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Leadership and Human Relations Neil J. Flinders

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NEIL J. FLINDERS. *Leadership and Human Relations*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1969. 254 pp. \$4.95.

(Reviewed by Norma Rohde, Assistant Director of the Counseling Center and associate professor of educational counseling at Brigham Young University. A specialist in the field of interpersonal communication, Dr. Rohde has also published in *SPATE*.)

Flinders has accomplished what must be the dream of most graduate students. He has published, in book form, his doctoral dissertation—written for the College of Education at Brigham Young University. It is an attempt “to combine the general knowledge about man that God has revealed to his prophets with the *specific* knowledge about man’s behavior that scientists have discovered.” The book is designed to serve as a handbook—a resource for information for parents, teachers, and executives. It is not light reading, nor is it entertaining. It is for the person who is interested in serious study, discussion, and further reading into the many references presented in the book. The author recognizes that this attempt is just a first step in bringing together this kind of resource material.

Chapters 2 and 3 present an image of man. They discuss his origin, the nature of his existence, some of the basic laws that govern him, his biological and emotional development, how he is motivated, how he thinks, learns, and responds to life. Chapters 5 through 8 discuss the interpersonal relationships—why and how an individual establishes, maintains, and dissolves his relationships with others, the influences upon the individual by the family, group dynamics, the principles that influence man's efforts to govern other men, and the author's summary of the essential ingredients for a healthy philosophy of leadership and human relationships. In each instance, Flinders presents both the research findings and the theological concepts. The intent has been to outline the principles and facts where both science and Latter-day Saint theology seem to be in essential harmony. It has not attempted to deal with those areas which are in disharmony. "The unique contribution of this work then, is its attempt to synthesize knowledge about leadership and human relations from both the teachings of the prophets and the research of scientists."

Interesting recommendations made by Flinders include (1) the need for a Church-sponsored Human Behavior Research and Development Center which could utilize the theology of the Church as a system of analysis and have among its operational goals the collection, utilization, and research of human behavior data and (2) the need for developing a training program in human relations, leadership, and administrative behavior for members of the LDS Church.

The author quite successfully demonstrates through his book that an estrangement does not have to exist between layman, theologian, and scientist. As is quoted from Elder John A. Widtsoe, ". . . science seeks truth, and the aim of religion is truth."

This book is an initial effort in meeting a need which has long existed in the Latter-day Saint Church—that of bringing together the teachings of its religion and the teachings of the social scientists and in presenting them in such a manner that they can have meaning to lay members. While the book is not designed for popular reading, for the serious person it contains many thoughtful principles of leadership and human relations. Its concise presentation of concepts and principles

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along with its lack of illustrative examples may make for difficult reading for the lay person, but certainly for the individual with the desire to learn more about human relations as presented by both science and religion, the book offers many ideas to think about, discuss, and further investigate, as well as put into practice.