

March 26, 1980
Communication Science, HLD
Governors State University
Park Forest South, IL. 60466

Ms. Linda Newell
1218 Harvard Ave.
Salt Lake City, Utah
84105

Dear Linda,

Winnie Brownell, a close friend and associate at University of R.I. suggested you might be willing to help me out with a paper I am doing on the charisma of Joseph Smith. Winnie had read the paper while I was teaching at URI before she went to Utah, and when she returned indicated you were working on a book on Emma Smith. I am sure you are fascinated as I have been by the lives of these early Mormons. I still do not know why I was attracted to look at Joseph Smith when I needed a figure to do a paper on charisma. I had done my thesis on charisma and ethos and was updating the work. The first time I had used Ronald Reagan as my focus of study.

Anyway, the way in which you may be of service to me if you can, is to read the article with an eye for historical accuracy. I have been able to get access to a number of pertinent sources at the Albany, N.Y. State Historical Library, and in the Snider Collection in N.Y.C., but I still feel limited, both by time to fully research the many first hand sources, and by my inability to travel to Salt Lake City to study sources there. So if you could give the paper a reading and give me any advice on how to orient it more closely to historical fact I would much appreciate it. There is also the problem I mention in the paper of the bias of sources, and I have tried using intertext comparison and my own intuitive judgement ~~to use this~~ to help me comprehend what must have been going on during this time between the Mormons and the population of the country at the time. It is a sticky issue.

If you do have time, I would appreciate it, if you don't, I will understand. My own time is always limited and I know how others must feel.

Sincerely,

P.S. I've included a return envelope + postage for your convenience.

*Oh, yes please note I'm still Michael W. Purdy
incomplete on some sources. I'm trying, for instance,
to locate copies of N.Y. Herald 1845- to read editorials.*