A Study of the Utilization of Selected Church Periodicals By LDS Seminary and Institute of Religion Personnel

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A STUDY OF THE UTILIZATION OF SELECTED CHURCH PERIODICALS

BY L.D.S. SEMINARY AND INSTITUTE

OF RELIGION PERSONNEL

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of Graduate Religious Instruction
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Religious Education

by
Dennis Glen Murdock
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For many years the General Authorities of the Church have instructed the members of the Church to read and use Church periodicals. The official periodicals have become known as the "voice of the Church." Recently, (1958) information has come to light indicating that the youth of the Church have rated the periodicals at the bottom of the list of things that influence them.

The non-Mormon religious press has also been losing influence over its readership. One of the most common complaints against the non-Mormon religious periodicals was that they were not relevant to real life. Some Mormon writers, publishers and educators have wondered if Mormon periodicals are considered relevant to the lives of the modern member of the Church. They have wondered if the religious educators, particularly the Seminary and Institute teachers, have been using Church periodicals in their teaching.

I. THE PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to compare the use of selected official and unofficial Church periodicals by Seminary and Institute

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1 See Chapter III, pp. 26-30, of this study.

2 Roy West, unpublished study on file in the files of the Department of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion, 1958.
personnel of the Church with the objectives and purposes of those periodicals. It was also to determine the relevancy of those periodicals to the department personnel and their students.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Church. When "Church" is spelled with a capitol C in this study, it refers to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints whose head-quarters are in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Department Personnel. All teachers and administrators of the LDS Department of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion are referred to as "department personnel." This usage is not meant to include any other employees of the department.

Official Church Periodicals. The Improvement Era, official organ of the Mutual Improvement Associations, the Priesthood Quorums and the LDS Department of Education; The Instructor, official organ of the Deseret Sunday School Union; and the Church News, supplementary section of The Deseret News, are referred to as "official Church periodicals."

Unofficial Church Periodicals. The periodicals Brigham Young University Studies, Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, and Impact are called "unofficial Church periodicals." They are labeled as Church periodicals because their primary focus is on the Church, its principal teachings and its culture. The criterion for determining them "unofficial" is that the editors accept no responsibility for their contents.

Relevancy. The "relevancy" of a feature refers to the bearing it
has to real life, the ease of application, and its pertinency to the reader.

Relevancy Rating. The rating given a feature on a numerical scale, running from one to five, is its "relevancy rating."

III. DELIMITATIONS

This study includes only those Church periodicals listed as official and unofficial. There is no detailed study of either the content or history of Church periodicals, though some discussion is given to establish a background to understand the role of Church periodicals.

No attempt is made to study attitudes or interests directly. Attitudes have an unquestioned affect on behavior but they are extremely difficult to measure.1 It is assumed that all opinions asked of the sample were reflections of attitudes.

This study is to determine: (1) the extent of use of Church periodicals by department personnel for their personal growth and development, (2) their rating of various features, and (3) their efforts to influence their students to use them.

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

Determination of editorial policy came from two sources, interviews of representatives of the magazine editorial staffs and from

officially written statements of editorial policy. The extent of utilization of periodicals by department personnel was obtained from data asked for in a questionnaire and from interviews given to a representative sample of department personnel available at summer school, Brigham Young University, 1968. The questionnaire asked for a rating of the relevance of features on the following scale:

1- extremely relevant  2- very relevant  3- moderately relevant
4- little relevancy  5- no relevancy.1

The interviews were conducted in accordance to George Gallup's interview procedures. Dr. Gallup, a pioneer of reader opinion surveys, noted a tendency of respondents of questionnaires to place their interests and tastes on a higher level than they actually are, or they give answers they perceive the interviewer wants. This tendency is not a deliberate attempt to be dishonest. It is done sub-consciously, but must be allowed for in opinion surveys.2 George Gallup's method of taking periodical surveys is to have the interviewers show individual articles to the interviewees and ask them if they have read them. All reflective comments are ignored. Reading one-half or more of each article was considered as a whole; less than one-half was marked as not read. Through use of the split-half method of testing reliability in Dr. Gallup's studies, this method has been fully established.3

Data from the questionnaire was run through the 7040 IBM Computer

1See Appendix A


3George Gallup, Editor and Publisher, (Feb. 8, 1930), p. 5.
at the Brigham Young University Computer Center using the STAT 06 pro-
gram. This gave frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations
on the values given each periodical feature. This information was
analyzed to determine if the data met the assumptions required for chi
square. Normal frequency is not needed to use this statistical method, 1
but it does require an adequate (at least two) number of cases in each
cell. Some data is grouped together in an attempt to have an adequate
number of samples in each cell of the distribution.

Comparisons between rankings given periodical features obtained
from the questionnaire and data about reading habits obtained from the
interviews were run through the 7040 Computer using the ANSTAT program
for chi square.

A representative sample was selected with the help of Marshall T.
Burton, Director of Personnel for the department. Every sixth name was
selected from a list of seminary teachers. It was felt that the seminary
teachers were a homogeneous group, but that the rest of the department
personnel were divided into distinct subgroups. Representatives from
each subgroup were chosen in the same proportion as the seminary group.
Some of the names chosen were inaccessible. The final sample was about
ten per cent of the total full time department personnel. The 555
Seminary people in the department were represented by 56 in the sample;
184 Institute men were represented by 18 in the sample; the 49 Indian

1 About one-half of the feature relevancy ratings had normal
distributions.
Seminary men were represented by 3 in the sample. From the total of 77, 3 were rejected for answering the questionnaire in unusable form.

The questionnaires and interviews were administered to each person in the sample individually while the interviewer remained to answer any questions. One interviewer administered all data gathering forms.

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1Original desires to study the Indian men as a separate factor was abandoned because of the small number in the sample. They were included with the regular Seminary men.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The teachers and administrators of the L.D.S. Department of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion have received an assignment to equip their students to resist "worldly" influences.¹ Joseph Smith, Jr.,² said that it is folly to think that this can be done without a deliberate effort to educate and that education be sought out of the best books.³ Books are not the only publications of the Church designed to help keep the Mormon culture different from the rest of the religious world. The Church has a history of placing great importance on its periodicals. The press (and radio) of the Church is considered essential to the survival of Mormonism as the press of America is to the survival of Americanism.⁴

Whenever non-Mormon neighbors expelled Mormons from their homes,

¹Mark E. Peterson, "Avoiding Sectarianism" (address given to Seminary and Institute Faculty, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, June 22, 1962), talks given to Seminary and Institute persons hereafter cited as, Sem. & Inst.

²Joseph Smith, Jr. was the first President of the Church, serving from April 6, 1830 to his death June 27, 1844.

³Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1957) 86:116; 90:15.

they began the conflict by the destruction of the current periodicals and publications of the Church. The *Evening and Morning Star*, the first periodical of the Church, began in Independence, Missouri. It was published for one year before mobs destroyed the press. Six months after its discontinuance in Missouri, the *Star* was begun again in Kirtland, Ohio. The *Messenger and Advocate* and the *Elder's Journal* were also published there. All three Kirtland periodicals were discontinued under pressure before the whole Church moved to Missouri. In Nauvoo, the *Times and Season*, a paper to communicate doctrine and Church matters to its members, was forced out of publication along with the *Nauvoo Neighbor*, a newspaper designed for both Mormon and non-Mormon usage. The newspapers of the day are given credit by some historians for arousing the hatred against Joseph Smith, Jr., and for his death. The only time Church leaders put an antagonistic paper— the *Nauvoo Expositor*—out of print themselves, it triggered the events that killed the prophet leader and his brother. Of the eighty-four discontinued periodicals of the Church, sixty-seven were published between 1830 and 1861, the period of greatest persecution.

The author does not want to give the impression that the complexities of conflicts in Mormon Church History are being reduced to a single

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2 Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1965), Vol. VI, p. 623. Governor Ford wrote that the destruction of the *Expositor* was one of three causes for the mobs' actions.

3 Joseph Sudweeks, *Discontinued LDS Periodicals* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1951).
causation. There were many reasons for the troubles between the Church and its enemies. The point presented here is that the influence of periodicals has been a significant force in the movements of the history of the Church.

Newspapers tend to reduce the many complex dynamics of history to a single or few causal factors. This oversimplification of the issue or issues gives a distorted view of the true nature of events even if they are reported accurately.\(^1\) This phenomenon coupled with the tendency of readers to assume they understand what they read even if they are inept at critical evaluation,\(^2\) gives undue importance to many of the conclusions drawn from printed matter. Church leaders are constantly cautioning members to be very selective in what they read and to seek aid from God for understanding.

In the past and present, Church heads have been concerned about the apathy they have noticed among the members toward reading the current publications. Mark E. Peterson\(^3\) expressed it this way, "I am sure that the people of the Church do not realize how closely tied to the publications of the Church is the very life blood of the church."\(^4\) He told


\(^2\)Ibid.

\(^3\)Mark E. Peterson is a member of The Quorum of Twelve Apostles, an ecclesiastical body equal in governing authority to, but under the direction of, the highest ranking body in the Church—The Quorum of the First Presidency.

how members of the Church were indifferent to the efforts of Charles H. Penrose to answer the charges made against the Church by the anti-Mormon newspapers of the time. The chief rival of Elder Penrose was C. C. Goodwin, editor of the Salt Lake Tribune. He wrote bitter articles against Mormonism. Charles Penrose was chided by many members of his own faith because the Deseret News was so small, yet it was one of the strongest voices in defense of the Church in that period. The apathy of Church members toward The Contributor, the forerunner of The Improvement Era, resulted in its discontinuance in 1879. The loss was " keenly felt."2

Elder Peterson gave the following assignments to Seminary and Institute personnel:

. . . The Press was a battle ground for survival on the part of our pioneers, and that press is still important for us today, and therefore we must teach in our classes and in every other way we can, a loyalty to and a pride in our Church publications. . . . Let us ourselves speak with respect of our magazines instead of in any way making derogatory remarks about it. Let us support them; let us teach our people loyalty and support for all these publications. Let them know that there is a perpetual need for a Church press and Church radio just as there is a perpetual need for a free press and free speech and radio in the United States as a whole.3

He added that this group of Church teachers should teach the history of publications in the Church and the "vital part publications have played in the development of the Church to the present time."4 A brief account of the historical role of the publications of this study and their immediate predecessors is given in Chapter III.

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1Peterson, op. cit.

2Harrison R. Merrill, "Fourty Years of Service." The Improvement Era, 15:673-681 (November, 1937).

3Peterson, op. cit. 4Ibid.
There is some evidence that these assignments have not been fulfilled to the extent that was desired. Roy West\(^1\) directed a study of the important factors that influenced seminary graduates in eighteen release time seminaries and four non-released time seminaries. He wanted to discover the amount of influence the family, the Church organizations, teachers and officers of the Church, and religious literature had on these students. One point nine per cent of the boys (thirteen out of 685) and one point five per cent of the girls (fifteen out of 970) chose religious literature as the most influential when compared to the other factors. Nineteen per cent of the boys and thirty per cent of the girls chose it as least important. When asked about religious magazines, no boys and three girls considered them most important.\(^2\) Youth are not as interested in church magazines as their parents are. A readership study of the Improvement Era found that "The Era of Youth" section, a feature designed for youth, was of less interest to youth than to adults between thirty and forty years old, the ages of their parents.\(^3\) It was surmised that the parents were interested in the feature because of their teen children.

It would be faulty thinking to conclude from these studies that

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\(^1\)Roy West is Director of Research for the Seminaries and Institutes of Religion.

\(^2\)Roy West, "The Individuals or Organizations in the Church Which Have Influenced Seminary Graduates" unpublished study, Department of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion, Provo, Utah, 1958.

religious literature has no influence. The affect of the religious press isn't as great as the other factors in the above research but it has a role to play in Church members' lives.

Many of the non-Mormon religious leaders are concerned over the declining power of their press. The secular press and other modes of communication have "taken over."¹ James M. Gustafson said, "The laity more and more do not accept the authority of the Church on matters of detail in private life."² This trend is reflected in a recent Gallup poll (1967). In 1957 fourteen per cent of Americans polled said that they thought religion was losing its influence. Ten years later fifty-seven per cent thought so. The study was described as "representative of a cross-section of the nation, embracing all religions in true proportion to the number of their followers."³ The major reason given for the drop is that religions have lost their "relevance." They have not addressed themselves to "the problems of the day." Religion is being called "outmoded" and "sterile."⁴ An early critic of the religious press, Reverend Robert E. Bisbee, complained back in 1898 that, "the average American seeking to better earthly conditions would as soon search Alaska for orange groves, or hades for an ice crop, as turn to

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⁴Ibid.
the religious press for help in a crisis. . . ."1 This irrelevance of past religious explanations of life when compared to observed life by laity seems to be the basis for the "God is dead" concept. It might be better labeled "the God of the Past is Irrelevant to the Present."

Mormon leaders reject the "God is dead" idea. Some think this notion is that God has gone out of existence. To a Mormon, the God described by non-Mormons is non-existent.2 Another interpretation of the "God is dead" issue sees past concepts of God and religion as being irrelevant to the present. This concept is also rejected as having any value in describing the Church. The Church teaches that gospel principles have been existent in every period of ancient and modern religious history, from Adam to the present, in some form closely akin to the present.3 Some Mormon writers writing for unofficial publications have expressed the opinion that the Church has relevance problems.

I had had a gradual realization of the hypocrisy of indifference among the positioned and the promising, who love and are loved, but who, having conditioned themselves to be children of light rather than children of this world, wise in their generation, made themselves unaware of social wars and incapable of social depth.4

The problem of adjusting to any relevance lag within the Church


publication without abandoning old values is expressed in the following editorial by John A. Widtsoe:

There is no chance . . . to improve upon the past, the only thing that can be done is to redirect the work in such a manner as to make it fit, more nearly the needs of the changing day: for no day is like any other day. . . . The same eternal principles have been taught . . . but the methods of approach have changed continually in the 38 years since the era was first published.1

Joseph F. Smith said that the Church is "perfectly organized" to care for its members. The reason for the need of so many auxiliary organizations is that the priesthood councils have not assumed and "magnified" their responsibilities. When they do, there will be no need for the auxiliaries. Then the Church's influence over its members will increase.2 The change sought in the Church seems to be to make old orders work in today's culture.

Together, a Methodist monthly, announced an All-Methodist football team in an attempt to be relevant with the day. Dan Wakefield referred to this as an example of a weakness of the religious press when he wrote of "slick-paper Christianity."

Too many religious leaders have sought to be Together with their era and become shabby followers and imitators rather than leaders. In the desperate effort to be up-to-date they have dressed Jesus Christ in a gray flannel suit and smothered his spirit in the folds of conformity. The slick-paper Christianity cheerily rises in the midst of a world seeking answers to survival, and offers an

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1John A. Widtsoe, talk given in June Conference of the Church 1935. It was printed in an undated circular found in the special collections section of the Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah, entitled "The Improvement Era Now Becomes More Than Ever the Voice of the Church."

2McConkie, op. cit., p. 65.
All-Methodist football team.1

These "slick-paper" articles were described as just machinations to attract readers.

Gordon Alred's book, The Valley of Tomorrow, made a deliberate attempt to present religious doctrine and concepts in a fiction book. The publisher, Marvin W. Wallin of Bookcraft, sent copies of it to several Seminaries to have students evaluate it. Helen Hinckley, in her review of the book, said that most students reported they enjoyed the book and could relate with the chief protagonist, Kelly.2 She then gave undue emphasis to the few negative critiques. The author found, in examination of the survey letters from the students, that one negative response quoted by Mrs. Hinckley was made by a fifty-two year old male. Most students were influenced for the better by the book. The few controvertive statements were made by youth that covertly or overtly expressed an involvement in the plot. Mrs. Hinckley asks, "Whether or not writing with such clearly defined purposes can produce excellence in literature."3 She suggests that good lessons can be taught only when the ideas come free of a structured, forced, or preachy aura. One gets the feeling that she thinks religious literature should make only "moral declarations" and not teach doctrine. One study of an L.D.S. publication discovered that Mormons desire mostly doctrine. Everything else is


3Ibid.
secondary.¹

The adage that the public demands lurid writing does not apply to the whole public. Several successful teen and young adult magazine editors have described their market as demanding articles that are relevant and written in good taste.²

From our reader response we find that the 13-18 year-old male is hip in the best sense of that word; knowledgeable and aware of a broad world. He can not be written down to and cannot be patronized.

... we have been most heartened by our younger writers simply because they don't look for angles, they don't try to put themselves into the contemporary scene, they are part of it. Their writing is almost always straightforward and to the point. ³

Today's young adults of all reading ability want good writing. They are ready for the meaty themes. The slower reader can still handle intellectual material.⁴ Young people can acquire learning from printed material. Wilmer S. Rush found that by the time most students reach the ninth grade in school, printed mediums of communication are a "highly significant" means of transferring information.⁵ J. Reuben Clark said that Church educators tend to underrate the spiritual inclinations of the young people of the Church. In an address to the Seminary and Institute personnel (1938), he stated that youth want the gospel

¹Vern Young, "Readership Study of The Instructor Magazine," unpublished thesis, Department of Communications, Brigham Young University, 1967.


³Ainsworth, op. cit. ¹Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

"straight and undiluted."\(^1\) The department's studentbod appear to want to learn doctrine from good writing but others warn that it must be perceived as believed.\(^2\) "If you get to teens with a believable approach, then they are yours for as long as you are able to sustain their interest. If you mislead them, then they will never forget your betrayal."\(^3\) In short, the most frequent variable used to delineate vital factors of a publication seemed to be the relevance of the writing to the audience and the day.

There appeared to be no variance between the Mormon leader and the non-Mormon leader about the need for relevance in their publications. The parting of the ways comes over another issue. The "new wave" of inspirational writing outside the Church has been that of leaning on the social and natural sciences and less on church history.\(^4\) This move has been noticed all over the world.\(^5\) No dogmas or battles on behalf of this or that literary cause holds the attention of these writers. There has been a kind of ecumenical movement among the religious press, with some

\(^1\) J. Rouben Clark, Jr., "The Charted Course of the Church in Education," printed pamphlet by The Department of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion from a talk given August 8, 1938.


\(^3\) Stephen Kahn, op. cit., p. 44.


exception.\textsuperscript{1}

All publications have some social effect.\textsuperscript{2} That social effect is hoped to be the same as the social purposes of their sponsoring institution. For an ecumenical joining of religious publications to occur, they would all need to de-emphasize the differences among their churches and accentuate areas of agreement. Bonhoeffer, a German theologian who died in one of Hitler's prisons, has had an almost universal effect on protestant ministers. He wrote that man has learned to answer questions of importance without using any constructs of a relevant God.\textsuperscript{3} Many influential men gave evidence of this conclusion. Tennessee Williams has been adjudged by Francis L. Kundel as representative of writing of a God who is not involved in the world in any meaningful way.\textsuperscript{4} A panel of non-Mormon religious leaders summarize their problem this way:

\begin{quote}
\ldots how are we going to put God back into the thinking of modern youth especially, and of non-church people? We can't very well do it through divine revelation or through prayer. It seems to me we've got to begin at the foundation and through a dialectic process point out that intelligence is the most satisfactory and rational solution of all that exists \ldots and this Intelligence, then, we would label God.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\ldots as a Christian theologian you are suggesting that this God-is-dead theory rests on the premise of the invalidity, the fallaciousness of the Apostles' Creed, and invalidity of the
\end{quote}


bibilical revelation, the collapse of the whole Christian view of God and the world.1

Mark E. Peterson was very vigorous in resisting the influence of other churches on seminary and institute teachers. He said, "... in teaching the gospel there is no academic freedom. There is only fundamental orthodox doctrine and truth. ... We have no need for the uninspired conjectures of the clerics of the world concerning the doctrines of Christ."2 J. Reuben Clark also charged the department personnel to teach only the gospel of Christ, the doctrines of the Church and leave "the philosophies of the world" to the public schools.3

They were directed to look to the Standard Works of the Church4 and the speeches and writings of the living Prophets,5 particularly the President of the Church. Some have had vision that the living Oracles are the best source for authoritative statements. What those men say have been considered to be the same as what the Lord would say.6 The

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3Clark, op. cit., p. 9.
4The Bible, The Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants, and The Pearl of Great Price. [These volumes are considered as scripture by the Church.]
5All Apostles and members of The First Presidency are Prophets. See, John A. Widtsoe, Priesthood and Church Government (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1939), p. 262.
6Marion G. Romney, Conference Report (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October, 1950), hereafter cited as C.R., also, C.R., April, 1945, p. 90, also, The Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1952), 1:38; 21:5-6; 133:71; 112:20, hereafter cited as D&C.
Church Department of Education personnel had been given the theme "Follow the Brethren" as a guide, referring to the prophets.\(^1\) The Presidents of the Church were especially revered as guides and as revealers of God's will. Many General Authorities\(^2\) have given testimony to the value of following the President's advice.\(^3\) Brigham Young once stood in a semi-annual conference of the Church, when Joseph Smith, Jr., was President, and testified that the words of the prophet-head of the Church were more valuable to the members than any of the cannonized scripture which lay on the pulpit before him. Joseph Smith confirmed it immediately afterward.\(^4\) Other General Authorities have said the same thing since that time.\(^5\)

Great value has been placed on the thoughts of the General Authorities given at the semi-annual general conferences of the Church. Alvin R. Dyer said, "From experience in the Church we have learned that

\(^{1}\)Boyd K. Packer, "Follow the Brethren," address given to Seminary and Institute personnel, summer, 1964, also given to Brigham Young University Student body, March 23, 1965, hereafter cited as BYU.

\(^{2}\)Members of the following quorums of the Church constitute the General Authorities: First Presidency, Council of Twelve Apostles, Assistants to the Twelve Apostles, First Council of Seventy, Presiding Bishopric, The Patriarch to the Church.


\(^{4}\)Alford Woodruff, C.R., October, 1897, pp. 18-19.

the expressed will of our Heavenly Father comes to his people at conference time. 1 Speaking to the Brigham Young University student body, Spencer W. Kimball made a similar point. He referred to the time, energy, and money put into a conference and said that the "education in eternal verities" are wasted unless they become part of the active epistemology of those who listen to conference. He desired of them to get a copy of the conference talks and give them as prominent a place in their libraries as the scriptures. 2 Another apostle of the Church, Harold B. Lee, encouraged conference attenders to read the reports of conference talks and, "... let it be the guide to their walk and talk during the next six months." 3 On another occasion he stated it more emphatically, "Now in the world is the Lord going to get over to you what he wants you to do if you are not there when he says it, and you do not take the time to read it after it has been said?" 4 The religion faculty of the Brigham Young University, one of the principal training institutions of Seminary and Institute personnel, considered the conference reports important enough to justify offering an undergraduate course (number 332) based on the reports.

Church Authorities have emphasized also that the most authoritative source for gospel understanding is the Holy Spirit. 5 No study of

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1 Alvin B. Dyer, C.R., October, 1965, p. 133.
3 Harold B. Lee, BYU, July 7, 1954.
4 Harold B. Lee, C.R., April, 1946, p. 66.
5 Harold B. Lee, C.R., April, 1953; Eldred G. Smith, C.R., October,
theology, religion or any other field of study is complete until it is confirmed by the Holy Spirit. This presupposes that personal revelation from God is obtainable. The final step in knowing the truth, as taught by the Church, is to live the principles, to make application of them in daily living.

In summary, this chapter has discussed the efforts of the Church to resist influences of "worldly ways" and to teach the doctrines accepted by it as truth. The purposes of the official Church periodicals are: (1) to be the voice of the General Authorities in revealing the will of the Lord, (2) the expounding of the doctrines of the Church, (3) the motivating of members to change their lives in conformity to the gospel as taught by the Church, and (4) the helping of members to resist pressures to do otherwise. The Seminary and Institute teachers and administrators, as well as other Church auxiliaries, are to assist the Church in accomplishing its goals. They were assigned to support the official Church periodicals and to use them in their work.

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1Marion G. Romney, BYU, May 30, 1957, also, The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1952), Moroni 10:5.

CHAPTER III

EDITORIAL POLICY AND HISTORICAL BEGINNINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to give a brief historical account of each periodical being studied and to present its editorial policy as accurately as possible. The objectives of a magazine must be known in order to make recommendations for improvement. Sidney Kobre states that recommendations for improvement of a newspaper or magazine are best determined by comparing the "objective or purposes for existence" with the social effect the periodical had on its readers. ¹

A scripture that might be considered as the Lord's editorial policy is found in the Doctrine and Covenants:

And for this purpose I have commanded you to organize yourselves, even to shinolah [print] my words, the fulness of my scriptures, the revelations which I have given unto you, and which I shall, hereafter, from time to time give unto you.

For the purpose of building up my church and kingdom on the earth, and to prepare my people for the time when I shall dwell with them, which is nigh at hand. ²

There have been eighty-four Church periodicals that have gone defunct. ³ Seventeen are currently being published by the Church. Ten of the seventeen have been produced in countries outside of the United States of America, such as The Millenial Star (England) and Der Stern

In certain cases it was difficult to determine if the publication was a magazine or a newspaper. Those published more frequently and concerned mostly with current news were generally considered newspapers.\(^2\)

One of the most popular Church magazines studied was The Improvement Era. There is about one "Era" sold for every ten members in the Church.\(^3\) The Mutual Improvement Association of Weber County, Utah, published The Amateur, a forerunner of the Era, from 1877 to 1879. Its success spurred a magazine for the whole MIA. The Contributor was published from 1879 to 1896 in answer to that need. The Mutual Improvement Messenger, an irregularly issued publication, represented five Stakes in Salt Lake City from 1896 to 1926. The "Era" came into being in 1896, successor to The Contributor. In 1909 it became the official periodical for the priesthood quorums of the Church. The Church schools were represented with pages in the "Era" starting in 1911. The Department of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion was the largest segment of the Church school system;\(^4\) thus, it was asked to make regular contributions to the publication.

Since its beginning, the senior editor of the Era has been a member of the First Presidency of the Church. A business manager or managing editor has usually taken care of the mundane details of

\(^1\)Lewis, op. cit. \(^2\)Sudweeks, op. cit., p. 5.

\(^3\)Lewis, op. cit., p. 9.

\(^4\)Harvey L. Taylor, Sem. & Inst., June 19, 1968. (Mr. Taylor is Administrator of all of the Church's schools except for Brigham Young University.)
publishing the magazine. Today's Era (1968) has no written editorial policy; however, the editorial staff met monthly with Church leaders. Most staff workers said that the policy established from the beginning issue is still in force.\(^1\) In 1933 the editors\(^2\) created a formal policy and circulated it through the Church in a pamphlet.\(^3\) It basically said as follows:

1. It is the voice of the Church in communicating the messages of Church leaders to members in:
   a. doctrine
   b. the position of the Church in government affairs
   c. economic, social and religious movements

2. It is to supply an outlet for creative art.

3. Miscellaneous:
   a. current Church news
   b. world news (of Church importance)

The circular also gave a statement of purpose that seems to place the Era over the other Church periodicals as the voice of Church officials to the whole Church. It stipulated that the "Era is for:

... the strengthening of the faith of the members in the restored Church of Christ, and the promulgation among all readers of the truths and principles of the gospel. Somehow, this purpose must actuate all labor in behalf of the Era, though it must be used with skill, and made inviting to the readers. The Era must of course, also serve as the official means of communication between the members

\(^{1}\)Lexis, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

\(^{2}\)Heber J. Grant, John A. Widtsoe, Harrison R. Merrill. (In his talk printed inside the circular, John A. Widtsoe mentions Elsie Talmage Brandlo as an associate editor who worked with the editorial board on the policy statement. A note on the cover announced her death.)

\(^{3}\)The Improvement Era (September, 1935), Vol. 38, No. 9. (The circular has no date, but is a reprint of the policy statement made on the inside cover of this issue, plus a printed speech given by Elder Widtsoe in June Conference, 1935. It has the title "The Improvement Era Now Becomes More Than Ever the Voice of the Church," and is found in the special collections of the Brigham Young University Library.)
and the organizations that it represents.\footnote{underlining added.}

The \textit{Era} has come to represent the whole Church whereas the other official Church periodicals represent some specific sub-group within the Church.\footnote{Peterson, op. cit., 1958, pp. 12-13.} The masthead, "The Voice of the Church," was carried on the \textit{Era} cover for many years as a reflection of that role.\footnote{Ibid.}

In the above statement of policy, there were two main purposes explained as justification for the existence of the publication: (1) to strengthen the faith of Church members in the Church (2) to present the principles of the faith to the members. When President Joseph F. Smith was an \textit{Era} editor, he stated it this way:

In all things, however, the spirit of the gospel will continue to be the leading thread holding all these institutions home, quorums, missions, organizations, and educational institutes together, and the \textit{Era}, as in the past, will breathe the spirit of our Lord, Jesus Christ, seeking to present nothing but what is clean, pure, proper, and in harmony with his laws and commandments.\footnote{Ibid.}

There has been no great change in policy from the beginning \textit{Era} to the present. Similar statements of intent, purpose and objectives have been expressed from time to time. The present managing editor, Doyle L. Green, was instructed to make it the "best magazine in the world" when he was assigned editorship by President George Albert Smith.\footnote{Ibid.}

Though the \textit{Era} is directed toward all Church members today (1968), it was originally intended to concentrate on youth: articles for them, assisting parents in understanding their children.\footnote{Ibid.} The \textit{Instructor}

\footnotesize

\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid.
\item Ibid.
\item Ibid.
\item Ibid.
\item Ibid.
\item ibid. op. cit., p. 25.
\item Editor's Table," \textit{The Improvement Era}, Vol. 1, No. 1 (November, 1897).
\end{enumerate}
magazine also was originally created for young people to read but has shifted its appeal to the teachers of youth in the Sunday schools of the Church. The magazine was called The Juvenile Instructor from 1866 to 1929. It became known as The Instructor in 1930 when the officers and teachers of the Deseret Union Sunday School became its focus. The first Juvenile Instructor was a folded four-page paper created by George Q. Cannon. That January issue (1866) began the first children's magazine to be published between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Coast.1 It celebrated its one-hundredth anniversary in 1966. The First Presidency of the Church pointed to its superiority, saying it was "unsurpassed by any in its field."2

Elder George Q. Cannon desired to give some consistency and unity to the various independent Sunday schools and to assist youth to prepare for future service to their Church and Country. It may be safely said that early history of The Instructor magazine hinged upon the efforts of Elder Cannon. Early editions carried this lead statement, "The Juvenile Instructor - An Illustrated Paper, Published Every Alternate Saturday - Designed Expressly for the Education and Elevation of the Youth - Elder George Q. Cannon, Editor - Published by George Q. Cannon." Elder Cannon's devotion to the Church resulted in a call to the Quorum of Twelve Apostles in 1860. In 1867 all Sunday schools of the Church were organized under direction of the newly appointed General Superintendent,

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George Q. Cannon. In 1872 the organization's name was changed from Parent Sunday School Union to The Deseret Sunday School Union. Elder Cannon was made a member of the First Presidency of the Church in 1880, serving under Presidents Wilford Woodruff and Lorenzo Snow. With these demands on his time, he never relinquished his role as editor and publisher of The Juvenile Instructor. After his death in 1901, the magazine was sold to the Deseret Sunday School Union for $25,000. Since that time, the President of the Church has been titled Editor with several associate editors doing the detailed work of producing it. David O. McKay has been editor since 1951, writing all of the editorials since that date. David Lawrence McKay, current Superintendent of the Deseret Sunday School Union, and Lorin F. Wheelwright, Chairman of the Instructor Committee of the Union and Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication of Brigham Young University, were Associate Editors at the time this study was completed. Burl Shepard was appointed as managing editor in 1965.

The editorial policies of The Instructor were summarized by Lorin F. Wheelwright, when he came to his present association with the magazine, as follows:

1. The Purpose. To help teachers teach the gospel to every member of the Church.

2. Spiritual Quality. To include only those articles, illustrations, and features which are in good taste, spiritually uplifting, and in harmony with the restored gospel.

3. Good Scholarship. To be as accurate with information and opinions as is achievable with the resources at hand.

4. Wide Participation. To keep a broad base of contribution to its pages so that it truly represents a variety of authors, good geographic distribution, and differing points of view on methods.

5. Interesting Style. To write so that it is easier to read than
to skip - at a level that is dignified but neither popularly breezy nor academically dull.

6. Well Balanced Content. To serve all facets of gospel teaching from the cradle roll to advanced maturity.

7. High Quality Production. To produce half-tone pictures and line cuts with clarity and full color pictures with full tonal range, accurate register, and fully corrected color plates. To keep type legible.

8. Prompt Schedules. To set and maintain a publication schedule which will best serve the readers.

9. Adherence to Church Policies. To keep all content in harmony with established traditions, Church Doctrine, and the desires of Church leadership. (to avoid controversy and skepticism.)

The Instructor has been described as the official organ of the Church Sunday School organization and "the teaching magazine of the Church." A more recent shift in its role has been towards helping parents in the family home evening programs of the Church.

The history of The Church News was entwined with the history of The Deseret News of which it was a supplementary section. The Deseret News was born in 1850 with Willard Richards as editor. It served the vast area known as the Provisional State of Deseret. That territory covered a large portion of Southern California, portions of New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, Oregon and all of Utah, Arizona and Nevada. It was the "oldest existing newspaper in the vast region west of Santa

1Lorin F. Wheelwright, Report on The Instructor Magazine (Sept., 1958), p. 18, as cited in Young, op. cit., p. 5.

2Peterson, op. cit., p. 17.

3Wheelwright, op. cit., as cited in Young, op. cit.

The affairs of the Church have always been represented in the 
*Deseret News*. The First Presidency made it the "official organ of the Church," 
Oct. 15, 1892. In the early days of the territory the Church permeated 
every way of life.

At the time of its establishment the separation between Church 
and State was one of administration—not of personnel. . . . The 
first masthead motto of the *Deseret News* was: **TRUTH AND LIBERTY**, 
expressing an ideal to which both Church and State have consistently 
been devoted throughout the past century of accomplishment.1

As early as 1896 the Saturday *news* was carrying a Church depart-
ment.2 By 1906 Church news took two full pages. In 1930 three pages 
were needed and Editor Albert Carrington announced that "as soon as 
practical" the *News* would publish a special section devoted to Church 
news.3 The first **Church Section of The Deseret News** made its debut on 
Saturday, April 1, 1931, in conjunction with Easter and April Conference 
of that year.4 For the first six months James "Jim" Kenward, the 
Saturday Feature Editor, produced it in addition to his regular load of 
work. Henry A. Smith became the first full time editor. During his 
eighteen year editorship, it grew from eight to twenty-four pages long.

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1Ibid., p. 12H.

2Dean C. Jessop, "Book Reviews," Brigham Young University Studies, 
*Vol. VIII, No. 1*, p. 96. (Mr. Jesse works in the Church Historian's 
Office. He reviewed James R. Clark's *Messages of the First Presidency*.)


4Wendell J. Ashton, *Voice of the West* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The 

5Ibid. 6Ibid.
It was named the Church News in 1943 and began some separate mailing from the Deseret News.  

1 Jack E. Jarrard, Church News Editor at the time this study was completed (1968), attributed its growth partly to the Newman style of writing used.  

2 He was under the direction of Mark E. Peterson, the Chairman of the Board of the Deseret News Publishing Company, which included both The Deseret News Press and the paper (1968). Elder Peterson also wrote the editorials for the Church News.  

The Church News worked closely with the Church Information Committee and its sub-committee, the News Development Committee, in devising ways to help missionaries tell the story of the Church. An example of this cooperation was the July 25, 1964, issue which told of the Mormon Tabernacle Choirs visit to the Mormon Pavilion at the New York World's Fair. Extra copies were produced and distributed among fair visitors by the missionaries.  

4 The dynamic nature of the Church produces news.  

5 The Church News and the committees did not create the news, they just tried to discover and present it.  

Two of the magazines called unofficial Church periodicals by this study, BYU Studies and Impact, might be identified as quasi-official since they were sponsored by official institutions of the Church.  

1 Ibid.  


3 Ibid.  

4 Ibid.  


5 Peterson, op. cit.
Studies is sponsored by Brigham Young University and **Impact** is the organ of the Department of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion.

**Impact** was proceeded by two other department sponsored periodicals, **Weekday Religious Education** and **Pinpoints**. **Weekday Religious Education**, the first, came forth as a quarterly starting in March, 1937. Vernon F. Larsen took command as the first Chairman of the Editing Committee. The first two issues had mostly book reviews by various members of the department. William E. Berrett, present Administrator of the Department of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion, was moved up from a member of the editing Committee to its chairman on the third issue. It came out in December, 1937, and had a greater variety in its format. There was no statement of editorial policy made; however, the masthead on the inside cover gave some generalized direction to the magazine. It stated that it was, "Designed to assist generally and professionally the teachers and directors of week-day religious education on the junior high, senior high and college level." There were many statements in the magazine, particularly in editorials, about the objectives of the department. These statements were considered as expressions of the editorial policy.

The following is a summary of the most frequently found objectives of the department's educational program as expressed by **Weekday Religious Education**:

1. Affect students to increase their loyalty to the Church, their faith in God and the restored gospel. Though character education is a part of their duty, it is auxiliary to testimony building.1

1Franklin L. West, "Editorial," **Weekday Religious Education**
2. to establish a rational basis for their belief. 1

3. to help students see the wisdom of acting in conformity with high moral standards. 2

4. to help students feel that they are children of God. 3

5. to affect a change in the lives of their students. 4

The March, 1939, edition had what appears to be William E. Berrett's first editorial. He compared the effect of the teachers of science, which only "superficially" touched the lives of others, to the teachers of the heart who reached "the deep wellsprings of the emotions, and stirs afresh the hope of immortality." 5 In the first editorial after official approval for publication by the Church Board of Education, 6 Franklin L. West wrote that he wanted the men and women in the "system" to write articles for publication and, more importantly, to "systematically read and study its contents." 7

President Berrett remained as Chairman of the Editorial Committee until the eleventh and last issue in March, 1940. No efforts were made

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(Provo, Utah: LDS Department of Education, December, 1937), Vol. 1, No. 3, hereafter cited as Morning Owl: Ed. (Franklin L. West was Church Commissioner of Education.)

1Ibid., Dec., 1938, Vol. 2, No. 4.  
2Ibid.

3Ibid.


5Ibid.

6The Church Board of Education consists of the First Presidency, the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, and other selected individuals.

7West, op. cit., Vol. 1, No. 3.
to replace it until 1954. During the summer school session\(^1\) selected men were assigned periodicals and books from the field of religious education to review on a monthly basis. These reviews and other teaching material were printed in a new publication, *Pinpoints*, under the caption, "Gleanings from the Field." The only other part of early issues was called "Party Line" and contained department news. It was mimeographed on eight and a half by eleven paper. *Pinpoints* seems to have never been intended to be professionally done or to broaden its scope to the extent of the former department magazine. It was very careful to avoid any philosophical exercises. Philosophical writing was what appeared to have put *Weekly Religious Education* in disfavor with the Board of Education, causing its discontinuance.

*Pinpoints* gave words of encouragement occasionally, such as one article written by Ernest L. Wilkinson\(^2\) in May, 1957. He admonished personnel to be engaged in the "good cause" of assisting people to build a good life. These general statements were the only thing that approached a policy description. In that same issue President Berrett announced that it was the last issue and any further department news and exchange among personnel was to be put in the Church Section\(^3\) of* The Deseret News*.

\(^1\)Every other summer all department personnel are required to attend the first session of summer school at Brigham Young University.

\(^2\)President Wilkinson was Chancellor of the LDS Department of Education. This office replaced the old Commissioner of Education. Presently (1968) the office has been divided into two; the Administrator of Church Schools other than Brigham Young University which was filled by Harvey L. Taylor and the President of the University filled by President Wilkinson. The name of the department was changed to Department of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion.

\(^3\)The name at that time was the Church Section. It has been
and in *The Improvement Era*.

William C. Smith supervised the first five *Pinpoints*, starting in December, 1951, then Hermine Briggs continued as editor until the last issue in May, 1957.

A third department periodical was authorized in 1967. President Berrett called on Albert Payne to edit it. He in turn asked for an editorial board to assist him. This publication was titled *Impact* and was on the order of the old *Weekday Religious Education*. It was printed quarterly and professionally prepared. Each of the three editions produced to date (1968) have had some theme that the editorials, by Mr. Payne and President Berrett, and the lead articles have centered on. The next two were said to have themes also, but it is questionable if this policy would continue. About four thousand copies were sent out each issue. They went to the General Authorities of the Church, Stake Presidents in United States and Canada, to administrative personnel of other Church periodicals, and to libraries in addition to the over nine hundred full time employees, two thousand-plus part time teachers and administrators of the program. There is no clear objective or editorial policy set forth. One of the purposes of this study is to help determine the direction the department personnel would like to see it take. At the time of this study (1968) policy is determined by the Editorial Board.

changed back to *Church News* again.

1Hermine Briggs was William E. Berrett's secretary. Her married name is Hamman.

2Told to the author by the editor in an interview, July 30, 1968.
In addition to Impact, all of the Institutes of Religion of the Church receive BYU Studies. Studies was formulated to appeal to the more educated members of the Church.

The original publication entitled Brigham Young University Studies came forth in 1925 and dealt only with writing of the sociology and economics of selected agricultural communities of Utah. The first issue was produced by the Research Division of the University. Following issues were published by individual faculty members. There was no consistent schedule of publication. Issue number two was published in 1928, number three in 1930; the fourth issue came out in 1933 and the last one of this original series was produced in 1937. Clinton F. Larson created a new periodical in 1959 which carried the old title, Brigham Young University Studies. It was considered an extension of Brigham Young University Bulletin and the old Studies by the administration of the school. President Wilkinson gave Dr. Larson support with his new magazine but wanted it to carry its present name rather than Wasatch Review (Dr. Larson's choice). Dr. Larson wanted to make it unique, with an identity of its own; thus, there were three sets of identification numbers on the first issue. Volume fifty-seven, number twenty-one, referred to that issue's place in the BYU Bulletin series; volume one, number two, placed it in series with the old BYU Studies; volume two, number one, shows that this was the first issue in the "new" series. These confusing numbers were discontinued with the second issue under Dr. Larson's managing editorship. The new identification numbers began

1The author interviewed Dr. Larson August 9, 1968, to learn this.
with the Autumn, 1961, issue. It was number one in volume four. The
Winter issue of that year was number two, but the volume was identified
as three.

Dean B. Farnsworth was the managing editor for volumes five, six
and seven. There were twelve issues under his editorship from 1961 to
1965. During the years 1962 and 1963 there were no Studies published.
This special note in the Spring-Summer, 1964, issue explained why:

Problems incident to publishing a periodical have delayed
the appearance of Brigham Young University Studies so that
Volume V, Number 2, is the Winter 1964 number. The immediately
preceding number, Volume V, Number 1, is the Autumn 1962 number.
This issue, the combined Spring-Summer 1964 issue, completes
Volume V.

All issues produced while Dr. Larson and Dr. Farnsworth were
editors had the following statement of purpose printed behind the title
page: "The purpose of Brigham Young University Studies is to be a voice
for the community of L.D.S. scholars." This was in keeping with the
vision of Dr. Larson's original concept of an editorial policy for his
creation.1 This policy gives Mormon scholars opportunity to publish
their thoughts on subjects of general interest. It was also part of the
policy to trust writers from the University to be scholarly and gave
them full responsibility for their writing.

This policy was continued when Charles D. Tate, Jr., accepted the
role of editor of Studies. The desire to give opportunity for LDS
scholars to publish was made more obvious by broadening the title to
Brigham Young University Studies: A Voice for the Community of LDS
Scholars. The previously implicit disclaimer for responsibility for

1Told to the author by Dr. Larson in an interview August 9, 1968.
writers "opinions and statements" was explicitly printed on the inside cover. After President Earl Crockett¹ asked Dr. Tate to be editor, one of his first decisions was to not make up for the unpublished 1966-67 issues.²

*Studies* appealed to a very select readership. About twenty-two hundred subscriptions were sent out plus those sold across the counter at the time of this study (1968). Subscriptions were increasing.

Dr. Tate's editorial policy was clearly put forth in the first issue he put out. It was:

... it should really be a voice for the Latter-day Saint scholar writing articles about how he correlated his scientific, literary, sociological, or psychological research and his religious convictions. ... we again dedicate its pages to the pursuit of truth, no matter where it may be found, and to the rooting out of error, no matter what its source. ... The purpose of BYU Studies is to give a voice to those who are striving in find truth, who are endeavoring to synthesize the spiritual and intellectual in their search, who are seeking "learning by study and also by faith." (D&C 88:118)

... our creed is to search with all our hearts and minds in the faith that the source of all knowledge might reveal truths to us in our laboratories, our studies, or our secret places of prayer.

... Each author must remember that in what he has to say he speaks for himself and not for the Church, not for Brigham Young University, nor even for the Editorial Board of BYU Studies. We lay no claim to being official spokesmen for the Church, and readers who refuse to accept this fact will misread our purpose and our desires.³

One is that real academic freedom can only be obtained outside of the

¹Vice-President of Brigham Young University at the time.


³Ibid.
control of the Church. This implied, to him, that Church leaders are unable to tolerate freedom of inquiry and expression. The other assumption he opposed is that valuable scholarship must be critical. His answer was that "critical synthesis" is as valid as "critical analysis," but is more difficult to achieve. He hoped that Studies could achieve "critical synthesis."

Tate's statement, about operating outside of the Church, seemed to be aimed towards Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought magazine. This periodical is also intended to appeal to the educated Mormon, but is not sponsored by any official organization within the Church.1 There have been mixed emotions felt by many people over the stature, the role and the future of this publication. The official Church position is best described as a "hands off" policy.2 Church leaders wanted to let Dialogue prove itself. John Gardner, a member of its editorial board, saw need for a publication like Dialogue but expressed his mixed feelings this way, "If Dialogue is ever a source of embarrassment to the Church, it should go out of publication. If it is useful, we hope it will continue."3

A newsletter sent to editorial board members after its first completed year of publication, announced that they expected to sell seven

1Every issue has this statement, "Dialogue has no official connection with any department of Stanford University or of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

2Expressed to the author by Dr. Gardner in an interview June 21, 1968, (He is Chairman of the Department of Physics of Brigham Young University.)

3Ibid. See Appendix B.
thousand five hundred copies, but were hoping to build readership to ten thousand in order to put it on a sound financial basis. Sales increased rapidly from the beginning until it became self-supporting then began to "plateau out;" new subscriptions just matched discontinued subscriptions.\(^1\)

Since it is supported by subscriptions only, members of the editorial board had the assignment to promote new subscriptions stressed to them.

One of the unique features (unique to a Mormon publication) is that non-Mormons as well as Mormons with a wide variety of viewpoints are invited to write for Dialogue.\(^2\) One of the founders and associate managing editor, Eugene England, identified some objectives of the magazine in its maiden issue. The most salient point was the intended effort to make Mormon life and teachings relevant to secular life.\(^3\)

Whether this use of the word relevant means (1) to make Mormon life conform to that of the rest of the world, (2) to seek clear understanding of non-Mormon views of life and insure that the Mormon ideas and ideals are rightly presented, or (3) to endeavor to live ones life consistent with his personal constructs of reality rather than to formulate his constructs to fit his life, wasn't made plain. It appeared that all three concepts were intended. Notice how Eugene England handled the relevancy issue:

My faith encourages my curiosity and awe; it thrusts me out into relationship with all the creation. The Christ I have come to know

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\(^1\)John Gardner interview.


\(^3\)Ibid.
through my Mormon faith affirms the world as good and each of its people as eternally precious; He insists that my words and actions be integrated with each other and relevant to that world—that they not just speak to it but really make the connection. My faith in Him encourages me to enter into dialogue.  

Some of its readers have wondered if Dialogue would become a journal for Ph.D’s to write back and forth to each other for comfort and reinforcement about problems within their disciplines rather than to really tackle the problems of relevancy. Others believe that Dialogue, and Dialogue only, gets to relevancy in a real way.

The other associate managing editor, G. Wesley Johnson, was lucid in his presentations of the magazine’s objectives.

Some of the more general purposes of Dialogue are: to stimulate excellence in writing and the visual arts throughout the Mormon community; to present fresh talent and to offer established authors a new vehicle of thought; to sustain a serious standard of objectivity, candor, and imagination in dealing with Mormon culture; to give students and thoughtful persons across the land a journal directly concerned with their quest for rational faith and faith-promoting knowledge; to provide professional people from a variety of disciplines a place to publish findings on Mormon topics which are of interest to the general public; to help Mormons and their neighbors develop understanding and concern for each other through an exchange of ideas; And perhaps most important of all, to help Mormons develop their identity, uniqueness, and sense of purpose by expressing their spiritual heritage and moral vision to the community of man.

In summary, Church authorities expected that the members would utilize the official Church periodicals. As President David O. McKay

3 Ibid.
said, "... it is hoped that members of the Church throughout the world will avail themselves of the essential functions which our magazines perform."¹ The quasi-official periodicals get help from the special groups they serve; Dialogue is left to "foot for itself."

One-half of the membership of the Church have been members less than five years.² Church News and the Era concern themselves with those people. The other publications are for special subgroups in the Church.


²Interview with Jack E. Jarrard June 20, 1968.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

There were no hypothesis made at the beginning of this study.

From a review of the literature, it was found that the relevance of written material to daily life experiences was one of the major concerns of all people associated with the modern religious press. Determining the relevancy ratings of selected representative features from the periodicals studied was the main concern of the questionnaire. The following tables, Figures, and discussion give summary of the data obtained from the questionnaire and interviews:

I. BREAKDOWN OF SAMPLE

There were fifty-nine in the sample that work only in the Seminary, eight that were only in Institute programs and ten that were in both Seminary and Institute. For the chi square tests (between those that read features—those that did not and the relevance ratings given those features) all associated with the Institute (eighteen) were made one group. Twenty-one of the total were instructors only, eighteen administrators only, thirty-four were in the role of both instructor and administrator and three were in the Indian program. All were full time employees of the Department.
FIGURE 1

PERSONNEL'S STUDENT LOAD

FIGURE 2

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE WITH DEPARTMENT
TABLE I
NUMBER OF YES AND NO ANSWERS ABOUT AVAILABILITY OF PERIODICALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIODICALS</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Improvement Era</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Instructor</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Church News</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Reports</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brighen Young University Studies</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where the questionnaire asked about the conference reports, it indicated that they were found in three sources: the Era, Church News and in bound copies. All in the sample indicated they took the Era yet two answered they did not get conference reports.

II. RELEVANCY RATINGS

Those participating in the study sample were asked to rate some of the features twice, once for themselves and once for their students. They were given the following instructions:

Please read the following list of features or types of features and indicate their relevancy to you for your personal growth and development. Relevancy is the bearing, case of application, pertinency of the feature to your life. A good "rule of thumb" to help you decide relevancy is to answer the question, "Am I interested in it and do I use it?" Rate the features as follows: 1-extremely relevant 2-very relevant 3-moderately relevant 4-little relevancy 5-no relevancy. Circle the number that indicates the relevancy of the feature to you.

The following table shows the relevancy ratings of features for the personal growth and development of department personnel:
### TABLE II

**Relevancy Ratings of Features for Department Personnel**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Periodicals</th>
<th>Frequency Distribution</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Instructor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Editorial page by President McKay</td>
<td>52 17 7 1 0</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reed Bradford's Articles on Home Life</td>
<td>0 23 36 14 4</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendall Ashton's Articles on Back Cover</td>
<td>7 25 29 13 3</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Teacher Improvement Lesson&quot;</td>
<td>15 24 21 12 2</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Series, as those on Philosophy and Religion by Truman Madson</td>
<td>9 22 30 15 1</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center page color foldout pictures</td>
<td>13 19 21 14 10</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Era</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Exploring the Universe&quot; by Franklin S. Harris</td>
<td>2 12 31 24 8</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Editor's Page&quot; by President David McKay</td>
<td>63 10 3 1 0</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;President Joseph Fielding Smith Answers Your Questions&quot;</td>
<td>31 33 9 4 0</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Since Cuemoreh&quot; by Hugh Nibley</td>
<td>10 21 33 10 3</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melchizedek Priesthood Page</td>
<td>18 26 16 11 3</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Presiding Bishopric's Page</td>
<td>12 29 21 13 2</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Today's Family&quot; by Florence B. Pinnock</td>
<td>2 13 26 20 16</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Era of Youth&quot;</td>
<td>30 26 18 2 1</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Church News</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;News Notes at Home and Abroad,&quot; Church Special Articles on news of current Church happenings</td>
<td>14 34 26 2 1</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Articles on Church History</td>
<td>10 35 24 6 2</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;News of Other Churches&quot;</td>
<td>5 9 33 22 8</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Notable Quotes,&quot; quotes on a topic from various sources</td>
<td>9 16 38 10 4</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorials</td>
<td>39 26 8 1 3</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;This Week in Church History,&quot; short articles on past history</td>
<td>12 23 33 8 1</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dialogue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;An Assessment of Mormon Culture,&quot; examines the history, present achievements, and potential of Mormon life</td>
<td>4 16 33 11 13</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Roundtable,&quot; features of current interest</td>
<td>2 19 31 12 13</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;From the Pulpit,&quot; sermons from Mormon leaders</td>
<td>9 23 25 9 11</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE II (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIODICALS</th>
<th>FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>STANDARD DEVIATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Reviews,&quot; of books on Mormonism</td>
<td>5 20 28 12 12</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Among the Mormons,&quot; a survey of current literature, bibliographies</td>
<td>4 12 26 22 13</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Notes and Comments,&quot; news, profiles, opinions, etc.</td>
<td>1 6 33 25 12</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BYU STUDIES

Articles from the physical science disciplines | 3 17 36 14 7 | 3.06 | .96 |
Articles from the life science disciplines      | 5 18 39 10 5 | 2.90 | .94 |
Articles from the religion faculty              | 16 35 20 2 4 | 2.25 | .99 |
Poems, Art: Work and critiques on them          | 2 7 38 16 12 | 3.10 | .95 |
Book Reviews                                    | 5 14 33 19 6 | 3.09 | 1.00 |
Bibliographies                                  | 3 14 30 19 11 | 3.27 | 1.05 |

IMPACT

"Editorials," by William E. Berrett and Albert L. Payne | 29 26 20 2 0 | 1.94 | .86 |
"Theme Articles" on issue's theme- Teacher's Role, Tying Knots, etc. | 23 26 23 5 0 | 2.13 | .92 |
"Contributions," on various issues, Teacher Improvement, Rewards of Teaching, etc. | 21 33 21 2 0 | 2.05 | .81 |
"News in Brief," department news                   | 12 22 30 11 2 | 2.60 | 1.00 |
"Personalities," in the department                  | 12 18 28 15 4 | 2.75 | 1.30 |

CONFERENCE REPORTS

President McKay's keynote address | 67 6 3 1 0 | 1.19 | .56 |
All talks other than President McKay's | 45 23 6 2 1 | 1.58 | .85 |

The following instructions were given to introduce the section where articles were rated for their relevancy to students:

Please indicate your opinion of the relevancy of the following features to your students, high school or college. Though there are great differences among your students, try to think of them here as a whole.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIODICALS</th>
<th>FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>STANDARD DEVIATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE ERA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Era of Youth,&quot; the youth section</td>
<td>33 30 12 2 0</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Editor's Page,&quot; by President McKay</td>
<td>32 13 22 8 2</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;President Joseph Fielding Smith Answers Your Questions&quot;</td>
<td>11 11 11 3 3</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Today's Family&quot; by Florence B. Pinnock</td>
<td>2 16 15 27 17</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Since Cumorah&quot; by Hugh Nibley</td>
<td>1 5 23 23 24</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE INSTRUCTOR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Editorial page by President McKay</td>
<td>29 21 19 6 2</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendall Ashton's Articles on back cover</td>
<td>10 18 31 12 6</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Series, as those on Philosophy and Religion by Truman Hadsen</td>
<td>2 6 25 27 17</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE CHURCH NEWS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;News Notes at Home and Abroad,&quot; Church</td>
<td>3 24 28 17 5</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Articles on news of current Church happenings</td>
<td>7 23 30 14 3</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Articles on Church History</td>
<td>4 16 31 23 3</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIALOGUE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;An Assessment of Mormon Culture,&quot; examines the history, present achievements and potential of Mormon life</td>
<td>4 8 23 19 23</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;From the Pulpit,&quot; sermons from Mormon leaders</td>
<td>3 8 26 21 19</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Religion and Ultimate Concern,&quot; on contemporary theologians</td>
<td>0 3 21 24 29</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYU STUDIES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles from the physical science disciplines</td>
<td>1 10 23 21 17</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles from the life science disciplines</td>
<td>1 11 29 20 16</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles from the religion faculty</td>
<td>3 16 26 17 15</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONFERENCE REPORTS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President McKay's keynote address</td>
<td>35 19 16 4 3</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All talks other than President McKay's</td>
<td>22 26 18 7 4</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It was noted in all ratings of President McKay's articles and talks that as the means decreased the standard deviations decreased. This indicates a high relevancy of President McKay's words to life and a homogeneous opinion about that relevancy among department personnel. The sample was examined for any meaningful differences between any subgroups. None were found. Student Load was not an important differentiating variable. No comparison was made on years of experience between subgroups but a cursory look at the mean of the means for the whole magazine, Impact, shows an appreciable difference between those with over eleven years experience and those with less. A comparison was not run because of the small number of cases in the very first and last two cells. The mean of the means (hereafter referred to as \( M \)) for Impact are: (the first year cell did not run because there was only one case in that cell), (one to three years) 2.28, (four to ten years) 2.38, (eleven to twenty years) 1.80, (over twenty years) 1.72. There should be enough cases in a cell (classification) to justify a statistical computation.

The following table shows the breakdown of \( M \) for the various assignments within the department:
TABLE IV

RELEVANCY RATING OF WHOLE PERIODICAL FOR STUDENTS BY DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIODICAL</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SEMINARY ONLY</td>
<td>INSTITUTE ONLY</td>
<td>BOTHa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church News</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYU Studies</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Reports</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aBoth referred to people who were in both Seminary and Institute programs. They were generally administrators.

Though the Seminary men and the Institute men rated the Era the same, the "Era of Youth" section of the Era was rated more relevant to high school students (1.71-between extremely and very relevant) by Seminary personnel than Institute men did for college students (2.25-between very and moderately relevant.)

Administrators in the department indicated a higher relevance (H of 2.02) of the department magazine, Impact, to themselves than did the Seminary group (H of 2.22) or the Institute personnel (H of 2.95.) The total group rated Impact between very and moderately relevant.

The H for the relevance of the whole periodical was also figured from data in the questionnaire where the personnel of the department rated the publication for their personal growth and for their students. These ratings were used to rank the whole periodical in the following table:
TABLE V
RANKING OF PERIODICALS IN STUDY ACCORDING TO THEIR RELEVANCE TO DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL AND THEIR STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAMPLE SUBGROUPS</th>
<th>M-RRa TO PERSONNEL</th>
<th>M-RR TO STUDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL SAMPLE (77)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Reports</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church News</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYU Studies</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>3.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEMINARY ONLY (59)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Reports</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church News</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYU Studies</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTITUTE ONLY (8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Reports</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>2.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYU Studies</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church News</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOTH INSTITUTE AND SEMINARY (10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Reports</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>2.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church News</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYU Studies</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Relevancy Rating
"Exploring the Universe," by Franklin S. Harris was not included in the average of the means because it has been discontinued from the Era. It was included in the study to see if the relevance rating justified its discontinuance. A mean of 3.31 (standard deviation of .95) places the rating between moderate and little relevancy and seems to back up the decision to discontinue it.

Dialogue was rated at the bottom by each subgroup within the department. It would be an over simplified statement to say that it was the least relevant. You must ask yourself, "It is the least relevant to whom?" There was a dynamic present when this periodical was rated that does not show up from looking at just the subgroups' answers to the questionnaire. Chi square tests revealed that those who had read the article, "Scholarly Studies of Mormonism in the Twentieth Century," from Dialogue, rated the feature it represented (An Assessment of Mormon Culture) higher than those who had not read it.1 Because of the small number who had read the article (six), there were too few samples in each cell to accurately use the results of this test for any predictive conclusions. There were no other significant chi square results. It appears that there is no relationship between reading of articles and the ratings given the features by department personnel. Table VI gives the data on the chi square test of the Dialogue feature.

---

1Significance at the .05 level of confidence.
There was a significant difference in the relevancy rating between the two groups, yet both groups rated the article below "moderately relevant."

The last section of the questionnaire asked if there were any changes the respondents would make in the format of the publication. Eleven made suggestions for change in Dialogue and sixty-six checked the NO answer. Many NO answer were qualified with statements like, "I don't care," "I am against it," "They ought to get rid of it." Dialogue was the only periodical that received qualified NO answers. All YES answers are summarized in chapter V in "Suggestions for Change."

The chi square study was run between those who had read the article representing the feature and those who had not read it with the ratings given those features. Ten features or types of features were represented by sixteen articles from those features.
**TABLE VII**

**ARTICLES THAT REPRESENTED FEATURES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTICLES PRESENTED IN INTERVIEWS</th>
<th>FEATURES FROM QUESTIONNAIRE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Christ, the Light of Humanity&quot;&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>President McKay's keynote Conference address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;After High School That&quot;&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Conference talks by those other than President McKay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Salt Lake Temple&quot;&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt; and &quot;The Gospel Is Our Anchor&quot;&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Editorial in the <em>Era</em> by President McKay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;What Is Eternal Life?&quot;&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt; and &quot;The Influence of Mother&quot;&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Editorial in <em>The Instructor</em> by President McKay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;How Late Is Too Late?&quot;&lt;sup&gt;g&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Editorial in <em>The Church News</em> by Mark E. Peterson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Eternal Progression and the Foreknowledge of God&quot;&lt;sup&gt;h&lt;/sup&gt; and &quot;Joseph Smith and the Lebolo Egyptian Papyri&quot;&lt;sup&gt;i&lt;/sup&gt; and &quot;The Significance of Joseph Smith's 'First Vision' in Mormon Thought&quot;&lt;sup&gt;j&lt;/sup&gt; and &quot;Scholarly Studies of Mormonism in the Twentieth Century&quot;&lt;sup&gt;k&lt;/sup&gt; and &quot;The Pay That Doesn't Come In An Envelope&quot;&lt;sup&gt;m&lt;/sup&gt; and &quot;On Becoming A Teacher-Scholar&quot;&lt;sup&gt;n&lt;/sup&gt; and &quot;Tying Knots&quot;&lt;sup&gt;o&lt;/sup&gt; and &quot;Parable of the Salesmen&quot;&lt;sup&gt;p&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Regular Features from the unofficial Church Periodicals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

<sup>a</sup>The Improvement Era, June, 1968, hereafter cited as Era.

<sup>b</sup>President Hugh B. Brown, Era, June, 1968. President Brown was the First Counselor to President David O. McKay in the First Presidency of the Church. The subject he spoke on was of particular importance to Seminary and Institute personnel. This might account for the high percent which read it.

<sup>c</sup>Era, April, 1968.  
<sup>d</sup>Era, May, 1968.

<sup>e</sup>Instructor, March, 1968.  
<sup>f</sup>Instructor, May, 1968.

<sup>g</sup>Church News, March 30, 1968.

<sup>h</sup>Church News, April 20, 1968.
TABLE VII (continued)


Everyone was asked if they had read the article not just heard the talk.

The number of department personnel that read each article has been compiled into Figure 3. This data was converted into a ranking of the features they represent by weighting the articles according to how many were used to represent each feature. This ranking appears in Figure 4.

Everyone in the interview sample (sixty-seven cases) was asked to rank the features (those in Figure 4) according to their importance as a source of authoritative reference. This accumulative ranking is presented in Figure 5. Comparing Figure 4 to Figure 5 will show the variance between that the people in the sample felt they should read and what they actually read. The most striking discovery is that President McKay's keynote conference address, it was felt, should have been read far more than it was.

This chapter has given most of the results compiled from questionnaires and interviews given the men and women in the Department of
Seminaries and Institutes of Religion. There was a variety of opinions about the relevance of the periodicals to themselves and their students. President McKay's words, particularly the keynote conference address, received highest ratings and Dialogue the lowest. BYU Studies was similarly low except among Institute men.
President McKay's April Conference Address (1968)
April Era Editorial (1968)
May Era Editorial (1968)
March Instructor Editorial (1968)
May Instructor Editorial (1968)
President Brown's April Conference Address (1968)
April 20, 1968 Church News Editorial
March 30, 1968 Church News Editorial
Autumn, 1967 Studies- Harris
Winter, 1968 Studies- Clark
Autumn, 1966 Dialogue- Allen
Spring, 1966 Dialogue- Arrington
Winter, 1968 Impact- Lynn
Spring, 1968 Impact- Godfrey
Spring, 1968 Impact- Barrett
Spring, 1968 Impact- Payne

There were 67 in this sample.

FIGURE 3
MIXER WHICH READ ARTICLES
CONFERENCE TALKS OTHER THAN PRES. ECKAY’S

EDITORIAL OF ERA

EDITORIAL OF CHURCH NEWS

EDITORIAL OF INSTRUCTOR

CONFERENCE REPORT OF PRESIDENT ECKAY

FEATURES IN UNOFFICIAL PERIODICALS

BYU STUDIES

DIALOGUE

IMPACT

FIGURE 4

RANKING OF FEATURES ACTUALLY READ
FIGURE 5

RANKING OF FEATURES BY IDEALISTIC IMPORTANCE
Do the periodicals in this study accomplish their editorial objectives as evaluated by department personnel? The official Church periodicals appear to have met their stated objectives. The Era and Church News, written for the general populace of the Church, have the more general, all-purpose formats. This sweeping direction necessitated a less complicated level of intellectual pursuit. Most of the department personnel have assessed these two periodicals as fulfilling their intended purposes moderately well but look to other publications for greater depth in their personal reading. The Instructor was viewed as the "teaching magazine" by those in the sample and those associated with the magazine.¹ The official Church periodicals as a group had a higher relevancy rating than the unofficial Church periodicals.

Dialogue editors stressed their concern to be relevant with real life. This study seems to indicate that Dialogue is the least relevant of the magazines in the study to department personnel. Finding that (1) far more did not have access to it than did (fourty-eight did not and twenty-nine did) and (2) of those who had access to it fewer had read it than had not read it (six read the sample articles and twenty-three had not) lead the author to wonder if the low relevancy rating of Dialogue might have been a reflection of the feeling tone towards the whole image of the magazine as well as a rating of how relevant to life the articles in it were.

Impact, the other magazine classified as an unofficial Church

¹ In an interview with the author, Lorin Wheelwright pictured The Instructor as fulfilling the needs of the more educated members of the Church as well as those who are teachers.
periodical in this study, ranked high in relevancy to department personnel. Its purpose for existence was to be of assistance to department personnel; thus, it appears to be justifying its publication.
CHAPTER V

SUGGESTIONS

This chapter has been divided into three areas of suggestions: (1) suggestions for changes in format of each periodical in the study (information from the questionnaire), (2) suggestions for further utilization of Church periodicals by department personnel (information from interviews), and (3) suggestions for further study.

In evaluating the suggestions, several things should be remembered:

1. There appeared to be no significant relationship between actual reading of the periodicals and their relevance ratings, with the exception of some features in Dialogue.

2. Measurements of statistical significance were applied only to the correlations between actual reading of articles and the relevance ratings given them. The following suggestions simply represent a compilation of what department personnel said they have done or would like to see done. An examination of these suggestions showed some differences of opinion about the courses pursued by the Church periodicals.

3. Many of those participating in the study said that they were not satisfied that their suggestions were necessary. The interviewer perceived that most of the department personnel interviewed wanted to do something to use the Church periodicals but were not certain as to what should be done.

4. Many of the suggestions were in operation.

5. Each individual suggestion was included whether it followed the main stream of opinion or not.

6. There was no tabulation of the frequency or value of suggestions.
All "YES" answers to questions seventy-three to seventy-eight on the questionnaire were compiled into the following table of suggestions. "YES" answers indicated that the respondent would change the format of the periodical in the way described below. Similar suggestions have been combined. The flavor of the response has been maintained by using the respondent's words if they communicated an understandable thought.

**TABLE VIII**

**SUGGESTED CHANGES IN PERIODICALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>66 NO answers - 11 YES answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The Era has been too nice, too general, and needs to penetrate the burning issues of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>It needs to include more material for college age students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>It was suggested they start a &quot;The Best From the Past&quot; section and publish interesting, fascinating articles, motivating stories popular features from ancient Eras which are not accessible to the lay member of the Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>More pictures convenient to use for visual aids would be valuable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The quality of writing needs improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>A section giving critiques on new books was suggested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>The Era needs to be sure to maintain Church standards in the pictures they use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>A more rigid evaluation of movies should be established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>The Era of Youth needs more realism, problem solving, less idealism and unreal symbolism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>More articles on Church doctrine are desired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>It was hoped that the Era would continue their present trend towards continually improvement of the magazine.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1 See Appendix A.
TABLE VIII (continued)

The Church News  66 NO answers - 11 YES answers

1. It was suggested that there be more extensive articles on current trends in the non-Mormon world of religion.\(a\)

2. It was suggested there be weekly answers to gospel questions.

3. Someone ought to include more news of the youth of the Church.

4. Some department personnel would like to see the Seminary and Institute in one place as a section of the paper again.

5. Drop the section on small world religions.

6. Make the Church News section available to those that do not subscribe to the Deseret News.

7. It was hoped that the present trend towards continual improvement would prevail.

Instructor  70 NO answers - 7 YES answers

1. The Instructor was described as one of the best sources for pictures usable for visual aids but more were desired.

2. It needs more depth and scholarship. Some articles show sound thinking and awareness of what is going on but many do not.

3. It was suggested the Instructor follow the Era's pattern of finishing each article on succeeding pages instead of in the back.

4. Drop "This Day in Church History."

5. "Be more selective in the pictures that represent the Savior," one respondent said.

6. It was hoped that the present trend towards improvement of the magazine would continue.

Dialogue  56 NO answers - 19 YES answers

1. They should use only Mormon authors.

2. They should be sure to keep control of the magazine out of "orthodox" hands.

3. They should get official sanction of Church authorities or quit publication.
TABLE VIII (continued)

4. It was suggested that they evaluate the frequency with which various positions are represented in the magazine and make deliberate attempts to represent them all. It was felt that some positions were not represented well enough; conservative positions, doctrinal subjects, representatives of the LDS Department of Education.

5. It was suggested that Dialogue editors be more selective in the writers who write on issues with a position opposed to the official position of the Church.

6. People in more authoritative positions in the Church should evaluate controversial issues.

7. Dialogue should quit publication.

Studies 72 NO answers - 5 YES answers

1. The several comments evoking the editor to invite scholars not associated with Brigham Young University to publish in Studies shows (1) an inadequate acquaintance with editorial policy since this suggestion has been followed and (2) a perceived limitation of writers because of the strong identification with Brigham Young University. This limitation was expressed as both to the number available and the variety of viewpoints. The author suggests that the part of the magazine's title, "A Voice For The Community Of LDS Scholars," be emphasized in some manner.

2. A greater variety of topics was felt to be needed.

3. Less sectarian issues by Mormon scholars and more material of interest about the Church was an expression of one of the respondents.

Impact 63 NO answers - 14 YES answers

1. One teacher in "the system" thinks that Impact should be a scholastic training handbook for faculty (department personnel) members.

2. It should contain department memorandums that have a universal application. These instructions which might become obsolete might affect the value of the magazine in the future. If it was full of department "memos", it would not be worth binding for a personal library book.

3. It should be identified as the official voice of the department.
TABLE VIII (continued)

4. Many would like to see more success experiences published. These are examples of how to get the job done.

5. It could use some articles for or from students.

6. Impact needs to be larger.

7. It should have more articles on the "how" of teaching.

8. Those articles written by assignment were not received as well as those volunteered by department personnel. Impact should encourage more articles from department personnel through volunteer methods.

9. It was felt that it would be better to put all articles on continuous pages instead of part at the back.

10. The "Unified Church School System" page in the Era could be bound and made available.

11. Department Personnel want more specific instruction from the administration and staff about:
   a. what they expect from personnel
   b. warnings, problems about teaching certain doctrines
   c. suggestions for specific lessons, particularly where to use new materials
   d. what is going on in the system, growth, new innovations, personnel changes, biographies.

12. A survey of current trends and practices in religious education would interest some department personnel.

13. It was expressed that there should be a balance between the practical and the theoretical aspects of religious education.

14. It was hoped that the high quality of writing found in past issues would continue.

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a. Relevancy ratings of this type of feature did not indicate that it would be in demand from the majority in the study.

b. Six "I don't care." Five were unfamiliar with the magazine.

c. Ten respondents who answered "I don't care." Five were unfamiliar with the magazine said that they were not familiar with it.
Table IX is an outline of suggestions for utilization of the Church periodicals. They were obtained from responses to an interview question, "What use of the Church periodicals have you made that you could recommend others use?"

### TABLE IX

**SUGGESTIONS FOR UTILIZATION OF CHURCH PERIODICALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Assignments given to students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Teachers or students could make &quot;learning stations&quot; assignments from good articles for student use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Reports prepared from articles to be given in devotionals and as part of lessons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Essay assignments with footnote references from periodicals and other sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. The Institute lesson on &quot;Sources of Truth&quot; can spend some time on history and use of the periodicals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Periodic reading from the Church News about current Church history. This can be done similarly to the way Senior Scholastic is used in the public schools.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>II. Use with the Seminary and Institute file systems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Clippings and quotes regularly filed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. 2½ minute talks to be given in class from file information or from a periodical. This can be done either with preparation or without (spontaneously.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. A project to build file. Each student who desired to participate gave some money plus researched three or four good references from the periodicals (and other sources) on subjects in the file system. Their work was reviewed by a student committee to eliminate duplication of work and poor quality work. All good references were duplicated and passed out to all those who participated.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. Extra curricular or extra credit projects for students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Index past issues of Church periodicals according to subjects in Seminary or Institute file system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE IX (continued)

E. Bulletin board displays. The "Era of Youth" has been used a great deal.

C. Create a local Seminary or Institute periodical.

D. Order enough copies of the special issues of the Era (such as the issue on the Book of Mormon, or the Temple issue) for everyone to stimulate and supplement class work.

E. The center page of the Instructor, colored pictures from all sources could be put in a visual aids file for use in making bulletin board displays, lesson aids, etc.

F. Encourage students to participate in the writing contests for the "Era of Youth."

IV. Teacher Use

A. Visual aids.

B. Read excerpts from an article, then tell students about how to find the rest. This could be an assignment.

C. Cut clippings of current Church history from the Church News, post on bulletin board, then test students on it periodically.

D. In order to make full use of the Church periodicals the teacher must be well acquainted with them.

E. Show personal enthusiasm for the periodicals by constantly quoting and commenting about the information found in them.

F. Set up a role play situation of a problem that can be helped by an article in a Church periodical.

G. Use the Conference Reports as an authoritative source for answers to gospel questions.

V. Make Periodicals readily available.

A. Keep a stack of them, or bound copies, on special display in the foyer, library or on teacher's desk. When a student finishes a project before his classmates, he can browse through them.

B. A magazine drive in Seminary could obtain enough for student use.
TABLE IX (continued)

C. Encourage students to purchase their own subscription if their parents don't want them to use, cut up, or file the family copy. Some girls have subscribed to The Relief Society Magazine.

Suggestions for further study are as follows: (1) A study of the relationship between the relevance ratings for students given the periodicals by department personnel and the ratings given them by the students would be of value; it would show how well the teachers understand their students, (2) the author suggests a study be done to answer the question, "Would the creation of an official Church periodical just for the youth of the Church be justifiable?", (3) it is suggested that a study of the relevance of the periodicals in this study be done after a lapse of time to see if their relevancy changes. The periodical editors themselves have continually been conducting interest surveys of their respective publications.
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ON FILE AT DEPARTMENT OFFICE


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Payne, Albert L. Associate Editor of Impact, July 1, and July 15, 1968.

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Tate, Charles, Jr. Editor of BYU Studies, June 26, and July 15, 1968.

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APPENDIX A

THE QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN THIS STUDY

The purpose of this questionnaire is to partially determine the extent of utilization of church periodicals by the department's personnel. Thanks for your help!

Data about your assignment: Mark only one on each numbered item.

1- I work in: Seminary ____ Institute ____ Both ____

2- I am: an instructor only ____ an administrator only ____ both an instructor and an administrator ____ Indian Program Only ____

3- My student load is: none ____ 1-100 ____ 101-140 ____ 141-175 ____ over 175 ____

4- I have been with the Seminary-Institute program (number of years): first year ____ 1-3 years ____ 4-10 years ____ 10-20 ____ over 20 years ____

5- I am: full-time ____ part-time ____

The Periodicals: I have the following periodicals available anytime I want them:

6- The Improvement Era ____ ____ 9- Conference Reports (in Era, Church News or bound) ____ ____

7- The Instructor ____ ____

8- The Church News (section of The Deseret News) ____ ____

10- Brigham Young University Studies ____ ____

11- Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought ____ ____

12- Impact (new department magazine) ____ ____

Relevancy: Please read the following list of features or types of features and indicate their relevancy to you for your personal growth and development. Relevancy is the bearing, ease of application, pertinency of the feature to your life. A good "rule of thumb" to help you decide relevancy is to answer the question, "Am I interested in it and do I use it?" Rate the features as follows:

1-extremely relevant 2-very relevant 3-moderately relevant 4-little relevancy 5-no relevancy. Circle the number that indicates the relevancy of the feature to you.
The Instructor:

13- The Editorial page by President McKay 1 2 3 4 5
14- Reed Bradford's Articles on Home Life 1 2 3 4 5
15- Wendall Ashton's Articles on back cover 1 2 3 4 5
16- "Teacher Improvement Lesson" 1 2 3 4 5
17- Special Series, such as those on Philosophy and Religion by Truman Madison 1 2 3 4 5
18- Center page color foldout pictures 1 2 3 4 5

The Era:

19- "Exploring the Universe" by Franklin S. Harris 1 2 3 4 5
20- "The Editor's Page" by President David O. McKay 1 2 3 4 5
21- "President Joseph Fielding Smith Answers Your Questions" 1 2 3 4 5
22- "Since Cumorah" by Hugh Nibley 1 2 3 4 5
23- Kolchizedek Priesthood Page 1 2 3 4 5
24- The Presiding Bishoprics's Page 1 2 3 4 5
25- "Today's Family" by Florence B. Pinnock 1 2 3 4 5
26- "Era of Youth" Marion D. Hanks and Elaine Cannon 1 2 3 4 5

The Church News:

27- "News Notes at Home and Abroad", about the Church 1 2 3 4 5
28- Special Articles on News of Current Church Happenings 1 2 3 4 5
29- Special Articles on Church History 1 2 3 4 5
30- "News of Other Churches" 1 2 3 4 5
31- "Notable Quotes", quotes on a topic from various sources 1 2 3 4 5
32- Editorials 1 2 3 4 5
33- "This week in Church History", short articles on past history 1 2 3 4 5

Dialogue:

34- "An Assessment of Mormon Culture", examines the history, present achievements, and potential of Mormon life 1 2 3 4 5
35- "Roundtable", features of current interest 1 2 3 4 5
36- "From the Pulpit", sermons from Mormon leaders 1 2 3 4 5
37- "Reviews", of books on Mormonism 1 2 3 4 5
38- "Among the Mormons", a survey of current literature, bibliographies 1 2 3 4 5
39- "Notes and Comments", news, profiles, opinions, etc. 1 2 3 4 5
40- "Religion and Ultimate Concern", on contemporary theologians 1 2 3 4 5

B.Y.U. Studies:

41- Articles from the physical science disciplines 1 2 3 4 5
42- Articles from the life science disciplines 1 2 3 4 5
43- Articles from the religion faculty 1 2 3 4 5
44- Poems, Art Work and critiques on them 1 2 3 4 5
45- Book Reviews 1 2 3 4 5
46- Bibliographies 1 2 3 4 5
Impact:

47- "Editorials" by William E. Berrett and Albert L. Payne
48- "Theme Articles" on issue's theme-Teacher's Role, Tying Knots, etc.
49- "Contributions" on various issues, Teacher Improvement, Rewards of Teaching, etc.
50- "News in Brief", department news
51- "Personalities", in the department

Conference Reports: from either The Era, Church News, or bound editions

52- President McKay's keynote address
53- All talks other than President McKay's

Please indicate your opinion of the relevancy of the following features to your students, high school or college. Though there are great differences among your students, try to think of them here as a whole.

The Era:

54- "The Era of Youth," the youth section
55- "The Editor's Page," by President McKay
56- "President Joseph Fielding Smith Answers Your Questions"
57- "Today's Family" by Florence B. Pinnock
58- "Since Gomorrah" by Hugh Nibley

The Instructor:

59- The Editorial page by President McKay
60- Wendall Ashton's Articles on back cover
61- Special Articles, such as those on Philosophy and Religion by Truman Madsen

The Church News:

62- "News Notes at Home and Abroad," about the Church
63- Special Articles on News of Current Church Happenings
64- Special Articles on Church History

Dialogue:

65- "An Assessment of Mormon Culture," examines the history, present achievements, and potential of Mormon life
66- "From the Pulpit," sermons from Mormon leaders
67- "Religion and Ultimate Concern," on contemporary theologians

R.Y.U. Studies:

68- Articles from the physical science disciplines
69- Articles from the life science disciplines
70- Articles from the religion faculty
Conference Reports:

71- President McKay's keynote address
72- All talks other than President McKay's

Would you change the format of any church periodical. Explain if there is anything you would drop or like to see added.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>73-</td>
<td>___</td>
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<tr>
<td>74-</td>
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</table>
If Dialogue is ever a source of advancement to the Church, it should go out of publication. If it is useful, we hope it will continue.

John H. Gardner
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to compare the use of selected official and unofficial Church periodicals by Seminary and Institute personnel of the Church with the objectives and purposes of those periodicals. It was also to determine the relevancy of those periodicals to the department personnel and their students. The magazines studied were: The Improvement Era, The Instructor, Church News, Impact, Brigham Young University Studies, and Dialogue.

The most prevalent concern about all religious press in the nineteen-sixties has been their relevance to real life. This study discovered that there was a variety of opinions about the relevance of selected Kormon features to department personnel and their students. President McKay's words, particularly the keynote conference address, received highest ratings and features in Dialogue the lowest. BYU Studies was similarly low except among Institute men.

Comparisons between the relevancy ratings given various features by those that read them and those that didn't found only one correlation (from Dialogue magazine) that was significant.

The last chapter makes suggestions for (1) changes in the periodicals, (2) utilization of them, and (3) further study.
APPROVED: James R. Harris
Chairman, Advisory Committee

Edward
Member, Advisory Committee

Chairman, Major Department