



10-1-1978

A History Of The Association of Mormon Counselors and Psychotherapists (AMCAP)

Vern H. Jensen

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Recommended Citation

Jensen, Vern H. (1978) "A History Of The Association of Mormon Counselors and Psychotherapists (AMCAP)," *Issues in Religion and Psychotherapy*: Vol. 4 : No. 2 , Article 2.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/irp/vol4/iss2/2>

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**A HISTORY OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF MORMON COUNSELORS
AND PSYCHOTHERAPISTS
(AMCAP)**

**Also
Includes a Brief History of AMCAP's Predecessor
THE LDS PERSONNEL AND GUIDANCE ASSOCIATION
(LDS PGA)**

Compiled
by
Vern H. Jensen

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	3
PART I - A VITAL PREDECESSOR – LDS PGA	
Early Beginnings	4
A New Title	5
Organizational Structure	6
An Increase in Enthusiasm	8
PART II - A BROADER VISION – AMCAP	
A Period of Transition	11
A Name to Reflect Expansion	12
Conference Planning	13
The First AMCAP Annual Convention	13
Putting the Plan Into Operation	14
The Second Annual Convention	16
Reaching Solutions With the Church	17
Rounding Out the Organization	17
Strengthening the Organization	18
The Third Annual Convention/Workshop	19
Growth and Expansion	20
Facing New Challenges	21
Plans for the 1978 Convention	21
The Fourth Annual Convention/Workshop	21
After Fifteen Years	23
APPENDIX A	25
APPENDIX B	26
APPENDIX C	29
INDEX	31

PREFACE

The History of the Association of Mormon Counselors and Psychotherapists (AMCAP) is actually the history of two organizations. The first is a history of the LDS Personnel and Guidance Association (LDS PGA) which was a vital predecessor to the organization of AMCAP. The second is a history of AMCAP itself which came about as a result of the developments occurring during the existence of LDS PGA. In other words, without LDS PGA the history of AMCAP may have never been written. One could safely say that AMCAP came into existence as a result of the merger of one organization into another. The last officers of LDS PGA, for example, became the first officers of AMCAP. Furthermore, the general goals of the LDS PGA became the same goals of AMCAP, and the Constitution of LDS PGA served as a base for the By-Laws of AMCAP. Finally, the membership of AMCAP was simply an extension of the membership of LDS PGA rather than a change in membership, that is, AMCAP was extended to include counselors and psychotherapists who had affiliation with other professional organizations in addition to the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA).

Up to the present time, 1978, LDS PGA has had a much longer history than AMCAP since its history extends from 1964 to 1975; whereas the history of AMCAP dates back to only 1975. Nevertheless, there is a greater abundance of recorded sources available for these past three years than all of the twelve preceding years of LDS PGA, which accounts for the greater length of Part II. At least two major reasons account for this. First, there were no minutes of meeting kept nor Journals published during the existence of LDS PGA. Second, with the exception of the last year of LDS PGA, much more activity occurred during the three years of AMCAP's operation than in those preceding years. Minutes of meetings began to be recorded during the last year of LDS PGA while AMCAP was in the process of being organized. In the early years of LDS PGA minutes of meetings were not recorded because of the informal nature of the group. If minutes were kept during the later years when LDS PGA was formally organized with elected officers and a Constitution, they

were either destroyed or filed away where no one could find them. The only minutes that are available for LDS PGA are those taken during the last year of its existence while AMCAP was being organized. During this time minutes were recorded of executive and ad hoc committee meetings and one newsletter was sent to members of the Association.

After the organization of AMCAP the *Journal* became another source of information along with correspondence, the minutes for all of the meetings and regularly published newsletters. From 1964 to 1974, however, the only sources of data were letters to and from the officers, a personal journal of one member of the Association, the agendas of LDS PGA meetings printed each year in the APGA Convention Program, and interviews with individuals. Even as far as letters are concerned, there are undoubtedly a number of letters that have never been recovered. One letter of significance in particular that has not yet been found was the very first letter, copies of which were distributed by Joseph C. Bentley in 1963 to four individuals proposing a forum where LDS members of the American Personnel and Guidance Association could get together and discuss principles of the Gospel and professional concepts.

As to the preparation of this history, acknowledgement is given to the chairmen and presidents of LDS PGA and AMCAP for their effort in furnishing both recorded and verbal information. In this regard, special thanks goes to Clyde A. Parker, P. Wendell Johnson, Norma Rohde, Lynn Eric Johnson, E. Wayne Wright, Henry L. Isaksen, and Burton C. Kelly. Grateful appreciation is also extended to Burton C. Kelly, AMCAP Historian, for assigning and urging that the compiling and writing of this history go forward, to Richard Heaps, AMCAP Secretary-Treasurer, for furnishing significant and helpful information and to Cathy Buxton for her untiring efforts in offering suggestions and typing the history.

Vern H. Jensen
Brigham Young University
October 1978