's authority.

80. John 17:11, 14–15, King James Bible.

Chapter 3

Women's Principles of Intelligence

Although the resolutions published by the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association and the articles issued by *The Juvenile Instructor* ascribed to traditional Victorian values on gender, these sources also reveal progressive undertones. Both the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association and *The Juvenile Instructor* uncover a larger pattern of the Latter-day Saint church encouraging its female members to focus their time on gaining an education and accumulating their religious knowledge. The inclusion of resolutions about women's needs to gain an education relates to the Mormon belief that knowledge is an eternal principle. The Doctrine and Covenants, a Latter-day Saint book of scripture illustrates this point. The Doctrine and Covenants is a book of scripture that was first published in 1835 and was designed to document the process of the creation of the church and the revelations that church leaders received.⁸¹ Doctrine and Covenants Chapter 130 verse 18 states "whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection."⁸² This revelation means that under Mormon doctrine, knowledge gained on earth is eternal and will remain with a person after death. For this reason, the women of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association would have wanted to include the desire for attaining knowledge in their resolutions, because gaining knowledge was important to their religious progression. However, due to the timing of this revelation during the Victorian Era, the knowledge women were encouraged to obtain was restricted to religiously-centered topics.

81. Robert J. Woodruff, "The Story of the Doctrine and Covenants," (December, 1984), <https://www.lds.org/ensign/1984/12/the-story-of-the-doctrine-and-covenants?lang=eng>.

82. *Doctrine and Covenants* 130:18.

The resolutions published by the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association mainly focused on reforming women's dress and appearance, as discussed in Chapter Two. However, there are also many commitments made in these resolutions on improving women's education and focusing on building women's intelligence. According to the resolutions, the driving force behind the creation of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association was to have Latter-day Saint women commit their time to "useful" pursuits, or religious education, and suspend using their time for "frivolous" pursuits, such as dress and appearance.

In a resolution by the 13th Ward, it states that "we will make an effort to be temperate, avoiding the useless habit of frivolous conversation, and strive to become more enlightened and intelligent; to be judicious in the selection of our companions, and in our associations to endeavor to inspire a sentiment of improvement."⁸³ The resolution adheres to the True Womanhood values of having women be temperate and subdued and includes a focus on marriage, yet encourages women to increase their knowledge. In Victorian ideals of womanhood, women were encouraged to remain in the home and the concept of increasing their intelligence was not encouraged; yet, it seemed important to Mormon women, and accepted by the greater church administration, to include conversations about women's education and intelligence in the conversation. A later resolution from the 13th Ward also states "for we realize that the cultivation of our immortal minds is of more value than perishable ornaments."⁸⁴ The resolution states that women should work on cultivating their minds, rather than focusing on futile interests, such as clothing choices. The inclusion of this statement in the resolution is interesting because on the surface, it appears that women are being told by male authority in the church to adhere to certain

83. Shipp et al., "The Young Ladies' Column," July 1870, 119.

84. Shipp et al., "The Young Ladies' Column," July 1870, 119.

standards of behavior and dress, but when the women drafted these resolutions, they saw the importance of cultivating their minds and investing their time in a religious education. These women saw their own educational endeavors as an avenue for furthering their religious commitment.

The resolution issued by the 14th Ward highlights the notion that the ultimate force behind the movement for women's education was the Mormon church's religious belief in the need for intelligence. The resolution from the 14th Ward states:

Resolved: That, as Saints, being accountable to God for the use we make of the abilities and intelligence He has given us, we are determined to devote our time and talents in governing ourselves, storing our minds with useful knowledge, and improving every opportunity afforded us of qualifying ourselves to fill useful and honorable positions in the Kingdom of God.⁸⁵

The religious background to the movement for encouraging women's development of intelligence is clear through this quote. Women were to improve themselves and focus their efforts on qualities deemed pleasing to God. These women believed that God had given them gifts and their duty was to fulfill their potential to the best of their ability. The 14th Ward's resolution highlights how the knowledge obtained by the women would be used within the realm of the church. According to the resolution, these women believe that God had given them the gift of intelligence, therefore they must develop their intelligence to better serve God.

The theme of valuing women's intelligence and other inward qualities is also reflected in the articles of *The Juvenile Instructor*. In a poem titled "How to be Beautiful When Old," the speaker emphasizes the importance on inward qualities, rather than outward ones. According to the speaker, one can become beautiful in old age "Not by lotions, dyes and pigments;/Not by washes for your hair./While you're young be pure and gentle;/Keep your passions well

85. Horne et al., "The Young Ladies' Column," August 1870, 123.

controlled,/Walk, work, and do your duty,/You'll be handsome when you're old."⁸⁶ As stated in the poem, the speaker views beauty as originating in inward qualities that reflect on outward appearance. By being diligent and righteous in one's youth, beauty is promised in one's old age. "And the smiles of age more pleasant/Than a youthful beauty's frown./'Tis the soul that shapes the features."⁸⁷ The overall message of the poem is that beauty comes from inward qualities, rather than outward ones, so young women should focus on improving themselves internally in order to make themselves more attractive on the outside.

Similar to the resolutions by the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association, the author of "The Follies of Fashion" holds the belief that women's obsession with current trends in fashion keeps them from developing their religious knowledge. "To labor to adorn our bodies according to the whims of fashion while the mind is uncultivated, is time poorly spent."⁸⁸ The Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association was created in order to keep women dedicated to their moral and religious causes deemed worthy of attention, rather than issues of the world, like fashion, which was seen as a distraction from women's duties.

The series of articles about fashion and beauty published in the 1872 issues of *The Juvenile Instructor* were published two years after the creation of the Young Ladies' Department of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association.⁸⁹ These poems and articles reflect the influence and overall purpose of the organization on Mormon culture. The purpose of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association was to adopt new standards for Mormon women's dress, appearance, and behavior.⁹⁰ Women were to dress plainly and conservatively in order to focus

86. "How to be Beautiful When Old," *The Juvenile Instructor*, November 1872 issue no. 24, 192.

87. "How to be Beautiful When Old," November 1872 issue no. 24, 192.

88. "The Follies of Fashion," June 1872 issue no. 11, 87.

89. Golding, "The First Fifty Years" (2017).

90. Golding, "The First Fifty Years" (2017).

their time and effort on righteous desires and demonstrating their religious commitment. One of these desires was developing women's religious knowledge. Through the articles and poems included in *The Juvenile Instructor* in 1872, the permeation of these new standards becomes apparent. The message of these articles and poems is that an interest in fashion, beauty, and outward appearance distracts one from improving oneself in the things that matter; in this case, religion. The articles also seek to establish beauty as an inward feature, and that women developing positive behavioral features will make the women more attractive, a pursuit more worthy of their time. The article "The Follies of Fashion" does address how men can also be preoccupied with their own appearance and having nice clothing, but the main focus of the article is on women and their misguided interest in appearance and trying to combat that temptation. The efforts of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association and *The Juvenile Instructor* were to establish a new Mormon culture around women's dress and behavior and to de-emphasize any focus on outward appearance and empower women's religious education and progression.

Although the LDS church established a clear pattern of ascribing to traditional Victorian Era gender norms, the resolutions issued by the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association and articles published by *The Juvenile Instructor* reflect a more progressive stance. The LDS church endorsed the statements given by the women's organization and issued the resolutions to the wide readership of *The Juvenile Instructor* that encouraged valuing women's intelligence and women's education. Although the encouragement of Mormon women's education was limited to religious knowledge, this was still a deviation from Victorian Era gender norms. In the rest of the nation, American women were seen as more religiously and spiritually inclined, but their intelligence was not valued as an eternal principle and necessary for fulfilling the measure of

their creation as the Mormon church taught. The LDS church took a more progressive stance on women's education by actively encouraging it and encouraging it through the voices of the female leadership of a women's organization.

Chapter 4

Contemporary Issues of Gender in the LDS Church

The creation of the Mormon church in the 1830s paralleled the permeation of the Victorian Era and its cultural ideologies in America. The adoption of Victorian Era gender ideals by the Mormon church is evident in their early doctrine and the articles communicated to their young members through *The Juvenile Instructor*, as evidenced throughout this thesis. However, the gender ideals the Mormon church advocated in the late nineteenth-century have not evolved since that time. The LDS church believes in modern-day prophets and modern-day revelation. The LDS church has the ability to change over time and change policies and doctrine. For example, the LDS church chose to ban the practice of polygamy in 1890. Countless changes have been made to the LDS church over time as the church was designed to, but the church's philosophies on the divine nature of gender and gender roles have remained fairly stagnant. This chapter will explore how the LDS church currently views gender through talks and literature written on the subject, and how church rhetoric parallels the views on gender that were articulated in the early years of the church.

In 1995, the First Presidency of the LDS church issued "The Family: A Proclamation to the World." The document speaks about the sanctity and power of the family unit and how the family is central to fulfilling God's purpose for humanity. This document specifically addresses gender roles in the church and how gender is essential to one's path in life.

All human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.⁹¹

91. Gordon B. Hinckley, "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" (*Salt Lake City, UT*, 1995).

A religious tenet of Mormonism is that individual people have a divine role to fulfill and characteristics of that divine role come from one's gender. Gender is posited as a central characteristic to one's identity, therefore there are many guidelines and expectations to fulfill based on one's gender. "The Family Proclamation" articulates the particular guidelines that men and women should fulfill by stating:

By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners.⁹²

This religious doctrine was issued a century after the height of Victorian values of separate spheres and the cult of domesticity were prominent, yet Mormons still retain the belief that women and men are fundamentally different and have different responsibilities in terms of home and family life. There is a strong emphasis on how motherhood and fatherhood are central to fulfilling one's purpose in life. From this document, fathers are posed as the ultimate authority in the home and should provide for their children and families. Mothers are given the task of taking care of the children. Although the document states that fathers and mothers should be equal partners, they are given distinct roles and responsibilities.

A later iteration of *The Juvenile Instructor*, the *Ensign* (1970-present), publishes non-fiction inspiring religious stories, articles on family life and teaching Sunday School courses, and General Conference talks.⁹³ Published in November 1979 in the *Ensign*, President of the LDS church, Spencer W. Kimball, addressed the women of the church in a talk titled "The Role of

92. Hinckley, "The Family: A Proclamation to the World."

93. General Conference is a semi-annual meeting where the church leadership addresses the members of the LDS church through talks that focus on issues that church members are facing in that time. Specific church leaders are chosen to speak on whichever topic they feel to be most relevant to the church members.

Righteous Women.”⁹⁴ Kimball addresses the complexities of gender roles within the church.

Kimball states

The place of woman in the Church is to walk beside the man, not in front of him nor behind him. In the Church there is full equality between man and woman...Within those great assurances, however, our roles and assignments differ. These are eternal differences—with women being given many tremendous responsibilities of motherhood and sisterhood and men being given the tremendous responsibilities of fatherhood and the priesthood—but the man is not without the woman nor the woman without the man in the Lord (see 1 Cor. 11:11).⁹⁵

Although Kimball asserts that men and women are equal in the eyes of the church and God, Mormon religious doctrine indicates that men and women have inherently different roles that are dependent on their gender. Women are responsible for motherhood and connecting with other women in creating a sisterhood of LDS women, while men are responsible for the priesthood, or the authority to have primary leadership roles in the church. This statement hearkens back to the Victorian ideals of separate spheres for genders: women are responsible for home and family life, while men are responsible for roles outside of the home. According to Kimball, and the church as a whole, men and women are fundamentally different and have different roles to fulfill, but the church maintains that it views these roles as equal in importance and responsibility.

Kimball goes on to address working mothers and working women inside the LDS church by stating

Some women, because of circumstances beyond their control, must work. We understand that...Do not, however, make the mistake of being drawn off into secondary tasks which

94. Spencer W. Kimball, “The Role of Righteous Women,” (Women’s Fireside Address, 1979). President Spencer W. Kimball was hospitalized at the time of this conference, so his wife, Camilla Kimball, read his speech in his place.

95. Kimball, “The Role of Righteous Women.”

will cause the neglect of your eternal assignments such as giving birth to and rearing the spirit children of our Father in Heaven.⁹⁶

The rhetoric around working mothers in the LDS church is that women should work only as a necessity, for example, to provide additional necessary income for one's family or because one's husband is deceased or when a couple gets divorced. A women's working by choice is seen as a "secondary task," or distraction, that will keep a woman from fulfilling her eternal duty of having and teaching children. However, Kimball goes on to stress the importance of education, and how women should all strive for the highest level of education possible.

We wish you [women] to pursue and to achieve that education, therefore, which will fit you for eternity *as well as* for full service in mortality. In addition to those basic and vital skills which go with homemaking, there are other skills which can be appropriately cultivated and which will increase your effectiveness in the home, in the Church, and in the community.⁹⁷

Although women are encouraged to receive an education, they are not encouraged to use it for purposes outside the home. Women are encouraged to learn homemaking skills, skills that will help them in their positions in the church, or in serving the community. These are noble skills, but women are not encouraged to use their knowledge and skills in a traditional job setting that would take them away from their roles and responsibilities in the home to serve their families. Kimball's rhetoric also relates back to the notion of eternal intelligence in the LDS church, and how gaining knowledge on earth will serve one for eternity.⁹⁸

In his address to the women of the church, Kimball makes counterintuitive claims about women's roles and responsibilities. He states that men and women are equal in the church and the eyes of God, yet they have separate roles to fulfill that are dependent on their gender. Women

96. Kimball, "The Role of Righteous Women."

97. Kimball, "The Role of Righteous Women."

98. *Doctrine and Covenants* 130:18.

are to work in the home and only to obtain a job if necessary. Women are also encouraged to gain an education, yet their education should focus on skills to support their family and home life. Additionally, that education should not be used to get a job to support a family. Often a woman's education is referred to as a "backup plan" if anything should happen to her husband or marriage. If a woman is left a widow or gets divorced, she should have the credentials to support her family, but she is counseled to not get a job under other circumstances. This point resonates with the claims made by the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association. The women articulated the need to gain an education and develop their intelligence, but it was limited to religious spheres. Today, the LDS church limits women's education to be used only when deemed necessary.

Kimball's address was given in 1979, and as a church that believes in the concept of modern revelation and adapting with the times, Second Counselor of the LDS Church, Dieter F. Uchtdorf gave a talk in 2009 on a very similar subject, titled "The Influence of Righteous Women."⁹⁹ Thirty years after Kimball gave his address on the role of women in the church and their relationship to education and work life and about 150 years after the Victorian Era, Uchtdorf reinforces the same point that women have an innate duty to their homes and families. In terms of women's education, Uchtdorf states "Latter-day Saint women are encouraged to acquire an education and training that will qualify them both for homemaking and raising a righteous family and for earning a living outside the home if the occasion requires."¹⁰⁰ In

99. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "The Influence of Righteous Women," (First Presidency Message, 2009). Dieter F. Uchtdorf served as a member of the General Presidency of the LDS church as the Second Counselor under President Thomas S. Monson from 2008-2018. The General Presidency includes the Prophet, or head of the church (also referred to as the President of the church), and two counselors. President Monson died on January 2, 2018, which caused Uchtdorf's subsequent release.

100. Uchtdorf, "The Influence of Righteous Women."

modern-day terms, this philosophy is colloquially referred to as obtaining an MRS Degree, where a woman goes to college in order to find a husband, not to pursue a serious education.¹⁰¹ Uchtdorf reinforces the “backup plan” rhetoric of only using one’s education as a female if the situation demands that a woman obtain a job; otherwise, a woman’s education should only serve to improve her home and family life.

Both Kimball and Uchtdorf echo the Victorian notion that women are naturally more spiritual than men and should serve as the religious teachers and leaders of the home and family. President Kimball refers to the growth of the church that he predicted in the coming years and how he felt that women would spearhead that effort due to women’s greater “inner sense of spirituality.”¹⁰² President Uchtdorf states “Sisters, you are an essential part of our Heavenly Father’s plan for eternal happiness; you are endowed with a divine birthright. You are the real builders of nations wherever you live, because strong homes of love and peace will bring security to any nation.”¹⁰³ Uchtdorf endorses women’s roles as homemakers and how as women their divine right is to build spiritual refuges within their homes. Women are not securing the peace of nations through political activism, but through their roles as mothers and as the religious leaders of their homes.

The modern-day focus on the belief of inherent differences between genders in the LDS is puzzling. The church strives to put men and women on equal footing through rhetoric of equality and attempting to create equal opportunities in their curricula and leadership roles; however, there remains a deeply-rooted belief in divine roles that each gender needs to fulfill that

101. Urban Dictionary defines an MRS Degree as “a marriage as a result of attending a 4-year university with the sole purpose of getting married and consequently not completing college.” <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=MRS%20Degree>

102. Kimball, “The Role of Righteous Women.”

103. Uchtdorf, “The Influence of Righteous Women.”

hearkens back to the Victorian values that were in place when the church was created. Although the church fundamentally believes in the power of modern-day revelation and change, gender ideals have changed very little since the religion's commencement. Women are still believed to be fundamentally different than men and women are still held responsible for taking care of their children and the home. Women are encouraged to obtain an education, as they were in 1870 by the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association, but this education is still encouraged to be used in limited ways.

Conclusion

In the early years of the LDS church, the gender roles communicated to church members appeared to follow the traditional Victorian model of separate spheres. Women were encouraged to serve their husbands and families, maintain a nurturing spirit, and cultivate a righteous home. These traditional gender roles were communicated to the youth of the church through various means such as *The Juvenile Instructor* and the resolutions published by the Young Ladies' Department of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association. However, after a close analysis of the articles, poems, speeches, and resolutions published by *The Juvenile Instructor*, the gender roles advocated for by the Latter-day Saint church were not as traditional as the Victorian model. Beginning in the 1840s, Mormon women created women's organizations that operated independently from male authority, and were encouraged by male leaders to form these organizations. The Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association was one such organization, and although they advocated for conservative dress and behavior, they also called for the advancement of women's religious education and overall intellect. Even though the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association was formed on the orders of male prophet, Brigham Young, the organization operated with distinctly female leadership. In their resolutions, the women of the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association supported modest dress and behavior, but on the justification of focusing women's time and efforts on religious education and intellectual betterment, rather than the male authorities' desires for modestly dressed and well-behaved female members of the church.

In *The Juvenile Instructor*, traditional gender roles and the perpetuation of separate spheres is more apparent, yet some deviations from Victorian norms persist. Frequently, articles and poems are included in the periodical about young girls growing up to be wives and mothers

and servants for their husbands and families, but there are many articles that speak of women's beauty and worth coming from the inside. In the early LDS church, women were valued for their capacity to gain religious intelligence, and were encouraged to focus on improving themselves inwardly rather than in superficial ways. However, the dominant Victorian ideologies of women remaining in the home to teach their religious knowledge to their children remained the focus of articles in *The Juvenile Instructor*.

In communicating to the future generations traditional gender role ideals, the youth of the church were indoctrinated to these values and traditional gender roles were reproduced. The reproduction of these traditional gender roles that were inculcated in the youth of the church in *The Juvenile Instructor* in the 1870s have been reproduced in part until today. Through an analysis of rhetoric used by church leadership in more recent years, women are still encouraged to maintain traditional gender roles where they are deemed responsible for raising children and taking care of the home. In parallel to the resolutions published by the Ladies' Co-operative Retrenchment Association, LDS women are encouraged to obtain an education, but to use this education in a limited way. For the women of the church in the 1870s, the development of their intellect was limited to religious knowledge. Today, the LDS church encourages women to gain an education in fields that will "serve their future families" or provide for their families, but only if her income is necessary.

As demonstrated through this thesis, LDS gender roles clearly follow Victorian Era gender ideologies, yet the historicized nature of these beliefs is not recognized by the church. Gender ideals within the LDS church have remained very similar since the beginning of the church, despite the church's capacity to change their policies and doctrine through modern revelation. The LDS church has neglected to acknowledge the historical period in which these

gender roles were created, and in turn, the roles have not evolved much over the 188 years of the church's existence.

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