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Mormon Bibliography 1981

Scott H. Duvall

In 1978 approximately 220 books, pamphlets, and articles were published on Mormon topics. In 1979 the figure rose to 335, and in 1980 it increased to 367. This burst of publishing which took place during the 1979–1980 years occurred in large measure, we at Special Collections in the Harold B. Lee Library thought, because of the Sesquicentennial celebration. Frankly, we expected a decrease in Mormon publication in 1981. We were wrong. Of the 531 items in this "Mormon Bibliography 1981," 452 were published in 1981. The rest appeared in 1980 and are included in the figure for that year. (Several of these were Masters' theses and Ph.D. dissertations which were not included in last year's bibliography.) The interest in Mormon topics by the non-Mormon as well as the Mormon audience is still growing.

An analysis of the different sections of this bibliography and a comparison with last year's bibliography will aid the reader's understanding of this growth. For example, in the Arts and Literature section this year there are fifty-four entries compared with forty-four last year. The publication of "Mormon" novels in 1981 surpassed the record set in 1980. There seems to be an audience for novels which are set in Mormon experience, whether that experience be in the past or the present.

The largest increase over last year's bibliography occurred in the Contemporary books and articles section (121 compared to 69). Articles on Sonia Johnson, the E.R.A., Mormon women's concerns, the MX missile issue, and the Joseph Smith III blessing were the major topics which attracted national and Church attention. In fact, these issues prompted more national press coverage in 1981 than did the Sesquicentennial activities of 1980.

Although in the Inspirational section of the bibliography the same number of entries appear this year as did last year, the overall emphasis among these publications shifted. In 1980 the majority of

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items listed in this section aimed at encouraging people to live better personal lives (see, for example, Paul H. Dunn's *I Challenge You . . . I Promise You*, the Ellsworths' *Getting to Know the Real You*, or Randall Mehev's *To Lengthen One's Stride: A Personal Guide to Better Living*). In 1981, however, the amount of publication of this nature decreased while several more items pointed specifically to marriage and family relationships.

Change also occurred this year among those books and articles listed under the Doctrinal heading. Not only did the amount of material in this section increase from forty-nine to ninety-two but also publications appeared on topics not treated last year. For instance, the coverage of marriage, family, and priesthood from a doctrinal viewpoint marks a change in publishing and writing emphasis. In addition, several items appeared which dealt with various Church doctrines in their historical settings (see, for example, Thomas G. Alexander, "The Word of Wisdom: From Principle to Requirement," *Dialogue* 14 (Fall 1981): 78–88, or Linda K. Newell, "A Gift Given, A Gift Taken: Washing, Anointing, and Blessing the Sick among Mormon Women," *Sunstone* 6 (September–October 1981): 16–25.

In short, the amount of publication on Mormon topics continued unabated in 1981. Some shifts of emphasis and some increases in the amount of material listed in different sections of the "Mormon Bibliography 1981" have been noted. It is hoped this analysis will aid those students of current Mormonism who watch for such changes, however subtle these changes may be.

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