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RECONSIDERING SOLIDARITY IN THE MORMON VILLAGE

by

Todd L. Goodsell

A thesis submitted to the faculty of

Brigham Young University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

Department of Sociology

Brigham Young University

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

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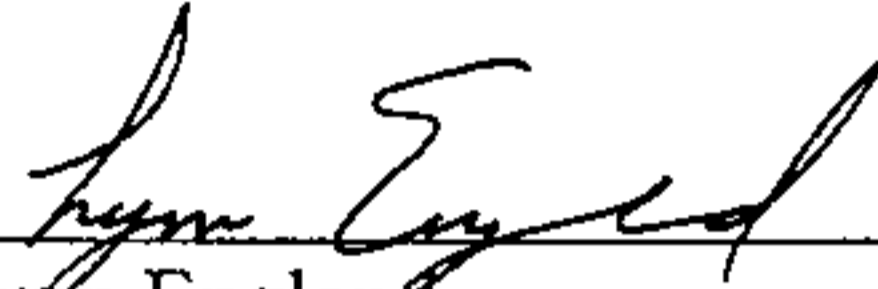
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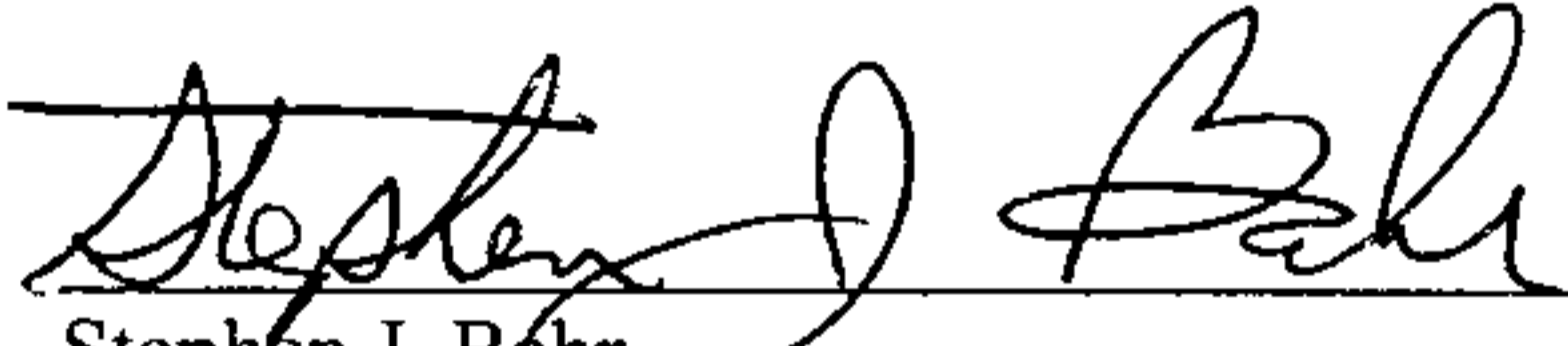
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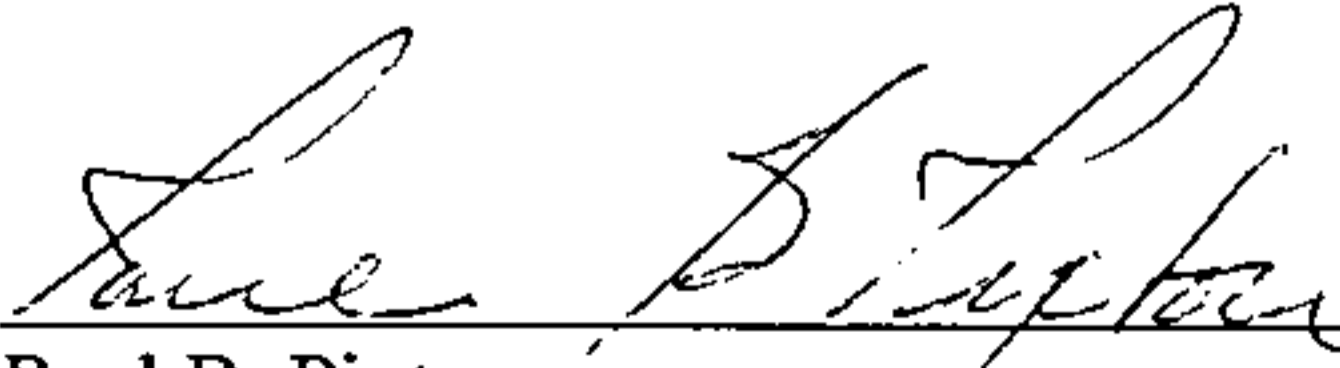
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ABSTRACT

RECONSIDERING SOLIDARITY IN THE MORMON VILLAGE

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Master of Science

In what became a classic rural community study, Lowry Nelson concluded in his first Mormon village series in the 1920's that the Mormon village is characterized by an extraordinary sense of solidarity. He claimed that this strong solidarity can be primarily explained by four factors of the social group: leadership, conflict, cooperation, and ideology. After resurveying the Mormon village in 1950, he concluded that solidarity had declined. However, a few problems become apparent to the present researcher looking back upon Nelson's findings. One of them is that Nelson never had a clear definition of solidarity to begin with. Another is that the research focus shifted between the first and the second Mormon village series. Primarily using ethnographic methods, the present research project attempts to derive a new definition and evaluation of solidarity within the Mormon village. The evidence produced by the study suggests that solidarity is best not seen as uniformity, nor as coordinated action, but as an affective attachment to a common purpose. The original factors promoting solidarity are still

relevant, but in different ways than they were seventy-five years ago. In addition, Mormon villagers have also found other means to promote solidarity in the local context. These include particular applications of gossip, service, and heritage or collective identity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I appreciate the critical comments of members of my thesis committee on this thesis and on the project described herein. Further, I am grateful for technical assistance provided by members of the staff at Brigham Young University, particularly the secretaries of the Department of Sociology.

I am mindful of the vital assistance of the residents of Ephraim, Utah. Research activities of this sort rely almost entirely upon the goodwill of many individuals who occupy the research setting. The people of Ephraim let me into their homes, their churches, their workplaces, their public buildings, their parks, their stores -- indeed, their town. They willingly provided their time and perspectives, and they did this without monetary compensation from the investigator. Since I was entirely unknown to them prior to the research project, their part in this work is all the more exemplary. For their cooperation, I express my thanks to the people of Ephraim.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
TABLES	ix
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION – COMMUNITY STUDIES	1
CHAPTER 2: COMMUNITY THEORY	5
THEORY	5
COMMUNITY	8
CHAPTER SUMMARY	20
CHAPTER 3: THE MORMON VILLAGE AND MORMONISM	22
COMMUNITY STUDIES AND THE MORMON VILLAGE	22
MORMONISM	32
CHAPTER SUMMARY	36
CHAPTER 4: METHODS	38
LOWRY NELSON’S METHODS	38
RESEARCH SITE	41
ETHNOGRAPHY	46
IDENTITY OF THE RESEARCHER	48
SELECTION OF INFORMANTS	52
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE	56
ON THE MEANING OF METHOD	59
CHAPTER 5: RESULTS	61
COUNTERVAILING FORCES	61
THEORY OF SOLIDARITY	69
PRINCIPLES OF SOLIDARITY FORMATION	79
Leadership	79
Ideology	84
Conflict	88
Cooperation: Place and the Environment	90
MAINTENANCE OF SOLIDARITY	96

Gossip	97
Service	100
Heritage	109
CHAPTER SUMMARY	119
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS	121
EVALUATIONS	121
FUTURE RESEARCH	125
THE FUTURE OF THE MORMON VILLAGE	127
ENDNOTES	130
REFERENCES	133
APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM, FACE SHEET, AND INTERVIEW GUIDE	140
CONSENT TO BE A RESEARCH SUBJECT	141
FACE SHEET	142
INTERVIEW GUIDE	143

TABLES

Table 1: Population Change in Lowry Nelson's Mormon Villages.....41

*“Is Ephraim still my dear
son? is he a pleasant child?
for since I spake against him,
I do earnestly remember him
still . . . I will surely have
mercy upon him, saith the
LORD.”*

~ Jeremiah 31:20 (KJV)

*“Oh, may thy Saints be one,
Like Father and the Son,
Nor disagree.
United heart and hand,
So may we ever stand,
A firm and valiant band
Eternally.”*

*~ Hymns of the Church of
Jesus Christ of Latter-day
Saints, no. 24*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION – COMMUNITY STUDIES

Sociologists have been producing community studies for three-quarters of a century. Studies of such places as Middletown, Crestwood Heights, Southerntown, Old City, Chestnut Valley, Greenwich Village, Rimrock, and Yankee City have given us in-depth look at the ecology of human interaction in close and regular proximity. As Stein (1972:3) observed,

Community studies cannot provide information about the men and events on the national scene that influence historical processes so decisively, but they do describe the effects of these processes on the everyday lives of ordinary men and women. They fill out the historical record by giving the intimate meanings that large-scale changes had for a limited segment of the population.

Although the community studies named have merit in themselves for the insight they give us into American life in the twentieth century, reviewing them gives the reader a sense of alienation from a larger project. Sociologists have generally performed studies of community in an atomistic manner; it is rare that they specifically extend the work of an earlier community study, or that they explicitly use a theoretical framework seeking to link a particular study to others. This has resulted in a plethora of understandings of what community is and how it functions in the lives of individual people. And yet, most researchers have had a theoretical orientation in their analysis of community. Mostly, this has been some form of modernization theory – what Stein (1972:5) breaks down into “urbanization, industrialization, and bureaucratization.” Building upon the grand narrative of modernity, these researchers chronicle the transition – for good or bad – of human society from an agricultural, rural, local, kinship-based structure to one featuring

all of the urban, industrial, rational, and extra-local linkages of the contemporary developed world.

This is not to say that community sociologists have ignored the continuing role of irrational, local, and kinship structures in community life, but these are often seen as relics of an earlier time, anomalies which themselves need to be explained. Generally, the narrative given is that of *community dissolution*: The workings of modernity act against “community,” typically defined as an irrational element that characterized all earlier periods of human history.

The community dissolution hypothesis generates an irony that has yet to be fully explored: It is that if one were to line up most community studies chronologically by the period of time studied and chart the narrative of community found collectively within them, the story would read that first there was community . . . and then it collapsed, and it collapsed, and it collapsed, and so on. Only occasionally do we find the story of *community building* – that at certain times, a group of human beings collectively defines a reality greater than themselves, and take whatever action is necessary to make that reality effective within their lives. . . It is odd that the focus of theory and research should be so much on the fall of community, because it does not seem far-fetched to suggest that for every fall of community, there must have been a rise that preceded it. In a practical sense, it would seem that understanding the mechanics of the rise of community would be of great utility for one seeking to attain or improve communities and social life generally.

The preceding discussion presupposes a cyclical nature of community. It is necessarily either *rising* or *falling*. The necessity of experiencing only the one or the

other is yet unproven in the sociological literature. On the other hand, so is the possibility *community maintenance*.

Why there should be this general omission of temporal development in the empirical research, and the resulting dependence on modernization theory, may be because of the difficulty of most community studies. They frequently involve multiple methodologies and extended periods of fieldwork, and it is possible that a simultaneous emphasis on theory development is too much to ask. Another possibility is that most community researchers have seen their studies as exploratory attempts to understand what was not well understood or at least well represented in the discipline. Finally, it is possible that earlier community sociologists reflected a discipline that did not see ethnographic work as leading to systematic theorizing in itself.

The community researcher of the 1990's is fortunate to be less limited by these concerns than sociologists earlier in this century. A number of community studies have left baseline data that can be used as a starting point for later theories. (Middletown III is one significant example of such a replication.) Longitudinal perspectives in research and a sensitivity to the need for explicit theoretical development of community change (or lack thereof) seem to be more likely now than ever before in the history of the discipline.

The purpose of this thesis is to follow-up on one classic community study – the Mormon village. Lowry Nelson, an early rural sociologist, conducted two programs of research on the Mormon village, one in the 1920's and the other in 1950. His conclusions about how solidarity develops over time can give us increased understanding of how communities can develop and maintain solidarity. The present study builds on Nelson's work, but is not merely a replication. I also consider community in the Mormon

village in light of developments in community theory over the last twenty-five years, and reevaluate the current status of Mormon village community through the perspectives of those who live within it.

5

CHAPTER 2: COMMUNITY THEORY

All sociology is based upon theories, which are explanations of the social world. Theories outline the relative significance and interrelationships between various concepts. Each concept requires a careful definition both for the strength of the theory and so that readers can understand the phenomenon being studied. In this thesis I discuss definitions, such as of solidarity and of identity, and theories, such as of research method and of community maintenance. I recognize, however, that definition and theory each require the other so closely that at times the difference between them becomes obscure. The purpose of this chapter is to present theories of method and community, and specific definitions will be presented as necessary.

THEORY

Craig Calhoun has recently criticized theorists who claim an objective distance from the object of theory and from even the act of theorizing itself:

A great deal of even very good social theory is produced and presented as though written from the umpire's chair. Its failure to take seriously both its own historical conditions of production and its implications as a practical action not only annoy those who call for more critical theory, but contribute to the frequent disappointments of traditional, mainstream or positivist theorists who expect a kind of straightforward cumulation of social science knowledge (Calhoun 1995:11).

He later elaborates on what he means by taking seriously the historical conditions of theoretical production, urging that sociologists recognize "the historical embeddedness of all theory, approaching past theories not just as exemplars, partial successes or sources of decontextualized insights, but as works bounded by or based on different histories from our own (Calhoun 1995:36)."

In one sense, Calhoun's challenge can be problematic to one performing a partial replication, such as I am. In social scientific replication, it is vital to ascertain – to the greatest degree possible – the theories, paradigms, and assumptions of the original researcher, and to allow them to work in the replicative project as well. To suggest that the dependent variable had changed by the latter study period, when the researcher had in fact altered the combination and composition of the independent variables, might disqualify the project from being a replication.

However, in social scientific work, true replication is never possible. The researcher cannot assume that it is adequate merely to perform the same operations that were done earlier, naively believing that they are functionally equivalent. In a social survey, for example, terms like “liberal government,” “welfare,” and even “satisfied” can carry significantly different meanings when presented to different people at a different time or in a different cultural milieu. We may not be able to avoid this problem, so Calhoun recommends that we confront the historical context of research directly, recognizing it as a part of the research project.

Calhoun (1995:10) also asserts that theorizing “can never be altogether neutral.” One reason for this is that all theory has its implications for practical action. The study of community may recognize this more than do many subfields of sociology. As I suggested to some of my informants, scholars do not normally study community in order to find ways to destroy it. In fact, the term “community” is not itself neutral. In almost all examples of practical usage, “community” carries positive connotations in the mind of its articulator. Moreover, Mormonism is not a neutral topic. The best the researcher can do is recognize this lack of neutrality and devise methods of managing it.

Another premise of the present theorizing is how I perceive the research subjects – those individuals who live within and under the influence of the Mormon village and who each day recreate and redefine what the Mormon village is all about. In this matter, I borrow some of the ideas of Alfred Schutz. First, an actor in the social sphere makes certain assumptions about other human beings who inhabit that sphere. With a measure of wit, Schutz (1970:163) details one such assumption:

We are simply born into a world of others, and as long as we stick to the natural attitude we have no doubt that intelligent fellow-men do exist. Only if radical solipsists or behaviorists demand proof of this fact does it turn out that the existence of intelligent fellow-men is a “soft datum” and incapable of verification (Russell). But in their natural attitude even those thinkers do not doubt this “soft datum.” Otherwise they could not meet others in congresses where it is reciprocally proved that the intelligence of the other is a questionable fact.

I likewise take the existence of intelligent others as a given. And as intelligent beings, these “others” are capable of reflecting upon their own lives and of articulating those reflections to the investigator. I, in turn, accept those articulated reflections as valid descriptors of social life.

Schutz described in further detail the social life of human beings, and this in a perspective that I call “bounded agency”:

The world of my daily life is by no means my private world but is from the outset an intersubjective one, shared with my fellow men, experienced and interpreted by others; in brief, it is a world common to all of us. The unique biographical situation in which I find myself within the world at any moment of my existence is only to a very small extent of my own making (Schutz 1970:163).

He who lives in the social world is a free being: his acts proceed from spontaneous activity. Once the action has transpired, once it is over and done with, it has become an act and is no longer free but closed and determinate in character. Nevertheless, it was free at the time the action took place; and if the question concerning the intended meaning refers, as it does in Max Weber’s case, to the point in time before the completion of the act, the answer must be that the actor always acts freely (Schutz 1970:146).

The research subjects, whom I assume to be intelligent, by that assumption also possess bounded agency: The great bulk of their social environment is handed to them by their predecessors and their contemporaries, and their latitude of choice within that environment is consequently limited. However, that limited latitude of choice remains theirs. In any given instance, the subjects choose to act or not to act, and if to act, whether to act in one way or another. An act is free because it is *chosen*, not because it is *different*. The power of social choice is *evidenced* in the capacity of intelligent agents, either collectively or individually, to modify their social environment to attain a desired end.

A final assertion about my theorizing on this research project derives from a statement by Ericksen (1922:46). He challenges the conscious, rational, deliberate interpretation of early Mormon history, noting that “Men do not in real life first think and then act; but they act and think at the same time.” Mormon villagers are still acting, and still thinking about the meaning of social action, and how they fit into each new challenge posed by their social environment. It follows that it would be foolish to think that this, or any scholarly work, is the definitive social interpretation of the Mormon village. Meaning is derived in process, and continues to be derived even after the publication of the scholarly work.

COMMUNITY

More than 40 years ago, Hiller (1955) cataloged 98 different definitions of community. Several more have been proposed in recent decades. With so many notions of community, it would be easy to become bogged down in sorting through them all.

Inasmuch as the present research qualifies as a community study, we ought to be clear about what is meant by “community” and related concepts. However, to avoid detracting from the primary purpose of this research, I will give only cursory attention to the total range of ideas about community and will focus mainly on those perspectives on community that apply directly to this work.

Cohen (1985) approaches community as a symbol, and as a symbol, its meaning can become quite an element of dispute. He explains that

. . . the symbol can function quite effectively as a means of communication without its meaning being rigorously tested. A courting couple may exchange an expression of sentiment:

“I love you!”

“*I love you!*”

without feeling the need to engage in a lengthy and complicated disquisition on the meaning of the word “love.” Yet it is, of course, a word which masks an extremely complex idea. So complex is it that were our two lovers to attempt to explain their meanings precisely they might well find themselves engaged in fierce argument [*italics in original*] (Cohen 1985:21).

Sometimes to seek precise definition of symbols suffused with such a great range of meaning, is to border on the ridiculous. Yet I shall attempt to define community, recognizing that there are many good definitions, and that the purpose here is merely the pragmatic task of choosing one that facilitates the study at hand.

Kesten (1993:24) aptly identifies the problem. In a section entitled, “A Few Words about Words,” he writes

Rather than speeding ideas down the highways of thought, as good words should, they force them into the slow lane. *Socialism, communism*, and words that look like *communism* [community, communitarian, etc.] create a special kind of confusion. It arises from the varying and changing ways in which people have interpreted these terms in the past and even today. . . . [T]hey mean whatever someone chooses them to mean [*italics in original*].

Cohen (1985:15) discusses how the significance of symbolism alters our discussion of terms like community:

Such categories as justice, goodness, patriotism, duty, love, peace, are almost impossible to spell out with precision. The attempt to do so invariably generates argument, sometimes worse. But their *range* of meanings can be glossed over in a commonly accepted symbol – precisely because it allows its adherents to attach their own meanings to it. They share the symbol, but do not necessarily share its meanings. Community is just such a boundary-expressing symbol. . . . The reality and efficacy of the community’s boundary – and therefore, of the community itself – depends upon its symbolic construction and embellishment. . . . The quintessential referent of community is that its members make, or believe they make, a similar sense of things either generally or with respect to specific and significant interests, and, further, that they think that that sense may differ from one made elsewhere. The reality of community in people’s experience thus inheres in their attachment or commitment to a common body of symbols. . . . But it must again be emphasized that the sharing of symbol is not necessarily the same as the sharing of meaning [*italics in original*].

Cohen would likely suggest, then, that to ask respondents in a given locality to *define* their community would result in many definitions, having in common only a set of symbols such as the terms “community,” “Ephraim,” or “neighbor.” Indeed, this happened in the present research. Residents of Ephraim did not share any single definition of community.

Devereux (1993), building on the work of Cohen, suggested that not only is community a symbol, but it is one that can be manipulated, changed, altered quite deliberately for whatever purposes present themselves.

Communities do not exist *per se*; they are ideas and arenas which are negotiated, constructed, and contested [*italics in original*] (Devereux 1993:75).

. . . the use of “community” may in fact be a strategic one. Many of these community groups are made up of a very small proportion of the population of a locality. In some respects, therefore, the term “community” is appropriated by such groups, irrespective of whether they have the support or interest of the wider population (Devereux 1993:74).

Devereux's statements direct the attention of the researcher toward *who* uses the term "community," in what *forum* it is used, and to what *end* it is included in discussion. In short, it focuses the research on the processes by which community is constructed by the actors themselves.

Schutz (1970:84) has offered the concept of overlapping community, a possibility even when the overlap is only large enough to encompass one person: "As Simmel has shown, each individual stands at the intersection of several social circles, and their number will be the greater the more differentiated the individual's personality." This is not necessarily a pathological scenario. In fact, the potential to bridge several communities may become quite an asset in preventing or repairing social divisions.

Inasmuch as my work follows up on earlier work done by Lowry Nelson, it is important to understand his conception of community. In reviewing earlier work on the meaning of the rural community, Nelson (1955) found the isolated farmstead to be the most common pattern of American settlement. It seems to follow that the best instance of community is a village trading center and those isolated farms that patronize it.

Nelson (1955) quickly finds several exceptions to this rule. First (and critical to the present study), this definition of community is entirely irrelevant to the farm village settlement pattern (of which Ephraim, Utah is a prime example). Second, the definition does not always make "community" clear. The boundaries of a rural commercial service area may vary by the good or service rendered. Third, the community is not the only relevant element of the social landscape. More local groupings called "rural neighborhoods" are necessary to maintain schools, social control, and mutual aid. Fourth, locality grouping is clearly insufficient to explain social behavior: Social

cohesion is often modified by school, church, or any of a number of institutions. To clarify these moderating factors, Nelson (1955:79-80) cites a study of rural life in Brazil:

In general in Brazil, as in the United States, the neighborhood is made up of a small number of families who live on adjacent farms, whose members frequently come into face-to-face contact with one another, and who have established a system of mutual aid amongst themselves. Brazilian neighborhoods owe their integration to a wide variety of causes: to the visiting and mutual aid among families who live near one another; to the pooling of efforts in order to secure and maintain a chapel or a school; to a mutual dependence upon a landed proprietor, a sugar mill, a cotton gin, a grist mill, a cooperative marketing association, a creamery or a cheese factory, a railroad station, or some other economic agency; to the grouping together in close proximity of farm families who are intimately knit together by ties of kinship, national origins and language, and religion; or to the fact that a few families have been thrown into close and constant contact among themselves and isolated from the larger world, by establishing their residences in a small mountain valley or cove, a fertile watered area in the midst of a barren region, on a small island or even on a large fazenda or plantation.

Thus, spatial relationships were found to be significant, but also significant were nongeographical elements of the community: A tradition of cooperation, the economy, familial relations, educational and religious institutions, national origins, language, and participation (or lack thereof) in the larger society are all necessary elements defining community. Finally, in spite of the rather static definition of community with which he started, Nelson (1955) cites evidence to show that community is neither constant across ethnic groups nor unchanging over time. Taking all of these into account in seeking a definition of community, one can see that “community” is not at all simple.

Nelson seems to have worked with at least two main conceptions of community. The first he defined as “the structuring of elements and dimensions to solve problems which must be or can be solved within the local area” (Nelson et al. 1960:24), or more simply, a “system or structure of interrelated parts” (Nelson et al. 1960:2). This is

essentially a broader version of the definition he originally proposed in his study of Escalante:

The term “community” is used here in the definition of the agricultural village. It is assumed that it is unnecessary to explain or define the term, since there are many definitions in sociological literature. Suffice it to say that the village in Utah seems to satisfy the requirements of the definition of community given by Cooley, in that it is “characterized by intimate face to face association,” with a homogeneous population inhabiting a definite geographic area (Nelson 1925:4).

This is the definition Nelson uses as a standard by which to consider all rural communities.

However, before the end of the first Mormon village series, Nelson had identified another key element: “In all cases the village is associated with communism and compact social solidarity” (Nelson 1930:13). It seems that the village, especially the Mormon village, is a special type of community, distinguished from other communities by this notion of solidarity.

Nelson does not give a clear definition of what he meant by “solidarity.”

However, he did identify certain elements associated with it. These are social processes “cementing the members of the Mormon group to each other” (Nelson 1930:27), namely, strong “leadership and prestige [usually charismatic leaders who garner much respect], ideals [a common vision or sense of purpose], conflict [in the Mormon experience, typically characterized as religious persecution], and cooperation” (Nelson 1930:29).

Nelson (1930:27) defines the final term as “the surrendering of individual wills for the good of the group.” He found such cooperation necessary for survival among the early Utah settlers, given their lack of capital and the exigencies of the natural environment.

The Mormon village experience with solidarity grows out of these experiences. It is important to remember that the four social processes are *inputs* in Nelson’s model, and solidarity is the *output*.

Nelson also defines describes solidarity as a strong “intensity of group feeling” (Nelson 1930:21), or “intense loyalty” to the group (Nelson 1930:25). He further elaborated in his follow-up study two decades later: “Throughout history it appears that the village is associated with communism and strong social solidarity such as that based upon kinship” (Nelson 1952:30). This statement does not provide a tight definition of social solidarity, but it does add the interpretive phrase “such as that based upon kinship.” Thus, in Nelson’s view solidarity is an aspect of community that reaches beyond mere structural relationships and that has a nature similar to that of kinship. Nelson (1952:40) states that Mormon groups are characterized by “intense social solidarity.”

It is worthwhile to consider other ideas regarding the solidarity of communities. A review of the literature reveals that notions of solidarity are almost as diverse as those of community. A few recent examples serve to illustrate this point: Zsembik and Beeghley (1996) define solidarity as a commitment to collective action on behalf of the group. Hechter (1987) calls it the contribution of private resources to collective ends. Others consider solidarity to be “community-wide social organization patterns or institutions that tend to unite or are more inclusive of the total community” (Moxley and Proctor 1995:313), “mutual support” with little asymmetry, exploitation, or individualism (Pessar 1995:389), or “affective ties” that contrast with the “affective neutrality” found “in the market and in bureaucratic structures” (Parsons 1973:157).

It should be clear at this point that the researcher’s choice of definition has a very strong effect on the methods indicated and the results she is likely to find. While all definitions of solidarity seem to point to something contrary to individualism, some emphasize an exchange relationship, some stress organizational patterns, some direct

attention to general well-being, some relate more to action, others to feeling. Although Nelson did not leave a specific definition of solidarity, to be true to his original work I will need to propose a definition of solidarity that is congruent with the comments he made on it: It may be produced by the interplay of prestigious leadership, by a group vision or ideal, by conflict with a common adversary, and by cooperation among members of the group. It resembles kinship, and it can exist to varying degrees (thus making “intense” a valid descriptor).

I suggest that relevant to the definition of solidarity are the works of Blea, Collins, Kanter, and Bauman. Each of these four authors has investigated community or solidarity in such a way that can aid the formulation of a definition of solidarity in this study. None of them explicitly attempted a definition of solidarity, but I will extract from their comments on community those ideas that seem relevant here. It seems that in a great many cases, when a theorist describes community, there is some sense of solidarity inherent in that definition.

Blea (1988:4) defines community as

a unit of social and geographic organization from which emerge feelings of belonging through a network of kinship, friends, and acquaintances who share a common experience. This definition is used with full knowledge that much of America no longer lives in this manner. Chicanos do, however, and references to community shall also be in the larger sense of Mexican American society. On a smaller scale, reference will be extended to residential areas in which people live, play, and die. In this community people rest, make their homes, earn incomes, and rear children. This definition includes the totality of social interaction.

In another work, Blea (1995:6) elaborates:

The community is not only a physical and social space, it is also a psychological space where people have been conditioned, where they learn to love and discover the meaning of family, neighbors. It is a creative place, but it has emotional boundaries that exist in the mind.

Other definitions of community stress either geography, experience, or interaction. Blea accepts these but does not stop there. Community necessarily involves “psychological space,” “meaning,” and “emotional boundaries.” It also involves, quite significantly, “identity” (Blea 1995:2).

Collins (1990:223-224) approaches these issues from the perspective of the African American woman:

Afrocentric models of community stress connections, caring, and personal accountability. . . . [Communities are] potential sanctuaries where individual Black women and men are nurtured in order to confront oppressive social institutions. Power from this perspective is a creative power used for the good of community, whether that community is conceptualized as one’s family, church community, or the next generation of the community’s children. By making the community stronger, African American women become empowered, and that same community can serve as a source of support when Black women encounter race, gender, and class oppression.

Collins is writing in the same tradition as Giddens (1979) in stressing the capacity of the individual to create a society more amenable to the individual. African American women, in Collins’ model, take upon themselves the responsibility of creating a cooperative environment that serves to strengthen its members in times of personal stress. The subjective result of this would be solidarity which Collins (1990:37) describes as “the oneness of life,” a unity that results from these common efforts and vision.

Kanter (1972: 66-67) explains the vital role of commitment in the maintenance, and even in the very definition of community:

In sociological terms, commitment means the attachment of the self to the requirements of social relations that are seen as self-expressive. Commitment links self-interest to social requirements. . . . *When a person is committed, what he wants to do (through internal feeling) is the same as what he has to do (according to external demands) . . . To a great extent, therefore, commitment is not only important for the survival of a community, but also is part of the essence of community [italics added].*

I would go even one step farther than Kanter does. I would assert that commitment is not only the *attachment* of the self to the requirements of social relations, but the *confounding* of the self to those requirements. In the committed community, we lose the social distinction between self and community, the identity of the one being bound up in the identity of the other. This does not mean the psychopathic loss of Self to the impersonal Other, but rather a unity between Self and Other such that it would be ridiculous (and impossible) to analyze the Self in isolation from the Other. The success of Self is bound up in the success of Other. (In this usage, I accept Other as representing a person, a group of people, or a common cause.) The Self is not made less by this association. Indeed, such a tie presupposes a “whole individual” (Kanter 1972:65). The whole individual is better appreciated in this social context than in any other.

Lee (1976:12) alleged that there are several cultures in which this sort of relationship between the Self and the Other is healthy and proper.

In a society where relatedness stems from the premise of the open self, . . . though the self and the other are differentiated, they are not mutually exclusive. The self contains some of the other, participates in the other, and is in part contained within the other. By this I do not mean that what usually goes under the name of empathy. I mean rather that where such a concept of the self is operative, self-interest and other-interest are not clearly distinguished; so that what I do for my own good is necessarily also good for my unit, the surround, whether this is my family, my village, my tribe, my land, or even nature in general, the entire universe. . . .

I can say, “Help *me* that *my people* may live” only when the self in continuous with the other; and when this is so, whether I enhance myself, whether I expose myself to illness or pollution, whether I allow myself to deteriorate, in every case this is not a matter involving only myself, and it is not even a matter purely affecting others, but rather a situation shared by the other because I am to some extent the other.

A corollary to this view of the self is that, in respecting the other, the self is simultaneously respected. . . . In societies where the individual is ideally at one with, in harmony with, society, nature, the universe, we find that the self has tremendous value.

Bauman (1992: 134) places the issue of community in the contemporary context by declaring it the main object of postmodernity, or the direction society has been moving over the course of this century:

Thus postmodernity, the age of contingency *für sich*, of self-conscious contingency, is for the thinking person also the age of community: of the lust for community, search for community, invention of community, imagining community. The nightmare of our contemporary – writes Manning Nash – ‘is to be deracinated, to be without papers, stateless, alone, alienated, and adrift in a world of organized others’; to be, in other words, *denied* identity by those who, being others (that is, different from ourselves), always *seem* at a distance enviably ‘well-settled’, ‘integrated’, ‘organized’ and sure of their own identity [italics in original].

Bauman then quotes Nash as describing how members of this group, this longed-for community, find an “identity” with others “thought to be ‘human’ and trustworthy,” and that the community becomes a “refuge,” in contrast to “a hostile, uncaring world.”

Community, in this model, is a place to turn to, an “identity,” a belonging, a oneness with others, even if it must be imagined.

That is not to say that because a community is imagined, it exists only as some irrelevant, unattainable abstraction. Rather, because it is imagined – because it permeates “the collective imagination” written of by Maffesoli (1966:18) – it reaches into the lived experiences of its members. Communities of this type do not survive long without effort, and the effort is usually driven by affective commitment: “What [the imagined community] lacks in stability and institutionalized continuity, it more than compensates for with the overwhelming affective commitment of its self-appointed ‘members’ ” (Bauman 1992, xix). In a world of instability and superficiality, some individuals *choose* to create a community that works in their lives. There is some debate as to the extent of these communities – how long they last, how far they extend – and perhaps that is a

question best left to empirical research. Bauman (1992) and Maffesoli (1996) seem to be more on the side of greater transience, while Simpson (1996) places emphasis on the extension of community over both time and space. The boundaries of community, in time, space, and imagination, are ripe topics for inquiry.

One clue Bauman (1992) gives to help the researcher determine those boundaries is the issue of responsibility. In so doing, he is not alone. As we have already seen, Collins (1990) observes the significance of personal accountability in the formation and maintenance of African American communities. Storer (1976:214) described the weight of responsibility of the individual in the following manner: “A good community can be raised up only at the cost of careful and truth-committed judgment and a will and purpose on the part of all, so far as they are able, to govern themselves by the findings of such judgment, having regard to the common good.” This type of responsibility does not decline with the increase of pluralism in contemporary society.

[P]luralism of authorities is conducive to the resumption by the agents of moral responsibility that tended to be neutralized, rescinded or ceded away as long as the agencies remained subordinated to a unified, quasi-monopolistic legislating authority. . . . All in all, in the postmodern context agents are constantly faced with moral issues . . . The choice always means the assumption of responsibility, and for this reason bears the character of a moral act (Bauman 1992, 203).

It seems that the extent of one’s community cannot truly reach any farther than one’s sense of responsibility. The two may be coterminous.

In this section, I have observed that there are several definitions of community. Rather than handling all of them, I have chosen to emphasize the solidary aspect of community, which Nelson found particularly characterizes Mormon villages. Solidarity is another term that has several definitions, and any meaning given it must be consonant with Nelson’s use. He places it in the context of prestigious leadership, group ideals,

external opposition, and internal cooperation, suggests its similarity to kinship relations; and permits it to exist in various degrees. The development of a definition has been informed by several authors, most particularly Blea, Collins, Kanter, and Bauman. They raise issues of identity, meaning, oneness, affect, commitment, and responsibility.

With this discussion as a background I propose a working definition of solidarity. For the purposes of this research project, solidarity will be defined as a subjective affiliation held by an individual toward a larger group – a positive feeling of *oneness in identity and purpose* accompanied by a committed sense of responsibility. Solidarity will be taken to be one element of community. It is not a primary object of this research to define community. For the present, I will simply accept “community” as a symbol held and used by humans in a social context, one that typically holds desirable or at least utilitarian relevance to social organization.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, I presented the underlying assumptions that guide the present research project. Regarding theory generally, the researcher should be frank about the situatedness of both his theorizing and his research. I assume that research subjects are bounded agents – individuals who are free to choose between distinct options within certain limitations – and that they are intelligent – capable of reflection upon their own experiences and of articulating them meaningfully to the researcher. Regarding community, I note that there is a great deal of disagreement in the sociological literature on the meaning of “community” and of “solidarity.” Building upon the foundation proposed by Nelson, and with reference to the theorizing of individuals like Blea, Collins,

Kanter, and Bauman, I propose a working definition of solidarity: a positive feeling of oneness in identity and purpose accompanied by a committed sense of responsibility. I regard community as a symbol of social organization used and manipulated by individuals as seems desirable or utilitarian.

CHAPTER 3: THE MORMON VILLAGE AND MORMONISM

COMMUNITY STUDIES AND THE MORMON VILLAGE

Rural community studies dating from the time of the first Mormon village series (i.e., from approximately the turn of the century to 1930) focused largely on gathering a wide variety of data about rural life. Most of Nelson's work in the first Mormon village series was just that – the collection and tabulation of descriptive statistics about life in the Mormon village. This tradition came under criticism by Sorokin and Zimmerman around 1930 (Hitt 1980). They asserted that rural sociology ought to move beyond the mere gathering of quantitative data, to an analysis of patterns, relationships, and theories. The popularity of this position became so strong that these early American rural community studies went out of style, and there has not as yet been a movement to follow-up on them systematically. Unfortunately, it was not recognized that these studies (including Nelson's) do indeed have theoretical relevance, and that follow-up studies and replications can provide evidence from which the contemporary sociologist can derive patterns and relationships.

Charles Galpin (1924) may have been the first rural sociologist to identify the villages of the Mormon West as exemplifying a major exception to mainstream American rural community. Nelson met Galpin when the former took leave of an administrative post at BYU to attend a seminar on rural issues taught by Galpin, who was a visiting scholar at UCLA. Galpin encouraged Nelson to perform empirical work on Mormon villages and took an advisory role in the subsequent series of community studies (Nelson 1985).

Nelson developed community studies and theory partially in agreement with Galpin's orientation, and partially along a different line than did Galpin, but understanding Galpin's positions on these issues can help us better understand Nelson's contributions. In his autobiographical writing, Galpin (1985) explained how many of his ideas developed in relation to his own social environment. His appointment at the University of Wisconsin doing both research and agricultural extension allowed him to deal with data that convinced him of the centrality of services and trade in rural social organization. Galpin said that it was in that setting that he developed a practical theory of rural social extension, namely to show what others are doing, to praise what has been accomplished, and to let imitation handle the rest. Later, while working in the Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C., Galpin came to believe that researchers located at regional and state institutions should be the experts on the states and regions in which they are located, leaving analyses of broad patterns and interrelationships and the development of rural sociology in general to those affiliated with national institutions.

In retrospect, it seems that Nelson's Mormon village followed Galpin's approach to rural sociological extension, in that while at what was a regional school (BYU), Nelson focused his research on local studies. The Mormon village series fits in Galpin's approach to rural extension work, in that Nelson looked for successes and publicized them, giving others the opportunity to imitate. Nelson also focused on the significance of economic variables in Mormon village life, but more so in the second series than in the first. In the first series, Nelson gave attention to group affect – a sociological variable for which Nelson relied heavily on the work of Ephraim Ericksen (1922).

Cited in Nelson's 1930 publication, *The Mormon Village: A Study In Social Origins*, Ericksen seems to have contributed much to Nelson's concern with the affective and identity components of Mormon social life. Ericksen wrote,

To find the true meaning of Mormonism we must go to its group sentiments. If we are to comprehend its life we must analyze its spiritual life, we must study the problems which have confronted the people and the sentiments derived from the struggle with them (Ericksen 1922:8).

He then gives much attention to defining what are the sentiments that characterize Mormonism. For example, he made the following significant observations about the moral sentiments that developed during the early period of Mormon history:

The individual becoming so completely merged into the activity of the group lost consciousness of personal interests. His entire life became identified with his group. The self was a group self; it was made up of the combined interests of all the brethren. When they suffered he suffered in a very real sense. . . . The individual immediately and directly felt the sufferings of his brother. And he did it because he found himself within the life of his brother. . . . The mistake which Adam Smith made (and which was also made by the moral sense school) is in treating the individual's life as distinct from that of his brother (Ericksen 1922:83-84).

Thus, to Ericksen, solidarity became the foundational Mormon social ethic, an idea that Nelson (1930) develops further.

Ericksen also contributed to some of the ideas Nelson used outlining how solidarity developed in the Mormon village. Preferring a developmental approach, Ericksen (1922) explains that in its first hundred years Mormonism underwent three developmental periods. The first, characterized by intense religious persecution of the Mormons by their neighbors in the eastern United States, resulted in the cultural value of solidarity as described earlier. The second, characterized by the challenge of conquering the natural environment of the arid West, resulted in the cultural value of obedience to

centralized authority. The third developmental period of Mormonism, in which life was stabilized in the now Mormon West, resulted in the cultural value of adherence to traditional religious thought in opposition to the intellectual precepts taught in secular educational institutions. The first two of these developmental periods closely parallel two of the social contexts Nelson asserts contributed to the strong social solidarity of the Mormon village.

Leonard Arrington belonged to a later generation and was not a contributor to Nelson's models of the Mormon village, but he helps to frame our understanding of the topic through his influential writings on early Mormon cooperation and economics. Like other analysts of early Mormon culture, Arrington also remarked on the power of the symbol of solidarity to these people:

The symbols of unity were a strong central organization and self-forgetting group solidarity . . . The Mormon passion for unity and solidarity, strengthened and tempered as it was by years of suffering and persecution, at once provided the means and the motive for regional economic planning by church authorities in the Great Basin. The means was provided by the willingness of church members to submit to the "counsel" of their leaders and to respond to every call, spiritual and temporal. The motive was provided by the principle of oneness itself, which was regarded as of divine origin, and whose attainment required planning and control by those in authority (Arrington 1958:27).

Arrington also deemed it important to reiterate the social effects of the "Plat of Zion," a defining trait of Mormon villages which was actually meant to be the focus of Nelson's 1930 work. Arrington (1958:24-25) wrote:

The Mormon village concept, which in some respects resembled the New England village, was used as a guide in the settlement of Far West, Nauvoo, Salt Lake City, and almost every other Mormon community in the West; indeed, it proved peculiarly adapted to the conditions required for colonizing the Great Basin. It provided security against Indians; facilitated cooperative efficiency by placing the members of the community in ready touch with directing officers of the group; made possible the maintenance of religious, educational, and other social

institutions; permitted effective irrigation culture; and assured, in general, a highly organized community life.

Nelson (1952:25) himself was the one to clearly articulate what the Mormon village (or the Plat of Zion) was, and much of his discussion focuses on its origins. The definition he gave was,

This is a form of habitation for farm people in which the homes are separate from the farms and are established in villages or towns. These latter are characterized usually by very wide streets (there are some variations from this) which intersect each other at right angles, and run to the cardinal points of the compass: due north-south and east-west. Barns, chicken coops, pig pens, and stack yards, as well as the homes, are built on the village lots. . . . The adjacent farm land was in the beginning of settlement divided equally among the families with holdings of only a few acres typical:

Nelson goes on to describe how some writers have outlined the practical benefits of this sort of settlement pattern in the American West, and have suggested that these are the reasons for which the pattern was used. However, Nelson observes that the foundation of the plan was created long before it was necessary or even obvious that it should be used. He describes social attributes of the early Mormon movement, including doctrine, leadership, and organization, and explains that these carry the greatest explanatory power for the formation of the Mormon village concept, thereby excluding explanations that base themselves on principles of functional consequences.

It is worth noting a few points of symbolism about the layout and implementation of the village. First, the lots in town were approximately equal-sized, as were the farm acreage surrounding it. Holdings both in and out of the town were originally divided equally among resident families, suggesting an equality of all members. That people were to live together in town, not dispersed across the landscape, suggested the importance of *communal* preparation for the impending Second Coming of the Savior –

that the group must collectively prepare itself for that event. The grid pattern of the streets and consequent rationalization and coordination of street names (100 South, 200 South, 300 South, etc.) and house numbers (304 West, 326 West, etc.) represented an order to the Mormon movement, in contrast to all of the disorder it experienced during its early years. The provision for civic and religious structures in the central blocks of the city further impressed the centrality of group life in the minds of residents. The communal shock that followed 1952 destruction of the Ephraim Tabernacle suggests the continuing importance residents place on the symbolic role of the historic, geographically central, religious structure.

Nelson studied other villages, such as those of southern Alberta and Cuba, but the focus of the present research is on the three Utah localities that lay at the heart of the Mormon village concept. The original series was conducted during the 1920's, when Nelson was at the beginning of his academic career, and probably took so long because he was going through several life transitions at the time – getting married, changing jobs, beginning graduate school, and moving across the country (Nelson 1985). As a result of his not conducting the first series all at once, there were theoretical and methodological elements of his inquiry that changed from the beginning of the first series to the end of it. Nelson's perspective continued to change, and by the second series, the fieldwork for which was conducted in 1950, he presented a much more formal, organizational, economic view of Mormon village life (Nelson 1952), a reflection of the existing disciplinary focus of rural sociology. This was in contrast to the first series, in which he emphasized social history and solidarity.

Why Nelson moved to the more formal, economic perspective is not entirely clear. He does not justify it himself. It is possible that the conclusions of the earlier series were the product of a younger and more idealistic mind, or that by the second series he had been more fully socialized into the standard motifs of the discipline. I believe that he found the original theoretical orientation simply unsuitable for tracking solidarity after the formative period of a community. Rather than adapting to historical circumstance by revising the theory to keep the affective component, Nelson chose to rely more heavily on organizational and economic factors.

Nelson's own theoretical transition presents a problem to the researcher seeking to perform a replication of the Mormon village study, and limited in resources enough to not be able to perform a complete replication. I decided to limit this portion of a larger project of replication to the issue of solidarity. This meant that I depended much more heavily on Nelson's first series than on the second for a theoretical grounding. The first lent itself better to a discussion of solidarity. Nevertheless, it is in his conclusions from the second series that Nelson gives a worrisome report on the status of solidarity. He found that the solidarity had declined markedly. The basic pattern Nelson (1952:137) described was that "as the settlement grew and the people began to feel secure, the original motivation for cooperative activity seemed to weaken and the system of competition took its place." As he later described in more detail,

. . . the villages described in this volume represent in microcosm the changes that are transpiring in American rural life in general. Urbanization, or as some sociologists call it, secularization of life is proceeding at a rapid pace. Communication and transportation devices which characterize contemporary life place the remotest corners in instantaneous contact with the world. The diffusion of urban traits to the countryside is everywhere apparent. Farming is becoming more and more mechanized and efficient. Farmers are declining in numbers and farms [are] increasing in size. Life becomes more impersonal, mutual aid

declines, and contractual forms of association increase. Formal organizations multiply as new interests arise – economic, social, recreational, educational. New occupations come into being as specialization and division of labor grow more elaborate. Homogeneity of the population gives way to increasing heterogeneity. Attitudes change. The sense of *community* suffers as cleavages develop around special interest. These developments are clearly evident in the Mormon villages today, as they are in the communities of the United States elsewhere [italics in original] (Nelson 1952:276-277).

Several problems with this assessment make it difficult to accept. First, and probably most importantly, Nelson did not articulate a clear definition of solidarity. Second, it becomes evident upon comparing Nelson's writings on each series that he shifted his focus somewhat to different factors in the second series (formal organization and economics) than he did in the first series (social history and subjective affiliation). In the first series he did comment on the local economy, but he did not posit it as a causal factor in his theory of solidarity. Third, even if we accept the premises of the second series as valid, in the 1920's Ericksen had noted that the very issues Nelson would later claim to be new were already present in Mormon villages:

Thus, we shall see than in the agricultural, as in every other line of economic activity in the Mormon community, the old co-operative community system is giving way to large corporate methods of business control (Ericksen 1922:42).

Fourth, it may be that part of the reason Nelson had so much difficulty in identifying community solidarity in his follow up studies, was that this theory was a theory of solidarity *formation*, not of solidarity *maintenance*. Since the possibility of maintaining solidarity over time becomes a major research question of the present effort, it deserves some elaboration.

Probably the clearest example of the neglect of solidarity maintenance is in Nelson's (1930) discussion of the four primary social processes that lead to solidarity within Mormon villages in the first place: Leadership, ideology, conflict, and

cooperation. The manner in which Nelson handles leadership, conflict, and cooperation makes those themes difficult to apply to the Mormon village beyond the settlement period.

Nelson's discussion of the importance of leadership in creating solidarity rests entirely on the contributions of Joseph Smith, Jr. and Brigham Young. The period of Mormon history connected with the lifetimes of these two men was clearly one of community-building. Upon their deaths, there must necessarily have been left a void. Granted, the organization of the LDS Church allows for another man to promptly take the leadership upon the death of the current president. At the time of the original series, five other men had served in the same office as Smith and Young had. However, Nelson completely neglects to discuss the impact of these other men on social life in the Mormon village, suggesting that their influence clearly fits into a different category. (What that might be, he does not specify.)

Nelson's discussion of conflict and cooperation are also clearly linked with early Mormon history. Conflict is typified by the religious persecution experienced by Mormons in New York, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois, while cooperation was necessary to build the infrastructure in the arid West. Once the Mormons removed themselves from violent religious persecution, and once the basic infrastructure of the West had been completed, conflict and cooperation, as so characterized, could no longer be relevant. That is, with the presence of infrastructure, we lose most of the grounds upon which solidarity is said to have been developed. Does this mean that solidarity must necessarily decline after having been built up? Or is it possible that a social group can take up new

functions to maintain the solidarity it has worked so hard to attain? This is to be a major thrust of the current research.

We should note “as so characterized” in the preceding discussion. Even to this day, conflict and cooperation are central elements in the Mormon psyche. The problem is that if conflict is only recognized as Mormon leaders being tarred and feathered, and if cooperation is only seen as instrumental – city founding and such – then the investigator will likely miss much of the depth of Mormons’ feelings about the Church, their own lives, and their identity. The experiences of the past do serve as a metaphor for the Mormon life-world as reconstructed over the years, but they do not entirely constitute that world.

The dearth of perspectives on community maintenance, rather than merely community formation and dissolution arises in the literature more generally, and not just in Nelson’s work. In all likelihood there are different skills and patterns necessary to maintain community than are needed to create one. It should not be surprising that the patterns that created community in the first place are absent upon reexamination several decades later, should not be surprising. This does not necessarily mean that solidarity is not present. Further research is needed to outline how solidarity is maintained beyond the initial establishment and construction of the community.

In response to these problems with earlier studies of the Mormon village, the present research project will have three objectives: First, to derive a working definition of solidarity relevant to the Mormon village; second, to reevaluate the relevance of Nelson’s four solidarity-producing social characteristics in contemporary Mormon village life; and third, to identify additional mechanisms whereby solidarity might be maintained

in the Mormon village following establishment of the physical infrastructure and social system.

MORMONISM

It is not possible to study the Mormon village without giving some attention to Mormonism. Before outlining the details of this project, I will make a few observations about the relevance of Mormonism.

For the purposes of this research project, “Mormon” refers to that which belongs or relates to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This is the largest and most well known organization claiming a heritage from Joseph Smith, Jr. When I refer to “the Church” (as opposed to “the church”), I mean the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (abbreviated LDS). This is not meant to be insulting. Latter-day Saints recognize the existence of many other churches. They simply tire of reciting the entire name of the organization, and truncate it after the second word. These uses agree with those of informants to this study.

The very title “Mormon village” indicates where Nelson himself placed this religion. He could have selected the title “Utah agricultural village” or something similar, but he considered “Mormon” to be the most appropriate descriptor. This village is not primarily characterized by being non-urban, or agricultural, or located in Utah. It attains to its unique identity specifically and necessarily by being Mormon.

I am aware that not all Ephraim’s population is affiliated with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and that historically other denominations have taken up residence there, so “Mormon village” is not a completely accurate descriptor of towns like Ephraim. Nevertheless, I consider “Mormon village” to be an appropriate label for

several reasons: (1) It is already well established through the work of Lowry Nelson. (2) The town and its traditions were founded in agreement with the general Mormon pattern. (3) The great majority of the population is still LDS. (4) Even those who do not choose to affiliate with the LDS Church still must define their identity and activities in reference to it. (5) The residents, Mormon and non-Mormon alike, readily accept the descriptor “Mormon” as referring to their town, sometimes declaring it before I described to them the sociological concept of “Mormon village.”

The focus of this work is the cultural aspects of life in the Mormon village. Nelson himself directed future researchers in the direction of Mormon culture as he concluded his first Mormon village series:

The results of these studies of Mormon villages point definitely to the need for an enlarged program of social research to reveal more specific trends in village development. . . . From the standpoint of Mormon culture a comprehensive program of social research can be of inestimable worth. With the efficient machinery of social control now existing in the Mormon communities the important need now is for a program based upon realities. These realities can be revealed only through patient research (Nelson 1933:73).

Culture is particularly important in understanding the behavior of residents of Mormon villages, relative to other American small towns in this century.

. . . Mormon villages are characterized by some special conditions growing out of the fact that they are *Mormon*. The importance of the Church organization has frequently been noted in this volume. It ramifies the social structure of the villages and is the dominant feature of it. The policies of the Church, therefore, affect behavior in the most remote community. This is true because of the highly centralized character of the organization. The policy-making body – the General Authorities – devise programs at central headquarters which are to be implemented in the Stakes and Wards. The local “congregation” has little or nothing to say in their formulation.

Therefore it is important, in considering the future of the [Mormon] village society, to examine some of the central ideas which characterize the Mormon cultural tradition [*italics added*] (Nelson 1952:277).

A fundamental concept in cultural studies is the difference between core and peripheral values. There are certain “core” values and beliefs within Mormonism that are necessary to the very definition of Mormonism. It is not possible to be Mormon and, for example, reject the prophetic status of Joseph Smith or the divinity of Jesus Christ. “Peripheral” values can still be Mormon, but would only be held by a certain group of Mormons, say, those who live in a particular place, who live at a particular time, or who have come into contact with certain other outside cultural influences. That is why it would be possible for a Mormon to experience culture shock moving from Texas, for example, to Utah.

The thrust of my thesis is on peripheral values, or those elements of culture that are particular to a specific subgroup and their social circumstances.¹ I cannot engage in an extensive justification of doctrine or in an analysis of recent or historical LDS Church directives. The present data and project do not lend themselves to either of these purposes. On the other hand, the present research project and the data it generated lend themselves very well to an attempt to understand the circumstances of a specific social group.

A final observation about the study of Mormonism: William Wilson, a Mormon folklorist, made a strong criticism of those who study Mormon life. He observed that too often, scholars have focused on aspects of Mormon life that do not represent what the great majority of that life entails. This may be because regular life is not “interesting” enough, or because we have been trained to think along certain lines, either in our academic discipline or in society generally, about what constitutes appropriate subject matter. Dr. Wilson relates the following:

During my first year in graduate school at Indiana University, I reviewed Saints of Sage and Saddle in Professor Dorson's seminar on theory and technique. In the main, I praised the book, but I also criticized what struck me as its exaggerated emphasis on the supernatural at the expense of any discussion of Mormon moral and spiritual values and of the motivating principles of sacrifice and service which I knew from experience were essential parts of being Mormon. I wrote:

“The missionary returning from the field will probably tell of a healing or two he has witnessed and of a miraculous conversion he has had a part in, but primarily he will talk about the change of character he has observed in the lives of those who have accepted the gospel. He will tell many stories about people who have abandoned their own interests to devote themselves to the service of others. Those stories are just as much a part of Mormon oral tradition as are tales of the supernatural, and no survey of Mormon folklore is complete without them.”

When I wrote those lines, I feared Professor Dorson would attack me for being a narrow apologist. But he wrote on my paper: “Splendid appraisal and statement of unnoticed Mormon traditions.” In subsequent years, I should have followed my own Mormon instincts, and I should have taken Professor Dorson's advice and collected and studied those unnoticed traditions. Instead, though I did break new ground in several areas of Mormon folklore study and though I still hold to most of the conclusions I have reached, I let myself be too easily influenced by what folklorists generally have considered to be memorable in religious folklore – that is, with dramatic tales of the supernatural – rather than with the quiet lives of committed service that I knew really lay at the heart of the Mormon experience (Wilson 1995:15-16).

We in the social sciences have our own parallels in the study of Mormonism: Polygamy, intellectualism (when defined as a force opposing Mormon doctrine and policy), and apostasy, for example, while relevant to LDS social life, do not constitute its common presentations. The duty of the ethnographer is to tell the story as closely as possible to the story passed along to her – both the sensational and the mundane, both the theoretically correct and the theoretically contradictory. I am inclined to believe that “quiet lives of committed service” do indeed lie “at the heart of the Mormon experience,” and I hope I can do justice to that area of Mormon social life.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Nelson's work on the Mormon village can be seen as an outgrowth of the intellectual currents of rural sociology at the time. Charles Galpin was encouraging work on rural communities by scholars at nearby institutions, and may have also influenced Nelson to focus on the successes of localities in dealing with their social problems. Ericksen drew the issue of affect in the Mormon social movement to the fore, making neglect of it impermissible for one trying to derive social explanations of Mormon behavior. As Arrington later pointed out, Mormon group affect was quite effective in practice. In tracking Mormon solidarity, however, Nelson suggested that it had declined markedly by 1950. I will take issue with this conclusion, for it seems that it may be an artifact of the theory Nelson formulated in the first series, and of some theoretical drift that he and rural sociology generally experienced between the 1920's and the 1950's. What he lacked was a clear and constant concept of solidarity.

Nelson's writings and those of others such as Wilson (1995) and Bahr and Forste (1998) suggest that it is desirable for the social scientist to address Mormonism as a cultural system, and to date such an approach has been neglected. When it has been used, researchers have tended to focus on those issues that do not represent the daily, material lives of the Mormon rank-and-file. Consequently, Mormonism continues to offer a potentially rich field for cultural analysis.

CHAPTER 4: METHODS

The present study is a follow-up study in Ephraim, one of the Mormon villages Nelson studied. This is not a full replication; a survey of current residents has not yet been completed.² Further, I have set about to further develop the theory of community by incorporating new ideas in the discipline from the last three decades. Because of the inclusion of these ideas, my methods were correspondingly altered, most significantly in the formation of the interview guide. This action further disqualifies the present study from being a strict replication (Bahr, Caplow, and Chadwick 1983).

The focus of the study is to develop the notion of solidarity: what is it, how can it be developed and sustained, and whether there are other bases for solidarity maintenance that may develop subsequent to a community's foundational period? To accomplish this, I chose the methods that seemed most suitable, and not all of Nelson's methods were equally significant to his theory of solidarity. Nelson's principal method was the social survey. However, we quickly discover from reviewing the survey sheets from the original Ephraim study that there is virtually nothing on them that seems calculated to give the researcher an indication of the degree of solidarity found in the town. It appears that solidarity was assessed using field techniques. Hence, a complete replication would not seem to be necessary to assess the solidarity of relationships and identity in the Mormon village.

LOWRY NELSON'S METHODS

Nelson's Ephraim study was the second in a series of three studies of rural Utah Mormon villages. He completed a study of Escalante two years prior, and one of

American Fork soon after the Ephraim work. For each study, a research paper summarizes his findings. Unfortunately, the paper on the Ephraim study is the only one of the three that does not contain a methods section, and the methods sections of the other studies are not complete by current standards. Fortunately, Nelson indicates in the other two publications that the methods used in each study were basically the same. In his Escalante study he wrote,

The data were secured by means of a survey of the families of the community. One hundred and eighty-three family heads, visited by an investigator, supplied answers to questions in a schedule. Personal observation, interviews with different members of the community, records of the L. D. S. [*sic*] Church, as well as those of the county and village, were also used as sources of information (Nelson 1925:12).

In his report of the American Fork study, Nelson similarly indicates the use of multiple methods:

The studies [of Escalante, Ephraim, and American Fork] have been made by the survey method. Preliminary information was gathered through interviews with local people, and through consulting such secondary sources as published histories, if any, school reports, census reports, and so on. A most important source of information was local persons, who through long residence in the community were in a position to give important facts, especially those relative to earlier history. A survey schedule was taken to each home in the community by a field investigator. These schedules constituted the basis for the tabulated data.

Where data are comparable, comparisons will be made with results secured in Ephraim and Escalante (Nelson 1933:9).

Nelson stated that his primary interest was the survey itself (which, as he indicated in the last line of his American Fork statement of methods, changed in content from study to study). However, qualitative methods were important in obtaining information about the nature of village life. From the Escalante study through the American Fork study, Nelson made clear that personal observation, interviews with local residents and community leaders, and secondary data analysis informed his conclusions.

The actual survey sheets used by Nelson in his original survey of Ephraim in 1925 are archived in Special Collections and Manuscripts in the Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young University (Nelson [n.d.]). There is one sheet for each household, filled out front and back, with responses divided into three categories: "Family Schedule," "The Home," and "The Farm." While rather direct over all, the instrument does reveal certain biases. For example, religious affiliation is taken for granted. There is no question asking to which church, if any, family members belong, but there is the query, "Has any member of the family been on a mission for the L. D. S. Church?" The subsequent line asks for "Name," "Place," and "Cost of Mission." Further, the survey offers a somewhat long checklist of appliances, utilities, and property, from "running water" to "phonograph" to "number [of] hogs." Such a list reflects the expectations of the physical context of life in Ephraim at the time. The final section, "The Farm," clearly reveals a bias that most, if not all Ephraimites are involved in farming, and have sufficient knowledge of farming methods to answer questions like "type of farming," "value per acre," and "acres 'dry-farmed'." These questions may have served well seventy-five years ago, but it is not certain how well they would serve today.

Surprisingly, given Nelson's conclusions about solidarity in Mormon villages, there does not seem to be any significant base in the survey questionnaires from which to determine the degree of solidarity within Ephraim. The only questions relevant to solidarity are, "Are you satisfied with your community?" and "If not, why not?" Most respondents answered that, yes, they were satisfied, and left blank the space provided for the answer to the second query. While most of Nelson's conclusions were clearly drawn

from the survey responses, his remarks about solidarity must have been derived from his ethnographic methods.

RESEARCH SITE

Hundreds of Mormon villages were founded in western North America during the first Mormon diaspora, which followed the group's expulsion from the eastern United States. Escalante, Ephraim, and American Fork, all located in the state of Utah, were the three Mormon villages selected by Nelson for study, and it was on the basis of these studies that he formulated the concept of the "Mormon village." In his report of the American Fork study, Nelson (1933) suggested that the three were selected because they represented three phases in community development. Escalante, with a population of about 1,000 at the time, was quite isolated in the desert of southern Utah. Ephraim, population approximately 2,000 in the mid-1920's and located in the center of Utah, was a mid-range locality. American Fork, which had about 3,000 people at the time of the original series, was well influenced by its location on north-central Utah's urbanizing Wasatch Front.

For the present study it was determined that an analysis of only one Mormon village would suffice. All three of these localities have experienced significant changes since the second series completed by Nelson in 1950. American Fork can hardly be considered rural anymore. By the 1990's it had become a sizable suburban city by Utah standards (approximately 20,000 residents in the late 1990's) and is part of the metropolitan area that includes Salt Lake City, Orem, and Provo. (See Table 1.) Its size rules it out of consideration for a project focused on solidarity in the Mormon village. Escalante is still rather small (approximately 900 residents), but the local social economy

has been recently thrown into controversy by the creation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, an unpopular action among many circles in Utah, especially in the state's rural south.

Table 1: Population Change in Lowry Nelson's Mormon Villages

	Escalante	Ephraim	American Fork
1860	N/A	910	695
1870	N/A	1167	1145
1880	623	1698	1299
1890	506	1800	1942
1900	650	2086	2732
1910	846	2296	2797
1920	1032	2287	2763
1930	862	1966	3047
1940	1106	2094	3333
1950	773	1987	5126
1960	702	1801	6373
1970	638	2127	7713
1980	652	2810	12,417
1990	818	3363	15,696
1997 (est.)	901	3856	20,094
2000 (est.)	1063	4196	21,675

Sources: Moffat 1996; Bureau of Economic and Business Research 1996; *Population Projections for Utah's Cities and Unincorporated Areas* 1997.

Ephraim remains small enough to be accessible, large enough to offer variance, and seems to have maintained contact with its roots. (See Table 1.) Thus, it seemed quite appropriate for my study of solidarity in the Mormon village. Moreover, much of the necessary data were available at the Harold B. Lee Library at BYU. Archived there on microfilm are editions of Ephraim's local newspaper, the *Ephraim Enterprise*, extending back through both the second and the first study periods. Also available at BYU are many of the personal papers of Lowry Nelson, among them the raw data sheets

of the original survey of Ephraim, completed in 1925. These allowed me to look at the actual questions asked in the original series. Nelson admitted to modifying his questions between studies, so the fact that we have the actual survey questions asked of Ephraim residents makes a study of that town even more appealing. To be sure, Ephraim has changed. Population growth, a shifting local economy, the expansion of Snow College, the intrusion of patterns of American culture, and the locating of new religious groups in the vicinity have all had their impacts. Still, of the three localities Ephraim seemed best-suited as a site to measure changes in community solidarity.

A town of nearly 4000 permanent residents, Ephraim is located in the central Utah county of Sanpete. It is in the center of a region that has been called “the Mormon heartland” (Francaviglia 1978:73) for its preservation of several elements of Mormon history and culture. Ephraim and three other Sanpete localities (Manti, Spring City, and Mount Pleasant), have collectively been designated by the state government as a historic region, and are receiving state support for historic preservation and heritage-related activities. Locals comment on the growth the town is currently experiencing. However, the recent growth can be seen as part of a much larger pattern of growth in the latter half of this century. Sampling population size at ten-year intervals, we note that Ephraim’s population peaked at 2296 in 1910, then underwent an unsteady decline to 1801 in 1960. Since then, the population has grown with each decade, and is projected to continue to do so (See Table 1.).

Ephraim was the only one of Nelson’s three Mormon villages to have been founded according to the traditional model of Mormon colonization: Brigham Young called newly arrived converts to go to Sanpete and establish the city (Nelson 1925; 1928;

1933). While some of the settlers were of eastern American origin, the majority were Scandinavian converts to the Mormon faith. Much of the local lore deals with the acculturation of these Scandinavians to life in frontier America (Butler 1950). This acculturation was not easy, but with time the ethnic differences between Scandinavians and the other residents disappeared. Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian identity became a thing of holidays, festivals, and family history projects. Further intermixing occurred as some Ephraimites married residents of other Mormon towns and brought their spouses to live in Ephraim. Other European Americans have recently migrated to Ephraim – some to retire, and some to work at Snow College, at the LDS Institute located adjacent to it, or at other local enterprises. While these people are not “natives” (an important distinction), most appear to be Mormon. Their greatest impact on local change appears to be their preference for basic urban amenities like paved streets and a sewer system.

Proportionately, students at Snow College greatly increase the population of the town during the fall and winter. About 2500 students are enrolled there. Though only a fraction of the student body is from Ephraim, the town’s history and current status cannot be understood without reference to them. More than once, the town of Ephraim has rallied behind its college to keep it running during times of financial or administrative crisis (Christensen 1988). Students are criticized for being loud, for damaging historic buildings that have been converted to student housing, and for reckless driving, but the continuous flow of students through the college lends stability to the local economy. They provide work for local residents in positions such as maintenance, administration, and teaching at the college, and they patronize local businesses like the movie theater and restaurants on Main Street. Residents also note other contributions of the students to the

local area, such as providing volunteer service, athletic events, and fine arts productions, all of which are believed to enhance the quality of life in Ephraim. Most Asians in Ephraim are students at the college.

The largest ethnic minority in Ephraim today is the Hispanic population, many of whom work in a turkey factory located in the town of Moroni, approximately fifteen miles northwest of Ephraim. According to the 1990 United States Census, people of Hispanic origin comprised only 3.9% of Ephraim's population, but this group has attracted much more attention than its numbers indicate. This is understandably so, given the many differences between them and the bulk of the town's population. Most of them live in a crowded trailer park (dubbed "Little Tijuana") on the northern edge of town, separated from the rest of Ephraim by the cemetery, rodeo arena, and a small shopping center.

Whereas the general population of Ephraim is clearly more diversified, the Hispanic minority is almost entirely employed as agricultural laborers at the turkey factory, mostly, and also on farms around Ephraim. In his first survey of Ephraim, Nelson (1928) showed that laborers have almost uniformly a lower material standard of living than farmers and other residents of the town. Ethnographic evidence in the present study indicates that this is certainly the case for Mexican Americans in Ephraim today. Nelson (1955:206-208) further observed that in spite of the respect Americans superficially pay to their farmers, farmers are still usually ranked in the lower half of occupational prestige scales, with farm laborers who do not own property ranked lower than owners. Duncan's socioeconomic index agrees with Nelson's assertion. Although farm laborers place near the bottom of the index, there are a few occupations lower - such

as mine laborers and wood choppers (Duncan 1961), and manual labor is stigmatized “rather uniformly” in all American social classes Merton (1957:145) .

Hispanics are further differentiated from the rest of the population of Ephraim by the fact that most Hispanics are Catholic. Many Ephraim residents remark on the establishment of a Catholic Church in town. Protestant churches have previously been established in Ephraim, only to be abandoned after a short time for lack of membership (Ephraim City Corporation 1981). There does not appear to be evidence that this will be the case for the Catholics.

Another aspect that sets Hispanics apart is that most adult Hispanics speak English only to a limited degree. Ephraim has had experience with immigrants who do not speak English, but the Hispanics do not share with the English-speaking majority a religious forum that reaches over the linguistic barrier. For these reasons, the Hispanics are seen by non-Hispanic Ephraimites as being the least integrated of all the local ethnic groups, and they may well have a harder time participating in it than has any other ethnic group.

ETHNOGRAPHY

This research is primarily ethnographic, involving a combination of observations of daily life and special events in Ephraim, with interviews of several residents. The observations of daily life occurred when I was in residence in Ephraim for four weeks during July, 1997. Nelson did not state how long the periods of observation lasted in the original two series, but he hinted that they lasted about a week and a half in 1950 (Nelson 1952:128). My own observations included attendance at city council meetings, library board meetings, church social activities, community service projects, a session of court,

an LDS missionary farewell, and a small number of family dinners and family reunions. Being in residence also allowed me chance meetings with people in places like on the street, in stores, in the library, in the cemetery, and on and around Snow College. I attended services at the Church of the Bible, St. Jude's Catholic Church (both English and Spanish mass), and in four of the five resident LDS wards. Thus, I was able to get a feel for the rhythm of life in Ephraim, at least as it is during the summer months. I referred to published sources, such as past editions of *The Ephraim Enterprise*, to gain a fuller picture of key events. Of the data I accumulated, the interviews are given the greatest weight, since it is by talking with residents of the town that I ascertained what meaning certain activities and events had for the respondents.

Ethnographic methods present certain obstacles generally, and other obstacles that seem particular to this research project also arose. There is always the danger of cultural misunderstandings between the researcher and the population being studied. I had to keep this in mind, since I was entering what was to me a foreign culture. The project became psychologically intense, given the amount of work that had to be completed in such a short time frame. At certain points, it also became emotionally intense. The ethnographer does not know completely the nature of an interview before he conducts it. Some informants to this study provided detailed descriptions of alienation, suspicion, and hypocrisy in local social life. Especially when I happened to receive two or three of these sorts of narratives in a single day, I found it necessary to retire from the research setting for a brief period before returning to work on the project. A final obstacle was in the effects of ethnicity on the research effort. There is the clear possibility that even with my best efforts to understand the Spanish-speaking minority, I still failed to grasp their

meanings. Perhaps that is one reason that some sociologists have recently criticized “drive-by research.” More extended interaction with the study population does not guarantee mutual understanding, but it does provide more opportunity for the researcher’s assumptions to be proven wrong.

As I noted earlier, my study is not a full replication of Nelson’s study since a survey is not included in the research design. I term this a “follow-up” to Nelson’s work. That is, I selected one of his conclusions – that of solidarity – and performed the necessary research operations to allow me to assess the meaning and extent of that conclusion in the village today. A complete replication, including a social survey, is entirely possible, but is beyond the scope of the present project.

IDENTITY OF THE RESEARCHER

Nelson likely did little if any of the fieldwork himself. In the Escalante study, Nelson (1925, verso) acknowledges “The field investigation was done by Mr. Roy Lee of Escalante.” In his autobiography, Nelson mentions that T. Lynn Smith “helped with the Ephraim study” and Nathan L. Whetten was given by Nelson “some modest employment in connection with my study of American Fork” (Nelson 1985:230). Since the latter two studies were completed while Nelson was in residence in Madison, Wisconsin, it is possible that these are the identities of the field workers for each of the three studies. (Just who did what is in question. Hitt [1980] gives Smith credit for some of the work on Ephraim and all of the field work and statistical analysis on American Fork – leaving little, if any, place for Whetten.) Smith and Whetten were both students at Brigham Young University at the time of the Ephraim and American Fork studies, respectively. At least Smith, who may have done the fieldwork in Ephraim, had served an LDS

mission prior to the study in which he participated. Smith was from a Mormon town in Colorado, and Whetten was from the Mormon colonies of northern Mexico. In all cases Nelson selected white males from Mormon villages as his research assistants. Putting all of the character descriptions together, and assuming that Smith and Whetten did play the role for Ephraim and American Fork that Lee played for Escalante, it would seem that an ethnographic replication should involve sending as a fieldworker a young, white, LDS male, whose origin is a Mormon village, who is currently a student at Brigham Young University, and who has served an LDS mission. I meet those qualifications on most counts. The point in which I do not fit that profile is in the characteristic of being from a small Mormon village myself. (I was born in Berkeley, and raised around Detroit and Los Angeles.)

In the field, it was very important for the residents of Ephraim, especially those who are LDS, to place me. I could not just be another individual present at the activity, service project, or public meeting. For instance, once I was at a community service project, simply helping out along with the few dozen others present. About halfway through the activity, a woman approached me and exclaimed that she and several others were trying to figure out who I was. They thought I might be “one of the Willmore boys,” and had been asking around to see if anyone could confirm their guess. Word finally reached someone who knew who I was and what I was doing, and that was when the woman felt comfortable approaching me and telling me what the others were talking about. They had no problem with my identity, as long as I was not simply a stranger.

I did not attempt any deception in my identity or purposes. Ephraimites like personal honesty. On the other hand, I didn't rush to explain who I was as soon as I met

someone. I would answer truthfully when asked what I was doing, and if I was not asked, I would wait for what seemed like an appropriate time in the conversation. On at least one occasion, that seemed to cause some discomfort. One Sunday evening I arrived at the Church of the Bible for their weekly fellowship. Two other couples arrived at the same time I did, and were quite friendly to me, recognizing me as a newcomer and introducing themselves before we even reached the building. One man, after giving the names of himself and his wife, added, "We're disgruntled Mormons." They didn't ask why I had come. We walked inside and saw the pastor, who was setting up for the program. He and I had already met in other circumstances and seeing me there, he asked whether I had told the others what I was doing. I explained the research project, and the two couples who had walked in with me seemed a bit surprised. In contrast to the welcome they had given me in the parking lot, they seemed rather distant for the rest of the evening.

I often was told of the importance of being an Ephraim "native," with the attendant understanding that if one were not a "native," one did not quite fit in, or at least not as readily. There were times when I was asked a series of questions to determine how well I fit the informal scale of nativism. That I had come because the research project required me to be in Ephraim was not enough. I would be asked whether I was from Ephraim, and would answer, "No." The questioner would ask where I was from. I would answer, "California." This seemed not to be informative enough, and so the line of questioning would move on to my family. I would be asked whether I had family from "around here" (an apparent reference to Sanpete County), and answer, "Not that I know of." The questioning would end when I admitted that my mother was from Cache Valley

(northern Utah, where Logan is located). I was not a native, but the knowledge that I had roots through another Utah, mountain valley, also largely agricultural, also the location of an institution of higher education, and like nearby Manti, the site of a Mormon temple, established enough parallels that my identity became acceptable.

There was one aspect of researcher identity that would have been very helpful for Nelson to identify in the original Mormon village series. That was the attitude the field worker took toward the LDS Church. Nelson entirely omitted discussion of this issue in from his academic writings, but in reflecting upon my own experience in Ephraim, my position with regard to the Church was critical. It went beyond mere status – whether I was born LDS, or whether I served an LDS mission – and dealt with how residents of Ephraim subjectively perceived my feelings about the LDS Church. Calhoun (1995) asserted that theorizing is never neutral. A corollary to that is that research is never neutral either. That was certainly true about my research among village Mormons.

Perhaps in a replication, the ideal position to take would be whatever position the earlier researcher took. There is some evidence that, at least in his later years, Nelson become somewhat of a revisionist Mormon, one who retains organizational affiliation but is known to criticize what he considers inappropriate policies (Nelson 1985). However, I do not know that such was his position during the 1920's. Even more, it is possible that T. Lynn Smith was the fieldworker for the original Ephraim study, and he seems to have been more reticent than Nelson to publish his personal feelings about the LDS Church. I do not believe that his having recently returned from an LDS mission is sufficient evidence of the direction of his subjective orientation toward the LDS Church. However,

the presumption is that a recently returned LDS missionary is likely to give a positive reference of the denomination.

In my fieldwork I took a benefit-of-the-doubt position, which is to say, when confronted by an individual who pushed me to take a position on a controversial topic such as BYU's dismissal of its head basketball coach, or academic freedom at Church schools, I admitted ignorance about the issue in question. Then I suggested that most people are doing the best they can with their situation as they perceive it, and the general public rarely hears the details of the procedures by which the decision was reached. Residents were rarely satisfied by this sort of response, but neither were they alienated by it, and I considered it the best way to maintain the greatest credibility among all groups. Beyond these direct questions over my subjective position toward the LDS Church, I tried to maintain the image of a good Mormon. I maintained modest standards of dress and grooming, attended LDS worship services, avoided activities prohibited by the LDS Church, and generally tried to be helpfully involved, but not intrusive.

SELECTION OF INFORMANTS

Nelson did not specify how he obtained his ethnographic informants, nor how many informants there were in each village. He did mention that "one of the L. D. S. [*sic*] bishops of Ephraim" complained a bit about the rate of outmigration among young people (Nelson 1928:18), so he plainly had some contact with the local LDS leadership. However, he does not explain in any detail who his fieldworkers talked to nor how they approached their informants.

I obtained my informants by entering into acquaintanceship circles. I started with people I knew on the Wasatch Front (north central Utah) who are from Ephraim, or who

knew people from Ephraim, or who knew people who knew people from Ephraim. I then worked outward using the “snowball” technique, asking for references from each person in the chain. However, I did not ask people to refer me only to their friends, or to whomever they thought I should talk to, to get to know life in Ephraim. I told them that I was trying to cover all perspectives on the town, and thus would like the greatest variety of experiences and opinions as possible. It is critical to my method to understand that I did not seek and almost certainly did not obtain a proportionally representative sample of the population. I sacrificed proportionality for variance, and I did that quite deliberately as a challenge to the theory of solidarity. An emphasis on variance would exaggerate any unsolidary tendencies in the local culture, affording me greater opportunity to assess how such tendencies operate in the social environment.

Once into the data gathering phase of the study, I included a question at the end of each interview asking for references. When I was aware that some segment of the population existed, but that I was not being referred to anyone in it, I specifically named this group in the interview and asked if the respondent could refer me to anyone in the group who might be willing to help with the project. In some cases, I simply had to find someone in the group on my own. That is how I obtained the three Asian respondents in the sample. No one in the original pool referred me to any Asians, but I would see Asians on the streets of town. I finally resorted to direct, cold contact on the street. I also allowed for chance meeting of informants. I met one family when my car had problems and needed to be taken to a repair shop in town. On another occasion, I asked directions of a couple of women sitting on their front porch. None of these people had been referred to me by the “snowball” approach.

Gender became a limited problem. I recognized the cultural significance of gender: A young, single, unknown male in town might be treated with some suspicion for pressing to speak privately with local women (although I believe my association with BYU, a generally trusted institution, alleviated most of these reservations). A few times, I interviewed a married couple or two female neighbors at the same time to avoid misunderstandings.

On one occasion, I arranged to visit with a married couple in their home. When I arrived for the appointment, the wife told me that their opinions were “basically the same,” and so I would simply be visiting with her husband. This was clearly less than desirable, but I didn’t want to be a troublesome guest, so I accepted the arrangement. The husband and I sat in the living room for the formal interview, while the wife lingered in the kitchen, which was open to the living room, with the children. At several points in the interview, the husband said that he didn’t know the answer, and asked his wife whether she had any ideas. Sometimes she pitched in an opinion on her own. Thus, even though this woman was not officially an informant, she did provide some responses. Earlier research on the people of Ephraim also found a tendency among women to encourage their husbands to participate in the project, then sit back and listen. Bulter (1950), who also did academic research in Ephraim but had the advantage of being a native, believed that the women of the town had valid perspectives of their own apart from the men, but also had a hard time getting them to express their ideas.

Ephraim’s Spanish-speaking minority posed a special challenge. Most Ephraimites have no significant friendships with them. I identified only two native English speakers who seemed to have a good grasp of what was going on in the Spanish-

speaking population, yet I suspect that these two, representing 2/52 of my entire informant pool, amount to a sizeable overrepresentation of the English-speaking majority who are “sensitive” to the Spanish-speaking residents. I had 5 native Spanish-speaking informants – at 9.6% of the total, another oversample. Two of them were referred to me by these two English speakers, one was referred to me by other English speakers, one I met while looking for someone else, and one I met by striking up a conversation on the street. All five of these interviews were conducted in Spanish. I translated into English those segments of Spanish-language interviews that were selected for inclusion in this thesis.

It appears to me that the opinions expressed in these interviews may represent those of an elite group within the Spanish-speaking population. The attitudes they expressed are quite progressive, and those attitudes may have had the result of marking them as “leaders,” making them more prone to be referred to me as spokespeople for the Spanish-speaking minority. My identity, as a university researcher who is American and who speaks Spanish only as a second language may have also caused them to alter their responses. However, they were very hospitable to me, and seemed willing to admit the problems that exist among others who share their identity.

Informants were first presented with a consent form explaining the purposes of the study and the consequences of participating in it, which they and a witness were asked to sign. Then they filled out a short information sheet, providing me with a sketch of their backgrounds. Following this, we had an oral interview, usually in the informant’s home, but sometimes at the informant’s place of work or some other location such as a library. The interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed and coded for analysis.

In the cover sheet, I committed to make a reasonable effort to obscure the identity of specific informants. I have used various methods to do that. For example, I sometimes substituted a relationship for a name. (Not “Jane was just telling me . . .” but “My wife was just telling me . . .”) Similarly, at times I substituted a broader category for more specific information. (Not “. . . and I teach theory of drama at the college,” but “. . . and I am a teacher at the college.”) On rare occasions where simply moving up a level of abstraction was not contextually possible, I created a name or status. (I never met or heard of a Jane or a teacher of the theory of drama, in Ephraim.) However, I only created a name or status where it was clearly not essential to the point of the statement. I retained original names where the content was neutral and they do not reveal the identity of the speaker. (They thought I might be “one of the Willmore boys.”) In presenting clusters of responses, I have avoided placing two statements by the same individual in the same cluster. When a second statement by the same person has been needed, I explained that it is from the same informant who contributed an earlier quoted statement.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

Men outnumber women in the sample (28 and 24 informants, respectively). I attempted to keep the sample as balanced as possible, but as I noted, the local people were more likely to allow me access to other men than to women. I note also that my 52 respondents are only the “official” respondents. A few women were willing to make statements during their husbands’ interviews. Also, the official count does not include people with whom I spoke informally.

My informants very well educated. Forty-six out of the fifty-two have some form of higher education. The prominent exception is the Hispanic minority. Of the Spanish-

speaking respondents, all had at least some education, but three had never progressed beyond the primary level. One declined to list his level of education, and one had received some higher education (vocational training).

Occupationally, homemaker was the largest category represented (12 persons). Seven were retired or disabled; nine were in education (including administration, teaching, and technical support); nine worked in mining or agriculture; two were primarily businesspeople; five were students; and eight reported some other occupation (including vocational and other technical). Estimating for those categories that reach across the blue collar / white collar dichotomy, just under half of the sample affiliated with the working or blue-collar class.

Informants ranged in age from 19 to 93, with a mean age of 50.6 and a standard deviation of 18.3. Part of the reason for the high average age is that I tended to interview heads of household (similar to the original Mormon village surveys). Another reason is that, thinking the project was about Ephraim's *history*, people tended to refer me to those who have lived through a greater proportion of it. Also, I mostly excluded Snow College students from the study, choosing instead to focus on permanent residents. Two other sources of age-bias in my sample are that it is easier for a retired person to get along in Ephraim than it is for a younger person who must have employment to support a family, and that many of the younger permanent residents were out of town in temporary summer employment during the study period.

Ten informants reported Ephraim as their earliest residence. Two reported their first residence as Sanpete outside Ephraim. Fifteen reported Utah outside Sanpete. Five reported the western United States outside Utah. Seven reported someplace in the rest of

the United States as their earliest residence. Five reported Latin America as their earliest residence, and four reported Asia or the Pacific Islands. Four declined to state their place of first residence.

Forty-two informants reported their race/ethnicity as White (or some derivation thereof). Three of these broke their White ethnicity down into fractions: (e.g., $\frac{1}{4}$ Welsh, $\frac{1}{2}$ Danish, etc.) Six informants reported it as Hispanic (or some related label). The most common self-selected label here was "Mexican." Three identified themselves as Asian or Pacific Islander. Only one informant declined to identify himself with a racial or ethnic category.

Five informants' native language is Spanish. Three informants' native language is Japanese. The rest are native English speakers.

Forty informants report that they are currently LDS. Five report that they are currently Catholic. Two report "Christian" or some other, specific Christian denomination. The remaining five did not report any current religious affiliation.

Respondents were asked to list a prior religious affiliation, if any. Forty-six of them did not report any. Two reported to have been Mormon. One reported to have been Catholic. Three reported to have been "Christian" or some other, specific Christian denomination.

Cross-tabulating the two religion items indicates that, of those who reported a current religious affiliation that is different from a prior religious affiliation (6 individuals), all who were Catholic or "Christian" or some other Christian denomination moved into the LDS category (4 individuals), while all of those who were LDS moved into the category of no current religious affiliation (2 individuals).

Cross-tabulating current religious affiliation with earliest place of residence, we find that, of those who currently report no religious affiliation, two individuals are from Ephraim, one is from the American West outside of Utah, and two are from Asia or the Pacific Islands. Current Latter-day Saints in the sample are predominantly from Utah (63%), with the largest number (15, or 38% of Mormons) being from Utah outside Sanpete. Eighty percent of Catholics in the sample originated in Latin America, and all individuals who affiliate with the label of “Christian” or some other Christian denomination originated in the United States outside the West.

Having recited these statistics, I emphasize once again that my “sample” of informants is not proportionally representative of the population of Ephraim. The purpose of this quantitative review was to demonstrate that I seem to have oversampled every category except the stereotypical Ephraim resident (born there, LDS, not a convert, and white). I oversampled minority statuses to obtain the greatest challenge to a theory of solidarity. Nevertheless, the number of informants is large enough that the White, well educated, lifetime Mormon is still well represented.

ON THE MEANING OF METHOD

While my readers within the discipline will recognize the limitations in deriving meaning from the conclusions based on this methodology, I recognize that there also will likely be among my readers members of the general public who have an interest in Mormonism, small towns, or Ephraim in particular. I shall make a few notes to them regarding the meaning of the research. To conduct ethnographic research is to give a select group of people the opportunity to reflect upon their own lives to the researcher. To write a report on one’s findings is to reflect upon what I have learned in the process.

Modeled as such, ethnographic research is the process of mutual sharing, in my case, sharing with the hope that there will be practical benefits to the research.

I will present information and ideas as they seemed to form patterns, from the narratives given to me by my informants. Some of these seem to present a poor image of individuals and institutions both in and out of Ephraim. This may be perceived as offensive to some, perhaps particularly to practicing Mormons, who do not wish their faith to receive unfavorable publicity. By way of explanation to these readers, I present the following statement of Brigham Young. He told of a conversation he had had with another (presumably a non-Mormon):

. . . said he, “You, as a people consider that you are perfect?”

“Oh no;” said I, “not by any means. . . . The doctrine that we have embraced is perfect; but when we come to the people, we have just as many imperfections as you can ask for. We are not perfect; but the Gospel that we preach is calculated to perfect the people . . .” (Young 1997:21)

To identify a problem within a particular religious group, is not to say that its doctrines (or its core values) are therefore incorrect. As this statement of Brigham Young indicates, LDS leaders have been aware for some time of occasional differences between Mormon doctrine (core values) and the local beliefs and behavior of specific Mormon groups (peripheral values). I believe that both social scientists and religious leaders will agree that it takes time to iron out differences between core values and peripheral values, and in the meantime, the two sets of values may be in conflict. On this point – the failings of local individuals and groups to maintain core values – academic inquiry need not conflict with religious faith.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

This chapter presents a theory of solidarity derived from my interviews during the study period, discusses of the significance of that solidarity to the local culture. I then continue along the lines of Nelson's theory of solidarity formation, to discuss evidence regarding leadership, ideology, conflict, and cooperation. Then I consider solidarity maintenance, touching on those elements of life in the Mormon village that have tended to perpetuate it. Finally, I consider the implications of these factors to the meaning, status, and future of solidarity in the Mormon village.

COUNTERVAILING FORCES

The theme of this thesis is on how solidarity is developed and maintained. It would require a significant deviation from that theme to provide a full description of social cleavages in the Mormon village. Yet the problems of the Mormon village are relevant, and Nelson (1925, 1952) also named some of them in his work. These included language and ethnic problems, problems of raising the younger members of the group, conflict within the LDS religious structure, and prejudice against the economically disadvantaged. Many of these problems still exist in Ephraim, as the following quotations demonstrate. Incidentally, these are only a sample of the problems revealed in my interviews. Much more could be said of them, but a full disquisition will have to wait. The statements that follow are only illustrative. On language and ethnic problems:

[From a White, English-speaking man:] I don't know how welcome they [the Mexican immigrants] feel, but I imagine that's one of the newer difficult trends. You know, it's a challenge in the public schools, when there are so few people – so few of the teachers spoke Spanish.

[From a White, English-speaking woman:] When I was on the library board, we had to get all these Spanish books. We had to get things ready to teach the little Mexican children, and I struggled with that because I thought, when in Rome, do as the Romans do. You've come to America, so you just learn our language. That's still a hang up with me.

[From a Japanese student:] My experience friendly and kind, but a little I like them. She never speaks slowly. If I can't understand them then ask again. But, she speak very fast. . . . I think maybe she, she don't like foreigner.

[From a Spanish-speaking Mexican-American man:] That's what we're missing here. There are many people who want to study and improve their condition, so they can get into some other position, but there is no one to help us. We have asked for help from the government and they haven't said anything to us. It's that if we want to go and learn something – like how I want to get more education so that I can get into a better situation and some other, better line of work – the problem is that if I work at doing that, what is my family going to eat?

[From a White, English-speaking man:] The only time non-Hispanics come into the trailer courts is for some reason, not just because they have friends there.

[From a White woman:] I don't think they're [people in Ephraim] terribly accepting of cultural differences. I think there are people who are really not kind to the Hispanics. And, I think there are people who are not kind to our neighbors' [minority] daughters. I don't think there is an open acceptance of differences. I don't think it's as wonderful as I would like it to be. I mean, I would think in a Mormon community that would just be a given. You know, to me it's Christlike to be accepting of people, however they are and whoever they are.

The problem in Ephraim is not merely a stereotypical, dichotomous case of a powerful, uncaring majority and an oppressed minority, as the following cases indicate:

[From a White, English-speaking woman:] Every year, Community Links has a Mexican dinner at the middle school, and the Hispanic people do all the cooking. The youth city council helps them out so they have people there, and I worked in the kitchen with the girls one year making tacos. They didn't realize that I knew some Spanish, and they talked about me and I listened. It wasn't negative. A lot of it was curiosity, because I was the only Caucasian in the kitchen, but that's where I wanted to be. I wanted that experience. . . . I think in the beginning those young ladies were a little intimidated by me, but we got along fine, after they found out I wasn't going to be a big boss. I was going to be okay with them. And I think everyone needs more experiences with that.

[From a Spanish-speaking, Mexican-American woman:] Look – I'm going to tell you something. Many of us who come here to the United States, especially right

now – people who don't have papers – come only to work and go home. The only thing they want to do is save up some pennies and go home. And they don't care if they sleep under a tree! But the reason for that is that the people don't want to improve themselves, or learn English, because they don't intend to stay here. They always have in their minds the thought of returning to Mexico. . . . The majority of the Hispanics – that's why they don't want to improve their situations. They don't want to study. Nothing. We just come, work like donkeys, and go home. . . . That's the life of us Mexicans, and we're poor wherever we go. Poor here, and poor there.

[From a Spanish-speaking, Mexican-American man:] Look, Father Mike [the Catholic priest] is a saint. . . . But Father Mike is going to defend us a lot. You know what I'm saying? Maybe he'd say – I don't know – that all the blame for why we're not one community with the Anglos is that it's their fault. Maybe not. For me, both sides are to blame.

On raising young people:

[From a non-LDS woman:] I think the younger generation coming up, that will change a lot. I see a lot of young people going away from the "religion." . . . And so I think years down the road, it's going to be quite different from what it is right now. But they still want to please their parents. I know a young man whose dad just told him, "If you don't go on a mission, you'll never amount to anything." This kid is great. I mean, he's a neat kid, but that puts guilt on him. He's kind of turned away.

[From an leader in the LDS Church:] The concerns that the brethren have – that they express over the pulpit – we've got all of them. [He went on to use unmarried, teenage pregnancy as an example.]

[From a Hispanic woman:] Let me tell you what the problem is: For me, this is one of the main problems we have. I think that many of these things are due to the fact that the mother is never at home with the family. This is a change. It's been very hard on Mexicans, because when we lived in Mexico, I never left my children alone with anyone. I was always with them and now I have to go to work and leave them alone, and I've never liked that. I always say that if the U.S. government here has so much money – like they say it does – the first thing they should do to get rid of so much delinquency as there is on the street, is to let mothers stay home with their children. . . . That's the way I think about it – it's that any other person, if you take them to any other person, no one is going to take care of them like their mother does. And that's what I've come to think is the reason why there is so much wrong with young people.

[From a young White man:] My mom and I communicated pretty well. I mean, we didn't really fight or argue. But at the same time, I didn't feel like she knew what I was about or what I cared about or, do you know what I mean? . . . They

just don't place enough interest in their kid's personal life. I think they just kind of see it as it is, face value, and not see what's going on outside of school and work and church.

On religious problems:

[From an LDS man:] I think it [religious commitment] varies all the way from totally committed, to wishing the Mormon Church didn't exist. You know, and I think that's among members! I think that there are people that live here in Ephraim that could live the Law of Consecration right now fairly easy, you know? And then, on the other hand, there's others that participate in church because it's a social thing and they want to be socially accepted . . .

[From an LDS woman:] The people that isn't LDS, they should treat them the same as people that are LDS. I've had people say well, "Bring your friends," you know, "even though they're not LDS, bring your friends." But there's not one person that I know that will allow their children to go to another church. Not one.

[From a formerly LDS man:] We noticed in Utah there were two types of Mormons: Either the inactive Mormons – or Jack Mormons – who didn't follow the religion at all, and then the super-zealous Mormons who really went overboard in trying to effect a piety that seemed artificial. . . . It seemed that there were a lot of people who had blinders on. And if it wasn't Mormon, it wasn't good.

[From a non-LDS man:] Rather than having that animosity toward us, but people who have stepped out of what they believed [in the LDS Church], and said, "No, we don't believe it's right anymore," there's animosity towards them. They are persecuted by the community. Pressured to try to force them back in or punish them for making bad decisions or whatever they've done. I definitely see that.

I also received comments like the following, regarding the assertion that

Mormons receive social sanctions for voicing their opinions:

[From an LDS man:] A high councilman came into our ward and spoke and said something. He said, "If you move to Ephraim . . . and you don't have a job, you don't belong here." He said that twice. . . . I just came unglued. So, I called the stake presidency and talked to a member of the stake presidency. And see, I think there probably are people who [would be bothered by] that, but I will and that doesn't bother me. If I'm disturbed by what I've heard and [rather than] go direct to the high councilman, I will go to the stake presidency. I felt better about that. And I didn't feel like . . . "Oh! . . . Could I be socially ostracized for this?" I was bothered by it and I thought and thought about it and talked to my wife and she said, "Why don't you call?" And I did and felt a lot better about it.

It seems that some people are better able than others to handle religious differences. Here is one example that was given to me:

[From an LDS woman:] Oh, they're intelligent. Very nice. [A person who is not LDS] did some work for me here, and when he got through, he really let into me about our religious beliefs – that we believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in his Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost. He said, "That's the craziest thing I ever heard of." He just went – he turned into a different person. And I said, "Well, each has their own belief. And by the way, I'd like to give you five dollars your church that you're starting." And he calmed right down.

I asked some active Latter-day Saints how I should interpret charges by other residents of hypocrisy or religious superficiality. I was interested in their responses, because in Ephraim, they are the ones who typically are so charged. This is what one told me:

[From a young, LDS man:] And if I can say something there about people having trouble with hypocrisy. I think that's interesting. On my mission I ran into a lot of people that had the same kind of problem. I mean, that's present everywhere because people are human. Personally, I had a really hard time understanding how people can say that, because people are hypocritical, but who isn't? Nobody's perfect. What I find happens a lot of times is, we tend to see other people's errors, but not our own. And to other people, those errors that we have may seem a lot bigger than the errors that they have. I've always looked at it in that way. I was certainly never perfect. . . . But we tend to, lots of times, overlook our own faults and arrow in on everybody else's faults, and that's where that kind of thing comes in. Personally I've had a hard time with that, how people can say because one person's not being perfect, they're going to stop trying.

One LDS bishop also addressed the issue of charges of hypocrisy dividing the LDS Church. It is significant that an LDS bishop made these comments, because within LDS organization, a bishop is explicitly designated as a "judge in Israel." The following is a summary of his remarks. He was not a formal informant to the study; we simply met in the hallway of a church and he showed some interest in the project. Since I was not able to tape record his comments, I immediately afterward wrote a summary of them and it is that summary that I present here.

[Interviewer:] Why are people caught up with hypocrisy in the Church?

They know that people in the Church are taught to be perfect. We teach perfection. They see that people are less than that, and have a hard time. The thing is, we shouldn't compare ourselves to our neighbor or even to Jesus Christ, just to see what a failure we are. Jesus was perfect, and any comparison to him is going to fall short. We need to compare ourselves to where we were yesterday, and hopefully we're better than we were. As long as we're doing the best we can with the capabilities and situation we have, the Atonement of Jesus Christ makes up for our inadequacies.

I've learned as a bishop to be much more careful about making judgments. You don't always know all of the reasons behind what people do. Furthermore, a testimony is not a single item. It is, in fact, as broad as it is deep. And at one point it may be much deeper than it is at another. Again, you have to judge people not by whether they are perfect, but by how much they have progressed from where they were.

There were some clear economic class distinctions. As may be seen in the following statements, people of different economic backgrounds experience life differently and have different expectations for the town.

[From a homemaker:] Well, you know, a big part of the community – a lot of the people in the community are here because of jobs at the college. Because they teach there, they work there, and they're accepted by now, you know, because they belong to that group. And they come into the wards and that and they're accepted and they're given [church] jobs and, you know, they are accepted. Whereas, maybe others in a lower financial bracket, I think that they are not, you know. People are friendly toward them, but that's as far as it goes. They just don't associate them in the in-groups and that, but they don't include them in any of the things that they do.

[From a business person:] I think if there's a change, it would probably be more toward the business end. A little more convenient facilities so that everybody doesn't have to drive to Provo for makeup. Not that I'm looking for ZCMI's full makeup counter, but just some more variety. Maybe some more business opportunities. Some more jobs, and some more products that we use every day without having to drive an hour north or south to obtain them. . . . I'd be happy and satisfied with Ephraim except for dry cleaners – lack of a dry cleaner. You know, just some of the little pleasures. You can go and buy bagels in the county now! Simple little things.

[From a blue collar informant:] The pioneer families own ninety percent of the valley. Even though they may not be ninety percent of the population, they own ninety percent of the wealth.

[From a blue collar informant:] I just don't think it's fair for them to move one big company in to monopolize and put the little companies out of business. They brought this big Kent's market in – put two of our smaller little country grocery stores right out of business because of the Kent's market. They're puttin' in a big hotel out there now which is going to destroy our small little hotels.

[From a farmer:] There's good years and bad years – most of them bad years.

[From a teacher:] There's kind of a poor mentality here. I mean, people think we're poor. It's a depressed area and when you look at the figures of unemployment and average income and stuff like that, I guess we're considered a poor place. But I think it's affected their mentality and they just think we're poor and just act that way.

[From an agricultural worker:] That was the reason for what we go through. My dad was so poor that he couldn't even give us money to buy a pencil. Nor anything to buy a notebook. Sometimes I said to my father, "Dad, I don't have enough to buy a pencil." "Down there they're buying eggs," said my mom. "Go and see if the chickens have laid any eggs so you can buy a pencil. Then sell it and buy yourself a pencil." I went barefoot to school – without shoes. I looked at the other children eating things. I never had any money, and that's why I've told my kids, "Study, so you don't have to go through what I went through."

Note that this small, solidary Mormon village exhibits major socio-economic cleavages. Moreover, Nelson recognized such stratification in both of his Mormon village series, and so have other researchers who have studied Mormon social life. Recognizing the existence of social divisions did not prevent Nelson from alleging that there is a high degree of solidarity within the Mormon village. In other words, he believed that solidarity could be present to a significant degree, even while the social divisions persisted.

I share his assumption of the work, and it seems to be well founded, for my informants also believed that having clear social distinctions did not preclude general solidarity. The question arises, however, whether the social divisions I have named here

on issues such as language, ethnicity, socialization of the young, religion, and the economy are comparable to those identified by Nelson. Two of the divisions I have presented here – ethnicity and religion – were also named by Nelson, but they are presented quite differently from how they were in the 1920's.

At the time of the original Mormon village series, the struggles of Scandinavian immigrants to learn English and adapt to a radically different physical and cultural environment were recent memories, and possibly still visible among the older residents of Ephraim. Locals also were having their difficulties with each other within their church, both among the members and the leaders. However, Ephraimites in 1925 had a crucial advantage in dealing with these problems that Ephraimites in 1997 do not have. Seventy years ago, everyone in Ephraim was LDS. What that meant was that everyone attended church services together, an opportunity to learn a common language, serve voluntarily side by side, and communicate frequently to come to a common definition of shared social circumstances. Moreover, the cultural systems of meaning of Ephraimites in 1925 converged on even more points than they do now. Mormonism's egalitarian doctrine allowed the immigrants social access that was not only religious, but economic. For example, the dividing of the land among the original settlers was done by the religious leaders who were also the political leaders on an equal basis, regardless of what language one spoke. The religion thereby implemented equality.

Nowadays, the formal organization of the LDS Church does not link all residents of Ephraim. The Catholic Church conducts weekly masses in Spanish, so Catholic Spanish speakers are not required to learn English to participate in religious observance. English speakers run the government, teach in the schools, and manage the businesses.

Spanish speakers generally work for lower wages, live in substandard housing, and rarely have health insurance. Residential segregation by language and economic status is pronounced, though not entirely uniform by language. It is exceedingly rare that residents on one side of the ethnic divide have friendship relationships with residents on the other side of the ethnic divide. However, there are some preliminary efforts to bridge this strong pattern of segregation, such as Community Links and the Piñata Festival.

The other key characteristics which differentiate Ephraim residents, including the religious differences both within and among denominations, intergenerational differences, and economic stratification, all seem to be related to each other, as the quotes given in this section illustrate. The prospects of resolving them are as daunting as those of resolving the problem of ethnic and language difficulties. How they have been addressed so far, and how they might be addressed in the future, will be the focus of the rest of this chapter.

THEORY OF SOLIDARITY

How is it possible that a place characterized by several social cleavages can also be characterized by social solidarity? There are several possibilities. First, the solidarity may exist, but only after much struggle, and whether the informant focuses on the struggle or on the solidarity is going to determine how he or she characterizes the group.

For example,

When those boys back there declared their independence from Britain, they didn't always see alike. But it took a lot of givin' and takin' and prayin' and finally they come up with what they wanted to do and got together and did it.

Another possibility is that solidarity may be only evident at certain times:

I think if it comes right down to it, and there was any kind of a crisis, they'd be right there. Every one of them, they'd come right together.

It may be on only selected issues:

The people have a tendency to just attract to those that are like their faith, obviously. Mormonism is a peculiar religion, so people tend to stick together a little more on that, I think. . . . A common purpose or identity other than [with] my wife? . . . I consider her my best friend and I always confide in her, talk to her. I mean, [she's] just my primary person.

Or it may be that solidarity is the dominant social characteristic. There may be some who do not participate in that condition, but they may be well outnumbered.

[Interviewer:] You make it sound like this is a very fractious city.

No, no. You have people like that, that's a minority and it's a small minority. But it's the small minority that you hear from.

It appears, both from the writings of Nelson and from many of the informants I spoke with in Ephraim, that perfect unity is not the same thing as a high degree of community solidarity.

Unlike a theory of community, which I could not derive from my interviews in Ephraim for the great variance of opinions on the topic, there did seem to be a core of views on the meaning of solidarity. This does not mean that there was perfect agreement on the topic. It is possible that some informants mistook the word "solidarity" for "solitude." (The same problem exists in Spanish, for the similarity of *solidaridad* and *soledad*.) Some informants seemed to view solidarity as negative – something akin to enforced uniformity. However, most comments treated solidarity as something highly desirable. The following comments have elements that the concept seems to center on.

Solidarity? I guess it's common goals and common beliefs. Common projects.

If I had solidarity with someone, I would think that we would have a commitment, or if with a group, commitment and a common purpose. That's, I think, what it means to me.

Solidarity comes from being, first of all – for the most part, the majority of the people are pretty rock-solid responsible. There’s solidarity there. They have common goals, common aspirations, common background, that leads to that. How else to put it? They respond to a crisis or problems with a – they kind of just move together.

Solidarity . . . I would use that word to describe a faculty who’s united. That we all have similar goals for the purpose of the program – that it was “our” program, not “his” program . . . I’d say that you could apply that to Ephraim, providing all the factions in the community were solid and united on some agreed upon, mutual goals.

It appears from the data that to the people of Ephraim, solidarity means an affective attachment, or commitment, to a common purpose. Kanter (1972) defined commitment as the state of having what one *has* to do being the same as what one *wants* to do, so I believe it is theoretically acceptable to place affect in the definition of solidarity. I believe my informants would agree. They did mention such things as “common projects,” “moving together,” and a “common background.” I cannot conclude from the information available that these statements allow us to devolve to an interactionist definition of solidarity. They do not preclude solidarity with those one interacts with on a regular basis, or with those who live close by, but they do not seem to exclude others with whom one has little interaction. For example,

If what we believe is true, then when we accept Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, that the Holy Spirit seals us and comes to live within us, then we have a common spirit. We have a common thread with all Christians across the United States too.

Thus, it appears that the role of interaction is that it serves to demonstrate and confirm solidarity, or to refute and deny it. As evidenced by many Ephraimites who asserted that their committed relationships were trans-temporal (as with deceased ancestors), trans-spatial (as with friends and family who have moved away), and even imagined (as with members of one’s church, whom one has never even met), *interaction*

– defined as visual, physical, audial, or other overt exchange between two or more individuals – *is not the same thing as solidarity.*

Given the definition that solidarity rests upon an affective attachment or commitment to a common purpose, the question remains what the common purposes are, upon which residents of Ephraim build solidarity. I am able to propose an answer, based upon the evidence given to me by the people of Ephraim. Included in each interview was the question, “What matters most to you?” If the informant asked for specification of the question’s parameters, I left the question “wide open.” The responses I received had remarkably little variance, relative to other questions in the interview guide. This is especially noteworthy, since the pool of informants is deliberately not proportionately representative. I sought to overrepresent those who might deviate from common purposes. Nevertheless, the pattern remained. In answer to the question of what matters most, fully half of my informants responded “family” or some related answer (my children, spouse, etc.) as their first answer. One in three named “religion” or some related answer (God, church, etc.) first. This pattern of placing family and religion at the top of the priority list held across all denominations surveyed, including those who defined their religious attitude as contrary to a denomination, and it held across the Anglo-Hispanic ethnic division. Only rarely – less than one in ten – did a first response to this question center on any other common theme. Some students mentioned educational and career ambitions, and there were occasional references to health, general improvement, peace, and happiness. But counting all “most important” values mentioned, in whatever order they were stated, over eighty percent of respondents named family, religion, or both.

Those who understand Mormonism will not be surprised by this finding. Not only are family and religion important for Americans generally, but Mormons place particular emphasis on the two being linked doctrinally. And it appears that non-Mormons who do well and remain in the Mormon village share these same fundamental values.

The level of commitment to these principles appears to be the final element we need to assess in order to evaluate overall solidarity in the Mormon village. Commitment, of course is clearly a difficult thing to measure. I present as evidence a few statements by Mormon villagers that provide clues as to their feelings on these common values.

So you have a family that's spiritually strong. There's no greater building block to building a strong community than that. No greater building block! None, whatsoever. In fact, it's the only building block, as far as I'm concerned.

My family is everything to me, and I think everyone would say the same thing. And the reasons for that are that I know what the family is and where it's going – what the ultimate goal of the family is. Families are forever. And so that means that the Church matters most. They're side by side. You can't have one without the other.

What matters most to me. In just – totally. Overall. Probably a sense of religious identity, and a oneness with God. That matters most to me. It makes me involved with the needs of others.

Where conviction goes deeper than the surface, it has to do with your relationship with God, I would say. If you don't feel a responsibility to an all-knowing, sovereign God, then what you do in your own time doesn't matter. But when you do feel a responsibility to a sovereign God, then what you do in your own time is of big importance.

It appears that most people in the Mormon village are strongly committed to the two values or purposes of promoting family and religion, and that this commitment seems to cut across religious and most ethnic differences.

Is there any other evidence of solidarity? I posed this question to a Mormon bishop in town with whom I spoke casually. His answer was, in summary, the following:

The degree of solidarity is highly related to the amount of service that goes on. Some wards have more solidarity than others, and those wards will have everyone serving everyone. It's not of course, just the action, though. It's the feeling behind it. You get it by experience. You see someone who exemplifies it – a Mother Theresa or a Gordon B. Hinckley, and you think, “Hey, I like that. That's good.” People help each other around town: A person greets someone kindly on the sidewalk one day, or someone takes bread to a neighbor saying, “Hey, I was just thinking about you.” Someone else sees the action and may start thinking, “You know, maybe there is something more to this. Maybe there is something below the surface – a feeling behind the action.” And it catches on. . . . That's how it is with a lot of things. Like prayer – You don't really understand prayer until you've had to pray for something with all your heart. Then you understand the meaning behind the action.

The Asian minority in Ephraim presents an interesting counterpoint to the issue of solidarity. The American stereotype of Asian culture is that Asians should be even more solidary than people raised in America, where the rugged individualist is so glorified. One Asian woman was familiar with this contrast and in an animated tone explained to me,

So, maybe, Japanese make importance, you know. I can see many pressures Japanese make group. So maybe Japanese like union. So, for example, in Japan, go to high school or junior high school, have uniforms . . . And older people – not only older people, young people, make group. So, if they go to make a trip, they make group, not individual.

She explained that from her perspective, Americans clearly did not place so much importance on the group. As a result, Japanese who come to the United States often feel left out. Later in the interview, when she said that career development was the most important thing to her, I was curious about how she felt about the dominant local norms. So at an appropriate interval in the conversation, I asked, “How do you feel about family? How important is family to you?” She paused for just a moment, then broke into laughter

and said, “Oh -- maybe we are individual!” Of course, we ought to recognize the context of this informant’s experience. She was temporarily living away from her family for the purpose of career advancement. This is not necessarily representative of Asians raised in their homeland. There was one informant of East Asian descent who was also LDS, and in response to the follow-up question about family, he indicated that of course family is so important that it hardly needs to be mentioned.

The reader who is acquainted with a range of Mormon village studies may note that my findings about the foundational values of the community do not agree with the findings of all other researchers. One of these was the Comparative Study of Values in Five Cultures (also known as the Rimrock Study), conducted by a group of social scientists from Harvard University in western New Mexico from 1949 to 1955. The researchers sought to describe and compare the principal values that characterize the Navajo, Zuni, Mormon, Texan, and Spanish American cultures. On one hand, the findings of the present study do lend support to those of O’Dea (1972:127), who observed,

The Mormons are a religious group and central to Mormon identity is membership in the formally organized church and its auxiliary organizations. But that is only part of the picture. For family and kinship are basic to Mormon values.

However, other members of the Rimrock study team came to a different conclusion with regard to the basic elements of the Mormon value structure. At one point, these investigators present a brief capsule for each cultural group, in which they identify what they consider to be the distinguishing value for that group, and the reason for their selection. Their paragraph on the fundamental value of Mormon culture reads,

Shift from Elizabethan family to polygynous family between 1840 and 1890 led to exclusive mother-infant sleeping arrangements and the postpartum sex taboo, which in turn required rigid sex impulse control (to prevent mother-son incest) and an emphasis upon *virtue* as a dominant value [italics in original] (Vogt and Albert 1967:29).

The different conclusions on this issue may be a result of our different theoretical approaches. My approach (and apparently O’Dea’s also, to an extent) was to show respect for the study population’s ability to interpret their own cultural norms. Vogt and Albert did not demonstrate any attempt to allow Mormon villagers to define their own culture, choosing instead to impose a foreign theory – in this case, Freudian analysis – on the study population, and then selecting out anything in the current or past experience of the population that might support that theory. I take issue with their method of theory construction, which does not respect the population under study, and with the theory itself. In my view, Freudian theory applies when one assumes *a priori* that the population or individual under study is mentally ill. The research question becomes, “*Why* is this group or person mentally ill?” Freudian analysis then proceeds from certain nonempirical assumptions about the group’s or person’s psychological makeup. Thus, conclusions based on this type of theory and method are virtually given from the beginning.

My contrasting theory and method find evidence that sex (or rather, restraint therefrom) is not the root value of Mormonism; family is. True, certain boundaries are placed on sexual expression, but Mormon sexual norms derive from Mormon idealization of family structure, and from doctrines about eternal families and the purpose of mortality. To assert that family and religion are the root Mormon values also carries greater theoretical utility. They not only explain Mormon sexual norms, but may also explain a broad range of aspects of Mormon life, including family structure, educational

patterns, employment patterns, religious behavior, mental health, and recreational activities.

I have one other observation about the experience of solidarity in the Mormon village, and this may be an element of solidarity that is particularly Mormon. At least in my field notes and interview transcripts, it was among the Latter-day Saints that this pattern appeared most clearly and strongly. It began when I was in Ephraim in March of 1997, doing a preliminary investigation to evaluate whether an ethnography of community would be feasible. While there, I had a brief conversation with a local resident. She began to talk about Ephraim, and how it was different from all the other towns in Sanpete Valley. I asked her how she could tell such a difference. She asked, “Are you LDS?” I said that I was, and she said there is a better “spirit” about Ephraim – it “feels” different.

In retrospect, I realized several key elements of this exchange. First, “Are you LDS?” was a gatekeeper question. Apparently, she believed that a listener who is LDS would understand her meaning, or at least respond appropriately to it. Second, the justification of difference was not done on the basis of balancing rational criteria, but on non-rational “spirit” or feeling. Third, it was understood that an appeal to these non-rational elements was sufficient to answer the question. No further explanation was needed; a Mormon would understand what she meant.

Surveying the interview transcripts, I found this to be a pattern among LDS informants. In the following example, note how the informant uses “feeling,” or a similar concept, to *know* something or to *distinguish* between things.

We have always sensed and felt and known that this had a more united attitude, friendly atmosphere and caring about each other. When difficulties occur –

funerals, deaths, surgery, accidents – people flock there with food and caring words and so forth. It doesn't seem to be prevalent in Manti which is only seven miles away, nor in Mount Pleasant or in Fairview. They just don't get that feeling. Others who have come from out of town, who have lived here recently, have a feeling of that. It's a unique characteristic of this Mormon village.

Well, you're just comfortable, you know. My girlfriends and I, we can go shopping. We can go for a ride or something and no one will say a word, but we know all is well. So it's just a feeling that you have.

We felt really good about it [moving to Ephraim] and my wife . . . liked the small town, too. She kind of grew up in that environment. It felt really good here, and we liked green grass . . . I don't know, we just felt like Ephraim would be a really great place to live.

I asked one informant, "What are those values, that are so important for you to live up to?" He responded,

. . . the Articles of Faith, the commandments. I guess those are some of the major ones. That's kind of a hard thing, but mostly doing what you *feel* is what God wants you to do – what you *feel* is what the Savior would have done – and what you feel is right. You can tell when something's right and when something's not right. [Emphasis in original.]

In Mormon Sacrament Meetings (the principal, weekly worship service), members of the congregation are often invited to speak. On occasion, one will describe the process she or he went through to make a decision. This may be a decision on where to live, which school to attend, or whom to marry. In the four Sundays I was in residence in Ephraim, there surfaced a pattern in these narratives. They begin with a statement of the problem. Then, the speaker presents the "evidence" in a rational manner, sometimes mentioning which option seemed best by this method. Sometimes the speaker will mention praying over the issue. Finally, the speaker will identify a feeling or impression to go one way or the other. This may confirm the decision formerly arrived upon, or it may refute it. The narrative ends with the conclusion that will be obvious to Mormon audiences: The speaker acts in agreement with the subjective impression. That this form

of narrative is presented by a Mormon speaker, in a Mormon meeting, in company of other Mormons, further suggests that this is meant to be a Mormon narrative. From the information available to me in the present project, I am not able to evaluate the extent to which a similar pattern may exist within other groups.

My data do point to a central concept of solidarity, namely, an affective attachment to a common purpose. They also indicate that the strongest bases for solidarity in the Mormon village are family and religion. How this solidarity is sustained in the particular social environment of the Mormon village is our next concern. We will first review Nelson's notion of the four ways Mormons forged a sense of solidarity, and how they are relevant today. Then, we will consider more recent additions to the repertoire of Ephraim's solidarity-building activities.

PRINCIPLES OF SOLIDARITY FORMATION

Leadership

Joseph Smith, Jr. and Brigham Young have faded a bit into the background of daily life in the Mormon village. They are often mentioned in classes taught in LDS Sunday School classes, and schoolchildren learn about them in their history lessons. While name recognition is very high, their influence is mostly indirect. Their lives have also been reinterpreted in light of current social and political environment, thereby creating a continuous progressive narrative from the early period of LDS Church history to the present. Ephraim's people recognize that much of their present social circumstances, including the very existence of their town and much of the LDS Church's organization and doctrine, were largely derived from these men.

That much was no surprise. It is well known that following the deaths of charismatic leaders, their followers either adapt to current social reality or see their group influence and identity wane. As far as contemporary LDS leadership figures are concerned, by far the most commonly named person was Gordon B. Hinckley, who is now the president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The extent to which he qualifies as a “charismatic leader” in the sense in which Lowry Nelson used the term, is in question.

Nelson (1930, 21) identified the following four elements in the acquisition of prestige:

1. Identification with an older prestige.
2. Demonstration of superiority in techniques which the group approves, such as language, possession of extraordinary powers, learning, etc.
3. Manufacture of public opinion, by the use of legends, and organs of opinion which tend to “feed the stereotype,” and bring up in the crowd mind images favorable to the leader.
4. Exhibitions of sympathy, friendliness for, and general identification with group sentiments and ideals.

By becoming the successor to the same prophetic office previously occupied by Joseph Smith, Jr. and Brigham Young, Hinckley identified himself with an older prestige. Hinckley has also taken advantage of various “organs of opinion” to establish a certain image. These organs have included the publication of a biography of Hinckley, the production of a biographical video of Hinckley’s life, and widespread travel – which allows more members of the Church to see the prophet personally. It is clear that he has identified himself with group sentiments and ideals. (An exception, for which Hinckley received censure from one informant, was his willingness to be cordial to U. S. President

Bill Clinton.) Besides media controlled by the Church, Hinckley has cooperated with Time Magazine in its feature story on Mormons, and with Mike Wallace's investigation of Mormonism which aired on the television show "60 Minutes."

In the second item, however, there seems to be little grounds on which to compare Joseph Smith, Jr. and Brigham Young to Gordon B. Hinckley. Nelson (1930) asserts that Smith received prestige for such acts as translating ancient records, receiving original revelations which were added to scripture, healing the sick, casting out devils, and prophesying. Young is cited for his practical skills, dealing with "mundane affairs, the building of empire," and "in delivering the group from its enemies" (Nelson 1930:24).

It is difficult to compare Gordon B. Hinckley with these sorts of activities. Part of the problem in making the comparison, is that historical circumstances are not comparable. Brigham Young, for example, ordered the establishment of towns in Sanpete, and hundreds of people obeyed, presumably out of devotion, since it came at a good measure of sacrifice, including some loss of life. Arrington (1958:19) describes the extent of Brigham Young's control over early Mormon movement toward and within the West.

The combined means of all the Saints was thus voluntarily placed at the disposal of a committee of the "Camp of Israel," of which Brigham Young was the chairman. Brigham Young, who was regarded as their spiritual as well as temporal leader, interpreted his delegated powers under this covenant very broadly, and men, supplies, and monies were commandeered for the accomplishment of the common goal.

The 1990's simply do not constitute an era of physical colonization. Prophetic calls to action do not generally come as large-scale, group calls. Usually, they come individually and do not require sudden, major life-style changes like the call to leave one's comfortable, urban home to become a subsistence farmer on the bank of a muddy

creek in Nevada. Calls to serve church missions are probably the best examples of dramatic, individual calls, but quite a few other directives are given generally and must be applied individually. As a result, compliance is very hard to measure on any kind of a large scale.

I noted several elements of social life in Ephraim that suggest an allegiance to or agreement with positions taken by the LDS prophet. Several LDS women stressed the importance of mothers staying home with their children – always in context of their own status as mothers and homemakers – and this might be taken as an adherence to the instructions of LDS Church leaders who have strongly advised the same. (Ironically, male LDS informants were not so emphatic on the point.) In many of the homes I visited, books were present in the living rooms of interviewees. One such book was the recently published biography of President Hinckley, Go Forward with Faith. It was often displayed prominently (as face up on the coffee table), and I never saw a dusty copy. And this was true even in July – when there was no general lack of dust – and even when there was other literature next to it that *was* dusty. Local leaders, political and religious, received their measure of criticism, but informants rarely criticized President Hinckley directly. Heritage has been emphasized in the LDS Church generally during Hinckley’s administration, but Ephraim’s local heritage movement was already well established long before Hinckley took his present position, so it cannot be seen as merely a response to the LDS president’s themes.

On the other hand, there is some evidence of less than full compliance with central Church directives. One prominent Ephraim LDS Church authority told me, “The concerns the Brethren have – that they express over the pulpit – we’ve got all of them.”

Not all LDS young men go on missions, as directed by the current and other recent LDS Church presidents. It appears that only a minority of LDS Church members give significant, voluntary community service beyond the boundaries of their own religious congregation. The existence of sexual immorality was also noted by many informants. While this suggests that current LDS Church leadership does not hold perfect sway over the lives of members, it does not necessarily mean that conditions have changed for the worse. Deviance of one kind or another has been a part of LDS Church history from the beginning (Church Educational System 1993), and improvements or declines must be specifically documented against benchmark data of some kind.

It would be worthwhile to note that local ecclesiastical leaders do hold a good measure of autonomy in affecting the lives of their members. In personal interviews with members, bishops and members of stake presidencies are free to inquire about any moral aspect of the members' lives. Disciplinary councils, in which a member's standing in the Church is brought into question as a result of that member's alleged acts, are held at the local level and presided over by local leaders. By presiding over local meetings, these leaders have a great deal of influence over their tone and content. They counsel members on the members' personal problems, direct staffing of local members in organizational positions of the unit, and they ensure that correct doctrine is taught in meetings and that Church standards are followed. Bishops and other local leaders will also play prominent roles in major life events of the local members, including births, baptisms, missions, marriages, and deaths. While I was in Ephraim, a certain home caught fire while the couple who owned it were away. One of the first people informed was the stake

president, who looked after the safety of other family members, assessed the extent of the damage, and notified the owners of the situation.

Finally, the significance of local ecclesiastical organization to the LDS residents of Ephraim is indicated by the comments of several informants that they might posit of kind of unity between Ephraim and Manti, since the two towns share the same junior high school and high school, but that union is not so simple since the towns were split into two separate LDS stakes during the 1980's. That division of the stakes created in Ephraim a stronger identity apart from its neighbor to the south. There are five resident LDS wards in Ephraim, and people could claim to be "better" on the basis of distinctions among the wards, but I saw no evidence of this. Perhaps if I had been in town at another time, such as during the Church basketball season, I might have discovered invidious comparisons between wards, but I found none.

In summary, the evidence is mixed on the issue of leadership. There are several evidences of congruence between the beliefs and behavior of people in Ephraim and the wishes of LDS Church president Gordon B. Hinckley, but it does not seem sufficient to conclude that in all respects Hinckley plays the same role for LDS Church members as Joseph Smith, Jr. and Brigham Young did. Hinckley's leadership style appears to be more individually oriented, and does not generally require sudden, major lifestyle changes. In general, local LDS leaders are quite involved in members' lives, but they receive such a mix of criticism and praise, compliance and noncompliance, that the appellation "charismatic leadership" seems inapplicable.

Ideology

Nelson (1930) suggested that there were many significant, integrating doctrines taught by the LDS Church, but only named four of them: The doctrine of the perfectibility of individuals; the importance of lay members, including the relative absence of an organizational elite; the practice of secret ritual, particularly within Mormon temples; and the breadth of Mormon doctrine, which allows Latter-day Saints to accept truth from any source. All of these doctrines are still believed and taught in the LDS Church.

Recent research on foundational doctrines of the LDS Church has focused on millennialism as a vital aspect. Shepherd and Shepherd (1994:164-165) asserted, “The transcendent cause to which the Latter-day Saints are collectively attached is the millennial belief in a divine mandate to build the Kingdom of God on earth as the culminating episode of human history.” Underwood (1996) went into much detail about what constitutes Mormon millennialism, illustrating how – contrary to other forms of millennial doctrine – it is translated into practical action: It prescribes concrete activities that Mormons can do today to facilitate or otherwise prepare for eschatological events. These include gathering to Zion and performing missionary work among the “Gentiles.” Other forms of millennialism, for example, modeled an inevitable and gradual transition into the thousand years of prosperity. This belief was more common in American Christianity in the nineteenth century, and did not prescribe any course of action for its adherents. Men and women had only to watch while the hand of God directed society toward ends that could only be for their benefit.

However, Shepherd and Shepherd (1986:126), in analyzing public Mormon rhetoric, note that the twentieth century has seen “a dramatic decline in persecution and utopian themes associated with the Mormons’ nineteenth century conceptions of a literal, material Zion and the eschatological Kingdom of God on earth . . .” Does this indicate a reversal, or a hedging of traditional Mormon belief? Doctrines such as millennialism and those mentioned by Nelson are still implicit in LDS missionary service, marriage, and parenting practices, and in other doctrines such as repentance and education. That they are not repeated explicitly as often may well be a result of having them so well established in Mormon thought that they do not need to be constantly reintroduced. Another possibility is that the rank-and-file of Mormonism is well acquainted with the Mormon model of the millennial vision, but perceives it as having only remote consequences on modern life.

Discussion of doctrinal themes was not frequently observed in the daily discourse of the Mormon village. Of course, it was a common element in religious services in the locality. There were denominational differences in how doctrine was treated in public meetings. While in all denominations, speakers taught doctrine from recognized scripture, public speakers in the major, weekly worship services of the LDS Church and in the Church of the Bible were more prone than the Catholic priest to draw practical recommendations from church doctrines. A comparison of the themes covered in meetings of each of the three resident churches illustrates this:

Speakers in one LDS service delivered the following admonitions: Serve your family; be committed to Christ; sacrifice your own desires to bring about good; be humble; be grateful for what you have received; pray; study scriptures; find good

examples and emulate them; don't lose your temper; the priesthood is the most powerful force on earth; and a person receives joy in helping others do what is right.

In a service at the Church of the Bible, the pastor taught: God brought death into the world when he performed the first sacrifice; blood must be shed as a consequence of sin; be willing to be taught; place God's will above your own; stress and guilt sometimes result from not hearkening to God; sin always carries a penalty; you are saved by faith; confess Jesus; and good works do not save, but they do make God happy and are likely to follow in the lives of those who are saved.

The Catholic priest taught the congregation one week: A person is a prophet when he or she shows by example the love of Christ; we are called to be prophets; Mary was ever a virgin; in the Bible, "brother" and "sister" can mean cousin, best friend, or intimate; Paul had a "thorn in the flesh" which, though not identified, allowed him to feel a connection with Christ on the cross; we should see our "thorns" or weaknesses as opportunities for growth; the Jews were exiled for disobedience; in our day, prophecy is in the "doing," not in the "saying."

Now, these examples lack the contextual information that would link together the principles that made up each discourse, but the point is to illustrate a difference in practical admonition. Latter-day Saint speakers were unlikely to state any doctrine unless they linked it with practical action.⁴ (This may be related to Ericksen's [1922] observation that Mormon beliefs are closely related to their practical, material circumstances.) The pastor at the Church of the Bible linked doctrine with practical action, but did not fit quite so many practical admonitions into one meeting as LDS speakers did. Finally, the Catholic priest spent a good proportion of his discourse stating

doctrine and letting it stand on its own merits. He did conclude on the importance of “doing,” but did not spell out what that entailed.

In summary, I have no reason to believe that religious doctrine is any less significant to Mormonism now than it was in the nineteenth century. Certain doctrines may not be discussed with as much frequency, but doctrine is still central to Mormon identity. In the contemporary Mormon village, Mormon religious speakers distinguish themselves for a greater propensity to link doctrine with practical admonition.

Conflict

Ericksen (1922, 30) explained that Mormonism has passed beyond the period of outright persecution, but that the effects of it remain:

Although the great conflict with the Gentiles practically ended with the expulsion from Nauvoo, its psychological effect still remains and functions vitally in the life of the people. The struggle was too intense and the emotional excitement too great to be quickly eliminated from their consciousness. There is a tendency to rehearse this great conflict in their religious services.

Nelson (1930) observed that Mormons tended to group together in the face of outside threats, and by keeping the image of persecution alive, they have also maintained the social effect. Of course, Nelson’s assertion is merely one of sequential correlation (first persecution, then solidarity), not causation. One Ephraim resident gave me her interpretation of causation as follows. She told me,

I was born in [a non-LDS city in the West], and there was a great deal of anti-Mormon sentiment there. We were really persecuted. . . . It was so anti-Mormon when I was there, so there wasn’t a unity there, except in our little LDS membership. We were very united. Wonderful!

When I asked whether this unity was because of the anti-Mormon pressure, her answer was quick and deliberate:

No! It was because we were so firm in the faith!

Apparently, she believes that the Mormons she knew while growing up would be united regardless of whether they were persecuted, since the unity resulted from their commitment to a common faith, not because they were pressured into pulling together. She attributes it to *intrinsic* factors, rather than *extrinsic*. This is a perspective that Ericksen (1922) developed much more than Nelson (1930).

In contrast, in today's Ephraim, persecution is more a metaphor than a material reality. However, it remains a strong metaphor. I realized, attending a missionary farewell⁵ that the missionary was being sent to "war." Typically for Latter-day Saints living in the Mormon heartland, this involves leaving a predominantly LDS environment to go to a non-LDS environment with the intent of sharing the gospel with the people there.⁶ The strong emotions present during a missionary farewell can be comparable to those present when a family sends a member into conventional warfare. I do not consider these emotions to indicate faltering social relationships (qua Bellah [1967]), but rather an indication of the strong affective commitment Mormons have to the institutions of religion and family.

Several local residents told me that commitment does indeed weaken during periods of peace, and as undesirable as conflict is, it does a fine job of raising consciousness of fundamental social values. For example, one informant explained,

Unfortunately, it seems that it takes conflict – more specifically, wars – to inspire patriotism, and it's during those times of conflict that people seem to work better together, and work harder to accomplish something.

Respondents such as these did not openly wish for conflict, but they did suggest that some of the effects these conflicts can be good. They often expressed regret that it would take as much to stir up that feeling and activity.

External conflict is mostly a thing of the past, kept alive through stories and through metaphorical extension to present-day situations such as missionary work. Informants admit the positive power of persecution to create a solidarity, but wish there were some other way to promote it.

Cooperation: Place and the Environment

Nelson (1930:27) called Mormon cooperation “the ‘all-to-one’ relationship supreme.” He explained that cooperation was a necessary coping mechanism in the face of the challenges of the natural environment. It was the only mode of survival when a large group arrives in a frontier and must suddenly build roads, irrigation canals, housing, manufacturing, and merchandising.

Once built, though, such cooperation is not usually a life-sustaining necessity. The establishment and enforcement of city-level planning and zoning ordinances were a relatively new innovation in Ephraim in 1997, and reportedly they caused quite a bit of chafing against the city government for making requirements and placing limitations on the people. Also in 1997, Ephraim was just finishing the project of paving all of its streets. Unlike cooperative projects during the settlement period, the work on the streets was done by a contractor, hired by the city. Residents had no part in it but to vote for or against them and then either enjoy them, or complain about the expense, the fact that the roads were left torn up all winter long, and how even paved streets developed potholes.⁷

Unlike the situation in pioneer times, in contemporary Ephraim cooperation usually is not an environmental imperative. There was one event that was often cited, in which cooperation was vital to managing an environmental threat. It was the town's response to the flooding of 1983. I quote extensively from one informant's narrative, because this experience left quite an impression upon locals involved, and a full account will allow the reader to get a better feel for the emotion involved.

We had a lot of snow up in these mountains. . . . And then it got very warm, and the water started coming down the mountain, and there was danger of flooding. We had a meeting over in the church over here and it was packed. People who hadn't been inside the church in their whole lives, I would think, were there. The city council had an engineer come in, who said, "This is what you need to do to protect the community," as far as flooding was concerned. "The water needs to be diverted outside of town," so that it didn't come crashing down through this little creek. . . . It goes under the city building and across the street and comes out behind the theater over there and into the park. And that was just raging. "The thing that needs to be done is that the water needs to be diverted out of town."

There was an old gravel pit. It's on First East and between Seventh and Eight South, on the east side of the street. So they decided to divert the water into that gravel pit, fill it up, and the overflow would come down through those people's property, go across the main highway, and go down into the west side of the valley. It was going to flood those people who had farmland and so forth – pastures – on the west side of the valley. Before it went into the river, it would probably cause some damage because the San Pitch River was the only receptacle to put it into.

Discussion was held for maybe half an hour. A proposition: We could do this or we could do this, and this would create this problem and this will create this problem. And you know, one of the men whose land this water was going to run all over – he was not going to have a crop that year because it was going to inundate his farming area. He stood up and said, "If this is what needs to be done, let's get to it!" Those people came right together. There was some damage done in the west end of town. The water table came up so high that there were a few homes on the west side of Third West down there that got water in the basement, but there was not real damage done to any house.

That was so exciting to me to see those people come together like that. I guess that's solidarity . . . I get really emotional about it because I was there and participated in it, and it was exciting. There's another big ditch over here on the north side of town, and there were a couple of homes that were in danger there. Kids were getting up at six o'clock in the morning, going down here to the parking lot behind the library, filling sandbags. Farmers, everybody – six o'clock in the morning – were loading trucks, taking them up, and banking those ditches

so those people wouldn't have damage to their homes. . . . You know, not everybody would do that. But the whole community turned out. It was just exciting. The whole community was buzzing with activity.

I think everybody goes their own way and we all take what we have for granted a little bit, but when it comes right down to it, we have solidarity here.

This sort of narrative does seem to agree with the somewhat glamorized accounts of the Mormon pioneers conquering the wilderness through selflessness, hard work, and cooperation. However, this was the only incident described to me in which the natural environment presented a major threat to the group, and the group pulled together and cooperated to protect life and property. On one hand, such experiences leave a clear and lasting imprint on the consciousness of a community, thereby providing the members of the community with evidence of their group identity (hence, the story ends with the conclusion, "When it comes right down to it, we have solidarity here"). On the other hand, this event does not characterize the common, day-to-day experience of living in the community.

In a broader sense, Ephraimites have followed the national trend of beginning to see the natural environment as an aesthetic and a recreational asset, rather than an obstacle to "progress." When I asked how the community had changed, one resident said, "We've progressed – took out all of our old trees and put in streets," and then added cynically, "I guess that's progress." But enough of the natural environment is still around that it becomes an oft-cited amenity of the town.

The mountains are still a form of our recreation, and they're beautiful, and they're a part of Ephraim.

People like the scenery. I used to argue with a man from Nebraska. He said the plains were security and I said the mountains were security. And he said they couldn't be "because you have earthquakes." And I said, "Well you have tornadoes!" I think a lot of people feel security – looking out every morning and seeing that beautiful mountain up there.

One couple told me how the environment was one thing that really struck them, having just moved to Ephraim from a metropolitan area.

[Husband:] My favorite thing around here . . . the first thing that comes to mind is, man, you – at night you can see the stars, you know? In the city, you know, you can only see the brightest stars. Here there's like hundreds of them.

[Wife:] Hundreds? Millions!

[Husband:] Thousands that you can see. And then the clean air. And so environmental things – I really enjoy that.

Appreciation for the environment becomes so strong that in a few cases, it even takes priority over religious duties, as two respondents explained:

If we've got a campin' trip, that comes before going to church.

When I first moved here, I remember them going to church on the Sunday of the deer hunt and they're saying, "Brother So-and-so, who's the Sunday School president, we're excusing him today because he and his family are deer hunting." Woah! That type of thing is very big. During hunting season, it's still big for a lot of families. The whole family does those things together.

Ephraim's natural environment is not only valued for its aesthetic and recreational values. It has also become an icon of commitment and local identity and values. A group's relationship to its environment is never a given, and space is a tool ever available for appropriation and reinterpretation. Lefebvre (1976:31) makes this point:

Space is not a scientific object removed from ideology or politics; it has always been ideological and strategic. If space has an air of neutrality and indifference with regard to its contents and thus seems to be 'purely' formal, the epitome of rational abstraction, it is precisely because it has already been occupied and used, and has already been the focus of past processes whose traces are not always evident in the landscape. . . . [S]pace, which seems homogeneous, which seems to be completely objective in its pure form, such as we ascertain it, is a social product.

When the Mormons left the populated East, they could have defined the Western frontier ahead of them as a dark wilderness, the undesirable land of exile, and evidence of

God's displeasure (or at least his neglect) upon them. Instead, while they do call this region a "desert," the emphasis is on the moral symbolism of it, and on the moral growth that comes from interaction with it. For example, one respondent told me,

So I think this valley is a pretty hostile valley as far as climate is concerned for crops and livestock. We have harsh winters and we don't have much water, but that may not be bad because it produces people with strong wills and strong commitments.

Another place where we find the conscious process of definition between people and their environment is in Mormon hymns. The following examples are selections from Mormon hymns or hymns whose words were altered by Mormons.

*Unheeding still the fiercest blasts that blow,
With tops encrusted by eternal snow,
The tow'ring peaks that shield the tender sod
Stand, types of freedom reared by nature's God.*
(*Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* 1985, no. 37)

*For the strength of the hills we bless thee, Our God, our fathers' God;
Thou hast made thy children mighty By the touch of the mountain sod.
Thou hast led thy chosen Israel to freedom's last abode;
For the strength of the hills we bless the, Our God, our fathers' God.*
(*Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* 1985, no. 35)

*Firm as the mountains around us, Stalwart and brave we stand
On the rock our fathers planted For us in this goodly land –
The rock of honor and virtue, Of faith in the living God.
They raised his banner triumphant Over the desert sod.*
(*Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* 1985, no. 255)

And it would not be appropriate to discuss hymns in a thesis about Ephraim without mentioning the hymn entitled "Ye Elders of Israel," the chorus of which announces,

*O Babylon, O Babylon, we bid thee farewell;
We're going to the mountains of Ephraim to dwell.*
(*Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* 1985, no. 319)

Having been raised outside of Utah, I had always taken this passage to be metaphorical, or at least referring to the Rocky Mountains in general. However, I was informed by more than one Ephraimite that it is *their* mountain we are singing about.

In addition to the strong language used in all of these hymn passages, all but the first are presented in the LDS hymnal with bold tunes to accompany them. It is clear that the wilderness of the Mormon West is not an image of fear, darkness, or loneliness. In fact, Mormons have *reversed* the expected metaphor, attaching negative imagery to every other place.

Mormons have applied the hymn “I’ll Go Where You Want Me to Go” to LDS missionary service. Note how in this context, going to the mission field (among the Gentiles) constitutes going down an unknown path that may not be pleasant for the missionary:

*It may not be on the mountain height Or over the stormy sea,
It may not be at the battle’s front My Lord will have need of me:
But if by a still, small voice he calls To paths that I do not know,
I’ll answer, dear Lord, with my hand in thine: I’ll go where you want me to go.
(Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 1985, no. 270)*

Here, leaving one’s Mormon home to go on a mission might not involve climbing a mountain, crossing a stormy sea, or entering the heat of the battle, but such a challenge remains definite possibility. In the face of such inhospitable prospects for traversing this unknown land, the missionary expresses his or her dependence upon the Lord.

Consider how another hymn celebrates how Mormonism gives *light* to a world languishing in *darkness*:

*Searching in darkness, nations have wept;
Watching for dawn, their vigil they’ve kept.
All now rejoice; the long night is o’er.
Truth is on earth once more!*

*Oh, how glorious from the throne above
Shines the gospel light of truth and love!
Bright as the sun, this heavenly ray
Lights every land today.*

(Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 1985, no. 264)

The Mormon relationship to place and the environment has changed from the meaning it carried in the middle of the nineteenth century. It no longer requires cooperation, since improvements in technology and available capital have made that no longer an imperative. However, the environment is appreciated for its aesthetic and recreational value. Even more than that, though, yesterday's foreboding wilderness has become a symbol of freedom, strength, and moral virtue, in contrast to the dark and treacherous world beyond its borders.

In summary, contrary to my original hypotheses, each of the four factors identified by Nelson are indeed still relevant to social life in Ephraim today. However, all of them have been adapted to fit the changing social circumstances of life in the town, and this supports my original assumptions. These are not, however, the only ways in which Ephraimites develop, express, and maintain solidarity in their locality. The additional ways, which have not been presented in extant research findings on Mormon villages, are the object of the next section.

MAINTENANCE OF SOLIDARITY

Ephraimites have established a certain set of norms that seem capable of perpetuating a sense of community. They apply to gossip, service, and identity or heritage. Each of these norms could, in fact, create divisions among residents of Ephraim, but by and large they seem to be applied in such a way that they have a positive effect on community life.

Gossip

Residents of Ephraim recognize that gossip can be very harmful, but they also recognize that it can be a tool for good. The difference seems to be that harmful gossip focuses on the *character* of another, reinforces negative *stereotypes* of a person or group of people, does not propose or expect *action* to be taken to resolve the problem, and operates to *separate* the person sharing the gossip from the person or activity gossiped about. The stories Butler (1950) outlined in her research on Ephraim folklore do not qualify as negative gossip, primarily because in most cases, they do not serve to *separate* the storyteller from the humorous situation being described. Indeed, part of the humor is that the storyteller is one of the group bearing the brunt of the joke. Collectively, Ephraim folk stories are about *us*, not about *them*.

There is still plenty of negative gossip going on, and it is reluctantly accepted as part of community life, but Ephraimites don't generally believe that its negative aspects must prevail:

We still have the small town gossip thing. There's a little of that, that goes on. We have a coffee shop out here where all the problems are "solved." [The tone here is sarcastic.] A lot of that seems to be anti-government and even anti-Church. . . . I think that the gossipy thing, the anti-government thing, maybe that's something that just has to be a part of the community. I don't know. I think a lot of the gossip that goes on is because people care. If someone is having a problem with kids, I think people can be very sympathetic. I think the reason people want to know about things is because they do care. So maybe it's a positive thing, in a way.

How does gossip become positive? Here is how the process seems to work.

Someone tells you about a problem someone else is facing. You duly express concern for that other person. Then, you evaluate how you can help. If there is something you can do, you do it. If there is not, you pass the story along to someone else, in the hope that

before too long the gossip will reach someone in a position to give aid to the distressed neighbor. From what I hear about response times in Ephraim, that waiting period is usually not very long. Sometimes help comes within hours, and the person receiving the aid will have no idea how The helpers learned that there was a problem. To learn of someone else's need and be able to help, but to neglect to do so, places a person in violation of community norms. In the words of some Ephraim residents,

When you go down to the store – you know, “Well, did you hear about So-and-so?” “Oh, no.” You know? And then they'll fill you in and you can go from there and do what you can to do to help.

We do kind of take care of each other's information about children. That can be perceived as gossip, if you will, or it can be perceived as information. And, for the most part, in Ephraim, it's perceived as information and you try to help each other. Now, maybe I'm the only one that perceives it as that, but I don't think so. I think they really do, you know? It's been a great help to raise a large family.

Whenever there's a need for something, sometimes, all you have to do is call all of the Relief Society presidents and they'll mention it in their wards and we'll get some action in a certain area, say for Sub-for-Santa. And we get some food donations or something like that.

People are. They're concerned about each other and they like to know what's going on with the people in the town and if anything needs to be done, they're right there to help.

I feel like the fact is that people kind of want to know what you're doing, and coming from some smaller towns in California, if people are that way with you down there, that's a problem. I guess the difference is why do they want to know. Around here, people want to know because, generally, they care and they're interested in you. And it's just more a sense of community here.

The boys who figure in the next story probably thought that when the word circled back, the gossip didn't qualify as “help.” But it illustrates how the gossip tends to regard individual actions in terms of the long-term well-being of the community.

I had a neighbor up here that called just a few years ago and said, “Now, I don't know if there's any connection, but I noticed your son and the other neighbor boy having their bee bee guns pointed up at the street light here the other day, and

darned if I didn't notice that the street light didn't work that night. I don't know if there's any connection or not, but I thought you'd like to know." "Well, thanks for calling," you know, "We'll take care of that." Yes, we did it, you know – go down to the city and talk to the mayor and say, "Okay, these kids shot out the light, what can I have 'em do?" "Well, it costs forty dollars . . ." And we had 'em do a little service. "Okay, we'll have 'em pick up garbage out along the side of the road," and "Yeah, that sounds like a good idea." And so they leaned up Cane Valley Road and paid for the lights. And now, I don't know how that gets handled in big cities, but my sense is that it wouldn't have been handled quite as easily.

To have such effective informal communication networks does have its drawbacks. The information may not be entirely correct, as one responded wryly observed:

That's one of the drawbacks. Everybody knows more about your business than you do.

But the general feeling seems to be that the risks of passing along misleading information are worth it. As another informant noted, it is culturally important to have information out in the open, where it can be dealt with. If the information is wrong, it can be corrected. If the information is correct, then action can be taken.

Sometimes, local norms clash with general LDS norms. Such instances include cases where an event involves an action that threatens a person's membership in the LDS Church. Say, for example, there has been a case of adultery. Local norms would dictate that everyone should know about it so that appropriate emotional and other support can be given to the spouse whose partner had cheated on him or her. It would also be important for residents to know that the unfaithful individuals have been appropriately punished. Mormons have a strong sense of justice. Even though their doctrine indicates that much justice must wait until after this life to be served, and even though Mormon doctrine also contains a strong presence of mercy, Mormons like to see the "end of the

story,” when the victims are vindicated and the evildoers punished. However, it is not LDS policy to support local gossip circles. Behavior such as adultery is handled in very private councils and one-on-one interviews, and the public sharing of what was said or decided in such councils is usually discouraged. In this respect, LDS policy and local culture remain at odds.

Because of the language barrier, the Spanish-speaking minority is virtually entirely cut off from positive gossip circles. Gossip does circulate about them, but it is quite ill-informed and general, and it does not allow for positive action, since it does not identify a person who could be helped. The rhetoric in English-speaking Ephraim quarantines the Hispanic minority with vague generalizations that do not suggest any inclusive course of action.

The data, including information provided by Spanish-speaking informants, do not describe the functioning of positive gossip circles between neighbors within the Hispanic population of Ephraim. They do indicate direct communication about problems within close relations such as between spouses and between parents and children, and within formal organizations such as the Catholic church.

Service

As should be clear from the preceding discussion, successful and positive application of gossip norms depends upon successful and positive application of service norms. If no one takes it upon herself or himself to change local circumstances, gossip becomes a social liability.

Rochat and Modigliani (1995) alleged that for kindness (or the more moralistic “goodness”) to be effective, it need not be heroic; it need only be ordinary. They

considered narratives given by residents of the small town of Le Chambon, France, that defied the demands of the Nazi and Vichy governments, and saved the lives of approximately five thousand refugees during World War II and found,

Those who refused to obey the orders of authorities, and came to the aid of persecuted people, were neither saints nor heroes. Rather, their goodness was that of ordinary men and women who were responsive to the victims' manifest need for help. The way they acted was part of their everyday life, and they did not perceive it as something extraordinary. They did not feel like heroes at the time, nor do they want to be seen as such in retrospect (Rochat and Modigliani 1995:197).

And yet, for the very reason that such a large proportion of the local population perceived that small and simple acts of kindness were quite ordinary, they collectively accomplished one of the most effective humanitarian operations of the war.

It was a completely new experience for which they had received no prior training and which evolved through a developmental learning process. They did one thing at a time, and one thing after the other, each move bringing them closer to becoming the rescuers we admire today. At the outset they were merely decent persons helping those in need. However, these small, early steps ended up making the difference between life and death for thousands of refugees (Rochat and Modigliani 1995:205).

The two authors conclude that, even though Arendt's thesis of the banality of evil may be true, yet that does not preclude a complementary "ordinariness of goodness," which can give much relief to human suffering in spite of whatever external demands may be placed upon the group.

It is not clear how extensive among the people of Ephraim the propensity to give service is. One man who is in the leadership of one ward introduced me to the "eighty-twenty rule:"

When it's a ward-wide service project, I'd say from the activities that I've been to, you seem to see the same faces. Like whether it's putting up chairs or helping someone with a project at someone's house – moving, yeah. I mean it's the same everywhere. Just like the eighty-twenty rule: Twenty percent of the people do

eighty percent of the work, you know? But again, there's more to responsibility than going to service projects, I think.

By noting that responsibility may entail more than formal, organized service projects, he points out the important distinction between formal service and informal service.

Another man told me that it is possible for a small town to become too organized (a potential threat in Mormon villages at least since Ericksen and Nelson). Therefore, it would seem that the beauty of such a culture would be that service would be widespread whether or not it is organized or assigned. Ideally, it should characterize everyday life, and not only a few scattered crises. In short, kindness should be ordinary. Anecdotal evidence is inadequate to answer the question of just how pervasive service is, and on what scale it occurs. One hears in Ephraim both positive and negative sides to the story.

I like the feeling that my little Down's boy can just go out in the community, and people are watching out for him. One time he went way down the street, next to Main Street, and some of the neighbors down there would put his little bike in the pickup and drive him home. People will look after each other a lot.

I feel badly about a lot of the youth growing up. They don't realize how fun it is to have a job and work, 'cuz they don't want to. The first thing they'll say, "Well, how much will you pay me?" There's a cute little boy that passes my house going to school and he asked me this one day if he could shovel my path, and I said, "Well yes, I'd be happy if you'd shovel it." "Well how much would you pay me?" You know, so I paid him 'cuz I was glad to get it done, but it's that feeling of wanting to help somebody else. Are we not teaching that to our children now?

We saw it I think on Saturday when we were out at the park [doing a group service project]. It's amazing how many people came up to me and said, "Why don't we do this more often?" We need this, and we're losing a sense of community when we don't do these things. Service is probably the area that brings it out the most.

We have a support group for unwed mothers – both parents and mothers can come. We have people who are trained to help, and they are reaching out to help and support, and these are things that on the surface no one would even know what was going on, because you don't go around waving your hands, saying, "Look what we're doing," obviously. And so when they don't see it, it doesn't mean it's not happening. It's just not loudly proclaimed, you know.

I feel remiss when I hear people I know criticize the Church because we had a group organized go over and landscape the Catholic church. That was one of these public affairs projects. All of the [LDS] stakes participated in that – put in a sprinkling system, trucks. We got a lot of things donated and then we gave the labor. They said, “Let them put in their own sprinkler system. When we do things for them that they can do for themselves, we rob them of opportunities to grow.” And my response is, “We’re not doing it for them; we’re doing it for us. We need to learn to give.”

I could go on all day giving you examples of good things that people have done. And they don’t necessarily have to be active Mormons to do it. After my husband died, I had a relative here that had done a lot of drinking all his life. “Marian,” he said, “I’ve got a load of wood on my little pickup.” He said, “Would you like a fire for the holidays?” We buried my husband the day before Thanksgiving. He said, “I thought maybe you’d like a fire for the holidays. I’ll bring it down.” He brought it down, unloaded it. . . . You can’t put a price on those kind of stuff.

This is kind of a fun story. It was right about the time I learned how to drive. My dad told me to pull my truck onto the lawn to wash it, and we had a big ditch in the front of our lawn. I didn’t realize that I should angle it in, so I just went and tried to go straight and I got it stuck right in front of my house. You know, a young kid – sixteen years old – to have his truck stuck right in front of his house wasn’t the most macho thing to have happen. But like the second car that passed by was a guy that we knew, and he had a chain in his truck and he just pulled it right out and we pulled it out onto the lawn and washed it. There was no problem. And it happened all the time. I got my truck stuck one time in the mountain in a field of snow. I just came down and knocked on my next door neighbor’s door, and he got out his four-wheel drive and we went up there and we got it unstuck. That happens a lot – me getting my truck stuck, and people helping me out.

The last story was from a young respondent (male, early 20’s) who strongly rejected the notion that people in Ephraim only serve each other in times of crisis. As a counterexample he told me that his family and the next-door neighbors have a “running competition” to see who can take *each other’s* trash out first on garbage day. In the following sequence, I wanted to know why he does this, and how common this sort of thing was among people his age.

It’s like the Scouts’ food drive. They pick up canned food and take it down to the food bank. And then the food bank distributes it to people that are needy. I went down there a couple times and helped them distribute and put away cans, and things like that.

[Interviewer:] Why did you do that?

I thought it would be a good thing to do. It would be kind of fun. I went with a date. It was kind of fun. It accomplished two things: It was fun and it helped somebody.

[Interviewer:] So it wasn't part of a club or church activity.

No, it wasn't. I called up a friend and we went.

[Interviewer:] Do you know many other people who would do a service activity just for fun – not because it's structurally or organizationally expected?

I don't know. I'm sure there are. I'm not sure.

[Interviewer:] You haven't heard about other people who do that type of thing on dates?

I guess, now that you mention it, no – not a lot.

When asked why he just spontaneously engaged in helping behavior, this informant's first response was morally evaluative: "I thought it would be a good thing to do." His reflex response, so to speak, was that he chose to help at the food bank because it is morally "good." He changed his tone of voice to add "It would be kind of fun," suggesting that "fun" is a secondary justification in the matter – perhaps a justification that some would find more socially acceptable.

However, he was not able to describe his own behavior as commonplace. As illustrated in these several examples, some people believe that service is frequent, and can give several examples; some can only cite a few examples, and express a wish that it were more common; and some only speak of how much a propensity toward service is lacking in Ephraim. The latter category is the least represented within my sample, but the sampling technique likely placed particular emphasis on people who are involved in service. In each of the three categories, there are both men and women, younger and

more mature, people who hold high-profile positions and people who do not. Mexican Americans in Ephraim also give a mixed report of attitudes toward service in their own culture:

They [Anglos] are very interested in helping the Hispanic community, but like I said, the people don't often pay much attention to it. True, if you go and give them a pair of pants, a shirt, a hundred dollars, they'll take it, but if you tell them, "Come on. We want to help you learn," not everyone will go.

Here in the town of Ephraim, everyone – Mormons, those of any religion – I have treated them courteously. I treat everyone properly. I tell them, "I'm not interested in your religion. If you want to be my friends, you can be my friends. If I can help you with something, I'll do it. If you can help me with in some respect, well enough." Because that's why we are on this earth – to serve and to be served. We should serve one another.

Both English speakers and Spanish speakers express a need for cooperative activity across the ethnic divide, but the language problem is the impediment most frequently cited by people on both sides.

The common denominator here is that service is valued in all cases and appreciated when it occurs. Evidence that service is a community norm is further found in this self-evaluation of one respondent:

I feel bad as we're talking about this. Because I think, well, maybe I'm not reaching out [enough] and doing more.

Service may be conceptualized both as that which is done in concert with norms and formal social organization, and that which is done in contrast or even in opposition to the norms. The former I call "voluntarism." The latter, which requires a stronger will and is more often done alone, I call "activism." Voluntarism doesn't attract as much attention to the individual actor as activism does, but it is broadly acclaimed for playing a vital role in Ephraim.

Without volunteers, we couldn't run our city, our schools. Everything would hold up without volunteers. And I didn't realize until I worked on the city council, and saw how many volunteers work to keep the city going. Cities the size of Ephraim simply do not have money.

With the Scandinavian Festival, I find that we are dependent on volunteers. I find that we have some very well qualified, dependable volunteers, so that each year we don't have to reinvent the wheel with the activities we do. I'm pleased about that. I know that so many cities and especially this community are really dependent upon volunteer help for so many activities that go on. Especially a big activity like the Festival.

I mean people do good things. Just to tell you something that one neighbor did for me. I had drug the garbage out and some animal had gotten in and knocked the trash out and there was trash everywhere. I had just had a baby and I was out there taking my garbage out and she pulled over, driving down the street, and stopped and helped me with the garbage. And I commented that in our church, I said, you know, "How many of us would have done that?" [In this case the person helping and the person being helped were not of the same religious denomination.] You know, you get in a hurry to go somewhere. How many of us would stop? . . . and especially with dirty garbage. . . . In my eyes, it was a really nice gesture.

About the time my eldest son was born my mother was Relief Society president over her ward [not in Ephraim]. And one of the things that she was so impressed with was the overwhelming amount of food that came into the home, unsolicited. That occurs with babies. It occurs with sickness and funerals. She says, "In my ward we generally make assignments to serve."

Today I was riding with my boss and there was a tire in the middle of the road. She stopped and moved the tire out to the side of the road, which is a simple little thing. It's a simple gesture but that's the kind of things she does all the time without thinking about it.

You know, when you just work in the Church, you can be pretty narrow. You don't realize that there's some people not willing to work in the Church who give their all in community service.

Sometimes service involves doing more than playing the expected role within an organization, or more than performing acts which community norms would suggest as appropriate. Some people reported stepping out of their roles to perform a task that needed to be done, or keeping their roles, but taking them an extra measure. These

people indicate that merely following along with whatever presents itself is not enough.

Said one informant:

If you want to get involved in the community, then you kind of look it over and see what little niche you want to be in, and join people. Make it a community.

Later this informant told of a situation where she spoke up to prevent a problem with young people who were skateboarding nearby.

So the skateboarders have been banned from a lot of places. There's no place for them to go. . . . It's a sport, and it keeps kids doing something. One day I had a bunch of them out here, so I called them all together and said, "You guys have been banned from a lot of places and this is probably your last holdout, right here." But I said, "There's some rules. If you want to stay here, there's some rules you have to go by. You don't throw garbage on the place. You don't hassle people getting out of their cars. If there's cars here, you're not here. You come in when it's empty." Very simple rules. But I said, "some of you guys are not behaving," and I said, "It's going to ruin it for those who are," so I said, "You get together and police yourselves." It is working! It is really working.

In being activist herself, this woman was teaching activism to a group of young people, not only in what she told them, but in what she did.

Another informant told me that this sort of attitude has to be internalized.

I think it is, many times, more external than internal. I'm saying, if you aren't told to do it, would you do it anyway? I mean, you have the forms – "We're going to go over and help Brother So-and-so because he needs help." If you weren't told to go over and help him, would you go over and help him? And I think that's external commitment versus internal commitment. The community works as an organized group to go over and help because you're told that. You're "asked to volunteer" – whatever. You go and the motivations are external. . . . It has been toward that, mainly because we're losing our internal motivations, and we have to have it forced on us. We just sit around and let our neighbors starve to death. Would we go out and help them on our own, without having to be a part of an organized group? If that person isn't part of the LDS community – they're a "Gentile" – then who is going to help them?

Putting this philosophy into practice gave this man the label:

When they look for someone who is a representative for the Hispanic community outside the Catholic church, for some reason they see me as – Well, when they did the article in the Tribune, they had me down as a "community activist." Maybe I

should have some business cards made up: “Community Activist.” Sounds like some subversive group or something.

Stepping out of the norms usually requires attachment to principle – not merely to people or to organizations. And as this man found out, the effects of activism sometimes generate more attention than one expects.

Traditional law enforcement isn’t the only way to obtain compliance to ordinances for the public good:

When we first were here, why, you had children playing and so on in the street and activity going. Remember that guy that had the fast moving vehicle? And we had those kids out here and I couldn’t get the police to cooperate and so I went and talked to him. And I told him that he was, well, under no circumstance, was he to race along that street with all those kids over there. And, my talking to him had more effect than anything else that was done.

Activism in the Mormon village doesn’t necessarily mean working *against* the system. It can also include stepping in to make sure the system attains the desired ends.

Another man explains:

I had my truck taken. They were able to catch the fourteen-year-old boys that did it. There were five of them. The county clerk who was serving as the clerk for the judge invited me over to the hearings, and wanted to know if I wanted to be part of it. And I told him yes. So I went over there, and the judge gave me the opportunity to make a statement. And I said, “Judge, there are two guilty parties here. They boys that took my truck are guilty, and the parents of those boys are guilty, because my truck was taken at two o’clock in the morning, and those parents should not have allowed their fourteen-year-old kids to be out running the streets at two o’clock in the morning.” I said, “So there should be two penalties: I would suggest that you assess the parents the penalty that would restore the scratches and bumps and dents on my truck. And then assign the boys to help me on the farm for a period of time.” I said, “I raised my boys on the farm, and when they came home at night, the only thing that they wanted to do was eat and go to bed.” And I said, “I would like to put a shovel and a pick in those boys’ hands, and I can assure you, when they got home at night, the only thing they’d want to do is eat and go to bed.”

Such “lone crusaders” seem to be exceptional. I found many more reports of quiet service, done in the background, with little or no public recognition. That is not to say

that the activist has no place in the Mormon village. Rather, it is this individual who articulates community values, and who points out to the community the ways in which it has been failing in its attempt to live them. Presumably a healthy community has its share of both activists and rank-and-file volunteers.

Heritage

Thomas O’Dea (1957:119) wrote in his much-noted analysis of Mormonism:

Mormonism is the product of a time when common men were beginning to conceive great expectations for self-improvement based upon individual effort and of a place where such expectations were infused with millennial aspirations and made more poignant by the emotionalism of enthusiastic religion. It developed and grew in the context of its own self-consciousness, its strong group loyalty reinforced by its belief in its own peculiarity and its special covenant.

O’Dea’s stress on “individual effort” neglects adequate consideration of the Mormon concept of grace, thereby giving a false impression of Mormon belief. Nevertheless, for our purposes this passage is sufficient in linking religious justification of activism with Mormonism’s “own self-consciousness.” It was this self-consciousness that Nelson missed in his studies, and that developed into Mormonism’s current sense of heritage. O’Dea continues by noting how the “challenges and lessons of pioneers” added to, and were interpreted in light of, the Mormon experience.

I take a social constructionist approach to heritage. This does not mean that local heritage is “inauthentic” (a charge that Calhoun [1995] discredits). In fact, the social constructionist approach to identity indicates the vitality of community life:

. . . all cultures and collective identities are constructions of one sort or another; they are changed and reformulated – continually reconstructed – over time. It is this very constructedness that is the source of their dynamism. It keeps them alive (Cornell and Hartmann 1998:92).

Stuart Hall explained that the process of identity construction is necessarily circular, both reaching away, into another place and time, and reaching back, into what we have become. He (1990:232) illustrates this using the Caribbean identity as a model:

To *this* “Africa”, which is a necessary part of the Caribbean imagery, we can’t literally go home again. . . . Tony Sewell’s documentary archival photographs, *Garvey’s Children: the Legacy of Marcus Garvey*, tells the story of a “return” to an African identity . . . It “ends”, not in Ethiopia but with Garvey’s statue in front of St. Ann Parish Library in Jamaica . . . This is our “long journey” home. . . . These symbolic journeys are necessary for us all – and necessarily circular. This is the Africa we must return to – but “by another route”: what Africa has *become* in the New World, what we have made of “Africa”: “Africa” – as we re-tell it through politics, memory and desire. [Italics in original.]

In effect, a people seeking their identity (heritage) do typically examine both who they *are* and who they *were*, select therefrom those qualities and processes that they most appreciate and that they most want to develop, then present the resulting *constructed* identity as their own. Why does this constructed heritage become so important? As Rhea explains,

The collective memory of a nation is that set of beliefs about the past which the nation’s citizens hold in common and publicly recognize as legitimate representations of their history. Collective memory is important because shared beliefs about the past provide citizens with common landmarks or examples which can be referred to when addressing the problems of the present (Rhea 1997:2).

For this reason,

A public history which promotes negative views of a group, or simply excludes it from consideration, does real harm to the living members of that group (Rhea 1997:2).

That which is written out of collective memory cannot be part of one pool from which we draw solutions to present problems. Since we can assume that a large portion of a group’s customs come from its ancestors, to exclude those forebears from the collective memory is to remove from consideration those living metaphors from that heritage that

may provide clues to resolving the present social problems of involving that group (among them, problems of inclusion).

The following are some examples of how Ephraimites define their local heritage:

This community was started by having Brigham Young send Scandinavians down here, so it has a history of being Church-organized. And how good the community is has a lot to do with the religion, you know, the LDS Church, so it's huge in my mind. That's why the community's so good.

We are a Scandinavian people. They had real close family ties and families would get together like on an afternoon maybe a couple days a week, sit on the porch like this one family. . . .

We didn't drag a handcart all the way across the plains to get here; we just drove here, so the commitment is rather different. I think the effect of that tremendous dedication and purpose for the first generation of people that came was at 100%. The next generation that came or were born afterwards, they did not participate in the coming here. They were probably trying to find their purpose – why they're here.

I think that way it's really changed. They just don't have the extra time now, but they used to work hard. I mean, I think of those pioneer women and the things that they used to do. There's no way I could work like they did, you know.

I feel close to someone I've never met and that's – I don't know why, just reading about her . . . It was my great, great grandmother and – I think, she sounded like me. And that's why I've been really curious, but that's written by somebody else so I'm not sure. Maybe she really wasn't like that, but I've been really curious to meet her because I thought, "Oh, she's just like I am. Kind of a nut." I'd love to meet her.

I've seen it especially since studying the pioneers this year. There was something really amazing, and I think that's what draws me and intrigues me about that era of time. People really, truly needed each other. I mean you didn't survive if you weren't an extremely close-knit community.

The consciousness of local heritage in Ephraim focuses on the settlement period.

Principles taught on the basis of the stories include religious connections, spending time with family, working hard, being internally committed to a principle, and being mutually committed to each other.

These examples were of local Ephraim residents reflecting upon their own heritage. The whole town makes a public display of heritage each year on Memorial Day weekend, when it holds its “Scandinavian Festival.” Though clearly more of a commercial venture than the stories people tell in their homes, it is still a means of a people telling their own story the way they want it told, and the moral of the story is meant to carry beyond the borders of the community. As Barthel (1996:52-53) explained,

Utopias serve ideological purposes, but they can also be a form of social critique, presenting alternative solutions. Visitors to Staged Symbolic Communities take away more than souvenirs and decorating ideas. They also come away with lessons regarding identity, history, and community.

Is a Staged Symbolic Community “authentic”? Yes, in my opinion, if the community presented is that derived at by the honest pursuit of identity in the manner described by Hall – a circular path linking present and past. True, if you go to the 1997 Scandinavian Festival in Ephraim what you get is Scandinavian à la Ephraim 1997. Say you travel to Copenhagen that year instead, to get “true” Scandinavian culture. What would you find? Most likely you would find Scandinavian à la Copenhagen 1997. And what if your definition of Scandinavian means Copenhagen 1850? You are in a bit of a bind, since that hasn’t existed in practice for approximately 150 years. It seems unlikely that 1997 Danes wear 1850 fashions in their daily activities.

If the hard-liner still insists on “authentic” Scandinavian, let me ask another question. Let’s start with a certain number of Danes living in Copenhagen in 1850. One segment of that population migrates to another place, while another portion remains there. Both groups continue to call themselves “Danish,” but only one of the two can claim the place called “Denmark.” Both groups alter, to one degree or another, a whole array of cultural attributes, including language, musical tastes, clothing, cooking, and patterns of

employment and housing, although there can be seen in both groups cultural remnants of the earlier era. One hundred and fifty years later, the two groups differ from each other, and differ from what they were 150 years earlier. Then the group that migrated senses an urge to redefine and reassert its “identity,” does some research into the Old Country, and begins to practice some of the old traditions, including retelling the old stories, cooking the old dishes, and even on occasion wearing the old fashions. The group that stayed does none of this, preferring a lifestyle quite different from that of its ancestors. Who is “authentic”?

They all are, providing no group’s activities is solely for the purpose of deception (and then the deliberate deception itself becomes a cultural artifact). Scandinavian à la Copenhagen 1850 is indeed Scandinavian à la Copenhagen 1850. Scandinavian à la Copenhagen 1997 is indeed Scandinavian à la Copenhagen 1997. And Scandinavian à la Ephraim 1997 is indeed Scandinavian à la Ephraim 1997. After all, “Scandinavian” itself is a symbol amenable to negotiation.⁸

Some may still object, on the grounds that Mormon village Scandinavian is still so diluted by English ancestry, plus several other European American ethnic groups – German, Irish, Welsh, and so forth. However, I maintain my position. The ethnic processes that have been working among Europeans in America are fundamentally the same as the ethnic processes that have been working among Europeans in Europe for thousands of years. When Central Asians pushed into Europe and occupied Poland, they raped many of the Polish women – some of these rapes resulting in births – and some stayed behind in Poland when others left. Does that mean that the Poles can’t call themselves Polish anymore, that they have to call themselves Polish-Central Asian? The

modern Irish are only part Celtic. During the Middle Ages, Norwegian Vikings colonized the island. The Norwegians did not keep themselves completely separate from the Celtic Irish, but settled there, often in families, establishing political units that included both Celts and Scandinavians. The Celts acquired some of the cultural attributes of the newcomers. It requires a great stretch of imagination to deny that there is some measure of Norwegian blood in Ireland. And yet, we still allow today's Irish to be "Irish." The mingling of ethnic groups is a major theme of European history, and it has continued in America, the only major difference being that it seems to happen more rapidly.

The discussion of heritage to this point has taken for granted what is actually a vital element in the Ephraim heritage movement, the fact that it is locally defined. Not only Nelson (1952), but Ericksen (1922) and O'Dea (1957) also observed that the LDS Church has a strong propensity for top-down directives, and that this can create a problem for local initiative. Mauss (1994) suggests that there has been a further pattern of centralized control within the LDS Church in the latter half of this century. To exemplify this group of writing, I present O'Dea's (1957:164-165) observations:

Congregationalism, so much a part of the democratic habits of the converts, was important; but, however important it may have been, it had to become either the registering of assent to a leadership believed to be divinely inspired or rebellion.

In general, however, Mormonism reconciled the two extremes by combining "a democracy of participation and an oligarchy of decision-making and command" (O'Dea 1957:165).

". . . the accommodation between these two tendencies. . . has worked out sufficiently well to permit effective operation of the church organization. Yet it remains a potential source of strain, and for the intellectuals it is an actual source of difficulty" (O'Dea 1957:243).

I suggest that the pattern operating in Ephraim is not merely one of increasing, centralized authority within the LDS Church. Yes, the narrative presented by informants in this study presents little resistance to LDS Church authority during the first century of the town's history. The narrative, however, presents a turning point happening (as luck would have it) in 1952 – just as Nelson was publishing his findings from the second Mormon village series. (That book ends with a slightly less than direct criticism of the LDS Church for teaching its members *what* to think, but not *how* to think.)

The narrative centers on the Ephraim Tabernacle,⁹ which was destroyed on Saturday, April 5, 1952. While I was in Ephraim, the story was told to me in its entirety twice, and several other people made reference to portions of it. The following is taken from my discussion with the second informant who told me the story:

We just felt like it was a tragedy because when we moved here [late 1960's] all we heard was people moaning because they lost their tabernacle that was over there. You probably heard a lot about the old tabernacle. It was just one of those sad things at that time. The Church thought they had to build the new buildings in the same place as the old one and tear it down. . . . Well, it wasn't adequate for the modern usage, you know, like the buildings are now. Of course, the one in Manti, they added on [thereby preserving the Manti Tabernacle] . . . But this was in the 1950's, I guess . . . A lot of people in town tried to save it, but just had the idea that if the Church says "Tear it down," that must be direct revelation so we'd better do it. . . . It was a mess, and we decided that the Church Building Committee wasn't really acting on direct revelation sometimes with their decisions. I shouldn't be talking about those kinds of things, I guess.

[Interviewer:] Someone told me that the reason they tore it down was because they discovered a few cracks in the foundation. . . .

Well, yeah, but when they tried to get it down, they had to dynamite it and one rock fell across the street and they couldn't dynamite that thing, it was so sturdy. . . . Yeah, see, that was just a poor excuse so they could tear it down. Because it was easier to build a new one there, but yeah. I don't know. It's just a different mindset now. Fortunately, they've changed their activities.

[Interviewer:] So now the co-op is the main building with historical significance.

Yeah, the only one left in Ephraim because the college has expanded and torn down so many of the old, historic homes, and really there just wasn't anything left and we just felt like we can't lose that one, too. So, we got busy and did what we could and it was enough to save it.

Several versions of the narrative maintain the "one stone" that was all that blew off the supposedly unsound structure upon the first detonation. As indicated in this narrative, the event had two effects on the local mind. First, it reportedly left them less inclined to simply accept whatever comes from LDS Church headquarters. Second, it motivated them to take action to prevent the destruction of icons of local identity. I do not wish to overstate the first effect. Ephraim today does not have the appearance of a town in total apostasy. Locals take pride in their Mormon roots, and the village supports three LDS stakes: a regular stake and two college stakes. Temple trips are reported to be frequent and the LDS institute program is large and active. What matters most for our purposes is that the narrative of the destruction of the Ephraim Tabernacle is portrayed as the commencement of local initiative in heritage development and preservation.

Ephraimites have taken several actions to describe and preserve their local heritage and identity – a remarkable number of actions, considering the size of the town. Since the 1970's they have been publishing an annual called the *Saga of Sanpitch*, dedicated to local narrative and lore. They have restored a number of buildings – the co-op, the Relief Society granary, and the bishop's storehouse are three examples located in the center of town. Inside the restored granary, they operate the Central Utah Art Center, which displays the work of local artists. The restored co-op building houses a cooperative mercantile (as were more common in early Utah), where there are available for sale homemade crafts from the region. Locals have begun regular upkeep of the Pioneer Cemetery – removing weeds and developing a list of individuals known to be

buried there. They have placed monuments and historical markers in the Pioneer Cemetery and at various locations around the town, identifying historic structures and sites. They initiated a new program at Snow College – one of the few of its type in the entire country and reportedly the only one in the West – to specialize in “traditional building skills,” thereby obtaining an official sanction and capacity for historic restoration. And finally – evidence perhaps of the scar left behind by the destruction of the tabernacle – Ephraimites have placed two dozen structures or so on national and state registers of historic places, thereby preventing the demolition or even significant alteration of the appearance of these buildings.

A new direction heritage development may take is represented by a relatively new event: the Piñata Festival. Mostly a fundraiser to help Hispanic youth participate in activities with the larger population, this has the potential of acquiring some real meaning as an expression and appreciation of Hispanic identity. Although this tradition is not more than a few years old, it has reportedly been received favorably. Another reason it is noteworthy is that it represents the willingness of Ephraimites to celebrate any heritage, even when it is not technically their own.

Out of curiosity about the story of the destruction of Ephraim’s Tabernacle, I looked up the incident in contemporary editions of the *Ephraim Enterprise*, the local newspaper. This publication has always had a pro-establishment inclination, I found, so I did not expect to find a great deal of criticism over the incident, but I did seek a third-person source regarding the event. The *Enterprise* did not report any controversy prior to the destruction of the tabernacle. Instead, it reported on the progress of plans to replace the old “West Ward Chapel” with a new, more serviceable model. Announcements of

fund raisers became more and more frequent until on April 4, 1952, the paper carried a front page article entitled, “Razing of West Ward Chapel to Begin Saturday.” The text of the article begins,

All available Aaronic Priesthood members of the West ward are asked to report at the ward chapel at 9 a. m. Saturday morning, April 5 – and it’s not for a special priesthood meeting. It’s for the purpose of starting to tear down that famous old building to make room for a new chapel and stake house that will seat up to 1100 people and provide an abundance of class rooms, recreation halls, etc. . . .

Still, there is no mention of controversy, and the emphasis quickly moves from the destruction of the old structure to the advantages that are projected from building a new one.

The following week (the *Ephraim Enterprise* is a weekly paper), surprisingly, nothing was mentioned in the paper of the incident. Then the next week, dated April 18, 1952, the *Enterprise* carried a front page story entitled “Reasons Given for Tearing Down the Ephraim Tabernacle.” It contains a well-written summary of an interview between the editor of the paper and the LDS stake president, Reuel E. Christensen. Already the reader can note a change in tone. Just two weeks earlier, the building was the “West Ward Chapel.” Now, it is the “Ephraim Tabernacle.” Two weeks earlier, the paper included at least an attempt at a joke in the opening paragraph. The latter article contains no jokes. The text reads as follows:

For some 17 years plans have been made, abandoned and remade to remodel the old Ephraim Tabernacle into a modern chapel and stake house without tearing down the historical building which has been serving for some 81 years, states Reuel E. Christensen, stake president.

The matter of remodeling, he states, was first considered in 1937 when he was a member of the bishopric. Since then it has been planned and replanned and the problem has been approached from every conceivable angle. At times, it seemed, a suitable plan had been made only to find some flaw which made it impracticable.

The present building is considerably changed from the original erected in 1871, there having been additions and remodeling in previous years.

The height and general construction of the building, its entire lack of plumbing, did not lend to plans for reconstruction, Pres. Christensen explains. Also a weakness in the tower would have necessitated probably complete reconstruction of that part of the old building. The cornice also showed definite signs of deterioration.

Remodeling Would Cost More –

After one investigation by an architect, the general authorities recommended that the old building be kept and remodeled, Pres. Christensen states. Then another architect was sent to make a more thorough check on some items of the proposed remodeling. After this it was determined that the cost of remodeling would be about 15 per cent greater than an entirely new building and that the maintenance, due to excessive height and other factors, would be 10 to 15 per cent greater.

“It was finally decided that this generation should, to be practical, leave for the oncoming generation as fine a structure as that left for us by the builders of 1871,” Pres. Christensen concluded.

It is planned to publish in the very near future the architect’s drawing of the new chapel and stake house which will have a seating capacity of 1100 people, all of whom will be able to see the speaker.

The article concludes with the announcement that several pieces of the Tabernacle or equipment formerly inside of it are available “for free or for sale.”

Of note in this article is that, regardless of technical considerations, the culminating justification for the destruction of the tabernacle is a call to heritage – framing the new project as one comparable to that done by the pioneers themselves. As unconvincing as this reasoning may sound to current Ephraimites, it illustrates the significance of heritage to Mormon villagers.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The present research has identified several sources of social division in the town of Ephraim. These include ethnic, language, socialization, religious, and economic differences. Together, they represent a rather sizable challenge to local solidarity. The present research also identified seven categories of factors that promote social solidarity

in Ephraim: Four proposed by Nelson but since modified by locals, and three that have developed over a longer period of time but that are evident now.

The leadership of the LDS Church has developed into a different style from what it was at the time of the settlement of Ephraim. The centralized LDS Church leadership, though known and generally respected, is less involved with the daily lives of residents, while local LDS Church leadership has been delegated quite a few responsibilities in this area. LDS ideology has maintained itself much the same, but its religious rhetoric has become less millennialist. LDS rhetoric has maintained its preference for practical admonition, and local LDS congregations seem to distinguish themselves for this even more than other denominations represented in Ephraim. Conflict has been reinterpreted as a metaphor of religious diligence, and the environment has come to represent moral values beyond the mere necessity of cooperation.

Since the second Mormon village series, it appears, Mormon villagers have also developed local norms that have a propensity to sustain solidarity over time. These include norms of gossip combined with common helping behavior, and a strong local heritage movement. These norms form a social support structure by which needed information is communicated rapidly, and resources are voluntarily obtained and allocated to individuals and circumstances that are most in need of them. The heritage movement publicly proclaims a common framework of identity relevant to all residents of the town (which is suggested by the fact that most residents participate in the Festival, whether or not they have Scandinavian ancestry or whether or not they are even Mormon). This movement may expand in future years to include other groups, as indicated by the recent innovation of the Piñata Festival.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will proceed along three lines. First, I will evaluate the research findings in light of theory, methods, and my hypotheses which I assumed at the beginning of the research project. Then, I will consider options for future research, which are indicated by these findings. Finally, I will make some comments on possible future trajectories of patterns of social relationships in Ephraim.

EVALUATIONS

At the beginning of this research project, I criticized Nelson for not forming a theory of solidarity. I hypothesized that one of the reasons Nelson suggested that solidarity had declined, was that his theory was one of solidarity *formation*, not of solidarity *maintenance*. My primary purpose, has been threefold. First, I attempted to establish a definition of solidarity that would be relevant to the study of community. Second, I reevaluated Nelson's four factors that promote solidarity, believing originally that only one of them – ideology – would clearly maintain its relevance over time. Third, I sought any evidence of processes that might maintain solidarity after a locality's basic social structure has been established.

On the first matter, the evidence provided by the residents of Ephraim indicates that solidarity is not necessarily a simple oneness of identity, since different social groups are still recognized within solidarity relationships. Nor is solidarity "sameness" in action or belief. That solidarity is not sameness, allows both solidarity and social cleavages to coexist. Solidarity, as defined by the study population, indicates an affective commitment to a common purpose. When put into practice, members of the group may

differ in their preferred course of action, but the fact that they are all committed to the same principles allows them to cooperate to the extent necessary to sustain those principles. Solidarity is not evenly distributed throughout the Mormon village – and in all likelihood it never was.

Prior to beginning the fieldwork, I had assumed that solidarity would be an indicator of community. Sincere there was no consensus among members of the sample on the meaning of community – and I decline to impose a foreign definition of community upon the sample – I cannot make any assertion about the relationship between solidarity and community.

I found several means by which solidarity is promoted and maintained in the Mormon village. The evidence suggests that leadership, conflict, cooperation, and ideology do not operate in the Mormon village today in the same ways in which they seem to have operated seventy-five years ago, in creating a sense of solidarity among the people of the locality. However, there was also a substantial amount of evidence that each of these factors are valued parts of practice and perspective in the Mormon village. Mormon villagers have reinterpreted and reassigned the roles each of these processes play in their lives. I also found that local norms of gossip, service, and heritage have developed – especially in the last fifty years – to support an attachment of members of the group to a common identity and purpose.

Much interest in community research in the 1990's has been defined in terms of the framework given by Wilkinson (1991). He divides the meaning of community into three parts:

Conventionally, there are three elements of the community, namely, a locality, a local society, and a process of locality-oriented collective actions [the community

field]. . . . A locality is a territory where people live and meet their daily needs together. A local society is a comprehensive network of associations for meeting common needs and expressing common interests. A community field is a process of interrelated actions through which residents express their common interest in the local society (Wilkinson 1991:2)

Wilkinson then gives the greatest interest in his work to the community field, or the interactions among members of the community. He asserts interaction to be, in fact, the defining characteristic of a community. I rejected this notion, preferring instead notions of community solidarity that focused attention on issues of affect, identity, and responsibility presented by such theorists as Blea, Collins, Kanter, and Bauman. The reason I rejected interactionist notions of community was that they leave unanswered the question of *why* a certain group of people would interact in the first place. To assert that community is interaction, and that therefore to build community one need merely to bring people into interaction, sounds like the proverbial people on an isolated tropical island who wanted more contact with the outside world. So, they laid out a small runway and sat back waiting for planes to land on it. On the other hand, action follows quite naturally from a deeply-rooted value structure.

Wilkinson's theory of community might be defended on the grounds that in his discussion of community field, he still allows for goals and emotion. However, I do not believe that this is adequately justified. It seems to reflect the problems of other theories of community that try to include so much in a single concept that their effectiveness becomes much reduced. I do not find the process of interrelated action to be substantially different from the interrelated action itself. Both are intangibles. Furthermore, his use of "community" is contradictory. He still on occasion uses the term merely to refer to locality, and he juxtaposes "community," which is commonly believed to have relevant

boundaries, with “field,” which he presents as being boundless. Finally, he does not address the issue of cultural differences. Therefore, I still find Wilkinson’s community theory to be inadequate.

On the meaning of solidarity, the common notion of the term in Ephraim supports my bias here – it is an affective commitment to a purpose. I consider this an essential element to the meaning of community – one that Wilkinson perhaps understood, but did not spell out in his observations about community. He insisted,

The essential ingredient [of community] is social interaction. Social interaction delineates a territory as the community locale; it provides the associations that comprise the local society; it gives structure and direction to processes of collective action; and it is the source of community identity. . . . The substance of community is social interaction (Wilkinson 1991:13).

Some residents of Ephraim saw community as Wilkinson did (as defined by interaction), but this was a minority view. In fact, there was no majority on the meaning of community. And yet, I cannot help but think that the great majority of Americans do not think of community but that they also think of it as something desirable. It is like motherhood and apple pie: Some mothers are incompetent and some apple pies go stale, but we still favor the institution. And that positive, evaluative judgment means that community is not merely a locus of action. There is something else that drives it.

The method used in this study appear to be appropriate to identify the driving forces operating in a particular community-cultural environment. Respecting the actors’ ability to define and articulate their own subjective reality was both appropriate and useful. Informant narratives were particularly useful in articulating value structures and providing original interpretations of local events. On the issue of local value structures, the evidence is clearly weighted in favor of the centrality of family and religion in the

identity of Mormon villagers. Take these values away, and I do not believe that any amount or type of interaction (if interaction could even be sustained without being built upon a value structure) would maintain the current sense identity these people hold.

FUTURE RESEARCH

There appear to be several potential avenues in further research on the Mormon village. A primary one would be a full replication of Nelson's methodology. In this, the researcher has the advantage of access to the original survey sheets from the first Ephraim survey. A full replication (with additional ethnographies of American Fork and Escalante) would also allow for the evaluation of contrasts between the different social settings of the three villages and how the residents of each village have responded to them.

The research on Ephraim itself suggests that there are also several substantive areas which could be explored in this town, but that were beyond the scope of the present research project. These include religious tension – both within the LDS Church and between that and other denominations – racial and ethnic differences, gender inequality, and adolescent socialization in the Mormon village.

Further research might also challenge my selection of study site. I conducted the study in the center of the Mormon culture zone, assuming that Mormon culture would be more clear – or at least stronger – in the Mormon heartland. This is an assumption that has already been questioned, and by Lowry Nelson himself. Thomas O'Dea (1955:38) had observed from his work in Rimrock, "Isolation and peripheral location appear to deepen and make more important the ties of Rimrock with the rest of Mormondom."

Nelson, in a comment attached to the end of O’Dea’s paper, observed that there may be other reasons for this phenomenon, but they may also point to the importance of geography. Rimrock only sees Salt Lake City as a religious symbol, not also as a political symbol as do Escalante, Ephraim, and American Fork. In Rimrock, moving out of the village means moving in with “Gentiles,” while in all of Nelson’s Utah Mormon villages, there are other Mormon villages nearby. Hence, “Living in the midst of non-Mormons, the people of Rimrock no doubt regard themselves as a show window of Mormonism and therefore more likely to be notably conformists with the traditional Mormon values” (O’Dea 1955:39).

At the end of the twentieth century, the great majority of Mormons live at some distance from the core region of Mormon culture. That does not mean that the Mormon heartland is not worth studying. Utah represents a reference culture in Mormonism, a culture that others of the same status group but of varying local traditions meaningfully take into account. However, without question the experience of being Mormon is different elsewhere. The ways in which it is different have not been explored. Part of the reason for that may be that in few places are Mormons so conveniently clustered together for study. Another part is the reluctance of LDS Church headquarters to release membership records, from which the researcher could draw a representative sample. (It is not unusual for researchers of formal organizations to have trouble obtaining membership lists. Many organizations restrict such access for legal or security reasons.) For those who can obtain a representative sample of Mormons outside the Mormon West (including even outside of the United States and Canada, home to a much misunderstood half of Mormons), the meaning and role of Mormon values presents an intriguing area of

research. If Nelson and O’Dea are correct, the Mormons who have the most traditional value structures live in places like St. Louis, Seattle, Sao Paolo, and Stockholm, making places like these potentially valuable research sites for understanding Mormon culture.

Finally, this research identified the possibility of a Mormon claim to knowledge. Mormons seem to provide narratives of decision making that includes an irrational element that does not conflict with rationality and that even supports it, and they seem to expect that only a select group – mostly active Mormons – will understand communication based upon the assumptions of this knowledge system. While there was some evidence to support this, further investigation, perhaps using some type of an experimental design, would seem appropriate to further understand this claim.

THE FUTURE OF THE MORMON VILLAGE

Ephraim has problems. And these problems are not small. The town suffers greatly from segregation by linguistic ability, and consequently by ethnicity, national origin, religion, and economic class. I place the language problem first because the local population cannot begin to address the other problems it faces unless it has some means by which to derive a common understanding of their shared social setting and a plan of action for dealing with it. Ephraim has norms of action to handle social difference, but it cannot put them into practice if it is inadequately informed of the nature of the problem and how it promotes human suffering.

Ephraim needs a common language. I am not particular about just which language that should be – it can be Spanish, English, Japanese, or Norwegian – but Ephraimites do need to choose one. (I raise the issue of learning a language in full recognition that one cannot learn a foreign language unless one also learns the culture that

created and sustains that language.) The reason I am not particular about which language becomes the local language of solidarity is that I know of no research that shows that a community must necessarily speak one language as opposed to any other language in order to be successful. However, since cultural value systems depend upon a shared sense of meaning, it follows that there must be some means of sharing that meaning with others.

It would probably be easier for English speaking Ephraimites to receive formal training in Spanish, than for Spanish speaking Ephraimites to receive formal training in English, and this would provide the English majority the advantage of knowing the two principal languages of the United States. It would help them to think in terms of alternate social possibilities, and increase their capacity to empathize with others of a different socio-cultural background. In the long term, these skills are critical for a dominant group to have, if equality is to have any significance.

On the other hand, Spanish speaking residents have much to gain from learning English. Regretfully, we cannot assume that dominant groups will always take whatever action is necessary to make sure that minority groups are included. Even if their other Ephraimites learn Spanish in order to communicate with them, when Spanish speaking Ephraimites have any dealings with other groups or entities elsewhere in the United States, they are likely to fall back into their social quarantine. Integration into the larger socio-economic life of this country requires both cooperation of the dominant group and effort on the part of the minority group. The latter's effort begins with learning the dominant language and then continues with acquiring education in a skill or discipline.

There is some question, though, as to whether Ephraim's Spanish-speaking minority has the resources to perform its part of this cooperative endeavor.

As the present research has shown, Ephraimites share common value structures to a greater extent than perhaps even they realize. This is a tremendous asset. A more diverse local group would first have to debate its priorities before it could even consider action to resolve social problems. The people of Ephraim have a strong history of cooperative action to resolve previous problems they have faced. That speaks well for the potential outcomes of the present situation. We wait to see how Ephraimites answer their latest challenges.

ENDNOTES

¹ I regret using “culture” perhaps a little bit too loosely. Like “community,” “culture” becomes quite problematic when we attempt a precise definition of it. The limitations of the present paper have prevented me from more fully exploring the concept.

² Completion of a full replication of the Mormon village series fits within a larger research agenda on Mormon culture, village life, or social change. Such a program might be appropriate for me to conduct at some point in the future, since disciplinary norms discourage ethnographic research without a commitment to the study population beyond the single research project.

³ Three other individuals are mentioned in this thesis as having some significance to this project’s findings and methodology. Two are T. Lynn Smith and Nathan Whetten. Each of these were research assistants to Lowry Nelson during the original Mormon village studies. Although both became noted rural sociologists, neither maintained research interests in Mormon villages. Both chose instead to focus their research efforts on various aspects of Latin America. The third individual is Lucille J. Butler. She completed a masters thesis on Ephraim folklore about the time of the second Mormon village series. What I found most significant was her discussion of methods. This was particularly important since Nelson was not explicit in detailing his methods of research. Several other pieces have been written about Ephraim, but these are largely histories and of lesser utility to the present work.

⁴ This agrees with Shepherd and Shepherd’s (1986:132) finding of a “consistently high preference of Mormon authorities for positive admonition (prescription) in every

generation . . . a preference that increases over time. . . . Mormon leaders have always urged a practical, materialistic and socially committed religious life for members.”

⁵ A missionary farewell is a Mormon worship service (Sacrament Meeting) in which the missionary (usually a young man, but sometimes a young woman or a mature couple) is invited to speak, often along with members of members of his or her family. It is typically held after the missionary has received notification of his or her assignment, but before actually leaving home to fulfill it.

⁶ Enough non-Mormons now live in the Mormon West, and enough Mormons now live elsewhere, that it is not uncommon for a missionary to be called to serve a mission in Utah. The dichotomy illustrated by calling Utah “Zion” and the world outside of Utah “the mission field” has become an archaic colloquialism since Utah is now also part of “the mission field.” The use of “mission field” as a geographical expression still hangs on among cultural hard-liners, though. This is one example of how traditional Mormon world-views have had to change over the last thirty years.

⁷ This contrasts with the fairly strict cooperation that was even informally imposed upon the Rimrock community fifty years ago when it decided to upgrade its roads. The decisions over whether and how to upgrade were made within the religious structure, but democratically. When one (and only one) man objected, “. . . he was soon silenced by a much poorer man who invoked Mormon values of progress and cooperation and pledged to give 25 dollars which was 5 dollars above the norm” (Vogt and O’Dea 1955:27).

⁸ My selection of 1850 as a base year is itself somewhat arbitrary. Copenhagen in 1705 was undoubtedly not the same as Copenhagen in 1850, and yet both are also Scandinavian.

⁹ Mormon culture holds a kind of three-tiered hierarchy in religious structures owned by the Church. Those given the most respect are temples. (The nearest temple to Ephraim is located in Manti – seven miles to the south.) The second tier is occupied by tabernacles. Almost exclusively found in the Mormon West, these historic structures of regional significance are often now used for conferences and major cultural events. The third tier would include chapels, in which regular weekly services and weekday activities are held. Since Ephraim had no temple, its tabernacle was the most culturally significant religious structure in town.

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APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM, FACE SHEET, AND INTERVIEW GUIDE

CONSENT TO BE A RESEARCH SUBJECT

This study is a follow up to the classic community study performed by the sociologist Lowry Nelson in 1925. He surveyed all households in Ephraim, Utah, and interviewed several of the residents. Nelson did a resurvey of the town in 1950. There has been no follow-up work on the Ephraim study since then. This study is being conducted by Todd Goodsell, a graduate student in Sociology at Brigham Young University. You were selected for participation because you are currently a resident of Ephraim.

Your participation in this study will consist of an interview, which has two parts. First, you will complete a data sheet. This data sheet will ask for a signature, which indicates your voluntary consent to participate in the study. It will also ask for basic information about your background, and will be used for comparative purposes. Second, in the interview you will be asked a series of questions about your community – what it is like, what has been your experience with it, and how you feel about it. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers to any of these questions – only what is true for you. Following the interview, you may be contacted again to clarify or expand upon an earlier response.

Participating in this study does not expose you to known risk. As a rule in studies of this nature, the identity of particular respondents is obscured in research reports. Answers are anonymous. However, those who already have a knowledge of a respondent’s circumstances may be able to identify the source of particular statements. If you feel uncomfortable with any question you may chose not to answer it. You may terminate the interview at any time. There are no known benefits to you for participation in this study. However, your assistance will help those interested in community development to better understand the strengths and challenges of communities in general, and of small towns in particular. A copy of the final thesis will be donated to Ephraim’s public library.

If you have question regarding this research project you may contact Todd Goodsell at 800 SWKT, PO Box 25547, Provo, UT 84602-5527; phone (801) 378-3392. If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in a research project you may contact Dr. Carol Ward, Chair of the Department Human Subjects Review Committee, 800 SWKT, PO Box 25547, Provo, UT 84602-5547; phone (801) 378-3047.

Thank you very much for your help.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Tell me about your family. (Are you married? How long? Children? Grandchildren? Who is now in your household? Where do other members of your family live? Where were you raised? Are your roots in Sanpete County?)
2. How do you spend your time in a typical day? In a typical week?
3. How would you describe the community you belong to? How has it changed? Why?
4. What kinds of community organizations and activities do you participate in? How often? Is your participation now different from what it was previously? How has your participation affected your view of the community?
5. What do you like about living around here? What would you like to change?
6. What kinds of things are of most concern to you about the future of your community?
7. Do you feel like you are a part of Ephraim? Are there people who live around here who don't really fit in? Are there people or groups of people in Ephraim who make you feel uncomfortable when you are around them?
8. Are there people in Ephraim who have a strong sense of responsibility? What are they like? How do you think they got that sense of responsibility?
9. Do you know people who look out for others very much? What are some examples that you have seen or that you know about?
10. Are there people with whom you feel a common purpose or identity? Whom and why? What is it like when you are with them? What is it like when you're not?
11. What matters most to you? How is your life different because of [respondent's answer]?
12. [If applicable – See face sheet #6.] How does the community feeling in Ephraim compare with that of other cities you've lived in?
13. What do you think of Snow College? What is its relationship to the town of Ephraim?

14. There has been some debate in sociology about the meaning of community. [Name geographical, interactionist, interest, value, identity, and affect-based theories.] Which of these, if any, describes your experience with community?
15. [Briefly outline Nelson's work, especially the assertion that solidarity had declined, but that he lacked a definition of solidarity.] What is solidarity? Does it exist here in Ephraim?
16. Before I leave Ephraim, who do you think I really need to talk to, to understand what is going on here?

