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Changing Views and Status of Women

Implications within the Church and the Professions

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“... he imparteth his word by angels unto men, yea, not only men but women also...”
Alma 32:23

Nothing that Concerns Mankind is Alien to Me

Moss

I think that the first great implication of the issue for this day is that each church member and professional must accept the reality of the phrase which I have chosen to use as a title for my comments -- “Nothing that concerns mankind (or womankind) is alien to me.”

All too often many of us handle this intrusion of women’s concerns as though it were but a disruptive breeze momentarily bothering our peaceful existence, but likely to pass on and, therefore, needing little, concentrated attention on our part. There are times when many of us might wish it could be so but my impression is that these current concerns about women are as sig-

“... he imparteth his word by angels unto men, yea, not only men but women also...”
Alma 32:23

nificant in our day as women’s search for the right to vote was in the prior century—one of those flowering buds with long roots which reach into the very anchors of some of our life pattern.

As I listen to or participate in discussions on the matter, I am reminded of youthful days when my father and his brother would argue over some matter. It was obvious to me that each was right in a way and wrong in another and that neither was really hearing what the other one said. Frequently, discussions about women’s concerns and with something like this from men: “You say I don’t understand...”

I can recall a faculty member making just such a statement, and he is identified by department secretaries as one of the more chauvinistic members of our male faculty. However, the answer to such a plea given by women is too often a restatement that “you just don’t understand,” accompanied on occasion with an added tone quality implying, “How could you..."you’ve been trained as a male so how could anyone expect you to understand?"

I’m not sure I greatly understand either but am supposed to talk today as though I do. So, in making a stab at it I would like to approach the matter at two differing levels, trying to identify some of the elusive specifics which one too often is expected to hear but may find has not been explicated. I approach it in this manner because it is my feeling that one becomes aware of the greatest implications with which there must be concern as they jump out at you when the issues are at the level of understanding. Also, I felt I was asked to handle it as it applies to man so my comments are likely to be so directed.

At the first level of comprehending what’s happening with women, I feel one concern is about their own sense of self-worth and personal identity. Since all of us gain much of this from social approval, women must obtain a good part of theirs from the feedback of men. Appreciating just what this means can probably be found only when one can operate from the assumption that “all men are biased” towards women and, therefore, women cannot get true readings from them. A corollary idea would be that many
women never experience a real sense of personal being because they accept such bias and, therefore, allow themselves to operate in a second class position.

If, as a priesthood holder, a woman, or professional I can accept the idea of such bias (and it’s not too hard if you really believe all people have motives in their eyes), then what is it women are searching for relative to themselves which may be hindered by such bias? I can think of three such desires:

1. Women desire credit be given for their opinions as man receives credit for his.

In any conversational exchange, family, church, or community activity, discrepancy in the value of personal opinion easily creeps in. Many women give male opinion more priority for various reasons, including the fact that we still have men and women who do not believe women can think on a part with men. Women who insist upon their opinion being given honest consideration find they either have to become assertive (something which is not always defined as a desirable goal because it can mean becoming like a dominating male), or turning to manipulative strategy using the emotions which can then brand her as an emotional cast to be handled rather than as a significant discussant of an issue. Such alternatives do not look very appealing to women who would really like to be appreciated as sound thinking individuals.

2. To be as free to participate in selected activities as a man.

Many women who are happy in a home situation still desire other contacts and experiences. Most men and women would argue that it is not wrong for women to have such desires and that they should be able to satisfy a reasonable amount of them. Many men will tell a wife she should take time to read, visit, or engage in creatively fulfilling activities. But the issue of concern lies beyond this. What else does the husband do besides give her freedom from his opinion? When a man goes to a ball game, watches T.V., etc. he will tell a wife she should take time to read, visit, or engage in creatively fulfilling activities. But the issue of concern lies beyond this. What else does the husband do besides give her freedom from his opinion? When a man goes to a ball game, watches T.V., etc. he usually does it with limited sets of expectations upon him while many women feel they are never free from home responsibilities while doing their uplifting things — because there is no one to take over the responsibilities. Part of this is a problem for women in learning to handle their own affairs, but part of it is something else.

For example, a husband agrees with a wife she is to be freed for participation in a play or some other activity. After such verbal agreement is made we then find many males who not only complain about how much she is gone, how much he is afflicted by her absence, but also who do not go out of their way either to become an applauding spectator of her accomplishments or to take on greatly added home responsibilities to help assure her feeling of freedom for the moment. As one wife voiced it, “it’s a different thing to have a husband tend kids while you’re gone, than to have a husband who will tend kids, prepare meals, bottle the grape juice, and arrange the house so it is in a good order when I come home as I have it for him when he comes home!”

At this first level of comprehension, women are not only concerned about their self image but about the fact that societal segregation gives males priority over women in many areas of life. It’s a different issue to talk about women’s self image and what they want from friendly males than it is to talk about the human societal system wherein there is typically priority for someone over someone and limited avenues open to the underdog.

Recently I was talking with a Black friend about the number of educated Blacks going into governmental office positions and questioning why so many go that route. His answer was, “if they don’t go into athletics or university work, where else can they go for something with any prestige value?” I hear many women saying similar things such as: “Where can I go outside the home for self expression if my first love isn’t sewing, cooking, gardening, designing, decorating, etc. Suppose I want a fresh, scintillating conversation; suppose I enjoy male conversation more than female on some subjects; suppose I want to become a more qualified musician, or a math expert, or have a love for computer analysis or for biological or zoological analysis as well as being a good homemaker — where can I go for such without being made to feel I am out of place or that I should feel guilty because I even want to go?”

3. To be given recognition as a person and not for playing a role.

Part of this is women’s problem as such recognition has to be earned through one remaining as interesting person. But there’s another part to it which seems disturbing to many women and it’s perhaps expressed as clearly as anywhere in some comments my wife often uses when we go on Education Week Lectures and talk about marriage:

“I don’t want my husband coming home, going to the bathroom, reading the paper, and kissing me — all with the same degree of enthusiasm. I want to be appreciated because I’m me and not because I’m useful like a stove, toilet, or refrigerator!”

It seems to me that the things I have mentioned at what I call this first level of comprehension reflect some of the more specific concerns reverberating around the ERA movement or related activities which don’t want ERA but want some rethinking about the world of women. It requests rethinking about possibilities of organizing societal systems so that one up-one down relationships can be put aside in favor of side by side ones and so that discriminating rules and expectations might be replaced by more common guides and policies based on humanity more than sex. I would see the many attempts at assertiveness training appearing in the country as a search for solution in some degree by building up females to contend with males. To the extent such activities produce increasing respect of self this can be helpful, but to the extent it becomes merely a compensatory mechanism to train women to dominantly compete with men we merely increase the competitive struggle in our world and diminish concerns about cooperation.

Somehow, I must admit as I look back over these
issues of concern I don't see a threat to our role of males as spiritual leaders in the home but I do see a challenge to whether we have learned to control by force or by love. I do see challenging implications as to how to train youth to be ready to organize relationships to profit from the strengths of males and females rather than to perpetuate stereotyped versions of what should be. And I do see many demands upon professionals and others to help people learn how to communicate more effectively so that any relationship can become the beneficiary of the increasing personal strengths of each member of the relationships.

The second level of comprehension concerning what's happening with women is more difficult to explicate but may be of even more importance within our LDS framework of our consideration. To put it in LDS terms the issue might go something like this:

Men and women find restrictions in developing spiritual intimacy and in intimate sharing of spirits, souls, or love (whichever you might wish to call it) before they become too bound up in carrying out stereotyped roles as males and females. And though God can help them in achieving such desires these same sexuality issues may get in our way even as we reach for God.

Such a statement implies that this issue is not just for women but also for men as well as the well being of marriage when it is defined as that in which two shall “cleave unto one another” so that they, in one sense, become as one yet in another remain as powerful agents of their own personal well-being.

Because we are talking today as this relates to women's concerns I shall continue in that vein of thought, but before doing so, let me read you something reflecting the thought of a man caught up in such concern. This poetic expression I will read is the product of one of our graduate students resulting from impact on him of material in a course in Marriage and Family Counseling. To me, it seems to communicate well the sense, become as one yet in another remain as powerful agents of their own personal well-being.

Because we are talking today as this relates to women's concerns I shall continue in that vein of thought, but before doing so, let me read you something reflecting the thought of a man caught up in such concern. This poetic expression I will read is the product of one of our graduate students resulting from impact on him of material in a course in Marriage and Family Counseling. To me, it seems to communicate well the sense, become as one yet in another remain as powerful agents of their own personal well-being.

TO BECOME A MAN

All my life I've been told
Become a man so brave, so bold.
To conquer, to win, to show my skills
This makes others react as I wished.

The path was long, so steep a trail.
There were times I thought I'd failed.
But after each drop, I climbed again,
Until on top I stood a man.

But now on top I look around,
There are no others to be found.
Elite I stand, so high above
Yet all alone, without a love.

All around I've built a wall
To give me strength while others fall.
Yet as they fall I feel they grow,

While I'm walled in, nowhere to go.

It's just not fair, I've worked so hard
To build myself, my strength, my guard.
I played the game, I played the part.
My body won, but not my heart.

If I could open up a gate,
Away from here I'd make a break,
And go back down to tears and pain
So that, perhaps, to love again.

For happiness is not in 'one,'
But rather in sharing with someone
The joys of life, the pain, the tears,
The things that draw a couple near.

The total man is not so hard
That he never drops his guard.
For it takes more strength to let in another
Than ever it took to walk out others.

Don't be afraid to share with them
The tenderness you hold within.
Share with them your very soul,
And from within a man will grow.

— Randy Chatelain

From the woman's point of view what happens to men may happen to some of them, but for many the concern is that because of what happens to the men they are hindered in their search for intimate relationships as part of their eternal growth. Or, to put it in the words of love, one sister has written:

“Love one another,” the Master said.
But in the impoverished dustlands of our calloused world
A veil of apathy overshadows hearts and minds—
So “love” waits, like a bell unring, a song unsung,
A thought unspoken, a tender touch withheld.
And that God-given epitome of human joy
That sacred communion of your soul and mine
Lies in hushed silence. Buried deep
In feelings of inadequacy, protocol, and fear.

— Audra Call Moss

The writer's plea sounds much like that of a writer in years past talking about “als is love too weak to speak. Are lovers powerless to reveal to each other that which, indeed, they feel?”

At this level of concern about being deprived of loving and spiritual opportunity there are also some express desires or concerns of women which can be delineated as we search for implications:

1. The desire for less bravado, heroism, machismo or whatever you may call it from men and for more real strength as manifested in faith.

Societal worlds have been permeated through the centuries with various forms of discrimination and various ways of reinforcing the prestige worth of males, whether it be in the machismo of the Spanish world, the “Samurai” of the Japanese, the “rough-tough but gentle with the ladies” hero of the Great Wild West, or as some label in the “intellectualized strategist” of the
modern world. Though women could always take pride in such a man, this pride often left her a widow and even when he was at home such manly splendor seemed much at variance with the image of a man strong enough through faith to make things happen in the world. It is true that without strength a man fails to be a man but spiritual sharing comes only in the sharing of the strength of faith.

2. The desire for less hindrance from the world of work to the search for personal and marriage and family growth.

It is true that the "blessing of earth is toil" for "by their works ye shall know them." But of concern are the time and other demands from the world of work which too often make a man prioritize for himself (and in some ways those around him) things which are less significant in depth of human relationships and in an eternal scheme of life. The competitive struggle emerging in the world of work, the status images which arise, and the pressure for learning maneuver strategies in the preservation of self interest or profit all too often appear as a counter culture to that from which quality intimate relationships can emerge; or from which a man can emerge as a distinctive human of culture with some wrong things'

3. The desire for less control tactics from males and more equalized decision making, or literally more of a partnership in family matters.

If there is truth that the training of males teaches men to be more interested in self than others; if it is true that man's contact with the world of work tends to teach him manipulation strategies more consistent with promoting self interest, then whence shall come the leadership and experience in being partners in the eternal enterprise? If woman feels her opinion is not credible; her place second-class; her influence praised but limited then she may search vainly for partnership.

4. The desire for less practicality and rationality on the part of males and more tenderness and sharing of emotional and spiritual depth.

It is perceived that males tend to be conditioned to operate within narrower emotional ranges than females. Though the broader emotional range of women may often be praised on Mother's Day it may at other times be perceived by men as weakness hindering good sound decision making. So it becomes sad but true that we have many sisters who turn to children and friends for sharing at a depth which they would love to share with their eternal partner.

It is true that emotionalism in and of itself may become an overdone product. I remember hearing from the world of drama that the greater emotional impact is achieved by some touch of restraint in emo-
Androgyny: Unisex or Individual Fulfillment

Oviatt

Very few of us, I imagine, can remember back to the time we first realized we were either boys or girls. Probably we were around two or three years old when we made that all-important discovery. Of course, everyone around us knew from the very beginning. We came, after all, wrapped in a pink or a blue blanket. We soon learned that the difference between boys and girls was more than pink and blue blankets and far more than variance in biological equipment. By the time we entered school, for example, we had learned that characteristics such as power, prestige, and aggression belonged to males. We knew that boys were “tough,” athletic, brave, were never afraid, and didn’t cry. We learned that men were usually in charge of things, that they were strong, made decisions, worked hard, and had adventures. We knew girls were neat, quiet, gentle, and “lady like.” We learned that women needed to know how to cook and clean and take care of children, that women were often indecisive, needed someone to help them, could not do dangerous things, and were not as smart as men. All those things, beyond the previously mentioned body differences are called sex stereotypes.

A stereotype, according to Gould and Kolb’s *Dictionary of the Social Sciences,* is “a belief about classes, individuals, groups or objects which are preconceived, i.e., resulting not from fresh appraisals of each phenomenon, but from routinized habits of judgment. . . . The one distinguishing element implicit, if not explicit, in all usages of the term is: a stereotype is a belief which is not held as a hypothesis buttressed by evidence but is rather mistaken in whole or part for an established fact.” Stereotypes seem to be a lazy person’s imitation of truth. Both as Mormons and as counselors, we are, or ought to be, committed to the uniqueness of individuals, and the stereotype has no legitimate place in our work or thought.

The role I described earlier as characterizing males is labelled the instrumental role. It is marked by action, aggression, and emotional control. The role females are assigned is described as the expressive role and is characterized by qualities of emotionality, passivity, and nurturance. There are qualities of personality and character we have unthinkingly come to expect of our men and women.

What I find most distressing is that these role assignments and expected behaviors are assumed valid without the benefit of evidence to support them. Although the research in sex differences is rather new, it seems that the results to date validate that there are, in fact, some documented differences between the sexes. However, most of the assumed differences are not supported. Macoby and Jacklin spent several years compiling all the known research on sex differences into their book, *The Psychology of Sex Differences.* They report that the following assumptions are unfounded: (1) that girls are more social than boys; (2) that girls are more suggestible than boys; (3) that girls have lower self-esteem; (4) that girls are better at rote learning and simple repetitive tasks, while boys are better at tasks which require high-level cognitive processes; (5) that boys are more analytical than girls; (6) that girls are more affected by heredity, boys by environment; (7) that girls lack achievement motivation; and (8) that girls are auditory, boys visual.

The results show these differences fairly well documented: (1) that girls have greater verbal ability than boys; (2) that boys excel in visual spatial ability; (3) that boys excel in mathematical ability after ages 12 or 13; (4) that boys are more physically aggressive. Many issues are still open to question since there is too little evidence or the findings are ambiguous: for example, the questions of (1) tactile sensitivity; (2) fear, timidity, and anxiety; (3) activity level; (4) competitiveness; (5) dominance; (6) compliance; (7) nurturance and “maternal” behavior. The question of whether girls are more passive than boys is very complex, but mostly negative.

Despite this evidence, most of us continue to behave as though the stereotypes were, in fact, reality. It seems important that we in the helping professions as well as Church members owe it both to our clients and ourselves to examine our behavior.

It is my belief that we in the Church give a great deal of lip service to the equality of the sexes. However, women are seen in a “separate but equal” status. The division of labor and roles within the Church falls basically into the two major areas of priesthood and motherhood. In my opinion those role assignments emphasize the differences between men and women. Although we say they are of equal importance, the emphasis, the labels (Priesthood Genealogy, Priesthood Correlation, Aaronic Priesthood and Young Women), and the attention we focus on the priesthood role often leave women feeling that their role is not as appreciated or anywhere near equal to men’s. In addition, the fact that men assume their priesthood responsibilities at age twelve, while women spend perhaps twenty-five years in the middle of their lives (and for some women, no years at all) involved in motherhood with many years before and after without the mother role, along with the realization that men can be priesthood holders as individuals but women’s most important designated role must depend on at least two other individuals—husband and child—are major differences which seem to me lead to feelings of inequality.

The instrumental role, the role assigned to males, has the highest social prestige and approval. That role is even considered one of the standards of mental health. Since we are counselors, as well as Mormons, the fol-
Following evidence ought to be especially important to us. Broverman et al., published a fascinating study in 1970 in an attempt to see how those in the helping professions viewed male and female clients. They gave 79 psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers a list of traits and asked them to select those that would describe a healthy, mature, socially competent adult without specifying sex. Then they were asked to select traits descriptive of a healthy, adult male; and finally, they were asked to choose those traits they thought descriptive of a healthy, adult female. Their results showed a high degree of agreement between the descriptions of a healthy male and a healthy adult, sex unspecified. However, the clinicians’ descriptions of a healthy adult female differed significantly from the healthy adult, sex unspecified. Specifically, the clinicians’ description of a healthy, adult woman differed from the healthy adult by being more submissive, less independent, less adventurous, more easily influenced, less aggressive, less competitive, more excitable in minor crises, having their feelings more easily hurt, being more emotional, more concienced about their appearance, less objective, and disliking math and science. Women are put in a double-bind: for them to be regarded as healthy women, even to those who are supposed to know what mental health is, they must conform to role behaviors that are not considered healthy adult behaviors.

This apparent double standard of mental health and rigid sex stereotypes are destructive to both sexes. The male stereotypes requirement to appear tough, objective, striving, unemotional, and unexpressive. The pressure to maintain this role has an inhibiting effect on both genuine interpersonal communication as well as healthy physical functioning. In *Men and Masculinity*, Dr. Sidney Jourard notes that men die earlier than women, although there is no evidence to show women more endurable. Jourard concludes that the difference in male and female life expectancy lies in men’s transactions and their interpersonal and social environments. There appears to be a direct correlation, according to Jourard, between men’s ability to be self-disclosing and their rate of psychosomatic illness.

Women, too, are injured by unthinking adherence to their cultural role. For many women, being feminine means being self-limiting. For example, girls do better than boys academically until high school. However, during early adolescence, when they become more aware of their “feminine characteristics,” they conform to the expected norm that “women are not as smart as men,” and their IQs drop below that of boys of their corresponding age. Marion Horner further describes this bind in her classic study of bright college women who had a strong motivation to avoid success (*Femininity and Motivation to Successful Achievement: A Basic Inconsistency*). Studies of women in the job market and academic world reflect this same pattern. Studies of how males and females view the role of the opposite sex show that both men and women see the masculine role as having more advantages and freedom. Men, according to both sexes, have more obligations; but women have more proscriptions.

The major problem with sex stereotyping, it seems to me, is that it leaves so little room for individual choice and growth. Until recent years, these limiting roles have been accepted almost without question. Even our psychological tests reflect the stereotypes and leave no room for healthy alternatives. For example, on most psychological tests, such as the MMPI, one can be either “masculine” or “feminine,” but not both. It is time we stopped regarding those terms as polar opposites.

One effort to break the stereotypic mold and free individuals to incorporate the traits of both sexes has been...
seen in Dr. Sandra Bem's reasearch on androgyny. The term *androgyny* has a long history. Basically, it is made from the word *andro* (meaning male) and *gyne* (meaning female) and implies a combination of the sexes, not biologically, but in personality traits. Dr. Bem has devised a self-descriptive test that rates one's degree of identification with the male role, the female role, or the combination of the two. Those that combine characteristics of both sexes in about equal proportions are called "*andrognous*.

Dr. Bem found that the chief characteristic of androgynous people is that they are flexible and have a wider range of behavior than people who conform to either the masculine or feminine role. Bem did some ingenious research to test performance levels in instrumental and expressive behaviors. One of her experiments judged subjects' abilities to make independent judgments in face of disagreement by others. In this experiment, subjects were asked to describe a cartoon as "*funny*" or "*unfunny*." At the time they were asked to give their rating, they heard other judges giving ratings. What they actually heard were tapes on which "*judges*" rated the funny cartoons as unfunny and vice versa. Bem found that masculine and androgynous subjects would more often ignore the other judges and make independent decisions than would feminine subjects.

Another experiment measured nurturing behavior with animals, an infant, and another subject in trouble. When given an opportunity to interact alone with a tiny kitten, it was expected that feminine subjects would show more nurturing behavior than masculine subjects and about the same as androgynous ones. However, feminine subjects showed less nurturing behavior than androgynous subjects. In an additional experiment using a five-month-old baby instead of a kitten, the same nurturance levels were found. Bem hypothesized that these unexpected low nurturing levels in feminine subjects might be because both the kitten and infant were passive stimuli and that feminine women were simply not assertive enough to initiate and sustain interaction, but that they might do better in a nurturing situation where they were allowed to play a more passive responsive role. When in such a situation, in this case listening responsively to a peer with a problem, feminine females did, in fact, do much better.

Bem found that androgynous subjects performed well in both expressive and instrumental roles and were more willing to perform tasks that society labels as outside of their assigned sex roles.

Androgyny as an alternative to sex role stereotype behavior is a fascinating idea both professionally and theoretically. It appears to me that androgyny is very harmonious with the Mormon principle of eternal progression and our concept of God. From what we can gather about the personality of God from the Scriptures and the example of Christ, god-like beings incorpor-
I'm going to ask everyone to close their eyes and keep them closed while I describe our imaginary world. Let us begin by considering the fact that, in this world we are entering, woman is the generic term for humanity. "Man" is obviously included in woman. Sense the meaning of this basic fact of language to you —— woman, generic, which includes man, of course.

Think of it always being that way, every day of your life. Feel the ever-presence of woman and feel the non-presence of man. Absorb what it tells you about the importance and value of being woman - of being man.

Recall that everything you have ever read all your life uses only female pronouns - she, her - meaning girls, and boys, both women and men. Recall that most of the voices on radio and most of the faces on TV are Women's - especially when important news events are covered. Recall that you have no male Utah senator representing you in Washington.

Consider the fact that women are the leaders, the power-centers, the prime-movers. Man, whose natural role is husband and father, fulfills himself through nurturing children and making the home a refuge for woman. This is only natural to balance the biological role of woman who devotes her whole body to the race of woman who devotes her whole body to the race — especially when important news events are covered. Recall that you have no male Utah senator representing you in Washington.

If the male denies these feelings, (of being husband and father) he is unconsciously rejecting his masculinity. Therapy is thus indicated to help him adjust to his own nature. Of course, therapy is administered by a woman, who has the education and wisdom to facilitate openness leading to the male's growth and self-actualization.

It was women who invented these theories of femininity and masculinity. They legitimate the way things are. Let us look at our own experience. If you are a man, remember that when you were born they said, "A boy? Oh . . . ." Remember that when you were little, the books you read had stories of girls doing exciting things while boys watched, or cried, or needed help. When you watched TV, you saw a female Captain Marvel, a female Captain Kangaroo, and Superwoman. By the age of 4, according to a Harvard survey, you probably wanted to be a girl.

Your mother went to work every day, and you were with your father all day. His day was oriented around the time when your mother came home from work all tired out. You got the idea that your mother was more important to the family than your father.

In church, deity was female, the minister or bishop was a female, the ushers and other helpers were females. You sang songs like "Rise Up O Women of God" and heard sermons about sisterhood, and if you asked, you were told that words like women, and sisterhood include you too, even if they don't sound like it.

You were allowed to play active games, but not as much as your sister, and people smiled indulgently and called you a "tomgirl." Your father talked to you about the time you would grow up and be a daddy like him.

When you went to high school, your counselor steered you toward a secretarial course. If you sent to college, you took nursing, education, or social work, the three men's professions, or something else that would fit in around caring for your future wife and family. If you were interested in something like math or anthropology, you were made to feel abnormal and discouraged from a "female profession."

You had trouble when you applied for a job, they said you would just get married and then you would quit when you have children. If your wife has the children, it is just and proper that you should take care of them. Or they said you would be absent a lot -- males trouble -- men are more prone to ulcers and heart attacks, and make a big deal of being sick. They made sure you could type before they hired you and you settled for a salary which was less than your female colleagues got. You began to dislike your job, since it was clear that it was women who were encouraged to seek promotion.

You got married. You changed your name and substituted misters, for master, so that everyone would know you were taken. You stopped working and joined the men's club at church where you found an unsatisfying outlet for your creative energies.

You began to feel unhappy. Like you were not all there, and you were not all you could be. You were dissatisfied. You were restless and bored, but you told yourself that you should be happy. You read househusband magazines to find an answer. They suggested needlepoint.

You went to talk to Rev. or Bishop Jane. She very subtly urged you to accept your male role of father and husband. She suggested some ways of being more masculine, which would satisfy your wife better, like reading "Fascinating Manhood." You went to a psychiatrist. She told you the same thing, but it cost a lot more.

And now do any of you househusbands (and of course we include those of you who work too but all men are househusbands) do any of you see a need for men's liberation? WOMAN — Which Includes Man, Of Course, copyrighted 1970 by Theodora Wells.

The Indians have a saying — "You should not judge another until you've walked in their moccasins for two full moons." I hope this "Imaginary Scenario" has given you the opportunity to begin to feel what it is to be a woman in today's world.

There is much talk and much confusion surrounding what is often referred to as "The Woman Question." It is inaccurate to speak of a woman's sphere and a man's sphere if we live what we say we believe — "Neither
is man without the woman, and neither the woman without the man in the Lord." The two are inseparable. We -- female and male are indivisible. The woman’s world is as unlimited as a man’s world -- particularly when we think and behave in terms of one day becoming goddesses and gods. People limit people. The Gods, our Heavenly Parents, do not limit us. They are the ultimate example of what each one of us can become. It is people who create divisions.

I once had a conversation which caused me to consider the ideas of division and unity more fully. One Friday evening I was invited to synagogue in Salt Lake City to attend a special meeting celebrating the Jewish holidays. Rabbi Bergman was speaking of “unity” -- “oneness” -- the kind we ought to have within the body of the Church as well as in our relationships, one with another. “Unity/Oneness,” he stressed, “was something felt so strongly by the Prophets of the Old Testament that in Genesis -- where there appears the record of the Creation -- at every point of creating when God performed a unifying act, He underlined that act by saying afterward, ‘It is good.’ But when the Lord performed a dividing act, the act of dividing the land and the water -- God did not say, ‘And this is good.’ Unity/Oneness is the ultimate purpose.”

I went back home, pondered this through and re-read Genesis from a perspective I’d never before had: “Male and female, black and white, bond and free -- all are one in the Lord.” We are equal before Him. Equality does not mean sameness, but fairness and justice -- attributes of God discussed in the Lectures on Faith. God is not a respector of persons. Yet we as mere mortals -- presume to be respectors of persons. This presumption reveals itself in the many ways we structure our society so that we divide people against each other based upon superficial reasons for these divisions. Such as the differential status accorded to those with specific educational degrees.

It is my personal conviction that as long as we continue to distort the heavens we will continue to distort our relationships during mortality.

The inescapable fact is -- we are literally the daughters and sons of a Heavenly Mother and a Heavenly Father. “Are parents single? . . . Truth is reason, Truth eternal tells me I’ve a Mother there.” We are not children of a one parent eternal family. But I believe that until we are moved with the desire to come to know Our Heavenly Mother, by that same process by which we must come to know our Heavenly Father and our elder brother Jesus Christ, until we come to know who we are by virtue of our spiritual origins and all that implies, until we understand our relationship to our Heavenly Parents and their relationship not only to each other but to the immutable laws which bind them as celestial beings, until this occurs -- we will not be able to overcome the crippling distortions that have entered into our perceptions and our behavior, one with another -- as females and males. I believe, that if we truly taught little children the fullness of their spiritual parentage they would grow up and make better marriage choices -- marriage choices for the right reasons. I believe that if children understood their spiritual parentage -- this understanding would help them transcend the imperfections and limits of most mortal relationships. If for any reason at one point of their lives they are without one or the other earthly parent -- their relationship with their Heavenly Mother, their Heavenly Father would see them through, where presently many are left wandering, uncertain. It is my personal conviction that as long as we continue to distort the heavens we will continue to distort our relationships during mortality.

If we understood the relationship of our Heavenly Parents -- wives and husbands would behave very differently. I believe that at the celestial level woman is not subject to man -- which is the curse of the fall -- but both to the im-
mutable laws which bind them. I am even inclined to believe that with the restoration — with the ushering in of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times where all that has been lost is restored to its fullness — I’m inclined to believe that woman is no longer subject to man. President Kimball stressed last conference that he would use the word “preside” in place of “rule.” Recently on the BYU campus President Kimball spoke of a proper marriage as a partnership of equality and said that we should not get ourselves into a relationship — especially an eternal relationship where one is unequally yoked. If “man will be punished for his own sins and not Adam’s transgressions,” doesn’t it follow that woman will be punished for her own sins and not Eve’s transgressions? Or, does the 2nd Article of Faith literally mean the curse has been lifted from the Adams, but not from the Eves? We say within the Church that we do not believe in predestination. Doctrinally we believe in foreordination: the former an inescapable, fatalistic approach to the way things supposedly work, but the latter, foreordination, has to do with being called and elected and having free agency. I maintain, that as long as we continue “sex-role stereotyping” we are practicing nothing more, nothing less than “social predestination.” By continuing to practice social predestination we are running interference with what each has been foreordained to be and do. Unless we comprehend the fact that none of us knows what the other has been called and elected to do — we will continue to behave to each other — females and males as if we knew what is really best for another person. We can justify our behaviors in a million ways, but you do not know what I promised to do in mortality, nor do I know that about you! Free agency, a gift from God, not man is incompatible with social predestination/sex-role stereotyping, for nothing in the scriptures supports the idea that “biology is destiny” — how could it — this temporal state is so transient, so fleeting in the eternal perspective of things.

Would that I had time today to talk with you about the implications, for us, of Christ’s behavior toward women within the historical context of his times. Have you ever thought about the fact that he contravened the customs of his time? Have you ever wondered what the status of woman was during his times? If we understood his behavior, ours would be very different. Let me read two poems by Carol Lynn Pearson:

When I first moved to this state about five years ago and began giving speeches I was initially startled when women would come up to me afterwards and say, "How do I respond to a husband who constantly tells me I must have done something wrong in the pre-existence to have been born a woman in this life."

HE WHO WOULD BE CHIEF AMONG YOU
And he rose from supper,
Poured water in a basin,
And washed the disciples’ feet.

Those hands,
Hardened by the heat of a desert sun,
Comfortable with cutting trees
And turning them to tables
In Joseph’s shop —

Those hands,
That with a wave could stop the troubled sea,
Could touch a leper clean,
Or triumphantly turn death away
From the loved daughter on Jairus’ couch —

Those hands,
That could gesture the heavens open —
Poured water in a basin
And washed the disciples’ feet.

The lesson lies unlearned
But to a few,
Who trust the paradox
And hear the call:

“He who would be chief among you,
Let him be the servant to all.”

That kind of power of the priesthood is very different than the way the world reflects “power.” Often the problem within relationships is the worldly way we translate “power” into action.

HAIKU FROM A MALE CHAUVINIST DEER

Shameless doe leaping
The fields at full speed — making
A buck of herself.

In all our lauding of women within the Church the fact remains there still exists some very destructive, damaging attitudes. As long as those attitudes are fostered and rewarded the “fear of women” will increase and I personally believe, homosexuality within the Church will also increase. It seems — based upon our discussions around this issue at our last conference that even in our pathology we are preoccupied with the male. We deal with homosexuality but not lesbianism. If we deal with the latter at all it is from a perspective of the syndrome of homosexuality, which refers to males, rather than of lesbianism, which refers to females, which, contrary to what male theorists and therapists may think and practice — is quite a different set of dynamics.

The film “Cipher in the Snow,” produced by BYU and written by Carol Lynn Pearson, deals with a young student who suddenly dies on the way to school. There appears to be no reason for his death. A teacher at his school tries to find out about this young man and in the process discovers nobody knew him. This teacher explains to the principal that because people ceased to care about the boy he was little by little erased until he literally ceased to exist and died. This erasing is what has hap-
pened to women. We are not longer validated personally, universally, nor eternally. We have been denied and kept ignorant of a sense of our own history, our psychology the way we are socialized, our own literature, our role in culture, and we are not informed about the contributions women have made in the arts, sciences, education, business, the professions, politics, nor do we understand how the laws exclude women, etc. We suffer from what I call "forced amnesia." How can we continue to erase women and then tell them to have self-esteem?

It has been said, "You can't keep a good woman down"—but centuries have swallowed the silent masses of "good women" and legions have indeed been "kept down." This remarkable feat has been accomplished through the deft use of oppression, repression, classism, racism and sexism. These crippling tools have been most successfully wielded by religious and educational institutions of the world throughout time immemorial.

Since that early dawn of history, when poor, weak, beguiled Eve sank her teeth into the apple, the crunch has resounded throughout time, binding in chains the psyches of her daughters. Women are the causeless martyrs of a cruel myth and the narrow cells of sexism have been her fated prison.

Historically educational programs are initiated by different religious sects. As societies become more complex and governments more sophisticated, an evolutionary process takes place which gradually loosens the controls of education by religious groups and there is a transfer of power to the state. Therefore it is not unreasonable to assume that the sexist attitudes and practices within world religious groups would be woven into educational traditions. Later, even though education is eventually taken over by the state, traditions are already engrained and sexist attitudes inherent. That transfer of control would not therefore eliminate sexism, but would in fact continue to be a perpetrating force.

Eve partook of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and has been systematically refused full access to the two institutions which offer that knowledge—churches and schools. Today, women are initiating a new "Fall," "Rather than a fall from the sacred, the Fall now initiated by women becomes a Fall into the sacred and therefore into freedom." (Mary Daly, Beyond God the Father: Beacon Press, Boston. 1973. pg. 67)

There is a historical male support system for the sexist attitudes which exist in the institutions of religion and education. Some examples of this are: 1) Plato's Symposium defends homosexuality in terms of his own personal hostility toward women and is an example of how this elite-consciousness is used by men to justify their fears. 2) Augustine developed a genito-centric theology which concentrated on man's genitals rather than on man as a whole. 3) Thomas Aquinas convinced mankind that woman is an imperfect animal, and he was influenced by Aristotelianism and scholasticism. 4) Johannes Damascenus saw woman as an "advance guard of hell." 5) Tertullian called her "the devil's gate." 6) Petrus Damiani called her the "bait of Satan." The inferiority complex of men uses the satanization of woman to transform itself into a superiority complex. Manifestations of this hatred and attempts for superiority are demonstrated in the syndromes, of head-hunters and witch-hunters. Damaged sexuality is linked to aggressive actions by male groups, and in these societies women emerge as mothers or prostitutes, with no alternatives in between.—a means to an end, existing to serve man.

The dichotomy set between religion and sexuality reaches its ultimate in celibacy practices a more "honorable alternative" to homosexuality. Elite-consciousness strengthened celibacy. Even among the great reformers, this dichotomy was evidenced. Martin Luther's Reformation failed to heal this duality because of his own early monastic life. Calvin felt that sex was a necessary evil and marriage was only for procreation. Freud proved no enlightened friend to womankind. Men just mentioned and countless, nameless others institutionalized their attitudes in churches and schools.

Christian churches have not understood, nor have they exemplified Christ's behavior toward women. He would not have tolerated the homo-social practices nor the homo-structural institutions.

Historically good women are kept down by being "kept out." Religious and educational institutions have vigorously worked to keep women out. Both of these societies are entities dominated by men. So the practice of celibacy continues as we are debating within the hallowed halls of academia, whether or not woman has a mind. This debate echoes those of earlier days when the Catholic Church was debating whether or not a woman has a soul. Head-hunting practices still exist as the rate of violences against women increases.
Education is discouraged for a group in whom free choice between alternatives is considered socially "dangerous." Free education has threatened the caste boundaries in society, and women are weary of being custom-shrunken.

The innovations of Jesus as an organizer have been overlooked by most Christians and social scientists. He has, however, left a legacy women are beginning to use in churches and schools. Women, like Christ, are taking positions of "no compromise with these governing powers." When they, like him, succeed they will be successful because all unrighteous dominion has been discredited and righteous power is unlimited. They do not seek personal power, but that power which comes through the unification over destructive factions between women and men.

For me the following quote exemplifies or states the high level at which we potentially could be interacting with each other. "It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses — to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which you could be strongly tempted to worship or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet if at all only in a nightmare. All day long we are in some degree helping each other to one or other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities — it is with the awe of circumspection proper to them that we should conduct all our dealings with one another. All friendships, all loves, all play, all politics, there are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations — these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat, but it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, shop, and fight with, immortal horrors, or everlasting splendors." — C.S. Lewis, Weight to Glory.

Another Viewpoint

Cline

AMCAP is just beginning its second year as an official organization and as we struggle with issues and problems, it might be appropriate to respond to some of the vastly stimulating and interesting kinds of comments that were made in the last few hours — not in any critical sense, but in a helpful way.

We are all truly grateful for the principle of free agency. That in a great church such as this, there can be some diversity of views and people can struggle with and discuss important issues and problems. Certainly in my life, I have seen that, while our Father in Heaven has given us revelation and helped us with many problems, He also expects us to use our own intelligence and initiative to do the best we can to find solutions to our questions. Issues such as the women's movement and the "correct" marital roles of men and women are going to be increasingly controversial for some individuals in the Church. I think we're all going to be challenged as therapists as well as members of the Church, and we're going to have to find some answers through inspiration, the scriptures, as well as examining...
flexibility suggested here. If women feel guilty about rearing children and doing things that are traditionally and culturally feminine, it can be very destructive to them—I have seen this to be true. Many women are going through this identity problem—searching for who they are and what their true role is. I see women as nurturant and tender, raising children, and some having careers along with families. But what really concerns me is the climate in which they do so. Some of the radical liberationists have tended to make women feel guilty about traditional feminine roles.

Another very touchy situation is the husband's presidency in the home. I have struggled with this problem for a long time and the only conclusion that I can come to is that if the husband and wife are given identical roles in the family, this will accentuate conflict. We believe, if we are active members of the Church and committed to this philosophy, that the husband does hold the presidency. This doesn't mean that the wife does not contribute a great deal in all kinds of ways, or that she isn't sometimes smarter or hasn't better judgment than her husband. But I think it would be like having two bishops in one ward: There is no way that it would work. The husband has to be righteous and aware of his tremendous responsibility, and no woman has to stay with an evil or tyrannical husband. The wife entered the marriage with her free agency and so if the husband is unrighteous she can certainly exercise that free agency to distance herself from him. The more I think about it and the more experiences I have, the more I am concerned about the tendency to confuse and blur role differentiation in the family. This is one of the messages that I have sensed this morning, a confusion and blurring of roles. I want to express, as a personal opinion, that we will be happier and healthier if we do allow some role differentiation. Some of you, I know, disagree with me, but all I can do is share with you my opinion and experience.

"You need to be somewhat understanding and allow people in our organization to have some independence, to think for themselves, and to present views which may not be yours, without putting them down."