AN IDEOGRAPH ANALYSIS OF THE MORMON WOMEN
AND NON-MORMON WOMEN'S PUBLIC ARGUMENT
ON POLYGAMY AND SUFFRAGE, 1870-1886.

by

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Title: AN IDEOGRAPH ANALYSIS OF THE MORMON WOMEN AND NON-MORMON WOMEN'S PUBLIC ARGUMENT ON POLYGAMY AND SUFFRAGE, 1870-1886.

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Historians have been unable to explain why the legislature of Utah extended the ballot to females in 1870 yet permitted polygamy. In 1862, the federal government passed the Anti-Bigamy Act in an attempt to eradicate polygamy. However, the Mormon Church did not officially stop the practice until 1890. During the interim period, the nation watched Mormon women steadfastly defend polygamy and a group of non-Mormon women vociferously oppose it both in theory and practice. As a means to legislate polygamy out of existence, the federal government disfranchised all voters in 1882 and all remaining females in 1887.
This study investigates how Mormon and non-Mormon women argued in the public arena during the polygamy/suffrage controversy. By studying language—speeches, memorials, and newspaper articles—a critic can locate the reasons and motives compelling a group to action. Speakers persuade through symbols, the ideas and values conveyed in everyday talk. Ideology comes into play when a speaker selects words to explain or interpret when addressing a group. Hence the study of ideology requires a critic to investigate how meaning is constructed and conveyed through symbolic forms.

In order to understand the ideology motivating the Mormon and non-Mormon women, I identified the ideographs speakers employed while defending or attacking polygamy or suffrage. Ideographs are ordinary language terms found in discourse that guide a group’s beliefs and actions. After identifying the ideographs, I analyzed how the ideographs established, sustained, subverted, or undermined power relationships between the Mormons and non-Mormons in the Utah Territory.

Analysis disclosed the following ideographs. The non-Mormon women primarily relied on <polygamy as barbaric>, <federal control>, <treason>, <sovereignty>, <government by theocracy>, and <republican form of government> ideographs. In essence, the non-Mormons sought federal help to eradicate polygamy to assure a republican form of government in the territory. On the other hand, the Mormons predominately
relied on <in the toils>, <constitutional rights>, <women of God>, and <love of family> ideographs. The Mormons showed a commitment to God and the principles He revealed when they entered a polygamy relationship. Additionally, as citizens, the Mormons claimed they had a right to practice polygamy and to vote.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For many observers of the West, the territory of Utah presents an anomaly. Most historians have been unable to explain why the legislature of Utah extended the vote to women in 1870, fifty years before the nation adopted the Nineteenth Amendment, yet permitted the twin relic of barbarism--polygamy. If there was a single distinguishing factor giving Utah national notoriety during this period, it was the controversy over polygamy, which the Mormons preferred to call plural marriage.

A large number of Mormon women during 1870-1886 steadfastly defended the practice of polygamy and publicly professed their support of it. While at the same time, a group of non-Mormon women vociferously opposed this position both in theory and practice. From 1862, when polygamy was made a serious crime by the federal government, to Utah's admission to the union in 1896, the public witnessed a federal government determined to pass legislation strengthening the 1862 Anti-Bigamy Act and to eradicate polygamy, anti-Mormons publishing tracts and weaving stories of depraved polygamist men and subjugated Mormon women, and a Mormon constituency defending their positions on the
polygamy controversy.

**Nature of the Problem**

The divisional lines of conflict between Mormon and non-Mormon women were drawn firmly in 1878 when the Anti-Polygamy Society assembled in Salt Lake City. Two-hundred non-Mormon women issued an invitation to all Christian women to join their society in opposing polygamy. The Utah-based group moved quickly to expand its influence; it published its own newspaper, the *Anti-Polygamy Standard*, and enlisted the assistance of nationally prominent women such as Lucy Hayes, Frances Willard, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. Employing various argumentative strategies, the Anti-Polygamy Society held public demonstrations against polygamy, organized mass meetings in protest, and petitioned Congress to end the morally reprehensible practice of polygamy. In short order, the Utah-based anti-polygamy movement gained national attention.

In part, the non-Mormon group gained national prominence quickly because of a series of exposés on polygamy started by Fanny Stenhouse’s *Tell It All*, published in 1874, and Cornelia Paddock’s 1881 history of a Utah family in *The Fate of Madame LaTour, A Tale of the Great Salt Lake*. Additionally, Jennie Anderson’s 1882 heart-tearing stories in *The Women of Mormonism or the Story of Polygamy as Told by the Victims Themselves* titillated the
public and measurably assisted in the national crusade for enforcement of legislation against polygamy.

The non-Mormon women not only opposed polygamy but also actively supported the disfranchisement of Utah women. The non-Mormon group consistently championed the argument that the Mormon male priesthood forced plural marriage on women and the unfortunate females needed assistance to extricate themselves from the barbaric male actions. Believing the Mormon sisters voted as puppets as directed by church leaders, the non-Mormons argued that instead of their individual consciences, Mormon women echoed their husbands in the polling booths. This led the Anti-Polygamy Society together with the Liberal political party to petition Congress to disfranchise all polygamists and all women in the territory.¹

In response to the non-Mormon women's charges against polygamy, the Mormon women criticized the sensitive points of monogamy and offered personal testimony regarding the desirability of plural marriage. The Mormon women, believing that women joined in plural marriage by choice, waged a verbal battle against the non-Mormons. The Mormon women used various rhetorical avenues to defend plural marriage. Supporting a diametrically opposite view from the non-Mormon women, the Mormon women, or sisters as they preferred to be called, ardently supported the polygamy marriage custom in public mass meetings in 1870, 1878, and
1886. Their public defense of polygamy strengthened the Mormon woman's belief in plural marriage. Besides the public protest meetings throughout the Utah territory, the Mormon women circulated numerous petitions requesting Congress or the President not to support anti-polygamy legislation.

The defense of the conveniences and practicalities of plural marriage fell on deaf ears. The Mormon women's rhetoric may have delayed some federal legislation but their defense probably had greater consequences for themselves. After studying the posture of the Mormon women in various historical documents, Casterline believed the defense of polygamy and suffrage served a self-persuading purpose:

The Gentile criticism seemed to cause the Mormon women to become more conscious of and to articulate their perception of themselves and their position; they built their own unique image and rejected the non-Mormon one. This was beneficial in that the sisters seemed to become more aware of their own contributing role in Mormon history. Through their advancement of testimonials and autobiographical statements they seemed to prove to themselves if no one else that they had been integral and worthy agents in the latter-day endeavor.²

Not only did the Mormons defend polygamy but the women were early suffrage supporters. After receiving the ballot in 1870, the Utah females enjoyed a long history of support from the National Woman's Suffrage Association.³ Susan B. Anthony and other ardent suffragists supported the Mormon women's unsuccessful fight against the divestment of their voting privileges. Anthony openly criticized the non-Mormon
women for favoring the repeal of suffrage in the Utah territory. Zina Young Williams and Emmeline B. Wells, prominent Mormon women, frequently attended national suffrage conventions representing Utah women and served as radiant examples of life under polygamy. But even with support from the national Woman's Suffrage Association, the Mormon women failed to get federal endorsement for their cause.

As a result of extended and extensive political pressures, Congress voted in 1882, to disfranchise all individuals involved in polygamous marriages in the Utah territory. The 1887 Congress denied the vote to all women in the territory. Following their disfranchisement, the Mormon women established the first local suffrage society in Utah in 1887. Many of non-Mormon women refused to align themselves with the local suffrage movement, partially out of fear that the Mormon church would regain political prominence.

The conflict and open hostilities between the non-Mormon and Mormon women continued into the 1890s. When Mormon President Wilford Woodruff publicly announced in a manifesto the abandonment of the practice of plural marriage by the Latter-day Saint church, the Anti-Polygamy Society finally achieved its objective. However, the public argument between the non-Mormon and Mormon women still continued.
In preparation for statehood, the participants at the 1895 constitutional convention held in Salt Lake debated the issue of female enfranchisement. The Utah women again divided along denominational lines with the Mormon ladies favoring suffrage and the non-Mormon women opposing the inclusion of female suffrage in the constitution. The suffrage societies, carried by the Mormons and their female service organization the Relief Society, generated enough local grassroots support for the re-granting of suffrage at the constitutional convention. In 1896, Congress granted permission to Utah to join the union with a suffrage plank in the constitution.

Research Questions and Definitions

This investigation studies the polygamy/suffrage public argument during 1870-1886. Attention will be placed on understanding the Mormon and non-Mormon women's position on both issues. The resolutions, memorials, and speeches prepared by Mormon and non-Mormon women and delivered in public protests will be described and analyzed. Specifically, I will review representative discourse from each group in order to discover the motives guiding each camp. Two questions guide this research: What motives govern the Mormon and non-Mormon women's public argument over suffrage and polygamy? How does meaning serve to establish and sustain power relations in the women's public
debate? This later question addresses how ideology operates as a strategy of symbolic construction.

For purposes of clarification, public argument, ideology, and motive must be defined. Argumentation, traditionally considered a set of rhetoric, has developed a particularized division with its own designative function. Many textbooks contain definitions that link argumentation with logical proof or reasoning. Speech scholars McBurney, O'Neil, and Mills believed that argumentation was the "art or activity by which one person, through the use of reasoned discourse, seeks to get other persons to believe or do what he wants them to believe or do." Similarity, McBath defined argumentation "as the broad process of developing ideas through reasoned discourse employing logical, emotional, and ethical proof."

Since the early 1950s, argumentation has kept as its goal the establishment of specific lines of reasoning. The employment of data or proofs for a proposition appear as instrumental components of the argumentation process. When advocates advance claims, they must justify the position they are advancing with data showing the reasonability of their claim. As such, Lee and Lee defined argumentation "as the theory and practice of justification based on conceptions of the reasonable." To justify a position, then, an advocate advances claims and presents data to support specific positions.
Disputants involved in public argument compose and present reasons in an attempt to influence the maintenance, altering, or the creation of public policy. To this end, advocates, when speaking in public, employ as premises of their discourse reasons motivating them to talk. The motives compelling a group to action are reflected in their discourse. By studying a group’s argumentation, a critic can locate the core dimensions influencing a group’s behavior. The Mormon women and the non-Mormon women held diametrically opposite ideologies and confronted each other in public for over thirty years. A detailed description and analysis of the reasoning contained in the non-Mormon and Mormon women’s public argument would permit an assessment of the motives calling each group to action and provide some information as to how rhetors express motives when arguing in public.

Public argument essentially is ideological because it represents the history, traditions, documents, and the collective expressed experiences of a group’s membership. In its more distinctive form, the beliefs and values of an advocate shape the nature of the discourse produced in public argument. Public argument, as a specific form of argumentation, occurs when private disagreement involves the interests of a community and when the future course of public action is undecided.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca saw the aim of public
argument as striving to provide "choice among possible theses." Similarly, Bitzer intertwined public rhetoric with testing truths and values when he wrote:

> With respect to public knowledge, rhetoric generates truths and values previously unknown to a public, gives voice to interests and principles whose locus is a public, serves as an instrument with which to test public truths and values and to select and justify public means and ends. In general, rhetoric at its best sustains wisdom in the life of a public.\(^9\)

Speakers employ as premises of their discourse truths, values, interests, and basic principles located within a public's domain and tradition.\(^10\) Through the market place of ideas, ideals, and ideologies, basic values of a group are tested, defended, or attacked. Understanding argument, therefore, assumes importance because the language used in the public deliberative process reflects the underlying values affecting the individual and the community at large.

For purposes of this study, the term public argument refers to an interchange of ideas by opposing groups in an open forum. Opponents need not confront each other in the same setting or on the same occasion but their arguments do stem from the same context. The use of the term public argument designates the specific reasoning process used by rhetors in arriving at their conclusions when airing community ideas in a public setting.

The term ideology is more difficult to define. Ideology, as a rationally articulated symbolic system striving for power, is a "public doctrine" and offers
evidence and reasoning in an appeal to a public." Gouldner expanded upon the function of ideology in public discourse in this manner:

I ideology makes a diagnosis of the social world and claims that it is true. It alleges an accurate picture of society and claims (or implies) that its political policies are grounded in that picture. To that extent, ideology is a very special sort of rational discourse by reason of its world-referring claims. It defends its policies neither by traditionalistic legitimation nor by invoking faith or revelation. As a historical object, then, ideology differs from both religion and metaphysics in that it is concerned to make "what is" in society a basis of action."

This concept of ideology as a rationally articulated symbolic system persuading listeners through rational discourse serves as the definition of ideology for this study. Ideology, in particular, refers to the mode of discourse which conveys a group's ideals to a listening public."

Since a group's ideals are reflected in their discourse, studying the ideology of the speakers in a public debate permits the identification of the motives driving them and legitimating their public actions. Since humans behave in a group differently than they do individually, to study the collective behavior of individuals and the rhetoric that influences their behavior makes sense. If a public has a "mass consciousness" then it should be reflected symbolically in the arguments aired by group members. When a person behaves or thinks collectively, that
person has been persuaded to an ideology of the group. This process of conversion and persuasion has important implications because the power of an ideology communicated can change a person's world view. By analyzing the statements of a group, a critic can discover the motives inducing individuals to articulate their group's position publicly.

Beyond studying ideology to discern public motives, the use of ideology to study the public debate between Mormon and non-Mormon women particularly seems appropriate. The Mormon conflict, above all else, was an ideological struggle. The Mormons, bound by a common religious ideology, mobilized power in the Utah territory by uniting church members in a common allegiance. Plural marriage offended many residents both in Utah and across the nation because it conflicted with the view on what constituted a proper marriage relationship in Victorian America. Another practice, the political domination of the Utah government by a religious group, also ran contrary to many of the beliefs of non-Mormons living in the territory. On both of these issues, plural marriage and political domination in the territory, the non-Mormons found causes around which they could unite. By studying the Mormon and non-Mormon's public argument, one can discover the rationale or ideological underpinnings governing the groups' actions on these two issues.
In order to analyze the public argument between the Mormon and non-Mormon women, appropriate analytic tools are needed. The approach selected for this study is based on the work of Michael McGee and John Thompson. In "The 'Ideograph' a Link Between Rhetoric and Ideology," McGee proposes a method for identifying "public" motives by investigating the historical context and social conditions in which discourse occurs. McGee's work supplies a tool that can isolate a group's ideology through its symbolic ideographs, the building blocks of ideology. McGee's approach differs from more traditional discourse analytic tools in that it not only is concerned with a speaker persuading an audience but it emphasizes how the ideology of a group can influence members of the group. Additional explanation of McGee's theory is included in the next chapter.

In Ideology and Modern Culture, Thompson describes the importance of studying how ideology establishes and sustains relations of domination. Thompson suggests that examining typical strategies of symbolic construction can help to explain ways that meaning and power interplay. Key to Thompson's approach is understanding the specific contexts within which symbolic forms are created, the mechanisms of transmission, and the sense the symbolic forms have on the individuals involved in the power interplay.

In this research, I want to identify the prominent
ideographs used by the Mormon and non-Mormon women while defending their beliefs on polygamy and suffrage. As such, this research serves as a case study of how ideographs established or sustained relations of domination among the Mormons and the non-Mormons. Four research questions guide this study: (1) What ideographs did the Mormon and non-Mormon women employ in the polygamy and suffrage public argument? (2) How did the arguments/ideographs advanced by each camp evolve and mature during 1870-1886? (3) How did the participants in the suffrage and polygamy public argument characterize their opponents and themselves? (4) What measurable effect did the women’s public argument have on the suffrage and polygamy dispute in the Utah territory?

Justification for Research

The rationale for this study is two-fold. First, a project surveying the female contribution to polygamy and suffrage would add substantially to our knowledge of women’s use of argument. In 1977, Riley wrote that women’s involvement in Western American history has been ignored to a large degree.17 Over fifteen years later, our book shelves are still not over-run with essays, reports, vignettes or discourses delivered or written by women.

Often the talk of women has been ignored because of the type of speaking women do. Scholars studied discourse by males more frequently than discourse by females simply
because they spoke in public more often. In part, this happened because women in the West, according to Larson, "did not lead expeditions, command troops, build railroads, drive cattle, ride Pony Express, find gold, amass great wealth, get elected to high public office, rob stages, or lead lynch mobs." Most pioneer women performed less dramatic roles within the confines of their primitive homes and thereby went unnoticed. But in the case of the polygamy/suffrage dispute in the Utah Territory, the women did perform a dramatic role and our understanding of the contribution these women made provides a fuller picture of the settling of the west.

Second, this study investigates a group of rhetors and the ideology motivating their discourse over a seventeen year period. As such, the analysis has value for understanding how ideology can influence public argument over an extended period of time.

Resources for the Study

The major sources for this study are the extant speeches delivered by Mormon and non-Mormon women at various territorial mass meetings held between 1870-1886, petitions sent to the President of the United States and Congress by each camp, and newspaper stories and editorials published in Salt Lake City between 1870-1886. The Mormon women held three major mass meetings. In 1870, fourteen Mormon women
delivered speeches opposing the passage of the Cullom legislation being considered in Congress. In response to the establishment of the Anti-Polygamy Society, eight Mormon women speakers addressed a female congregation at the theatre in Salt Lake City in 1878. Protesting against the indignation and insults heaped upon their sex in District Court, and also against disfranchisement, fifteen Mormon women spoke at a mass meeting convened in 1886. Nine additional speeches prepared but not read at the 1886 mass meeting are available for analysis. In addition, many local communities throughout the territory held smaller protest meetings following the format of the larger mass meeting in Salt Lake City. Many of the reports of these meetings were published.

The major sources for the non-Mormon's protest against polygamy and suffrage are speeches, public petitions against polygamy, and reports from meetings of the Anti-Polygamy Society. Not as many copies of speeches delivered by non-Mormon women are available as for the Mormon women. Since many newspapers contained editorials and published statements of the non-Mormon speakers, there should be little problem with getting an adequate discourse sample. Additionally, several memorials were sent to Congress expressing the non-Mormon views on polygamy and suffrage including petitions by leading anti-polygamists. These references provide substantial resources for documenting
arguments used by the non-Mormons against polygamy and suffrage.

Further, newspapers published in the territory constitute an excellent resource for this investigation. *The Woman's Exponent*, published by the Mormon women, and the *Anti-Polygamy Standard*, established by the non-Mormon women, provide excellent avenues for discovering both sides of the controversy. Frequently texts of speeches were reprinted in newspapers. Other newspapers, such as the *Deseret News* and the *Salt Lake Daily Tribune*, provide insights into the territorial controversies. "The Journal History of the Church," a day-by-day record of events of the Mormon church, has newspaper clippings and other records for the time period. This record is available at the Latter-day Saints' Church Office Building in Salt Lake City.

Manuscript collections of many of the prominent personalities in Utah history are housed in the Special Collections section of the Brigham Young University Library in Provo, Utah, the Special Collections of Utah State University Library in Logan, Utah, the Library of the Utah State Historical Society in Salt Lake City, the LDS Church Historical Library at the Latter-day Saints Church Office Building in Salt Lake City, and the Western Americana Collection of the University of Utah Library in Salt Lake City. Letters and diaries in these collections are a rich resource for discovering the attitudes and feelings of the
participants in the suffrage/polygamy controversy.

**Summary**

Overall, this study focuses on understanding how ideology compels rhetors in public policy disputes. Primarily, it will rely on McGee's ideograph approach for identifying the motives undergirding the Mormon and non-Mormon public discourse and Thompson's conception of ideology. As such, this study can serve as a model for critics interested in understanding how advocates use ideographs to support their arguments and how ideographs change over time.

**Chapter Preview**

In the next chapter, the methodology used in this research is described. McGee's ideograph method will be detailed and an in-depth discussion of how ideology has been treated historically will be summarized as well. A review of the literature on the political speaking of Mormon and non-Mormon women is found in Chapter III. In Chapter IV, the historical antecedents of female suffrage and polygamy in the Utah Territory are discussed. Since this investigation concentrates on the public dispute in Utah from 1870-1886, a knowledge of the Mormon's background and the settling of the Utah territory permits a critic to view the dispute from a broader context. Information on the political conflicts of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-
day Saints during its formation period, and the migration of church members to Utah provides necessary background information to understand the motives of the Mormons. In addition, information on the granting of suffrage in the Utah territory is explained including a discussion of possible reasons for extending the ballot to territorial women. Finally, federal attempts to control polygamy are described.

Chapter V and VI introduces the formal analysis of the public dispute using the methodology outlined in Chapter II. The time period under investigation has been divided into two segments: Chapter V covers the period 1870-1877; Chapter VI details the prominent ideographs employed during 1878-1886. In Chapters V and VI, the speeches delivered at the mass meetings and resolutions sent to Washington D. C. will be described. In addition, the dominant ideographs employed at each public dispute will be isolated and assessed. Finally, the motives propelling the Mormons and non-Mormons to take public action will be appraised.

The final chapter assesses how ideographs reflect the motives causing the Mormons and non-Mormons to take the actions they did. Specific attention is paid to assessing the importance of ideology in public disputes and answering two questions: How did the arguments/ideographs advanced by each camp evolve over the seventeen year period? What measurable effect did the women’s public debate have on the
suffrage and polygamy dispute or power relationships in the Utah Territory?
Notes

1 At the close of the civil war, Utah's population was divided along denominational lines. The heterogenous minority composed of goldseekers, dropouts from individuals traveling to California and Oregon, miners, federal appointees, members and followers of Johnston's army, California volunteers who established Fort Douglas, and apostate Mormons formed a temporary alliance and organized the Liberal party in 1870 in Utah. The Liberal party made polygamy a political issue.


10 Bitzer, 1978, 68.


13 Gouldner, 1976, 55-56.


CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In order to understand a public controversy, a critic could catalogue the rhetorical techniques used by speakers involved in a public dispute. In this instance, a critic assumes that speakers shape the nature and direction of their arguments. Since a speaker's purpose often is to convince an audience, a critic could appraise a message by taking into account how the dispute developed historically. Then the critic would assess the influence of the persuasive appeal on an audience. On the other hand, a critic could focus also on the ideology supporting a group's rhetoric. In this instance, the critic assumes discourse reflects the fundamental beliefs of the group.

In many ways, dominant discourse controls us through supporting ideologies. Sign systems are socially constructed. As Ernest Bormann postulated, groups or communities share common rules, customs, and language permitting them to engage in significant discourse. Bormann theorized that groups share a common rhetorical vision, a consensus of what is appropriate and valuable communication. For example, in a religious community
members share common values and a sense of how to talk to God and each other. These "rhetorical communities," according to Bormann, create stories about themselves and about outside groups. The sharing of these stories allow members to build a common consciousness. Group members interpret common experiences because they identify with events and characters constructed in the narratives.4

By studying a group's language, a critic would locate the reasons and motives compelling a group to action. These core beliefs, in turn, influence the degree to which group members process messages from people not in their group. Participants in a public dispute, influenced by both the immediate situation and their own historical experience, adjust their perception of the here-and-now to fit with previously held opinions. For example, when an audience hears the words <moral majority>, they react to the phrase based on their past experience and the degree of their religious conviction at the point in time when they heard the phrase. In both cases, either studying the persuasive strategies used in a public debate or searching for a group's ideological roots, the discourse used in a public controversy elicits responses and conveys meaning through both the content and form of the message.5

This study looks at how Mormon women and non-Mormon women argued in the public arena. As noted in Chapter I, this public conflict centered over ideological differences.
To better understand the ideology of each camp, a common point of departure is dictated. Explaining how ideology generates and orders a participant’s social world seems appropriate. Consequently, this chapter reviews prominent theories of ideology, and explains the analytic tools selected to analyze the public dispute by Mormon and non-Mormon women in the Utah territory during 1870-1886.

As a word, ideology causes conceptual problems because of the elusive nature of the term. Some see ideology as the social cement that binds members who share values and norms together. Denotatively, ideology refers to a coherent and meaningful system of ideas. This definition, however, is somewhat confusing because the materials generally included as elements of ideology, such as ideas, beliefs, and attitudes, are difficult to observe and even more arduous to identify in discourse. As defined in Chapter I, ideology refers to a rationally articulated symbolic system striving for power. A brief discussion on the historical development of ideology provides some insight into its complex nature. Specifically, I will summarize briefly Destutt de Tracy, Karl Marx and Karl Mannheim’s writings on ideology.

Prominent Theories of Ideology

Initially, ideologies are shared symbol systems of ordinary language. Ideology comes into play when a rhetor selects discourse or suppresses material when addressing a
group. At the most elementary level, ideology serves as a rational mode of discourse.

Ideologies structure the roles people play because ideologies premise and mobilize individuals to action. The assumption here is that words matter and that language, even everyday language, has the power to change members and their worlds. In short, ideologies facilitate communication in public by simultaneously inhibiting certain kinds of discourse while at the same time focusing communication on other concerns. As such, speakers select subjects for discussion while at the same time, they reject other ideas. For example, when the non-Mormons rejected polygamy because of its debasing nature, they then needed to disparage the Mormon's claim that polygamy provided good marriage partners to help settle the west.

Besides structuring roles and focussing communication, ideologies can become a meta-language by describing a group's world view. Ideologies call attention to items not directly observable by the senses. For example, a fight between an employee and an employer might be interpreted as a "power struggle" when discussing a worker's relationship, but without an ideological emphasis, it could be called "a difference of opinion."

On the other hand, ideology is a system of thought. As Thompson explained, ideology "may be regarded as the interwoven systems of thought and modes of experience which
are conditioned by social circumstances and shared by groups of individuals, including the individuals engaged in ideological analysis. As such, ideologies express and promote the interests of the major classes embroiled in conflict.

As a symbol system, an ideology serves to justify and to mobilize public projects. Speakers persuade through symbols, the ideas and values conveyed in everyday talk. In many ways, ideology has suasive properties because it can mobilize power and organize social action. It binds individuals who have little in common but shared ideas. Ideologically determined, language provides a symbolic structuring mechanism. As a selection process, ideology shifts, sorts, accommodates, or rejects selected aspects of consciousness. When a group reaches a consensus, ideologies vocalize the grounds for harmonizing various subgroups. An ideology restructures ordinary language by changing the meaning or by redefining or refocusing words in new ways. Ideology activates certain ideas and permits these to be communicated via reflexive and shared messages. Therefore, to understand public arguments requires an understanding that ideology underpins rational discourse.

The concept of ideology has been twisted, recast, and has undergone many transformations since Destutt de Tracy coined the word ideologie in 1796. He equated ideology with broad scientific ideas and human ideals. De Tracy and his
colleagues, advocated the writings of John Locke as the heart of their approach. They reformed the national educational system in hopes of transforming France into a rational and scientific society by creating the **Institut National**, the home of the ideologues. The **Institut** replaced the royal academies earlier abolished by Robespierre. De Tracy taught that the study of ideology permitted individuals to draw inferences. He argued that we can’t know things in and of themselves but only the ideas formed by the sensation of them. Systematically analyzing ideas and sensation could provide the basis for comparing social and political order of humans. As such, ideology became the first science.

The **Deuxième Classe of the Institut National** came under Napoleon Bonaparte’s attack during 1802-1803. At first, Bonaparte supported the program, but later his admiration turned to scorn. He dismissed the members of the **Deuxième Classe** because he felt they were impractical visionaries. He even went so far as to ridicule them openly and to blame them for France’s military defeat in 1812. In short, the ideologues became the scapegoat for Napoleon’s failed regime.

In a similar direction, Karl Marx adopted the Napoleonic position of viewing ideology negatively when he and Friedrich Engels wrote the **German Ideology** in 1846.® Engels and Marx’s ideas occupy a central position in the
conceptualization of ideology. Engels and Marx reflected their own cultural experience, nineteenth-century Europe and its rigid class system, in their writing. The industrial, capitalist society dominated their world. The capitalists made the rules, controlled the core values, and directed all aspects of German life. Marx and Engels believed that those who produce inevitably would conflict over their fair share of the economy. In opposition, the masters would resist change in order to protect what they thought they owned. Accordingly, Marxism represents an ideology of class struggle."

In *German Ideology*, Marx and Engels explained the doctrine of historical materialism, a theory assessing that the mode of production of the material means of existence determines human consciousness. They believed ideology, a set of beliefs, was critical to historical materialism. They saw a connection between ideology and the means by which the elites persuaded the proletariat. Marx felt the elites, in an effort to control the military, economic, and political functions of a state, seduced the proletariat into adopting the bourgeoisie’s ideology. Ideology, as a false consciousness of speech, served the bourgeoisie’s interests in the struggle for domination; it expressed what a person was led to think or believe rather than what was true. Ideology determined the mass belief of a group and restricted any emerging political opinion. Therefore, Marx
and Engels were among the first to give the term "ideology" a sociological meaning. 

Marx and Engels linked ideology to social determination of consciousness and the socio-historical world in which individuals live. Material conditions determine the forms of consciousness of humans. Ideas—thinking, conceiving—became processes interwoven and determined by material conditions of a person's life. Using an analog of a camera obscura, Marx and Engels proposed that ideological circumstances appear upside down, much like the retina inverts objects. Individuals become products of ideas rather than the producers of concepts, just like the retina inverts physical life-processes. Thompson, interpreting Marx and Engels, explained the illusory form of ideology.

[Ideology] is a system of ideas which expresses the interests of the dominant class but which represents class relations in an illusory form. Ideology expresses the interest of the dominant class in the sense that the ideas which compose ideology are ideas which, in any particular historical period, articulate the ambitions, concerns and wishful deliberations of dominant social groups as they struggle to secure and maintain their position of domination. But ideology represents class relations in an illusory form in so far as these ideas do not accurately portray the nature and relative positions of the classes concerned; rather they misrepresent these relations in a way which concurs with the interests of the dominant class.

In many ways, Marx and Engels conceived of ideology as looking backwards rather than forwards. Humans were oriented toward images and ideals of the past, especially those concealed in class relations. As such ideology
expressed the ideas or interests of the classes engaged in conflict.

In *Ideology and Utopia*, Karl Mannheim systematically refined and expanded the Marxian conception of ideology. Mannheim moved the conception of ideology from a particular to a general formation. Under Mannheim’s direction, ideology became a method of research in intellectual and social history.

Mannheim, relying on the works of Auguste Comte and Georg Hegel, believed that the historical process dominated the past. In Mannheim’s scheme, two different categories of thought—ideology and utopia—explained social order. The future offered the promise of ascending over historical domination. Believing that all knowledge was tied to specific socio-historical circumstances, Mannheim argued that within each age there is both a movement toward conservation and a striving for change. A commitment to conservation eventually produced an ideology and moved the society closer to a utopian vision. In short, ideology functioned to maintain the existing social order by excessively idealizing the past, while on the other hand, a utopian vision contained a critique of the existing order and promised a revised social order.

Mannheim expanded Marxian ideology by conceiving utopia as the opposite of ideology. He also suggested that ideological thinking was not limited just to the ruling
class but extended to all classes since each class had a particular social status. In his view, the formation of a better society did not depend on a revolution but could be achieved through a conscious political effort on the part of the members of the state.\textsuperscript{14} Rather than discrediting opponents, Mannheim's scheme encompassed the whole historical process by analyzing the factors influencing thought. He called this analytical process "the sociology of knowledge."\textsuperscript{15}

Thus, the primary roots of ideology stem from Engels, Marx, and Mannheim with their emphasis on the sociological dimension. Recently, however, others have emphasized the importance of ideology in understanding public discourse.\textsuperscript{16} For example, John Thompson in Ideology and Modern Culture reformulated the concept of ideology. He believed that ideology can be used to understand power relationships, especially relations of domination.

Ideology, broadly speaking, is meaning in the service of power. Hence the study of ideology requires us to investigate the ways in which meaning is constructed and conveyed by symbolic forms of various kinds, from everyday linguistic utterances to complex images and texts. It requires us to investigate the social context within which symbolic forms are employed and deployed, and it calls upon us to ask whether, and if so how, the meaning mobilized by symbolic forms serves, in specific contexts, to establish and sustain relations of domination.\textsuperscript{17}

Basically, Thompson argued that the study of ideology should emphasize how symbolic forms maintain or fail to maintain
asymmetrical power relationships. This re-conceptualization regarded ideology as an integral part of a broader concern with the characteristics of action and interaction, the forms of power and domination, the nature of social structure, social reproduction and social change, the features of symbolic forms and their roles in social life.\(^{18}\)

Thompson proposed an alternative way to conceptualize ideology by studying the intersection of symbolic forms and power relationships. Emphasis is placed on studying the ways groups or individuals holding power are bolstered. Thompson explained:

> To study ideology is to study the ways in which meaning serves to establish and sustain relations of domination. . . . [S]ymbolic phenomena, are not ideological as such, but are ideological only in so far as they serve, in particular circumstances, to maintain relations of domination.\(^{19}\)

Thompson retained, in modified form, Marx's negative concept of ideology. Symbolic forms may be illusory and may conceal or mask social relationships, but he argued that this condition was a contingent possibility, not a necessary case of ideology per se.\(^{20}\) This re-conceptualization releases ideology from some of the epistemological baggage encumbered since de Tracy. No longer did truth or falsity of symbolic forms dictate the force of ideology in particular circumstances. The re-conception shifted ideology to understanding how "symbolic forms serve to establish and sustain relations of domination only by virtue of being erroneous, illusory or false."\(^{21}\)
Thompson also rejected the link between ideology and class domination supported by Marx. He believed that the link between the two should be a contingent not a necessary connection. A researcher may be interested in not only how symbolic forms support class domination, but also how domination between gender, ethnic groups, or nation states may be contexts for understanding ideology.\textsuperscript{22}

In a sense, Thompson assumed that the meaning of symbolic forms actively create and sustain relations between individuals and groups. Symbolic forms are constitutive of social reality and therefore "maintain and reproduce relations of domination through the ongoing process of producing and receiving forms."\textsuperscript{23}

This research studies the symbolic forms used to oppose and support polygamy and woman suffrage in Utah. In this instance, I am concerned with how the Mormon women’s language serves to sustain polygamy and suffrage while the symbolic forms of the non-Mormon women create reasons to erase polygamy and supply the non-Mormon population with more political control.

In order to identify the ideology of each group, I will rely on an analytic tool, the ideograph, as outline by Michael McGee. To understand how participants in the polygamy/suffrage debate maintain relations of domination, I will rely on John Thompson’s strategies of symbolic construction. In the next section of this chapter, McGee
and Thompson's approaches are reviewed.

Analytic Tools

Michael McGee framed his work on the assumption that humans in a group think and act differently than they do in isolation and that rhetoric inevitably creates a distortion of reality. Like Marx and Mannheim, McGee emphasized the active role of receivers in a public debate by noting that a collective of people have "been tricked, self-deluded, or manipulated" into believing in a public ideology. In turn then, the ideology of the group shapes and textures the reality of each individual member of the group.²⁴

The ideology that shapes and textures group members can be discovered in their discourse. Ideology as practiced, wrote McGee, is "preserved in rhetorical documents with the capacity to dictate decision and control public belief and behavior."²⁵ Elaborating on the symbolic influence of public motives on the political consciousness of group members, McGee committed himself to the following tenets: (1) If a mass consciousness exists, it would be manifested in the language which communicates it; (2) Ideological statements should be concerned primarily with "describing and evaluating public motives;" and (3) "The falsity of an ideology is specifically rhetorical, for the illusion of truth and falsity with regard to normative commitments is the product of persuasion."²⁶
McGee believed that a public is not conditioned directly by an ideology but is conditioned by a vocabulary or grammar of ideology that guides group members' beliefs and actions: "[T]he political language which manifests ideology seems characterized by slogans, a vocabulary of 'ideographs.'" Ideographs, the basic "building blocks" or structure of ideology exists in discourse and have the following characteristics:

An ideograph is an ordinary language term found in political discourse. It is a high-order abstraction representing collective commitment to a particular but equivocal and defined normative goal. It warrants the use of power, excuses behavior and belief which might otherwise be perceived as eccentric or anti-social, and guides behavior and belief into channels easily recognized by a community as acceptable and laudable.  

Ideographs, thus, are words or phrases symbolizing the essence of an argument and, in turn, control the political consciousness of the members of a group. The words and the subsequent developed lines of reasoning formed from those words locates a group's ideology. For example, the words <freedom of the press>, <liberty>, <born again Christian>, or <Saddam Hussein> each signify or contain an ideological commitment, and each member of a community understands the nuances of each term based on their experience with the construct. By analyzing the usages of each ideograph in political rhetoric, McGee sought to identify the "structure" of public motives.

The structure of public motive are either diachronic or
synchronic patterns each of which can influence a member's reality or political consciousness:

[Two recognizable "ideologies" exist in any specific culture at one "moment." One "ideology" is a "grammar," a historically-defined diachronic structure of ideograph-meanings expanding and contracting from the birth of the society to its "present." Another "ideology" is a "rhetoric," a situationally-defined synchronic structure of ideograph clusters constantly reorganizing itself to accommodate specific circumstances while maintaining its fundamental consonance and unity.]

In order to describe a group's ideology and public motives, both the diachronic and the synchronic structured ideographs must be isolated and understood by the critic.

Structured vertically, a diachronic ideograph makes comparisons over time. For example, the vertical structure of the ideograph <disarmament> was given meaning by referencing the current political need to reduce the number of arms by developed countries. By comparing the current use of the term to historical incidents of disarmament, such as the use of the term immediately following World War II or the Korean conflict, one creates an analog allowing participants in an interchange to judge the utility of using the ideograph in the present instance. Illustrating the importance of using historical touchstones in a diachronic ideograph, McGee wrote:

If asked to make a case for "equality" that is to define the term, we are forced to make reference to its history by detailing the situations for which the word has been an appropriate description. Then, by comparisons over time, we establish an analog for the proposed present usage
of the term. Earlier usages become precedent, touchstones, for judging the propriety of the ideograph in a current circumstance. The words <disarmament> or <equality> may change signification in a particular instance, but the word still retains a meaning derived from its diachronic usage through history.

In an extended illustration of a diachronic ideograph, McGee discussed the impeachment hearings of Richard Nixon and the ideograph <high crimes and misdemeanors>. The citizens of the United States had built into their government a means to protect against the abuse of an errant president. The constitution indicates that a president can be impeached for <high crimes and misdemeanors>. But what does this ideograph mean? An answer is found by searching history for touchstones or precedents that help explain the dimensions of the ideograph <high crimes and misdemeanors>. Representative Peter Rodino, wishing to justify the impeachment charge of President Richard Nixon, did just that. He searched past analogous situations and, in his indictment of Nixon, used historical proofs "ranging from [the] Magna Carta to Edmund Burke’s impeachment of Warren Hastings." Rodino argued that Nixon had violated the law because he found a similar circumstance that had been judged as a high crime to the current problem. The ideograph <high crimes and misdemeanors> served as the structuring principle in his speech. By referencing the historical instance of
<high crimes and misdemeanors>, Rodino created an analog for the proper use of the phrase and permitted him to determine the propriety of using the term in the particular situation.

In addition to diachronic or grammatic ideographs, there are also rhetorical or synchronous ideographs. Synchronous ideographs develop horizontally and generally are defined situationally. A synchronous ideograph reflects the "here-and-now" but only as understood when compared to another ideograph. The synchronous ideograph becomes the "god-term," or "title," around which other ideographs spin. McGee, again using the Watergate narrative, developed the following explanation of a synchronous ideograph.

The ideographs <rule of law> and <principle of confidentiality> when analyzed vertically, reveal a consonant relationship. "<Confidentiality> of certain conversations is a control on the behavior of government, a control that functions to maintain a <rule of law> and prevents <tyranny> by preserving a realm of privacy for the individual." The consonant relationship between Congress and President Nixon on the Watergate tapes issue broke, however, when Congress requested, formally and legally, documents from Nixon. When Nixon refused the request, he created an apparent violation of the law. In justifying his actions before a national television audience, Nixon argued that the <principle of confidentiality> was a higher law
(i.e. A President's conversations with advisors are privileged just as the conversations between a lawyer and client, husband and wife, or priest and penitent are privileged). Nixon had no vertical precedent he could use to support his argument. Instead, he praised <confidentiality> as a necessary condition for any President to be able to carry out the work of the office and argued that <confidentiality> should take precedence over another law. Nixon created a synchronic ideograph that ran horizontally and evolved out of the particular exigence of justifying his refusal to supply the requested material to Congress.

Ideographs fulfill two specific functions in a public dispute. They can intensify a sense of alienation in a public increasing opposition to an opponent's beliefs and practices, or they can reinforce the ideals and beliefs of a collective body by giving order and meaning to the material under dispute. The strategic use of ideological arguments can bind individuals who share little in common but a single idea. A careful investigation of the use of ideographs can explain how ideological arguments are wielded to achieve an advantage in a public argument. The important question is not the truth or falsity of the signification but how the ideographs are used by a group in a public dispute to advance their cause.

A key question might be asked. In what ways can
meaning establish and sustain relations of domination? Thompson identifies five general modes through which ideology establishes and sustains domination. These strategies of symbolic construction are not mutually exclusive of how ideology can operate nor are the modes inherently ideological. Thompson argued that a symbolic form has ideological properties if it sustains, subverts, establishes or undermines power relationships.\(^6\)

The five modes include:

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<th>Mode</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Legitimation</td>
<td>Establishing and sustaining relations of domination as worthy, or legitimate of support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dissimulation</td>
<td>Establishing and sustaining relations of domination by concealing, denying, obscuring, or deflecting attention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unification</td>
<td>Establishing and sustaining relations of domination by embracing individual’s collective regardless of differences and divisions that separate them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fragmentation</td>
<td>Establishing and sustaining relations of domination by not unifying individual as groups, keeping them separate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reification</td>
<td>Relations of domination are established by representing something transitory as if it was permanent or rigid.</td>
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In order to understand the ideological foundation of the groups involved in the polygamy/suffrage dispute, an analysis of each group’s ideographs should reveal the motives compelling each group to enter into the conflict. Specifically in this research, I want to identify the dominant ideographs used by the Mormon and non-Mormon women
while defending their beliefs on polygamy and suffrage. Additionally, I want to evaluate how each camp modified their arguments as the public dispute developed and then was resolved. Finally, I want to see how the groups used the ideographs to establish and sustain relations of domination by relying on Thompson’s strategies of symbolic construction.

Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed selected theories of ideology. Michael McGee’s analytic tool for investigating the ideological foundations of rhetoric, as well as John Thompson’s modes of studying ideological discourse were explained. These tools will be used to study the Mormon and non-Mormon women’s public argument over suffrage and polygamy. Before assessing the ideographs used in the polygamy/suffrage dispute, a review of the literature on polygamy and suffrage as well as a chapter detailing the historical background of the public controversy is needed to understand the context of the public debate. Chapter III contains a review of the published materials evaluating the woman’s role during the polygamy and suffrage controversies. In Chapter IV, the historical antecedents on the origin and conflict over polygamy and suffrage are detailed.
Notes


John B. Thompson defines symbolic forms broadly as "actions and utterances, images and text, which are produced by subjects and recognized by them and others as meaningful constructs." Ideology and Modern Culture (Stanford, CA: Stanford U P, 1990) 57. Symbolic forms may be spoken or written utterances and expressions, non-linguistic or quasi-linguistic forms such as a visual images.

Thompson, 1990, 48-49.


Thompson, 1990, 37-38.


Thompson, 1990, 49.

Thompson, 1990, 7.

19 Thompson, 1990, 56.

20 Thompson, 1990, 56.

21 Thompson, 1980, 57.

22 Thompson, 1990, 58.

23 Thompson, 1990, 58.


33 McGee, 1980, 10.


35 McGee, 1980, 12.

36 Thompson, 1990, 61.
CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF LITERATURE: THE SUFFRAGE AND POLYGAMY CONFLICT

Introduction

From 1862, when the Morrill Act banned bigamy, until 1896, when the United States admitted Utah to the union, polygamy and suffrage were constantly on the minds of Mormon residents in Utah, federal legislators in Washington, and many concerned non-Mormons living inside and outside the boundaries of the Utah Territory. Much of the research covering this time period chronicled the federal government’s twenty-five year legislative attempt to enforce the 1862 law forbidding bigamy. Many of the authors approached the topic similarly. Either they briefly listed the issues connected to the polygamy and suffrage controversy, or they described the potential sociological benefits and/or harms associated with polygamy and female suffrage. In either case, researchers emphasized the Mormon church’s accommodation to the dominant Victorian culture of the time.2

The purpose of this chapter then is to survey the literature written on the suffrage and polygamy conflicts. A single question guides this review. What research on the
Utah polygamy and suffrage disputes between Mormon and non-Mormon women has been completed? An answer to this question can be found by reviewing journal articles, theses, dissertations, and books that discuss the political speaking by women in Utah during 1870-1886.

Review

Polygamy, more than any other problem or issue in the territory, set up conflicting forces between the Mormons and the non-Mormons. The Mormons were "intent on proving their righteousness" and the non-Mormons were dedicated to forcing "the miscreant group to recant their evil ways." Although this conflict held significant historical implications, the research on frontier women generally emphasized either the struggle for equal rights or described the domestic roles traditionally filled by pioneer women. In an attempt to understand the pioneer woman, researchers in the 1970s and into the 1980s paid increased attention to the struggle of the pioneer woman in the westward movement. No in-depth discussion or analysis has been written on the contributions of women to the public dispute over suffrage and polygamy in Utah during 1870-1886. In fact, the research surveying or describing the importance of the suffrage and political mass meetings held by Mormon sisters in 1870, 1878, and 1886 in Utah and the female non-Mormons' response to the mass meetings is piecemeal at best. A summary of the key
research on suffrage and polygamy follows.

Professor Thomas Alexander described the Utah female suffrage story. He investigated the federal congressional debates questioning the feasibility of granting suffrage to women in the Utah territory. Alexander also studied the actions of the territorial legislature when it enfranchised Utah females in 1870. Alexander limited his study to a descriptive explanation of the granting of suffrage in 1870, the year women were enfranchised. His research did not mention the conflict over female suffrage beyond 1870.1

Ralph Jack's thesis on female suffrage, on the other hand, chronicled a major portion of the suffrage controversy.4 Jack reported on the suffrage issues in the territory as printed in the press during the years 1870-1896. He relied mainly on the Deseret News, the Mormon newspaper, and the Salt Lake Daily Tribune, the non-Mormon press, for his data. Consequently, Jack's study reflects the public press sentiment. Jack did not report on the disfranchisement of female voters in 1886.

Leon Thurgood's study parallels the research reported by Jack.7 However, Thurgood covered an increased time period and focussed on the speeches delivered by Mormon women when arguing for suffrage in the Utah territory during the period of October 1870 to October 1895. Thurgood hypothesized that Mormon women, because of their devotion to religious beliefs, would employ the scriptures and common
religion as data for their arguments. Using 51 speeches by 37 female speakers, he catalogued and grouped the women's claims into five areas: faith or trust in God; woman, mother or motherhood; liberty and freedom; creator, created, created equal; and suffrage or enfranchisement.

Unfortunately, Thurgood did little beyond classifying and describing the types of argument used to justify the Mormon women's position. Occasionally, he extended his discussion beyond his research question. For example, he criticized the contemporary women's movement because it denied women the responsibility of being a wife and mother. He also discussed the relationship between increased taxes, divorce, and the fall of the Roman Empire and then asserted that a similar problem exists in contemporary times. Finally, he concluded, without supporting data, that a woman can perform only one role--wife or career--without sacrificing the other. Thurgood never linked any of these criticisms with the Mormon women's public argument during the period of 1870-1895.

In addition, Thurgood's analysis of the issues of suffrage appears incomplete. Part of the territorial dispute over female suffrage centered on the issue of the variation in voting standards for males and females. According to the territorial law enfranchising women voters, a woman did not have to be a citizen or a taxpayer in order to cast a ballot. She received her voting status based on
the citizenship of her husband and if she was not married the citizenship of her father. A male had to be a taxpayer and a citizen. While accurately reporting the objection surrounding the tax issue, Thurgood did not mention the controversial issue of allowing women to vote, even though they were not citizens.

Finally, Thurgood failed to describe the interrelationship between the two political issues of suffrage and polygamy, probably the most critical error in his study. Instead of interconnecting the two issues, Thurgood chose to focus on the public rhetoric of Mormon women separate from the political and social climate of the times. Thurgood made no effort to assess changes in the arguments advanced by the Mormon women over the period. He did not comment on the rhetors' improvement in style during the fifteen-year-period, nor did he discuss how the arguments justifying female suffrage evolved during the disfranchisement debate. In review, beyond cataloguing the major themes raised in the public debate by Mormon women, his thesis offered little insight and understanding as to how arguments developed in the suffrage/polygamy controversy.

Beverly Beeton, another historian, presented a critical analysis of the granting of suffrage in four Western States—Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, and Colorado—and the interaction between the territorial suffrage supporters and
the national suffrage leaders. With respect to Utah, Beeton concluded that the National Woman Suffrage Association indirectly supported the female Mormon's cause for years, while the Mormon priesthood officials used suffrage to further their political objectives. The Mormon priesthood leaders, Beeton theorized, used suffrage to draw attention away from the polygamy controversy and as a strategic weapon in their requests for statehood.

In her research on Utah suffrage, Beeton described the involvement of the national suffrage leaders in the political affairs of Utah. Individuals, such as Belva Lockwood, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Colby Saxon, among others, visited Utah while waging a national campaign for women suffrage. Beeton detailed the circumstances surrounding their visits. She also explained the subsequent involvement of territorial representatives in the national suffrage movement.

Beeton concluded that the National Woman Suffrage Association support for the Mormon females injured the Association's image. Supporting suffrage rights for the Mormon women seemed inconsistent with believing that polygamy exploited women. For example, Belva Lockwood, lawyer and women's rights activist in Washington, D. C., delivered a series of lectures titled "The Mormon Question: The Other Side" in which she explained the inconsistency between the two positions. Lockwood attacked the unjust
decision on the part of the federal government to disfranchise all women under the Edmunds-Tucker Act, legislation that Congress passed in 1887. In her speeches, Lockwood complimented the Mormons and supported their request for admission to the union. Even though Lockwood assured her audience that she did not believe in polygamy and that she was not a convert to the Mormon faith, these protective claims did little to insure her status with national suffrage leaders. Following her lectures, the National Woman Suffrage Association became less supportive of affairs in Utah. But this action by the National Woman Suffrage Association came too late, the image of the Association already had been tarnished. The National Association, Beeton argued, "was greatly weakened as a result of its being identified with the Mormons and their marital system." According to Beeton, "Belva Lockwood in her defense of the Mormons, like Victoria Woodhull before her, brought the wrath of society down on the National Association." Clearly, Lockwood had not supported polygamy but only championed a woman's right to vote in Utah. But even so, the position she held still instrumentally damaged the image of the National Suffrage Association.

Although a comprehensive reporting of the relationship between territorial and national suffrage concerns, Beeton's study provided a cursory description of the conflict between
the Mormon and the non-Mormon women’s argument over polygamy and suffrage. She briefly mentioned the mass meetings held by the Mormon women, but she did not report extensively on the political involvement of the non-Mormons, nor the efforts of the Utah based Anti-Polygamy Society to end polygamy and curtail suffrage for women in the territory.

Additionally, Jean B. White covered the regranting of voting privileges to the Utah women. In her February 14, 1974 Charles Redd lecture at Brigham Young University, White detailed the events surrounding the inclusion of women suffrage in the Utah constitution. The value of White’s study rests in her description and analysis of the suffrage debate at the Utah constitutional convention. When Utah made application for Statehood in 1895, the constitution included a woman’s suffrage plank. The issue of political rights for women in Utah became the most bitterly fought battle on the convention floor because many delegates expressed concern over the Mormon church dominating politics in Utah. The male delegates debated whether the new constitution should include a suffrage plank. Members of the Utah female suffrage organization were influential in the debate. Selected members of the territorial suffrage organizations testified before the voter qualification committee on why women should be given the vote.

White offered four explanations for why women found a place in the 1895 constitution. First, suffrage supporters
concentrated on securing political rights and did not espouse any radical reform measures. Second, since suffrage had been tried successfully in Utah for 17 years, the new state was not taking an unknown risk by granting the ballot to women. Third, suffrage supporters cultivated significant grassroots bipartisan support among many constitutional delegates. As White explained, the women won the ballot on the convention floor because they had formed a solid core of supporters "who parried the oratorical thrusts, [and] who made sure they were not outwitted in parliamentary maneuvering."13

If there was a weakness in White's research, it was the lack of detail explaining the Mormon and non-Mormon women's involvement at the constitutional convention. White did not allude to the extensive letter writing campaign of the Mormon women nor refer to the series of resolutions forwarded by the Mormon women to the Constitutional convention requesting suffrage for women. She did not mention the extensive monitoring of delegates by feminist leaders residing in the territory. She also skimmed over the non-Mormon women's opposition to enfranchisement of women.

In addition to the aforementioned works, a corpus of specialized interpretive and biographical studies featuring Mormon women were available. In her dissertation "A Mormon Woman in Victorian America," Carol Cornwall Madsen studied
the life of Emmeline B. Wells. Wells held numerous prominent positions in rural Utah: She edited the Woman’s Exponent, she served as the Mormon Relief Society President, she attended the National Suffrage Association and the National and International Councils of Women meetings, she travelled to Washington requesting Congress and the President to not disfranchise women voters in Utah, and she fought for the return of the ballot to Utah women in 1895 when Utah became a state. Madsen contrasted biographical information about Wells against the dynamics of nineteenth-century Victorian life providing insight as to historical and cultural factors influencing rural life in Utah.14

Attempting to acquaint contemporary Mormon women with Mormondom’s heroic females of the past, a group of Mormon women formed a discussion group and later presented a class to the Latter-day Saint Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Each participant selected a nineteenth-century topic, researched it for a semester in preparation for the class, then, during the second semester, the discussion group offered weekly classes on the topics they had prepared. As an outgrowth of the course, the group published the book Mormon Sisters, a compilation of the study group’s lecture notes. The book covered topics on midwives, political affairs, suffrage, and fictional accounts of Mormon women. It also contained specialized chapters on Eliza R. Snow and Susa Young Gates, two of the
more powerful Mormon women leaders in Utah. *Mormon Sisters* retold the stories of remarkable women, who belonged to an "elite echelon" and "were leaders of their community or noted for their special accomplishments."\(^{13}\)

Of particular interest were the sections in *Mormon Sisters* discussing plural marriage and suffrage. Part of the conflict between Mormon and non-Mormon women stemmed from the plural wives challenging the stereotype of the acceptable place for women. The authors of *Mormon Sisters* believed that early practitioners of polygamy were "more like widows than traditional wives."\(^{16}\) As a result of polygamy, husbands were not always at home and this reduced the amount of time a woman spent on household chores freeing her to participate in activities outside the home. As printed in the introduction to *Mormon Sisters*, "A plural wife could not be the helpless, fainting, protected female or she would likely faint alone."\(^{17}\) As such, many Mormon women led productive lives outside the traditional spheres of wife and mother.

Four essays in *Mormon Sisters* provided valuable background information on the public dispute over polygamy and suffrage. First, Nancy Tate Dredge wrote about the hardships experienced by supporters of polygamy. In "Victims of Conflict," Dredge described the period when the federal government tried to legislate polygamy out of existence.\(^{16}\) Vividly picturing the persecution and ridicule
aimed at practitioners of plural marriage, Dredge described
the worry, heartache, and loneliness experienced by the
women living during this troubled time. For example, to
avoid governmental officials and arrest, many polygamists
fled underground. Even though the Mormon church eventually
capitulated and issued a manifesto forsaking polygamy in
1890, the action of the church minimally improved
relationships between the Mormons and governmental
officials. The children and wives of polygamous families
still faced ridicule. Only now the ridicule came from
neighbors and non-polygamist Mormons. In Dredge’s opinion,
"an unbending church and a crusading, punitive government"
caused many of the problems for the victims of the
conflict.19

In addition to the Dredge essay, Mormon Sisters
contained a second article that bears directly on this
study, probably more so than any other research so far
reviewed. Heather Symmes Cannon focused on the political
involvement of women in the Utah territory during 1870-1890.
This research is the only contemporary work surveying the
specific policies and actions followed by the Mormon women
during 1870-1890. In her essay "Practical Politicians,"
Cannon retold the experiences of the Mormon women in their
attempt to resolve the differences between various national
government officials and church leaders.20 Cannon believed
the women directly influenced the reconciliation process.
She claimed, for example, that the female mass protests helped delay harsh Congressional anti-polygamy legislation, and agitation by the women insured legitimacy and inheritance rights for children of polygamous relationships. The Mormon women, in Cannon’s mind, "exhibited massive unified political activism far in advance of their sisters in the rest of the country." In her essay, Cannon reviewed the historical antecedents and the methods used to secure political rights in the Utah territory for women. In doing so, she studied the speeches delivered at all three mass meetings held by the Mormon women and summarized the major positions advanced at the meetings. She also noted the Mormon women’s widespread use of petitions as a persuasive tool, and mentioned how the Woman's Exponent disseminated information favoring the Mormons’ position.

Although Cannon’s work included an excellent summary of the political input of Mormon women into Utah’s organization for statehood, Cannon’s conclusions only partially explain how the arguments evolved during this time period. She argued that "the mass meetings evolved from defenses of polygamy and threats of national defiance in 1870 to legalistic protest against judicial excesses and abuses of female rights in 1886." Although this judgment concerning the change in argumentation employed by the Mormon women was accurate, it only partially explained the improvement in the Mormon women’s rhetorical skills and abilities.
Cannon accurately described the purpose of the various petition campaigns waged during the 1870s. She did not explain completely the rationale used by the petitioners to support their requests.23 She claimed that the Mormon women's political interest during the petition campaign changed from a strong "religious patriotism to a more specific interest in defending women's rights and in particular their right to suffrage."24 Although the Mormon women did shift their argument, religious patriotism still formed the basis for their claim. Perhaps the most significant weakness of the Cannon essay is the limited coverage of the non-Mormon women's arguments over the polygamy conflict. After reviewing Cannon's study, a reader might assume that the residents in the territory universally endorsed statehood and suffrage with little public opposition. This was not the case. Beyond mentioning the founding of the Utah based Anti-Polygamy Society, Cannon reports little of the non-Mormon women's public discussion and actions opposing polygamy and suffrage. In actuality, the non-Mormons were extremely vocal in their repudiation of polygamy, and frequently admonished Congress to repeal suffrage for women. The non-Mormon women even opposed the adoption of a female suffrage plank in the proposed Utah constitution in 1895.

In her essay, Cannon provided a useful chronology of actions taken by the Mormon women, but a more in-depth
analysis of both Mormon and non-Mormon women's political involvement in the Utah Territory is needed. A closer study of changes in petitioners's reasoning would enhance our comprehension of the suffrage/polygamy movement in the Utah Territory and would help us understand how language conveys a group's ideals to a listening public.

Judith Rasmussen Dushku wrote a third essay from *Mormon Sisters* that relates to the topic of this study. In "Feminists," Dushku identified three areas of Mormon life—publishing, grass-root organization, and personal involvement with women's rights leaders in the East—that she believed exhibited the Mormon women's feminist leanings. From 1870 until 1896, many women in the territory actively supported the national suffrage cause. These supporters were highly vocal in backing enfranchisement nation-wide. Utah women financially assisted the Eastern suffrage organizations and frequently campaigned in their behalf. Dushku concluded that the Mormon women, especially the authors of the *Woman's Exponent*, were not "passive recipients of a franchise inexplicably offered by the brethren," but actively supported female equality and defended their beliefs and life style in the Utah territory.

The subject of Dushku's work, the relationship between Utah suffrage leaders and national women's rights organizations, confirmed Beeton's analysis. Mentioning the
visit to Utah by suffrage leaders Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony in 1871, Dushku concluded that a mutually tolerant relationship developed between the national woman's rights organization and the Mormon sisters. The national organization never approved of polygamy but the leaders always supported the continuation of women's suffrage in the territory. The activities of Emmeline B. Wells, a Mormon suffrage leader and editor of the Woman's Exponent, were responsible for the friendly relationship between the two groups even though most national feminist leaders never were convinced of the value of polygamy.

A fourth essay in Mormon Sisters has tangential value for this study. Maureen Ursenback Beecher, then an editor in the Latter-day Saint Church Historian's Office, penned an essay describing the life of Eliza R. Snow. She was the first President of the Female Relief Society in Utah and the acknowledged "first lady" of the Utah Territory had significant influence with the female population of Utah. Snow chaired the 1878 mass meeting supporting polygamy. In Beecher's opinion, Snow "lent her support rather than her leadership to the feminist movement in the territory." She willingly served as a "figurehead" and added her "eloquent oratory" when required, but she did not spearhead the attempts to secure political equality for the female residents in the Utah territory.

In addition to Mormon Sisters, a second book, Sister
Saints, supplemented the shortage of accurate biographical information about early Utah female leaders. Published in 1978, Sister Saints included a series of essays on prominent Mormon females living, predominantly, during the nineteenth century. The essays recounted each woman’s unique contribution to pioneer life, the effect of Mormonism on her, and sometimes her relationship with the other women described in the book.  

Contributed essays highlighted some of the Mormon women’s involvement in suffrage and political affairs in the Utah territory. Many of these women were featured speakers at the political mass meetings held in Salt Lake City. The women highlighted for participating in political affairs during 1870-1896 included: Eliza R. Snow, Sarah Kimball, Louisa Pratt, Susa Young Gates, Jane Richards, Bathsheba Smith, Dr. Ellen Ferguson, Dr. Romania Pratt, Dr. Ellis Shipp, Dr. Martha Cannon, Louisa Lula Greene Richards, Emmeline B. Wells, and August Joyce Cochener. The essays provided valuable biographical data on the lives of many of the Mormon women speakers.  

In order to understand how men and women lived under polygamy, the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies at Brigham Young University interviewed 250 surviving children of Church-sanctioned polygamous families during 1976 to 1982. In 1982, the project expanded and 150 children from monogamous families growing up during the same time period
were interviewed as a comparison group. This information along with interviews conducted during 1930 by James Hulett and Kimball Young and deposited at the Garrett Theological Seminary at Northwestern University formed the basis for the book *Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle* by Jessie L. Embry. In assessing the impact of polygamy on family life, Embry concluded:

Mormon polygamous families were not much different than Mormon monogamous families and other non-Mormon families of the same era. The Mormons simply adapted Victorian ideology to fit their new polygamous life-style. Since polygamy was practiced for such a short time in the LDS Church, these adaptations varied from family to family, making it impossible to describe the typical Mormon polygamous family.\(^4\)

According to Embry, the complexity of polygamy caused participants to have mixed reactions to it. But even so, participants exhibited a degree of unanimity and willingness to make the system work. The Mormons "accepted and lived polygamy" because "they believed they were obeying a higher commandment of God."\(^5\) Embry concluded that polygamy was not a "new life-style but an adaptation of the Victorian family pattern"\(^6\) with its emphasis on thrift, industry, self-improvement, and self-reliance.

If the research on Mormon women's political efforts to promote polygamy and suffrage issues appears sketchy, the research on women's involvement in the Anti-Polygamy Society is even less revealing. Robert Dwyer conducted the most comprehensive analysis of the non-Mormon response to
polygamy and suffrage. In his work, *The Gentile Comes to Utah*, Dwyer traced the non-Mormon women’s attempt to rid the territory of the abominable practice of polygamy. The non-Mormon woman "conceived it to be her mission to open the eyes of the deluded Mormon sisters to the folly and indignity of their way of life." Dwyer explained why the non-Mormons supported disfranchisement. Although some of the leaders of the Anti-Polygamy Society were members of the Women’s Suffrage Association, they rationalized the disfranchisement of women under the Edmunds-Tucker bill from a position of self-sacrifice. "They had deprived themselves of a precious privilege," Dwyer concluded, "in order to cure an intolerable disorder." In other words, the non-Mormon women willingly gave up rights in order to correct a greater evil. In addition to explaining the efforts of the Anti-Polygamy Society to abolish polygamy, Dwyer briefly documented the work of the non-Mormons in establishing a home for the children and wives who left their polygamist husbands. Few Mormon women fled from their polygamous marriages to seek refuge in the industrial home.

Conclusions

Based on this review, a number of conclusions can be made concerning the research on the women’s talk on polygamy and suffrage. First, research projects have not covered the entire time period of the polygamy/suffrage controversy,
have disregarded the interrelationship between suffrage and polygamy, have ignored the situational factors affecting suffrage, or have not detailed how the argumentative strategy of both camps changed over the period of conflict. Additionally, as limited as the research on Mormon women's political involvement in the Utah Territory is, the research on non-Mormons' involvement appears even less prolific. Information on the non-Mormon women's efforts to rid the territory of polygamy and their strategy of limiting suffrage to accomplish this objective is finite.

Obviously, some questions concerning the public debates by women still need answers. For example, how did the Mormon and non-Mormon women characterize themselves and their opponents? Does their argumentation reflect the motives for supporting or opposing polygamy and suffrage? If so, what rationale did the Mormons and non-Mormons use to support their claims? Finally, how did the arguments change during 17 years of conflict? These questions will be answered in Chapters V-VI. The next chapter chronicles the beginnings of the Mormon church in the east, the development of the church in the mid-west, and the move west to the Utah Territory, and also details the federal legislative attempts to control polygamy in the territory.
Notes


Huntington Library, 1971) ix.


8 Thurgood, 1973, 45 and 49.

9 Thurgood, 1973, 45.

10 Thurgood, 1973, 45.


15 Bushman, 1976, xxii.

16 Bushman, 1976, xix.

17 Bushman, 1976, xix.


19 Dredge, 1976, 150.


22 Cannon, 1976, 168.

23 Emmeline B. Wells and Zina Young Williams frequently made trips to Washington, D. C. to deliver petitions to Congress. Often they would deliver petitions while attending the National Woman Suffrage Association Convention.


26 The Mormon women collected signatures from residents throughout the territory on a petition requesting Congressional approval of the 16th amendment.

27 Dushku, 1976, 186.


18 Dwyer, 1971, 191.


20 Dwyer, 1971, 205-07.
CHAPTER IV

HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS

Introduction

Since this study investigates the public conflict between Mormon and non-Mormon women on suffrage and polygamy, sketching the antecedent conditions contributing to the controversy helps to explain the motives driving each group. Diachronic ideographs rely on historical touchstones, experiences that are common within a group. As such, understanding important common experiences of the speakers appears necessary in order to grasp their ideology. The historical antecedents detailed in this chapter include: First, a synopsis of the foundation and westward migration of the Mormon church; second, an explanation of the granting of female suffrage in the Utah Territory in 1870; third, an explanation of why the Mormons practiced polygamy; and fourth, a brief summary of the federal efforts to end polygamy.

Foundation and Westward Migration of the Mormon Church

Mormonism began in the New England area during a period of religious excitement. Feeling the impact of the Second Great Awakening in 1799 and 1800, western New York became an
orphanage for revivalists. Innovative reformers, such as Jemima Wilkinson, and Ann Lee, adopted New York as their home. The area drew conservative Presbyterians, Methodists, and Congregationalists, and the more liberal Unitarians and Universalists.¹ Joseph Smith, Jr., the future prophet of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, moved into this religious hot bed with his parents, five brothers, and two sisters when still a small boy. In 1820, while living in Palmyra, New York, Smith, a young lad of fourteen, claimed to have received a vision in which God and Jesus Christ literally appeared to him in 1820. Confused at the variance of opinions accompanying the religious excitement in western New York, Smith prayed to God asking for direction as to which church to join. During the vision, God literally appeared and informed Smith that no true Church existed on the earth.²

A few years later on September 21, 1823, Smith had a second vision. An angel, the last prophet of an earlier race inhabiting the Americas, told Smith about a collection of gold plates containing an abridged religious history of a vanished race. Four years later at the age of twenty-one, Smith took possession of and translated the plates. He published the translated contents of the plates as the Book of Mormon during 1829–1830.

The gold plates chronicled the story of a group of individuals who lived in Palestine in 600 B.C. Inspired to
leave Jerusalem, they traveled to the Indian Ocean and constructed a boat that brought them to the west coast of the Americas. Following their arrival in the new land, conflict developed and the group split into warring factions, the Nephites and the Lamanites. Following Jesus’ crucifixion in Jerusalem, Christ appeared to the Nephites and Lamanites and organized his church on the American continent. The Nephites and Lamanites adopted Christ’s teaching and for two hundred years experienced peace. Finally in 421 A.D. following a siege of wars, the Lamanites, the predecessors of the Indian groups now living in the Americas, destroyed the Nephite nation. Moroni, the last prophet of the Nephites, buried the historical and religious records of his people on plates in the Hill Cumorah in upstate New York. The plates remained hidden until Moroni, an angel, delivered them to Joseph Smith in 1827.

Historical research can neither validate nor deny the supernatural experience of Smith. The individuals who believed in the authenticity of Smith’s vision became primitive gospelers. God, a real being of material body, had spoken through his prophet Joseph Smith. The restored religion offered salvation to the faithful through repentance, baptism by immersion, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and a lay ministry governed by the priesthood, the power to act in God’s name.
John the Baptist restored the lower or Aaronic priesthood to Smith and Oliver Cowdery, one of the scribes helping Smith translate the gold plates, in May of 1829. The Aaronic priesthood gave Smith the authority to baptize individuals for the remission of sins. Later Peter, James, and John, apostles of the New Testament, restored the Melchizedek or higher priesthood. This power permitted Smith and his followers to restore Christ's church. On April 6, 1830, the Mormonism movement took official form in Fayette, New York when Smith legally organized the church. Following the founding of the church, the leaders built their membership by sending out missionaries to Europe, the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii), and to various settlements within the United States.

As the church grew in population so did the opposition to the Mormons. After the church took structural form in the Spring of 1830, the members encountered increasing difficulties with their non-Mormon neighbors in New York and because of the hostility, the Saints, as they were often called, left their homes and moved westward to Ohio for a period of time, and then eventually into Missouri and Illinois. Regardless of where they went, hostility erupted within a few years and sometimes even months after arrival. For example, in 1838, a little over five years after arriving in Missouri, church members were driven from the state by mobs and in a tragic confrontation at Hauns Mill, a
small settlement near Far West, Missouri, thirty families were attacked and many of the group were killed.

Wherever the Mormons settled, they inflamed their enemies. Former Latter-day Saint Church Historian Leonard J. Arrington and University of Utah Professor Davis Bitton explained in the *Mormon Experience* why the Mormons' friends turned into enemies. The non-Mormons were repelled by a religion that challenged many socially accepted values. The non-Mormons accused the Mormons of agitating among the Indians and tampering with the slaves, disapproved of block voting by the Mormons in elections, and questioned the economic separateness of the Mormons. In short, the Mormons were seen as a threat economically, politically, and religiously. Although individually many Mormons were accepted, collectively they were feared.

Church members, expelled from Ohio and Missouri, migrated to Illinois and on the banks of the Mississippi fifty-three miles north of Quincy built the city of Nauvoo in April, 1839. Under Smith's direction as President of the church, members constructed a city out of a swamp, built a temple, and established numerous businesses (a saw mill, a flour mill, a tool factory, a foundry, and even a china factory). They established a university and planted and harvested agricultural produce. Due to a very liberal charter granted by the state of Illinois, the city recruited, trained, and staffed its own militia. By 1844,
the population of Nauvoo had grown so large that it ranked as the second largest city in Illinois with more than ten thousand people residing in the community.4

Despite signs of outward growth and prosperity, the church in Nauvoo rested on a precarious foundation. The existence of a Mormon city-state quickly invited opposition from the non-Mormons. But the rumor that Mormon leaders secretly practiced polygamy eventually incited an explosive scandal. John C. Bennett, a former mayor of Nauvoo and a dissatisfied Mormon, accused Smith of immoral behavior in an expose on polygamy. As a result of this action, the church excommunicated Bennett. In truth, certain select members of the Mormon faith had practiced a form of wife plurality as early as 1841, but not to the degree Bennett charged.

The controversy surrounding polygamy did not die after Bennett's excommunication. Dismissal from the church did not quiet him. Bennett continued accusing Smith of supporting plural marriage. Rumors concerning the polygamy practice ran rampant during 1842 and 1843. In the spring of 1844, a group of dissidents, under Bennett's guidance, published the Nauvoo Expositor. Although only one issue was printed, the Expositor inflamed the controversy over polygamy by discussing the sex lives of prominent Mormons. Joseph Smith, the mayor of Nauvoo, and his brother, vice-mayor Hyrum Smith, declared the newspaper libelous and directed the city Marshall to destroy the press. The Nauvoo
Council concurred that the newspaper endangered civil order in the city and supported the destruction of the press.

By demolishing the press, the Mormons provided the ammunition for vigilante groups to kill Joseph Smith, his brother, and eventually ruin the city of Nauvoo. Charges of inciting a riot were filed against Smith and other Mormon leaders by the non-Mormons. Joseph and Hyrum Smith requested a writ of habeas corpus from a small city court in Illinois. The court granted the writ and a non-Mormon judge in Nauvoo tried and acquitted the brothers.

Needless to say, Smith's acquittal angered many of the non-Mormons in the community. As an outgrowth of this dissatisfaction, vigilante groups persecuted the Mormons. Smith, in retaliation, declared martial law and mobilized the Nauvoo Legion, the Mormon militia, to protect the city. Finally, the controversy came to a head when the Smith brothers, along with other prominent Mormon leaders, were incarcerated in the Carthage, Illinois jail. A mob brutally killed Joseph and Hyrum Smith in Carthage in 1844.

Even after the death of their prophet, the persecution of the Mormons continued. Many Mormon homes in Nauvoo were subjected to "wolf hunts" or raids. By September, 1845, Brigham Young, the new leader of the church, realized that church members no longer could remain safely in Nauvoo. To get prepared for the move, the Mormons remained in Nauvoo until February, 1846. Young, wishing to find a haven where
the church could be free, instructed members to leave their property and valuables and cross the Mississippi River to Far West, Missouri. Seventeen months later, the lead party found its haven in the dry, desolate territory of Utah. 5

The experience of starting a new religion concomitant with numerous moves to avoid persecution served as common touchstones for the Mormons. The Joseph Smith story of talking with God and being told no church was true, and the subsequent restoration of God's true church served as common antecedent experiences for all Church members. Often members would testify in church to the truthfulness of the restoration and Smith's vision.

A good church member obeyed God's word because God tested individuals in this life. Obeying God's commandments, such as plural marriage, plus doing good works assured exaltation in the next life. Time and time again, the Saints gave up their homes in search for religious freedom as they left New York, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois when persecution became unbearable. They did so knowing their suffering demonstrated their faithfulness to God's principles. In all instances, the Saints tried to be law abiding citizens following not only the federal and local laws but also the laws of God. When later called to defend polygamy, the Mormons would argue that they were only following God's principles and as law-abiding citizens, they had the right to practice the religion of their choice.
As can be seen, the Mormons' early experiments with polygamy were not without controversy. However, the granting of the ballot to women seemed more conventional. Federal officials considered enfranchising women in the late 1860s. The territorial government eventually extended voting privileges to women in 1870. In the next section, the attempts to enfranchise women by both the federal and territorial governments are described with an eye to explaining why Utah women received the ballot, close to 50 years before Congress approved universal suffrage.

Female Enfranchisement in Utah

The strategies employed in the cause of universal female suffrage varied in intensity and design. On the national level, some suffrage supporters favored a national amendment to the United States Constitution granting females the ballot. A constitutional amendment required a two-thirds vote by both the House of Representatives and the Senate, plus approval of three-fourths of the state legislatures. Congress followed this approach when it authorized universal suffrage to female citizens in 1919.

Prior to the granting of universal suffrage, some leading suffrage proponents favored campaigns to amend state constitutions but approval by popular vote proved difficult. The suffrage backers finally won a state-wide election for enfranchisement of the female population in Colorado in
1893. Unlike the states, the territories could adopt female suffrage without approval of the residing population. Suffrage could be granted either by the territorial legislature or by the Congress in Washington D. C., contingent upon approval by the executive in each case.⁶

Appearing as leaders in approving suffrage, six territories in the West considered granting females the ballot during 1869 to 1870. Four of the territories, Colorado, Dakota, Idaho, and New Mexico, failed to pass legislation, but Wyoming and Utah adopted bills enfranchising the female population. Wyoming authorized female suffrage and the right to hold office December 10, 1869. Utah enacted legislation two months later, but females were not permitted to hold political office. The granting of the ballot in Utah received more attention than in Wyoming because the act admitted forty times as many women to the polls than similar legislation did in Wyoming. Additionally, many of the newly enfranchised held membership in a religious sect that practiced the foreign marriage custom of polygamy.⁷

In some sections of the nation, women actively campaigned for the ballot. This was not the case in Utah. The women of Utah received the vote without any demonstrations or petitions. Although they did not campaign for the vote in Utah, the Mormon women strongly supported suffrage for the next twenty-seven years, unlike the non-
Mormon women in the territory. The Mormons joined campaigns for suffrage in other geographical areas within the United States; they waged fights for improvement of woman's legal status and educational opportunities; and the women organized a territorial-wide suffrage association when disfranchised by the Edmunds-Tucker Act in 1887. Following their disfranchisement, the Mormon women continued to present public speeches arguing for the return of their right to vote, and campaigned for female suffrage when Utah applied for statehood in 1896.

An explanation for why Utah granted suffrage to women can be discovered by searching historical accounts on the debate both on a federal and territorial level. Scholars have tried to explain why female suffrage emerged early in the American west since no suffrage organization existed in the Utah territory prior to 1887. Although the Mormon women organized a territorial-wide Relief Society, seeking political rights was not an initial goal of the society. The Woman's Exponent, a newspaper supporting rights for women during the later years of Utah's territorial status, did not start its presses until after Utah granted suffrage.

Given these facts, why were the women of the territory permitted to vote in 1870? Since the granting of the ballot in the territories was not the result of a long battle fought by an organized group of women, the suffrage movement can not claim the credit. Describing the popular Mormon
explanation, historian Thomas Alexander explained that the granting of suffrage merely extended the law of common consent practiced in the church. Both men and women had voted on ecclesiastical matters since the church organized in New York in 1830. Thus church members argued that the granting of the ballot simply extended the voting rights already practiced within the church.³

During reconstruction, the radical Republicans wanted to extend the Fourteenth Amendment guarantees of suffrage to women. There was little support for this measure in Congress and even less support for Kansas Senator Samuel C. Pomeroy's separate amendment enfranchising women. Hamilton Wilcox, a representative of the New York Universal Franchise Association, publicly recommended enfranchisement of the women in Utah in an address before the House Committee on Territories. During the Kansas campaign, Wilcox proposed a trial enfranchisement period for women in the territories and the New York Times popularized his comments.⁹

George Washington Julian gave Wilcox's territorial woman suffrage scheme operational form by introducing a resolution in Congress in 1869. For some members of Congress, the bill appeared safe. They reasoned that granting suffrage in the territories would not alter seriously the movement for enfranchisement on the national scene. If Congress approved the resolution, the women could vote only for territorial officers, not for the governor or
federal officers. Additionally, since the federal government had direct jurisdiction over territorial political matters, the scheme easily could be reversed if any difficulty arose. Many supporters believed the scheme would safely test the female influence on politics and the "possible defeminizing" impact that politics might have on women. Wilcox predicted two outcomes: There would be a movement of surplus women from the east to the west, or women in Utah would eliminate the practice of plural marriage. When the legislation appeared stalled in Congress in the spring of 1869, Julian limited his resolution to Utah in hopes that it would pass. William Henry Hooper, Utah's delegate to Congress, spoke in favor of the legislation, much to the surprise of many of the congressional delegates.

On March 18, 1869, the Deseret Evening News, the newspaper of the Latter-day Saint church, endorsed Julian's attempt to enfranchise the female population of Utah. The congressional speakers, as recorded in the News, claimed "that the unequal distribution of the sexes in the nation, with its attendant evils of low wages for women and lives of ill-fame, could be much lessened by enfranchising the women." The granting of suffrage would give women the same rights that were extended to the "ignorant freedmen of the South." Through enfranchisement, supporters reasoned, women could vote down the shackles of polygamy like the
blacks had removed the shackles of slavery in the South following the Civil War. If the scheme proved successful in Utah, then suffrage could be extended elsewhere in the nation. If the project failed, only the Mormons would suffer. However, the Julian resolution never even came up for a vote in Congress.

No documentation exists showing that the women of Utah ever requested the ballot from the governor. Susa Young Gates, daughter of Brigham Young and a subsequent suffrage representative from Utah to the national suffrage conventions, recorded the story of the involvement of Mormon officials in the granting of suffrage. President Brigham Young, after hearing a report of recent federal efforts to approve female suffrage, called the leading representatives of the legislature, George A. Smith, Lorenzo Snow, Abram O. Smoot, George Q. Cannon, and William Maughn, and "suggest[ed] the advisability of granting the right of suffrage to the women of Utah." Aware of Wyoming's new suffrage law, Brigham Young favored the passage of a woman's suffrage law in the Utah territory. George Q. Cannon introduced the bill in the legislature. In short order, the legislation conferred the elective franchise upon women twenty-one years of age or older who had resided in the territory six months, were born or naturalized in the United States, or were the wives or daughters of native-born or naturalized citizens.
Utah residents did not universally accept the enfranchisement of women. Non-Mormons accused the male Mormon hierarchy of deliberately registering women as voters to obtain additional support to fight Washington on the issue of polygamy. Proponents of this position believed Mormons were afraid of outsiders immigrating following the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. Data supporting this argument was skimpy. In 1870, the year the territory approved suffrage for women, the non-Mormon population barely reached 4,500 out of a total of 87,000 in the territory.¹⁶ The possibility for immigration existed, but no one really anticipated it. In fact, the Mormons maintained their political superiority during the entire territorial period. From 1871 to 1896, the Mormon men outnumbered non-Mormon men four to one.¹⁷ The enfranchisement of the women really was not necessary to retain political control.

Another explanation for the approval of suffrage in the territory involved the need on the part of the Mormons to demonstrate political solidarity. Some historians believe women received the ballot not to maintain superiority over non-Mormons but for the purpose of maintaining Mormon political solidarity and the need to counter the downtrodden image of Mormon women.¹⁸ "Women voters," argued Alan P. Grimes "were not so much pawns in the struggle as reserve troops to be called upon when needed."¹⁹ A number of Mormon
members had lost interest in the church and had apostatized. In a demonstration of political solidarity, the church enrolled additional support for priesthood decisions by permitting women access to the ballot. The elevation of the status of Mormon women would assist in the national fight against anti-polygamy legislation and further the lobbying power in Congress for statehood.

Finally, two accounts for extending suffrage appear less popular. The granting of female suffrage simply extended the Puritan chivalry and equality rooted in frontier America and as such was an outgrowth of the Populist and Progressive movements. Alan Grimes offered the least satisfactory explanation. "In newly emerging societies," he wrote, "decidedly significant political actions may be the result largely of pure chance, coincidence, or a fortuitous combination of circumstances." Regardless of the reasons, Mormon women voted in territorial affairs until disfranchised in 1887.

In the remaining sections of this chapter, I wish to explain how the Mormon women justified polygamy. Then I want to comment on the federal legislative acts making polygamy a serious crime.

The Practice of Polygamy

For many individuals outside the Mormon faith, polygamy appeared foreign and unappealing because polygamy seemed at
odds with the values of Victorian America. Even some of the Church members felt a similar reaction, but for many members the opposite held true. So if the custom was so abhorrent, why continue to practice it? For the Mormons, polygamy was a principle from God and in many ways, it made survival in the West easier. By obeying God’s will, the Mormons proved they were good church members. Polygamy permitted the Saints to organize and cooperate in building communities in the rough frontier. If practicing polygamy assured exaltation in the next life, many Mormon women willingly complied with the principle in this life. The challenge to polygamy tested the faith and supplied a motive for active involvement in the church.

In fact, the Mormon women’s responses to the system of plural marriage were as varied as were the responses to the more standard custom of monogamous marriage. Some sought divorce, others found refuge through flight, but the majority felt a strong commitment to their husbands and to their religious principles. The church advocated the practice of plural marriage as an official religious tenet, and members were taught that the practice of plural marriage renewed the same order of matrimony as practiced by the people of God in ancient biblical times. The Mormons believed that Joseph Smith received a direct revelation from the Lord in 1843, commanding faithful members of the church to practice celestial or plural marriage. As noted earlier
in this chapter, selected leaders of the church secretly practiced polygamy while the membership still resided in Nauvoo. In 1852, four years after arriving in the Utah territory, church officials publicly announced the doctrine.\(^2\)

The rationale for plural marriage rested on the belief that God had ordained that men and women should marry as a requirement for celestial glory in the life-here-after. This celestial law of marriage, as practiced by the Latter-day Saint church, required the stating of vows and covenants during this lifetime, plus a sanctioning or sealing by the priesthood of God. The sealing established ties that could not be broken or dissolved by death. Since the holy principle of marriage was eternal, the marriage covenant offered the followers of God’s word the promise of exaltation, crowns, kingdoms, and principalities in the world to come. But to receive exaltation required at least one righteous marriage during mortality. The doctrine of celestial marriage did not require all members of the church to practice polygamy. In theory, only the righteous were permitted to enter into more than one marriage arrangement. The taking of additional wives required official approval from priesthood officials.

On the surface, one would suspect that the women would reject celestial marriage. But as strange aspolygamy appeared, most Mormon women endorsed the tenet and argued
for its continuation. They justified plural marriage on pragmatic grounds, as a social good, and as a divine commandment.  

The rationale supporting polygamy on pragmatic grounds appears quite humorous. The argument started with the premise that the majority of women were superior to the majority of men. This inequality only could be corrected by permitting worthy men to marry more than one worthy woman. As F. S. wrote in the *Woman's Exponent*, the Mormons believed in "equal rights for all." A society could not claim equality if only a few women married moral and temperate husbands. The unequal single ladies would die without having fulfilled their mission to the earth," or else face marriage prospects with the worthless, the poor, or the drunk. Since marriage must be performed during this life, and since there were only a certain number of proper male partners, marrying a married man seemed a suitable option. In other words, part of a pure and religiously devoted husband was better than no man and certainly far superior to the companionship of a dirty, corrupt, and selfish man. On a pragmatic level then, the principle of plurality of wives provided a system for women to secure a suitable marriage partner.

Beyond justifying polygamy on pragmatic grounds, the women also saw polygamy as beneficial to society. The non-Mormons frequently charged that polygamy caused indifference
in the marriage relationship and thus rejected it as harmful. In reply, Mormon women claimed that they were not "alienated in their affections," and borrowing a strategy used during the slavery period, justified plural marriage as positive. Emmeline B. Wells, using the name of Blanche Beechwood, decried the charge that polygamy alienated affections. "Plural marriage," she claimed vociferously, "makes woman more the companion and much less the subordinate than any other form of marriage". Rather than weakening the ties of matrimony, the Mormon sisters believed polygamy strengthened the bonds of marriage. In a Relief Society report from the Mill Creek Ward, one lady commented on the strength of a polygamous marriage, "two are better than one, and a three-fold cord is not quickly broken."

Adherents to polygamy argued that polygamy was superior to prostitution. Under celestial marriage, the man honored the woman, and the children were raised properly. Prostitution, on the other hand, "[took] from the woman her honor, and [sought] to destroy both her and the offspring of his hidden relations." As such, plural marriage safeguarded women rather than harmed them. A resolution unanimously passed at the 1870 mass meeting claimed that plural marriage was "the only reliable safeguard of female virtue and innocence." Not only did polygamy offer women more freedom, the Mormon women claimed plural marriage eliminated a sexual double standard for women. The practice
of polygamy, reasoned its advocates, eliminated the need for courtesans, prostitutes, and marital infidels.\textsuperscript{33}

The advocates of plural marriage, however, did not limit their arguments solely to the rationale of solving the evil of prostitution. They also argued that polygamy strengthened the character of those who practiced it. Following a plural marriage, the preferred custom was to establish each wife in separate houses when possible. Since all polygamous men were not wealthy, many wives discovered the necessity of setting up a home and assisting with the finances of the family.\textsuperscript{34} The women strongly claimed this state of affairs as an economic incentive and Mormon women soon discovered themselves liberated and enlightened rather than victims of the "twin relic of barbarism." As recorded in the \textit{Woman's Exponent}, under plural marriage a woman became more than "a play-thing, or a hot-house plant." A woman became "the head of her own household and the intelligent companion of her husband."\textsuperscript{35} Under the umbrella of polygamy, women learned self reliance and a "higher" purpose than being a man's pet or housekeeper.\textsuperscript{36} If a husband had four wives, Martha Hughes Cannon informed an interviewer, the woman had "three weeks of freedom every single month."\textsuperscript{37} By responding to the criticisms of plural marriage, the Mormon women emerged as "theoretical feminists."\textsuperscript{38}

In addition to justifying polygamy on pragmatic and
social grounds, Mormon women found a third reason to support the doctrine. The women justified the practice of plural marriage as a divine commandment from God. They believed that God blessed individuals who followed His word. The Bible sanctioned polygamy and the Lord blessed and favored individuals who practiced the custom in ancient times. God had commanded that the Mormons practice plural marriage under righteous conditions. Following the Lord’s word would improve a person’s spirituality. Letters to the editor, articles, and speeches published in the Woman’s Exponent testified to the spiritual benefits from plural marriage. The Mormon woman who sought exaltation in the next life should toil and follow God’s commandments in this life.

The arguments supporting polygamy appear creative and perhaps even a little humorous. The rhetoric opposing polygamy shows the conflict between the Mormons and non-Mormons over political control of the territory of Utah and a need to free the Mormon women from bondage. The last section of chapter details important events in the conflict and summarizes the reasons non-Mormons opposed polygamy.

**Federal Efforts to End Polygamy**

Harriet Beecher Stowe’s thoughts on polygamy frequently appeared in the Anti-Polygamy Standard. Appealing to the women of America on behalf of polygamist wives, she wrote:

*Let every happy wife and mother who reads these lines give her sympathy, prayers and efforts to*
free her sisters from this degrading bondage. Let all the womanhood of the country stand united for them. There is a power in combined enlightened sentiment and sympathy, before which every form of injustice and cruelty must finally go down.\(^9\)

Political attempts to rid the territory of the controversial practice of polygamy were intensive and extensive. Miners, dropouts from the Oregon and California trails, federal appointees and their dependents, members and followers of Johnston's army,\(^40\) ministers intent on saving the deluded Mormons, and dissatisfied Mormons made up the bulk of the non-Mormon population in Utah. This minority made up only ten to fifteen percent of the population in the 1860s and 1870s.\(^41\)

Divisional lines were drawn between the Mormons and the non-Mormons shortly after arriving in the territory. Each group strived for political power, but due to the large number of Latter-day Saint members in the territory, the Mormons had a superior political position. Regardless of their size, the non-Mormons attacked the abhorrent marriage custom not only because they disliked the practice, but as an attempt to lessen the Mormon's political power in the territory.\(^42\)

Those who opposed polygamy viewed the practice negatively. The non-Mormons thought polygamy an "outrageous swindle,"\(^43\) and "a festering sore, a putrid spot in the heart of the nation."\(^44\) Consequently, the non-Mormons wished it stopped because it violated their sensibilities.
Additionally, they believed polygamy violated both the law of the land and the law of God. They argued that polygamy made slaves of women and hurt children.

The non-Mormons complained that polygamy debased and degraded women. Calling for an emancipation of women from the slavery of polygamy, Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote: "Shall we not then hope that the hour is come to loose the bonds of a cruel slavery whose chains have cut into the very hearts of thousands of our sisters—a slavery which debases and degrades womanhood, motherhood, and the family." 45 Similarly, Cornelia Paddock echoed Stowe's complaint that polygamy made slaves of women by explaining the harm of polygamy on children. "I am a woman, and polygamy made that sacred name a by word; . . . I am a mother, and polygamy makes maternity a curse, and puts the brand of shame on the innocent foreheads of little children." 46

Not only did the non-Mormons oppose polygamy because it made slaves of women and hurt the children of a polygamous relationship, they also opposed polygamy because it violated the Anti-Bigamy law. While addressing the Congregational Church in Washington, D.C. in 1886, Kate Field charged that polygamy was an "alien to American institutions." 47 The Mormons ignored the law and were guilty of treason when practicing plural marriage. Besides, claiming polygamy violated civil law, the non-Mormons also argued polygamy violated God's law. They took pleasure in noting that God
had commanded the Mormons not to practice any type of plural marriage. Often they quoted passages from the Book of Mormon, the LDS scripture translated by Joseph Smith from the gold plates, to support their claim: "Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none."\textsuperscript{48}

In a similar fashion, the federal government did not remain on the sidelines during the controversy. Members of Congress tried to abolish polygamy and strip the Mormons of political control of the territory. In fact, Congress introduced seventy-nine different bills or resolutions during 1852-1890 in an effort to legislate a solution to the "Mormon Question."\textsuperscript{49}

The federal involvement in the territorial confrontation was not without cause. Less than ten years after arriving in the valley, the Utah government made a second request for admission into the Union and plunged the Utah theocracy into the national arena. During the 1856 campaign, the Republican party announced their goal of ending polygamy and made their objection to the doctrine explicit in their platform. This action by the Republican party angered Church members and many of the religious followers threatened disloyalty to the United States. Priesthood leaders called the Saints to repentance. Church authorities requested the Saints purge out influences from
their lives, proposed a policy of self-sufficiency, and as a result boycotted the non-Mormon businesses in the territory. The reformation and the practice of self-sufficiency only served to heighten animosities in an already troubled arena. Economic historian Leonard Arrington vividly described the territorial confrontation:

Despite sincere efforts on the part of certain church leaders, including Brigham Young, to gain the support of Gentile capitalists and "rugged individualists" for Mormon social objectives throughout the 1850's, most of them seem to have felt that Mormon policy and practice, at least in its economic phases, was directed against them. The church would not permit the freedom of enterprise to which they had been accustomed and which would make possible the profits they sought; therefore, the church was dictatorial and the Prophet was a tyrant. The church frequently interfered to prevent the uninterrupted operation of free markets; therefore, the church was a combination in restraint of trade. The church encouraged its members to consecrate all their property to the trustee-in-trust; therefore, the church was a monopoly whose power and economic interests were growing stronger and stronger. The church expected extensive donations for community projects and cooperation in their completion and maintenance; therefore the church was coercive.¹⁰

No wonder federal officials and non-Mormons residing in the territory feared Utah political conditions.

All of the presidents from Abraham Lincoln to Grover Cleveland disliked polygamy. In fact, many of the presidents of the United States supported legislative attempts to rid the nation of polygamy. Others, like Lincoln, avoided any direct confrontation with the Mormons. In the early 1860s, the Mormon question took a back seat to the nation's concern over Southern slavery. The South had
made a number of flagrant and overt attacks at the union and rumblings of secession could be heard. Lincoln, after signing the 1862 Bigamy Act, overlooked its enforcement and turned his attention to the Southern rebellion. Lincoln left the Mormons alone and once told a member of the Mormon faith, "You tell Brigham Young if he will leave me alone, I'll leave him alone."

President Grover Cleveland attacked polygamy more aggressively than Lincoln. In his "First Annual Message to the Congress of the United States" in 1885, Cleveland rejected polygamy because of its harmful effects on families and declared that:

The strength, the perpetuity, and the destiny of the nation rests upon our homes, established by the law of God, guarded by parental care, regulated by parental authority, and sanctified by parental love.

These are not the homes of polygamy.

The mothers of our loved, who rule the nation as they mold the characters and guide the actions of their sons, live according to God's holy ordinances, and each, secure and happy in the exclusive love of the father of her children, sheds the warm light of true womanhood, unperverted and unpolluted, upon all within her pure and wholesome family circle.

These are not the cheerless, crushed, and unwomanly mothers of polygamy.

The fathers of our families are the best citizens of the Republic, wife and children are the sources of patriotism, and conjugal and parental affection beget devotion to the country. The man who, undefiled with plural marriage, is surrounded in his single home with his wife and children has a stake in the country which inspires him with respect for its law and courage for its defense.

These are not the fathers of polygamous families.
In 1857, President Buchanan, in a show of strength to the South, sent troops to Utah. His decision to send troops inaugurated thirty years of federal attempts by Congress to guarantee the continuation of Victorian marriage customs and to curb Mormon political domination in Utah.

Following a decade of public pressure, Justin S. Morrill, a Vermont Representative, introduced an anti-bigamy bill in 1862 that passed both houses of Congress by overwhelming margins. The legislation attempted to correct both the problem of political domination in Utah and the problem of polygamy. The legislation prohibited polygamy in the territory, disincorporated the church, and restricted the church's ownership of property to $50,000. Abraham Lincoln signed the bill into law but, as mentioned previously, overlooked its enforcement during the Civil War.

Following the Civil War, Congress attacked the problems in Utah with greater force. In order to enforce the Bigamy Act, Congress, during the next two decades, passed legislation designed to increase federal control over the executive, legislative and judicial processes in the territory. One such bill, the Cullom bill, gave federal officials broad powers to enforce the 1862 Morrill Act. The Cullom bill made cohabitation a misdemeanor, exempted polygamy and related offenses from the statute of limitation, barred polygamists from being naturalized, voting, or holding public office, permitted wives to testify
against their husbands in polygamy trials, and authorized the confiscation of property of polygamists to provide for their dependents. In addition, the Cullom bill attempted to correct the political imbalance in Utah by allowing the governor to appoint all probate judges, justices of the peace, judges of elections, notaries public, and sheriffs. The bill also reduced the jurisdiction of the probate courts; gave federal appointees the power of jury selection; and barred believers in plural marriage from jury service in polygamy or cohabitation trials. The Cullom bill passed the House of Representatives in the spring of 1870, but did not clear the floor of the Senate. Although the bill failed this time, each of the provisions in the legislation would reappear in subsequent legislation introduced in Congress.

In his "Seventh Annual Message to Congress," Ulysses S. Grant felt "polygamy should be banished from the land" and in a subsequent speech delivered in 1875, he requested legislation to abolish polygamy:

That polygamy should exist in a free, enlightened, and Christian country, without the power to punish so flagrant a crime against decency and morality, seems preposterous. True, there is no law to sustain this unnatural vice; but what is needed is a law to punish it as a crime, and at the same time to fix the status of the innocent children, the offspring of this system, and of the possibly innocent plural wives."

Later in his address, Grant implied that Congress had jurisdiction to legislate on moral issues, even on topics involving religion.
In 1882, George F. Edmunds, a Republican from Vermont, introduced legislation that amended the Anti-Bigamy Act of 1862 by making polygamy a felony with a penalty of up to five years imprisonment and/or a $500 fine. The Edmunds Act also made unlawful cohabitation, a misdemeanor punishable by a $300 fine and/or six months in prison. The law disfranchised all polygamists, both women and men, and prohibited any polygamous men from holding political office. The bill also established the Utah Commission, a federally appointed group charged with the responsibilities of directing elections and passing voting laws consistent with the territory's organic act and United States laws. In essence, the Edmunds bill gave the Republicans control over the territory, much to the Democrats' dismay. The Democrats opposed the legislation because it denied civil rights to citizens without a trial. Following a heated debate in both the House and the Senate, President Arthur signed the legislation into law on March 22, 1882.

Two years later, the problem of polygamy in the territories still existed. The Mormons had not given up the practice. Polygamists had escaped prosecution and many openly still lived with more than one wife. To improve enforcement, Senator Edmunds introduced extensive amendments to the Morrill and Edmunds Act in an effort to eliminate loopholes. Congress approved the most damaging legislation on the Mormon question in 1887. The bill abolished women's
suffrage and reinstated a test oath for voters, jurors, and office holders. It also required witnesses to attend trials, permitted a lawful wife to testify against her husband, and allowed adultery prosecutions to be initiated by someone other than a husband or a wife.

On the economic side, the act devastated the church because it disincorporated it and gave the United States Attorney General power to attach all of the church property. In another move of force, the legislation dissolved the Nauvoo Legion and destroyed the power of the Perpetual Emigration Fund Company, a program established to help new converts emigrate to the United States and migrate to the Utah territory. Stripped of their economic base and divested of much of their political power, the Mormons finally capitulated. On September 25, 1890, Wilford Woodruff, president of the Mormon Church, issued a manifesto abandoning polygamy and ended over forty years of conflict with the federal government.

Summary

The public dispute between Mormons and non-Mormons centered on who had political control over the territory. The polygamy and suffrage issues became embroiled in this controversy because both actions differed from the norm nation wide. This chapter provided background information on the political conflict between the Mormons and non-
Mormons. From the settlement of the Mormon church in the west until Utah became a state, Mormons and non-Mormons clashed over control of the territory and religious principles. In the early period of the Mormon church, the non-Mormons feared the growing numbers and the economic strength of the Mormons. When polygamy became an official practice of the Mormon faith, the non-Mormons channeled their rhetoric against it and argued for its abolition.

The issue of woman suffrage became inexplicably tied to the polygamy issue. Congress tried to rid the territory of polygamy by first proposing that female suffrage be granted to women in Utah in hopes that the women would use the ballot to end polygamy.

Women in the territory split over their support of suffrage. Mormon women voted in elections bolstering the strength of the Mormon regime. Non-Mormon women requested the removal of the ballot in order to prohibit a system of values that they found reprehensible.

Polygamy flourished until Congress, responding to the anti-polygamy rhetoric, stripped the political rights of all polygamous men and denied suffrage to women in the territory. In a series of legislative acts designed to curb polygamy and upset the authority of the Mormon church in Utah, Congress eventually legislated polygamy out of existence.

In the next two chapters, the critical approach
outlined in Chapter II is used to study the public arguments issued by the Mormon and non Mormon women. Chapter V encompasses the period of the dispute between 1870-1878 while chapter VI covers the period of 1879-1886.
Notes


6 U.S. Const., Art. IV, Sec. 3, Clause 2 reads, "The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States."


9 For additional background material on the granting of suffrage see Edward W. Tullidge, *History of Salt Lake City* (Salt Lake City: Star Printing, 1886) 433-39.

10 Beeton, 1976, 6-7. Neither of these two rationales, the redistribution of population nor the end of polygamy, were major arguments used by members of the national suffrage organization requesting enfranchisement. National suffrage speakers more frequently argued for female enfranchisement.

11 "Female Suffrage--Ends to be Gained by It," *Deseret Evening News*, 18 Mar. 1869: N. pag.

12 "Female Suffrage--Ends to be Gained by It," 1869, N. pag.


15 In a letter to Orson Pratt, speaker of the Territorial House, acting Governor S. A. Mann confessed his doubts about the wisdom and soundness of the Woman's Suffrage bill. But, in defense to the judgment of the representatives, and because both the House and the Council unanimously had passed the act, Mann signed the bill. "The Woman Suffrage Bill," *Deseret Evening News*, 12 Feb. 1870: N. pag.

16 Beeton, 1976, 56.

17 Beeton, 1976, 57.

18 Beeton, 1976, 57.


20 Beeton, 1976, 57.


23 Joseph Smith, *The Doctrine and Covenants* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1968) sect. 132.

27 F. S., 1872, 43.
28 "Replication," Woman’s Exponent 15 Aug. 1873, 45.
29 Beechwood, 1877, 54.
30 "Woman’s Voice," Woman’s Exponent 1 Aug. 1876: 35.
33 Minutes of a Ladies’ Mass Meeting, 1870, 115.
35 "A Mormon Woman’s View," Woman’s Exponent 1 Nov. 1884: 82.
36 Beechwood, 1877, 54.
40 President Buchanan ordered the army to Utah in 1857 to stop a potential rebellion of the Mormons and to show the danger of Utah as a free state.


46 T. B. H. Stenhouse, Tell It All: The Story of a Life's Experience in Mormonism (Hartford, CT: A. D. Worthington, 1874) vi.

47 A. G. Paddock, In the Toils or Martyrs of the Latter Days (Chicago: Dixon and Shepard, 1879) 5.


49 Joseph Smith, trans., The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1976) Jacob 2:27.


51 Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom, 1958, 174.


"Ulysses S. Grant, "Seventh Annual Message to Congress, December 7, 1875," A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the President, 1898, 355."
CHAPTER V

THE POLYGAMY DEBATE, 1870-1878

Introduction

"I have lived 18 years in plural marriage and could not be persuaded from it."¹ "It is the indisputable right of every woman to have a good husband and a home."² "Polygamy is utterly and entirely opposite to equality. . . ."³ "Women of Utah, you have the right of suffrage in this Territory. . . . [Y]ou have been driven to the polls like sheep by the whip of your masters."⁴ Female speakers made these and similar statements during public mass meetings in the Utah territory during 1870-1878.

In this chapter, the rhetoric of both the Mormon and non-Mormon women on polygamy will be studied. The purpose of this chapter, then, is two-fold: First, to identify the prominent ideographs used by Mormon and non-Mormon women in their public argument over polygamy; and second, to explain how the participants in the polygamy debates characterized their opponents and themselves. By locating the ideographs and describing how the participants in the debates viewed themselves and their opponents the reasons motivating the speakers to public action should become clear.

Organizationally, this chapter contains the following
sections. A description of the structure of the mass meetings held by the Mormon women comprises the first section. In the second section, the prominent ideographs employed in the Mormon's discourse at the 1870 mass meeting are identified and explained. In the third section, the organization of the Anti-Polygamy Society and the subsequent opposition to polygamy by the members of the Society is outlined. This section also includes an explanation of the prominent ideographs reflected in the discourse presented at the anti-polygamy organizational meeting held in 1878. A summary of the Mormon women's response to the formation of the Anti-Polygamy Society makes up the fourth division. The ideographs reflected in the Mormon's discourse opposing the Anti-Polygamy Society are identified and explained here. The fifth section summarizes how the Mormon and non-Mormon women characterized themselves and their opponents. Finally, the last section contains a discussion of the motives or reasons driving each group to speak publicly.

Structure of the Mormon Mass Meeting

The Mormon women sponsored two large meetings during 1870-1878. Both were held in Salt Lake City—the first in 1870 and the second in 1878. In addition to these two large protest meetings, various settlements in the territory sponsored smaller protest sessions during 1878 and into 1879.
At the indignation meetings, Mormon women delivered short, pointed, and spirited speeches. The speeches contained between one hundred to a thousand words. The speakers praised various Mormon religious practices, especially the practice of plural marriage, and claimed plural marriage positively affected the domestic relationship. Well attended, the first indignation meeting held in Salt Lake City saw "ladies of all ages—old, young, and middle aged" in the audience. Likewise, the second major mass meeting and smaller protests were well attended.

At the meetings, the speakers chose not to refute directly their opponent's argument against the Mormon church and polygamy but instead used their testimonies to demonstrate that they were intelligent beings and capable of making rational decisions on their own. Rather than select external evidence to support plural marriage, the speakers told stories of their own experiences as proof of the positive impact of polygamy.

Generally, the audiences attending the meetings responded positively to the messages of the speakers. One reviewer described the speeches at the St. George meeting in 1878, as "eloquent." A report in the Deseret News of the mass protest at Provo called the rhetoric "spirited" and claimed the resolutions passed at the meeting were "pithy and pointed." In a similar fashion, the mass meeting held in Lehi in December, 1878, described the talk positively:
The speeches were plain and pointed, fully setting forth the views, feelings and position on the principle under discussion, and fully showed that the ladies were abundantly able to express themselves and take their own part.4

All of the meetings sponsored by the Mormon women followed a similar format. The meetings usually commenced with music. If a band did not play, the congregation would sing spiritual songs such as "The Spirit of God" or Americanism-type music such as "Hail Columbia." Every assembly opened with a prayer in which the women asked God for guidance and strength during the meeting.

Following the election of officers, the congregation usually heard a series of short speeches by women on topics such as plural marriage, female rights, and suffrage. During these speeches, a group of women would leave the meeting to prepare resolutions of protest. The resolutions framed the goals of the meeting and outlined any actions those attending the meeting wished to take.

Each speaker had been selected carefully by the planners. The speakers at the Salt Lake mass meetings were leaders from the surrounding communities who had worked actively in the Female Relief Society and/or were wives of prominent church authorities. All were faithful members of the Mormon church. The planners meticulously orchestrated the number and type of speakers so that both active polygamists and women not participating in plural marriage testified of the desirability of the practice. Invariably,
the Mormon women testified that the law of celestial marriage came from God.

The speakers also varied in age and education. The elderly women generally spoke of their lengthy involvement in the church and recalled incidents where the church members had withstood persecution in the name of religious freedom. The younger women, on the other hand, testified of the joy and love they had for the family unit. In both instances, the women always supported plural marriage and expressed that they loved the children of other wives as if the children were their own. The more educated speakers, such as doctors and midwives, also underscored the desirability of plural marriage and verbally deplored the unjust treatment of the Mormons by the sponsors of the anti-polygamy legislation. Often poems written specifically for the occasion would be read.

After the resolution committee returned, organizers sought audience approval of the protest resolutions. Not surprisingly, at every mass meeting the resolutions were adopted unanimously. Following the presentation of the resolutions, the meeting closed with a song and a prayer.

The Salt Lake City mass meeting became the model for similar protests throughout the territory in both substance and structure. Planners carefully controlled the direction of the protest by their selection of who spoke and the resolutions passed.
With the basic structure of the Mormon mass meetings explained, I will now turn to an analysis of the speeches delivered at the 1870 mass meeting. In the next section, I will detail the prominent ideographs appearing in the Mormon women’s discourse.

The 1870 Mass Meeting

With the completion of the Civil War and Reconstruction, Congressional leaders directed their attention to creating a stringent enforcement mechanism for the 1862 Bigamy Act. Congressperson Shelby M. Cullom from the state of Illinois introduced the Cullom Bill in an attempt to control polygamy in the territory in 1869. In the minds of the Mormons, the bill, if passed, would strip political power from the Mormon church in the territory. The bill would have subjected Utah to complete federal control. In essence, the bill would have divested the Mormons of many of their political privileges. The Mormons adamantly opposed the adoption of the Cullom Bill because of its harsh punishment against the husband in a polygamous relationship and its denial of inheritance rights to children.

The Mormon women joined en masse in Salt Lake City to oppose the passage of the Cullom Bill in 1870. A review of the thirteen speeches delivered and the resolutions passed at the indignation meeting revealed four prominent
ideographs (See Table 1). Not only were the ideographs employed more frequently but the issues generally were developed in more depth by the speakers. A short synopsis and explanation of each ideograph depicts the intense feelings aroused by the Cullom Bill and reveals the basic values motivating the Mormon women to speak out against the legislation. The major ideographs included: <Citizen’s rights>, <trust in God>, <women of God>, and <in the toils>.

<Constitutional Rights>

The first ideograph might be labeled <constitutional rights> or <citizen rights>. As "honest, virtuous, and loyal citizens," the Mormons felt they should be accorded the privileges and rights provided for in the Constitution of the United States. In general, speakers using the <constitutional rights> ideograph employed historical examples to justify the positions they advocated. Mrs. Kimball, for example, felt the Cullom Bill denied Mormon women the privilege of selecting a husband. Bathsheba W. Smith believed the Cullom Bill withheld religious liberty. In fact, all thirteen speeches at the mass meeting used the ideograph <constitution rights> in some form. In some speeches, the Mormons employed the term <liberty> instead of the phrase <constitutional rights>, but the diachronic structure of the ideograph remained the same. For support of their position, the Mormon women often
TABLE 1. Ideographs contained in the 1870 Mormon Women's Mass Meeting

Purpose of Meeting: Opposition to the Cullom legislation

I. *Citizen's rights* or *Constitutional rights*

Summary: Citizens should be accorded the privileges and rights guaranteed in the Constitution of the United States.

Sample discourse:

A resolution passed at the meeting indicated: "That we unitedly exercise every moral power and every right which we inherit as the daughters of American <citizens>, to prevent the passage of such bills; knowing that they would inevitably cast a stigma on our republican Government by jeopardizing the liberty and lives of its most loyal and peaceable <citizens>."[13]

In her protest speech, Mrs. Wilmarth stated: "The <Constitution> for which our forefathers fought and bled and died bequeaths to us the right of religious liberty, the right to worship God according to the dictates of our own consciences. Does the Cullom Bill give us this right? Compare it with the <Constitution> if you please, and see what a disgrace has come upon this once happy and republican Government! . . . I am an American <citizen> by birthright, and having lived above the laws of the land, I claim the right to worship God according to the dictates of my own conscience and the commandments that God shall give unto me."[14]

II. *Trust in God*

Summary: A faithful religious member showed devotion to God by complying willingly with the commandments of their religious faith. A faithful follower of God's commandments would return to live with God and would receive exaltation in the next life.
II. **<Trust in God>**

Sample Discourse: "Whatever may be the final result of the action of Congress in passing or enforcing oppressive laws for the sake of our religion upon the noble men who have subdued these deserts, it is our duty to stand by them, and support them by our faith, prayers and works, through every dark hour unto the end, and <trust in God> of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to defend us, and all who are called to suffer for keeping the commandments of God."

III. **<Women of God>**

Purpose: This ideograph represented the Mormon women's view of her relationship to God and the world. A Mormon not only held citizenship within the United States but she held citizenship in the kingdom of God. God, at the helm of His church, would defend His people if they followed His word.

Sample discourse: Eliza R. Snow believed <women of God> should be a helpmate: "Were we the stupid, degraded, heartbroken beings that we have been represented, silence might become us; but as <women of God>, women filling high and responsible positions, performing sacred duties, women who stand not as dictators but as counselors to their husbands, and who, in the purest, noblest sense of refined womanhood, being truly their helpmates, we not only speak because we have the gift, but justice and humanity demand that we should."

IV. **<In the toils>**

Purpose: The Mormon women argued that they had withstood <intolerant persecution> and defended their religious ideals, or they argued that they had <struggled> without complaint to settle the west.

Sample discourse: Bathsheba W. Smith recalled: "In this isolated country we made new homes, and for a time contended with the crickets for a scanty subsistence. The rude, ignorant, and almost nude Indians were a heavy tax upon us while <struggling> again to make comfortable homes and improvements; yet we bore it all without complaint."
would refer to their ancestors’ efforts to guarantee freedom. Although the <constitutional rights> ideograph appeared frequently in the discourse at the 1870 mass meeting, its form differed from speaker to speaker. Mrs. WilmARTH, for example, employed a diachronic ideograph when she made reference to her ancestors who had bled and died to insure religious liberty:

The <Constitution> for which our forefathers fought and bled and died bequeaths to us the right of religious liberty, the right to worship God according to the dictates of our own consciences. Does the Cullom Bill give us this right? Compare it with the <Constitution> if you please, and see what a disgrace has come upon this once happy and republican Government! . . . I am an American <citizen> by birthright, and having lived above the laws of the land, I claim the right to worship God according to the dictates of my own conscience and the commandments that God shall give unto me."

For Mrs. WilmARTH, American citizenship provided the right to religious freedom. To remain silent while her liberty was being trampled seemed unacceptable.

Since many of the early converts to the Mormon faith came from the New England area, many had ancestors that either fought in the Revolutionary War or had immigrated to the New World in search of religious freedom. Repeatedly, they used historical illustrations of their ancestors suffering for religious liberty. For example, Mrs. East felt that being an American citizen entitled her to the liberty for which her forefathers had fought in the Revolutionary War. On the other hand, Hannah T. King
eloquently combined historical illustrations of Columbus, Washington, and the Pilgrim fathers to support her thesis that the Cullom legislation denied the Mormons their constitutional rights:

My sisters, are we really in America, the world-renowned land of liberty, freedom, and equal rights? The land that Columbus wore his noble life out to discover? The land that God Himself helped to exhume, and that Isabella, a queen, a woman, declared she would pawn her jewels and crown of Castile to give him the outfit which he needed? The land of Washington, the "Father of this Country," and a host of noble spirits too numerous to mention? The land to which the Mayflower bore the Pilgrim fathers, who rose up and left their homes, and bade their native land "good night," simply that they might worship God by a purer and holier faith in a land of freedom and liberty, of which America has long been synonymous? Yes, my sisters, this is America; but oh? "how are the mighty fallen!"

By using historical illustrations that the audience viewed favorably, the speakers easily identified the thesis of their speeches to the beliefs of their audience.

In addition to selecting historical illustrations to support the constitutional rights ideograph, the speakers also recounted personal stories involving religious freedom. Two anecdotes—the leaving of Nauvoo and the Mormon Battalion—were retold in the mass meetings. Neither the state of Illinois nor the federal government had protected the Mormons from religious persecution while they had lived in Nauvoo. After significant harassment in which opponents martyred Joseph Smith, the president and prophet of the church, the Mormons left Nauvoo in 1846 to avoid further
religious persecution. The move west caused significant hardships. The pioneers suffered serious physical hardships including disease, starvation, and confrontation with the Indians. The speakers, in making reference to their life in Nauvoo and the move west, repeatedly high-lighted the Nauvoo experience and the <toils> of the move west. Eliza R. Snow, the president of the Female Relief Society of the church, recalled the Mormon's move west in this manner:

They [Congress] must be very dull in estimating the energy of female character who can persuade themselves that women, who for the sake of their religion left their homes, crossed the plains with hand-carts, or, as many had previously done, drove ox, mule, and horse teams from Nauvoo and from other points when their husbands and sons went at their country's call to fight her battles in Mexico--yes, that very country which had refused us protection and from which we were then <struggling> to make our escape. . . .

The recounting of these experiences intensified the Mormons feelings concerning the Cullom Bill. The enemy this time was not the persecuting crowds in Illinois, nor the harsh experience of migrating west, but federal officials who were debating legislation to limit the Mormons' <constitutional rights>. The Mormons thought the Cullom Bill would restrict the opportunities of religious freedom.

The second anecdote, the story of the Mormon Battalion, also underscored the Mormon's belief in <constitutional rights>. Even though the federal government had not protected the Mormons in Nauvoo, but the church still responded to President Polk's request for military
assistance in 1846. Polk wanted to occupy California and to provide sufficient military strength for any future dispute with Mexico. Five hundred Mormon men agreed to help the President. The men formed the Mormon Battalion and marched by foot from Fort Leavenworth to San Diego, arriving in California in January 1847.21

The <constitutional rights> ideograph not only appeared in the speeches but played a dominant part in the resolutions adopted at the protest meeting. In fact, of the eight resolutions passed at the meeting, five contained the <constitutional rights> ideograph. In one resolution, for example, the women cited historical incidents to encourage hearers to protect their <citizenship>:

Resolved, That we unitedly exercise every moral power and every right which we inherit as the daughters of American <citizens>, to prevent the passage of such bills; knowing that they would inevitably cast a stigma on our republican Government by jeopardizing the liberty and lives of its most loyal and peaceable <citizens>.22

Even though the structure of the <constitutional rights> ideograph in the speeches paralleled the resolution, the intended purpose differed. Designed for the immediate congregation, the speeches had a powerful self-persuading influence on the hearers attending the meeting. On the other hand, the resolutions directed to the supporters of the Cullom Bill took on a more general persuasive appeal.

As shown, the Mormon women supported the Constitution of the United States and held in high esteem the rights
guaranteed through the document. In part, this idea rested on the Mormon’s belief that the United States government was established under God’s direction and that the Constitution was divinely inspired. To deny American citizens their constitutional rights equaled, in the minds of the Mormons, a denial of God. Harriet Cook Young, as well as others vilified Senator Cullom because his legislation infringed on the constitutional rights of the Mormons:

The Constitution of our country is therefore hallowed to us, and we view with a jealous eye every infringement upon its great principles, and demand, in the sacred name of liberty, that the miscreant who would trample it under his feet, by depriving a hundred thousand American citizens of every vestige of liberty, should be anathematized throughout the length and breadth of the land as a traitor to God and his country.23

Cullom was not the only person the Mormon women verbally attacked. The individuals supporting the Cullom Bill received their share of verbal abuse. In two resolutions passed at the mass meeting, the Mormon women caustically pronounced:

Resolved, That we do hold sacred the Constitution bequeathed us by our forefathers, and ignore with laudable womanly jealousy every act of those men to whom the responsibilities of government have been instructed, which is calculated to destroy its efficacy.

And,

Resolved, That in our candid opinion, the presentation of the aforesaid bills indicates a manifest degeneracy of the great men of our nation; and their adoption would presage a speedy downfall and ultimate extinction of the glorious pedestal of Freedom, Protection, and Equal
<Rights> established by our noble ancestors.\textsuperscript{24}

The Mormon women, not content to leave their objections against the perpetrators of the Cullom legislation in such a mild form, caustically criticized the backers of the bill. Feeling that the supporters of the legislation were disloyal, the Mormon women described them as "unworthy of any position of trust in any office which involved the interest of our nation."\textsuperscript{25}

On surface then, the Mormon women’s opposition to the anti-polygamy legislation appeared inconsistent with their use of the <constitutional rights> ideograph.\textsuperscript{26} Since the 1862 Bigamy Act had been in effect for eight years, one might easily have concluded that the Mormons practicing polygamy violated the law. However, in the minds of the Mormons, the law of the land was the Constitution, not legislative acts. Until the court ruled on the constitutionality of the 1862 Bigamy Act, the Mormons felt no compulsion to honor the law. In fact, the Mormon women made no reference to the Bigamy Act or to the Mormon’s violation of this law at any time during the indignation meeting. Instead, the Mormon women narrowly applied the <constitution rights> ideograph to the guarantees of individual freedom contained within the Bill of Rights.

In review, the Mormon women strongly supported the Constitution and held in high esteem the rights guaranteed in the document. They used <constitutional rights>
arguments in hopes of convincing the proponents of the Cullom Bill that the Mormons were faithful citizens and that the Bill itself violated their fundamental rights of freedom of religion. In both the speeches delivered and the resolutions passed at the mass meeting the <constitutional rights> ideograph appeared repeatedly.

<Trust in God>

Beyond the <constitutional rights> ideograph, the Mormon women's rhetoric reflected their religious beliefs, including a blind faith to <trust in God>. The Mormons believed that God directed and counseled His children. To show devotion to God, the Mormons needed to comply willingly with the commandments of their religious faith. As a requirement of the gospel, the Mormon women felt an obligation, as Mrs. Levi Riter stated, "to honor, teach, and practice" the belief. Put simply, a person honored their God by following His commandments.

Ultimately <trusting in God> lead the Mormon women to support their husbands and the church:

[W]hatever maybe the final result of the action of Congress in passing and enforcing oppressive laws for the sake of our religion upon the noble men who have subdued these deserts, it is our duty to stand by them, and support them by our faith, prayers, and works, through every dark hour unto the end, and <trust in God> of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to defend us, and all who are called to suffer for keeping the commandments of God.¹⁸

The Mormon women would stand by and support their husbands,
fathers, and sons because they had made a commitment to follow the counsel of God. Following the counsel of God, however, was not without its reward. The promise or reward for righteous living and a triumph over evil came in the next life. A faithful follower of God's commandments would return to live with God.

<Women of God>

Another ideograph used by the Mormon women in the 1870 meeting tangently related to the <constitutional rights> ideograph. The <women of God> ideograph represented the Mormon women's view of her relationship to God and the world. A Mormon not only held citizenship within the United States but she also believed that she was a citizen of the kingdom of God. This latter citizenship required that she honor and sustain certain religious rules. The <woman of God> ideograph was built upon the precept that God, at the helm of His church, would defend His people if they followed His word.29 In contrast to the degraded, heart-broken women, as the anti-polygamists depicted the Mormon women, they saw themselves as noble and following a responsible course of action. Eliza R. Snow, for example, believed that women of God could be a helpmate to her husband:

Were we the stupid, degraded, heart-broken beings that we have been represented, silence might become us; but as <women of God>, women filling high and responsible positions, performing sacred duties, women who stand not as dictators but as counselors to their husbands, and who, in the
purest, noblest sense of refined womanhood, being truly their helpmates, we not only speak because we have the right, but justice and humanity demand that we should.\textsuperscript{30}

Snow went on to praise the Mormon women who stood by their helpmates in a supportive capacity. Thus, \textit{women of God} followed religious teaching righteously.

\textit{<In the Toils>}

The final ideograph found in the discourse at the 1870 mass meeting might best be labeled \textit{<in the toils>}. The \textit{<in the toils>} ideograph generally appeared in a synchronic form and developed in either of two ways. The Mormon women either argued that they had withstood \textit{<intolerant persecution>} by protecting and defending their religious ideals or they argued that they had \textit{<struggled>} without complaint to settle the west. Only a few of the speakers at the 1870 meeting used the \textit{<in the toils>} ideograph, but the ideograph emerged over and over again in numerous articles published by the Mormon women in the \textit{Woman's Exponent}.

Repeating stories of religious persecution experienced in Missouri and Illinois, some speakers at the mass meeting heralded the \textit{<in the toils>} message. Bathsheba W. Smith, using the \textit{<intolerant persecution>} form of the \textit{<in the toils>} ideograph, recalled her own personal experience in Missouri:

\begin{quote}
From my early youth I have been identified with the Latter-day Saints; hence, I have been an eye and ear-witness to many of the scenes that have
\end{quote}
been inflicted upon our people by a spirit of intolerant persecution. . . . In Missouri mobs were burning houses and killing the Saints, when an army was sent by Governor Boggs, which we supposed had come to protect us; but, alas! time proved that it came to continue the same dreadful work, reducing the whole people from competence to extreme poverty, sending them forth under an exterminating order, in midwinter, two hundred miles across bleak prairies, among strangers in a strange State, leaving their homes and property to be possessed by their persecutors.31

The Mormons experienced similar abuses in Illinois and were forced to leave their homes because of religious persecution. But still the Mormons toiled in righteousness. In the isolated desert of Utah, the Mormons made and created their new homes. As Bathsheba W. Smith recalled: "In this isolated country we made new homes, and for a time contended with the crickets for a scanty subsistence. The rude, ignorant, and almost nude Indians were a heavy tax upon us while struggling again to make comfortable homes and improvements; yet we bore it all without complaint. . . ."32

When using the in the toils ideograph, the Mormon women pictured themselves as enduring and suffering for their goals but in the end succeeding. This steadfastness to their ideals was a positive aspect of the Mormon character. Whereas in the constitutional rights ideographs stories of persecution were used to show an infringement of individual rights, stories used to support the in the toils ideograph showed how dedicated and committed the Mormon followers were to their faith. The
Mormons <struggled> and withstood <intolerant persecution>.

Overall then, the Mormon women opposed the Cullom legislation because of its harmful consequences to the personal liberties of the Mormons. The Mormon women formed arguments to oppose the legislation that reflected fundamental values which they held. They believed that plural marriage was a requirement of their religion. They also believed, as citizens, that they had the right to religious liberty. In the eyes of the Mormon women, the practice of plural marriage stood as a fundamental religious belief that required protection rather than eradication.

The Mormon women opposed the Cullom legislation because of its harmful consequences to personal liberties. In their view, they practiced plural marriage as a religious belief and felt that polygamy should be shielded rather than destroyed. The Mormon women formed arguments opposing the legislation that rested on a <rights> position. As <citizens>, they had the right to religious liberty including the choice of a woman to marry a man that already had a wife.

The Mormon women supported the <constitution> of the United States and held in high esteem the <rights> guaranteed through the document. The Mormons believed that God established the United States government, and as such, God inspired the writing of the constitution. For the Mormons, denying <citizens> their <constitutional rights>,
as proposed in the Cullom legislation, equaled a denial of God.

In part, the speeches at the 1870 mass meeting served to unite or join the Mormon women in a common cause. For example, the <women of God> ideograph reflected the Mormon women's dedication to following God's commandments. In order to receive exaltation in the next life, the Mormon women needed to honor and sustain the religious principles of the Mormon faith and this included the practice of plural marriage. As such, a Mormon not only held <citizenship> within the United States, but she also believed that she needed to be a faithful member of the kingdom of God. This latter <citizenship> required that she honor and sustain God's rules. By supporting plural marriage, the Mormon woman demonstrated she was a good <citizen> in God's kingdom.

In addition, the <in the toils> stories helped to unify the group. Why would so many Mormons have suffered so much unless they believed the principles were correct? The commonly held belief that the Mormons had been persecuted unfairly in the past and would be treated unfairly under the Cullom legislation seemed to unify the group in a common purpose. To survive persecution, the audience, at least as offered by speakers at the 1870 mass meeting, needed to place their <trust in God> and He would protect them. The speakers condemned the Cullom Bill and advised the audience
to remain firm in their commitment to God’s commandments. The <trust in God> ideograph showed that the Mormons believed that faith brought rewards. God would compensate the faithful, if not in this life then in the life-hereafter. Where the <constitutional rights> ideograph showed an infringement on individual rights through persecution, stories used to support the <in the toils> ideograph demonstrated the dedication and commitment the Mormon followers had in their faith.

The rhetoric at the 1870 mass meeting probably had the greatest influence on those who attended and spoke at the meeting. The meeting permitted the speakers to articulate ideas about which they felt strongly. In turn, their speeches served as a self-persuasive exercise. By explaining how they felt about the Cullom Bill, the Mormons argued against federal involvement and publicly denied the evils of polygamy. By putting these feelings into words, their ideas became anchored more firmly in the Mormon women’s ideology of how they saw themselves with respect to the rest of the world.

In the next section of this chapter, the non-Mormon women’s formation of the Anti-Polygamy Society is explained. The rhetoric of the non-Mormon protest against polygamy is analyzed and the prominent ideographs identified and explained.
The Anti-Polygamy Society's Campaign Against Polygamy

The individuals most responsible for arousing public discontent and requesting federal legislation against polygamy were members of the Anti-Polygamy Society. The Society, comprised of non-Mormons in the Utah territory and other individuals outside the territory, publicly denounced polygamy during the late 1870s and into the 1880s and noted the disadvantages and societal harms caused by the vile marriage practice. The members of the Society constituted the backbone of American Protestantism's protest against polygamy. Although the Society did not formally organize in the territory until 1878, the opposition to polygamy and female suffrage had been an active topic during the 1870s. Through mass meetings, petitions to Congress, and letters to religious organizations, the non-Mormons opposed polygamy.

In 1878, a young English woman, Carrie Owen, arrived in Utah as a convert to the Mormon church. After entering the territory, Owen found herself entangled in a polygamous relationship and she appealed to the non-Mormon women for assistance.13 Allegedly, she had married John Miles on the very same day that he had married another woman.14 The incident received so much notoriety that the non-Mormon women thought the time opportune to oppose polygamy. They called a mass meeting for November 7, 1878, "to consider the means of extirpating the sin and shame of polygamy."15

A complete record of the meeting does not exist.
Newspaper accounts recorded, in part, some of the issues discussed and reprinted the memorials passed at the meeting. The *Deseret News* reported that 200 women attended the meeting held in the Congregational church. S. A. Cooke chaired the meeting and Mrs. Bane acted as secretary. Where the Mormon women carefully had orchestrated the extemporaneous discourse at their mass meeting, the non-Mormons meticulously planned a single speech and deliberately limited debate. Miss Read read an address, which previously had been written by a committee. As the *Salt Lake Daily Tribune* recorded:

> They [organizers of the mass meeting] spent no time in debate, but rushed to the business of the meeting though with a celerity that puts to shame the disputation and delay of similar meetings of the rougher sex.

The address read by Miss Read consisted of two letters and a memorial: One letter functioned as an open address to Mrs. Rutherford B. Hayes and the women of the United States, the second letter was directed to the clergy, and the memorial, addressed to the Senate and House of Representatives, requested legislation to make effective the anti-polygamy law of 1862.

The letter to Mrs. Hayes and the women of the United States outlined the problems associated with polygamy and the political domination of the Mormons in temporal matters in the territory. Strategically, the non-Mormon women saw an advantage of providing elected officials with
documentation that many individuals were concerned about the barbaric practice of polygamy. To accomplish this end, they sent the open letter and a copy of the memorial to Congress, and a circular letter to representatives of the clergy across the nation. They requested that the clergy read the open letter to their congregations and then circulate the memorial for signatures of support. Following the collection of signatures, the memorial was to be forwarded to Congressional representatives for presentation to Congress.

The address to Mrs. Hayes, the letter, and the memorial contained two dominant ideographs: <Polygamy as barbaric> and <federal control>. The <federal control> ideograph had two forms, <treason> and <government by theocracy> (See Table 2). In the opening paragraph of the letter addressed to Mrs. Hayes and the women of the United States, the non-Mormon women charged Congress with failing to enforce existing polygamy laws. In part, their motive for petitioning Congress, then, was to encourage the federal government to end polygamy. The <federal control> ideograph became the most dominant ideograph in the non-Mormon women's rhetoric in 1878. The reasons for why the government needed to intervene and stop polygamy can be seen in an edic analysis of the <polygamy as barbaric>, <treason>, and <government by theocracy> ideographs. Each of these three ideographs served as reasons for why Congress needed to act
TABLE 2. The 1878 Anti-Polygamy Meeting Ideographs

Purpose of meeting: To persuade Congress and religious organizations to support the abolition of polygamy.

I. Polygamy as barbaric

Summary: The non-Mormons felt that polygamy violated principles of Victorian America. Polygamy degraded women and made them slaves to their husbands.

Sample discourse:

"That so long as the Mormon priesthood are suffered to rule this Territory under their anti-American system of local laws, and subject it to their barbaric practice of polygamy, defiling the purity of society, we must protest against its admission as a state of the Union." 38

II. Federal control

Summary: To assure a fair government in the territory, the federal government should exercise authority to control polygamy.

Sample discourse:

"We, the undersigned, women of Utah, pray your honorable body to enact such legislation as will make effective the anti-polygamy law of 1862." 39

A. Treason

Summary: Mormons violated the 1862 Bigamy Act and continued to form polygamy alliances. They also perjured themselves when in court.

Sample discourse:

"Congress has utterly failed to enact, efficient or enforce existing laws for the abolition of this great crime, and we believe that more of these unlawful and unhallowed alliances have been consummated in the past year..." 40
B. *Government by theocracy*

Summary: The Mormons controlled the territorial government and as such violated the separation of church and state.

Sample discourse:

"Our legislature is composed almost entirely of polygamists and members of the Mormon priesthood, and they have thrown around polygamy every possible legislative safeguard in their power, and the right of dower has been abolished to break down the distinction between the lawful wife and concubine." ⁴¹
on the Utah question.

The <polygamy as barbaric> ideograph pictured the practice of polygamy as debasing and degrading to both women, men, and children. The most frequently used ideograph, the <polygamy as barbaric> centered on what should constitute a proper marriage relationship. In a resolution passed at the 1877 men's mass meeting, the memorializers wrote:

That as observers of the practical effects of this anomalous and licentious system, we affirm our unqualified conviction of its debasing and degrading influence on society, and our belief that its continuance will ultimately bring social ruin upon any community. . . . 42

In the non-Mormon's view, any person who favored an ecclesiastical law over a temporal law had committed a <treasonable> action. The non-Mormons, as loyal citizens of the United States, objected to such unjust acts. However, the framers of the resolutions never gave any examples of treasonable acts the Mormons had committed. Instead, they charged the Mormons violated the United States marriage customs. On the whole, the non-Mormon's reasoning does have validity. When two laws conflict (i.e., an ecclesiastical rule and a temporal law) and when officials, who make judgments concerning the conflicting laws, are Mormon priesthood holders, one reasonably could assume that the temporal law would not have the highest priority. In fact, the non-Mormons felt so strongly about the inappropriate actions of the Mormons that they requested the federal
government deny statehood until the problem was corrected.

Resolution Eight read in part:

That so long as the Mormon priesthood are suffered to rule this Territory under their anti-American system of local laws, and subject it to their <barbaric practice of polygamy>, defiling the purity of society, we must protest against its admission as a state of the Union.43

With respect to the <treason> ideograph, the non-Mormon women asserted that "unlawful and unhallowed alliances" of polygamy still continued in the territory.44 The non-Mormons, unable to ascertain or document how many polygamous marriages had taken place, offered little proof substantiating for their complaint. Performed in secret in an Endowment House, members of the LDS church had taken oaths not to reveal what occurred during the marriage ceremony. The non-Mormons, therefore, lacked quantitative support for their accusation. They, however, inferred that because of all the secrecy the Mormons could not be trusted. In the open letter, the non-Mormon women charged that the oath taken in the temple by the Mormons was so strong that "witnesses on the witness stand unblushingly perjure themselves and on the jury violate all considerations of oath and duty."45 Now, since the marriages were performed in secret, since the Mormons took an oath of secrecy, and since the Mormons perjured themselves in the courtroom, what else could a prospective hearer conclude but that the Mormons were in all likelihood guilty of <treason-like actions>.}
The fact that the Mormons practiced polygamy under the cloak of religion tied the <polygamy as barbaric> ideograph to the <government by theocracy> ideograph. The grounds supporting <government by theocracy> would be similar to the rationale used to advocate separation of church and state. In an open letter, the non-Mormons highlighted their concern:

Our legislature is composed almost entirely of polygamists and members of the Mormon priesthood, and they have thrown around polygamy every possible legislative safeguard in their power, and the right of dower has been abolished to break down the distinction between the lawful wife and concubine.45

Philosophically, the non-Mormons did not want to be governed by priesthood officials who, they felt, failed to enforce the law. Since the Mormons failed to punish other Mormons who violated the law, the priesthood officials violated the separation between temporal and ecclesiastical matters.

Utah required <federal control> to correct the problem if a long term solution to the conflict could not be reached locally. Since compromise between the participants was next to impossible, the only solution and the fairer solution, in the words of the non-Mormons, was to write the federal government to solve the difficulties.

The <government by theocracy> ideograph reflected the non-Mormon concern for separating church and state issues. By noting the political dominance of the church in non-ecclesiastical matters, the non-Mormon women advanced their
position for getting the federal government to pass legislation curtailing the Mormon political dominance and outlawing polygamy. To show the urgency for federal action, the non-Mormon women noted that the Mormons were extending their settlements and were moving into neighboring territories. Unless the Mormons were stopped quickly, the problem of Mormon dominance would grow and become even more difficult to control.

As a result of the non-Mormon women's concern for Carrie Owen and their desire to end polygamy and Mormon priesthood dominance, the non-Mormon women officially formed the Anti-Polygamy Society at the 1878 meeting. On the forming of the Anti-Polygamy Society, the Mormon press made this comment: "This is a new crusade, or rather an old attack in a new form. It will, in a short time, be numbered among the rest of the failures in the fight against God and truth."47 The Anti-Polygamy Society would not fail, but members of the Society would serve for the next nine years as leaders in the opposition to polygamy.

The 1878 Mormon Women's Mass Protest

The Mormon women reacted quickly to the formation of the Anti-Polygamy Society. Wounded by the attacks of the non-Mormon women, the Mormon women returned to a direct and public defense of polygamy. They organized a large number of protest meetings in Mormon settlements throughout the
intermountain west. The meetings denounced what had been said and written by the members of the Anti-Polygamy Society. At the Nephi mass meeting, one person called the circular of the Anti-Polygamy Society "unhallowed."48 At the American Fork meeting, a woman saw the non-Mormons' protest as "wicked interference."49 While Mrs. Hindley, in her address at the American Fork meeting, denounced the charges of the non-Mormon women as "vile misrepresentation."50

Motivated to respond to the charges of the Anti-Polygamy Society, leaders in the Mormon Female Relief Society organized an indignation meeting in Salt Lake. Zina D. Young, M. Isabella Horne, and Emmeline B. Wells submitted a notice to the Deseret News calling for a public protest against the misrepresentations and falsehoods being circulated by the non-Mormon women. The article called on all interested women to declare their true sentiments upon the subject of polygamy.51 Believing that it was better to represent themselves than be misrepresented by others, 1,500 ladies convened in the Salt Lake Theater on the 16th of November, 1878. They demonstrated that the Mormon women could speak for themselves by protesting against the recent charges of the anti-polygamy crusaders in Utah. The Mormon women felt they had been misjudged by females in their own midst on subjects that the Mormons held most sacred—the rights of wifehood and motherhood. The Deseret News aptly
described the value the meeting held for improving the national image of the Mormon women: "The 'downtrodden women of Utah,' 'the slave to horrible tyranny,' 'the sad-eyed sisters of Salt Lake,' will be able to demonstrate "how little these peculiar designations truly apply to them." 

The Mormon women felt indignant that members of their own sex would print such allegations against a principle they revered. As Emmeline B. Wells, in the closing address of the mass meeting, so ably explained: "We never thought that women could rise up against women." Consequently, the Mormon women willingly tackled the problem at hand, even if it meant verbally attacking other women in public. At the close of her fiery address, Wells advised the audience to meet the problem head on with "all the energy and fortitude" they possessed, for it would be "diamond cut diamond."

Where the speakers at the first protest meeting had defended religious freedom, the speakers at the second mass meeting strongly supported the practice of plural marriage. Having to reply to the charges made by members of their own sex seemed very disquieting for the Mormon sisters. As Emmeline B. Wells expressed:

I feel that we are in earnest; that the time has come when we can no longer be silent, as we are assailed, and that too by our own sex, who, it seems, would, if possible, deprive us of the claim to wifehood and motherhood, by destroying our most sacred relations and crushing our most holy affections. But they know not what they do."
Committed to their religion and to their family, the Mormon women defended their religious beliefs and represented their own cause in public at the 1878 mass meeting.

Although similar in structure to the 1870 mass meeting, the 1878 indignation meeting did differ in a number of ways. In 1870, speakers had claimed that the practice of polygamy came from God. In 1878, they tried to show that the practice of plural marriage had a positive value. Continually, the rhetors defended plural marriage as virtuous. They supported this position by relying on personal testimony of the positive effects of plural marriage in their own lives. One speaker, Margaret T. Smoot, explained it this way:

With regard to the principle of plural marriage, I wish to say, that I have had experience in its practice for over 30 years. I am the wife of a polygamist, I believe in the principle, and I know that those who practice it in the spirit of the Gospel of which it is a part, are pure and virtuous.

Second, not only did the speakers see the practice of plural marriage as virtuous, they argued that plural marriage was positive. In one of the resolutions passed at the meeting, the Mormon women claimed that practicing plural marriage righteously "would conduce to the long life, strength and glory of the people practicing it." Data supporting plural marriage as a positive social custom were skimpy. The speakers made broad assertions and relied solely on personal testimony to validate their claims.
In addition to defending polygamy and justifying the practice as positive, the Mormons requested that their opponents stay out of the fight over polygamy. The assumption underlying this attack rested on the belief that non-Mormon women had allowed themselves to be used by unprincipled men. The non-Mormons wanted the Mormons' property and thus, as one woman claimed, by flattery "they have so blinded these women that they fail to comprehend the motives" of those who control them.  

Another difference between the 1870 and 1878 meetings rested in the specific ideographs employed by the speakers. Only two of the ideographs, the <in the toils> and <constitutional rights> remained the same. The <women of God> ideograph took on a different form. Believing plural marriage was a <principle from God>, the Mormon women saw their religious principles being attacked publicly by members of their own sex. As such, the Mormon women questioned the motives of the non-Mormon women and claimed that the whole movement was engineered by "other hands than those seen on the surface." They also claimed the non-Mormon women were "mere tools and mouthpieces of those men who are endeavoring to procure legislation from Congress for their own private and peculiar ends." The Mormons charged that the rhetoric of the non-Mormons was an example "of intolerance and religious hate sowed by Satan."  

The fact that only three ideographs were discovered in
the discourse at the 1878 mass indignation meeting might suggest that the Mormon women had refined their thinking during the interim eight years (See Table 3). For example, the Mormon women still used the <in the toils> ideograph to show the steadfastness of the Mormon women to their religion. Speakers consistently characterized themselves as hardworking and dedicated to their religion. As in the 1870 meeting, the Mormons used pioneer stories of crossing the plains and working side-by-side with their spouses to settle the territory. In Dr. Romania B. Pratt’s account of the building of the territory, she revealed the importance, in the Mormons’ world view, of working:

As the fruits of indomitable energy, perseverance and patient labor, the wild sagebrush vanished, the rock and arid soil, through the power of the life giving streams of water, softening the forbidden face of nature into smiling fields and gardens. With this glad change of elements there gradually arose and prospered industries, enterprise and commerce, the busy hum of which tickled the ears of lovers of grain, when again the web of our lives is interwoven with hostile elements of former years.43

As in 1870, the Mormons’ vision of reality, as revealed in the <in the toils> ideograph, seemed self-centered. By noting their successes over their trials and tribulations, they encouraged their hearers to remain faithful and steadfast against the attacks on their religion. Together as a group, as the Mormons had done in the past, they would withstand the <toils> and the anti-polygamy opposition.
TABLE 3. Prominent Ideographs from the 1878 Mormon Protest

**Purpose:** To reply to the Anti-Polygamy Society charges.

I. **<Citizen’s rights> or <Constitutional rights>**
   Used similarly to the 1870 protest. Takes on a dominant position in the discourse.

II. **<Trust in God>**
    Dropped from discourse.

III. **<Women of God>**
    Adapted to a broader ideograph **<God’s principles>**

IV. **<God’s principles>**
    Summary: The Mormon women believed that plural marriage was a **<principle from God>**.
    Sample discourse:
    
    Zina D. Young testified to the importance of plural marriage in the Mormon religion: "The principle of plural marriage is honorable, it is a **<principle of the Gods>**—it is heaven-born. God revealed it to us, among other things, as a saving principle; we have accepted it as such, and we know it is of him for the fruits of it are holly."[4]

V. **<In the toils>**
    Used similarly to the 1870 protest.
In addition to the <in the toils> ideograph, the speakers also employed the <constitutional rights> ideograph in much the same manner as it had been argued in the 1870 mass meeting. The <in the toils> ideograph bolstered the immediate audience giving them the encouragement to face the barrage of attacks leveled against the Mormons. The <constitutional rights> ideograph, as developed, reflected the basic legal position of the Mormon women, that being an absolute right to religious freedom without governmental or individual interference.

In the 1878 meeting, the <constitutional rights> ideograph assumed an even more important position in the Mormons' reply to the anti-polygamy crusade. They used the <constitutional rights> ideograph to rationalize their right to practice polygamy. In the 1870 meeting, the speakers believed that supplying information on their beliefs would be sufficient to convince their opponents of the value of polygamy. Now at the 1878 meeting, the Mormon women adamantly claimed the right to religious freedom since they were <citizens>. Since polygamy was one of the most important tenets of their religion, the Mormons reasoned they had every right to practice it without interference. Even if opponents discounted the authority of the constitution, God, as the supreme being, authorized the practice of plural marriage. In either case, the appeal to constitutional authority or the use of God as an authority,
plural marriage had official sanction in the Mormon women’s eyes. Since the Constitution authorized freedom of religion, the Mormons should be spared harassment and interference by those wishing to curtail that freedom. Any tampering with the religious rights of a person, on either the part of the Anti-Polygamy Society or federal legislators, would set a dangerous precedent for eroding religious rights in the future. A portion of Bathsheba W. Smith’s address illustrated how easily the right of religious freedom could be eroded:

As a legal <citizen> of this great republic, I enter my most fervent protest against this unlawful and unhallowed crusade founded on misrepresentations. Congress has no right to interfere with our most sacred religion. As well might that honorable body legislate against baptism by immersion as against plurality of wives. <God has revealed these principles>, and they must be sustained.^65

These two ideographs, <in the toils> and <constitutional rights>, reappeared over and over again in the speeches delivered at smaller protest meetings in the territory. Cedar City, Beaver, Lehi, St. George, Hyrum, Fillmore, and even some towns outside of Utah organized public protests during 1878–1879. Initiated under the direction of the leaders of the Mormon Female Relief Society and faithful members of the church living in each area, these small protest meetings constantly supported Mormonism and plural marriage. In fact, one report of a mass meeting held in Alma, Wyoming recorded that a Mrs. Beveridge
advised the women in attendance that if there were any "who did not believe in plural marriage not to speak against it for the angels of God were taking notes..."^56

Continually, women attending the mass meetings were admonished to remain steadfast to the truth. The listeners were counseled that faithful observance of plural marriage would be rewarded in the next life. At the St. George mass meeting held on the 8th of December 1878, one woman noted:

> God is your shield and your defence [sic], and though hell may rage, midnight darkness surround you, and breakers rise before, and dash their spray around you, the Pilot who guides the ship will never leave His post until she is safely anchored in a haven of security and peace.^67

With few exceptions, the women claimed that if their opponents really knew the Mormons that the attempt to end plural marriage would stop. As Mrs. L. W. Kimball noted at the December protest in Provo: "The ladies of the East would not persecute us if they really knew us."^68

In their effort to enlighten the opposition as to the value of plural marriage, the speakers at the smaller territorial protests, similar to the speakers at the large indignation meeting in Salt Lake City, continually pointed out the advantages of polygamy. Speakers seldom refuted the arguments raised by the non-Mormon women but were content to describe their life under polygamy. For example, a speech written by Helen M. Callister was read at the Fillmore mass meeting on January 8th, 1879. Her message reflected her personal conviction of <toiling> for the truth:
I know the principle of plural marriage to be a truth. . . . I have shared hunger, poverty, and <toil>, with my husband’s first wife, whom I love as a dear sister. Together we trod the trackless wilds to reach these then sterile valleys. Together we battled the hardships of the "first year." Through many trying scenes, ties closer than that of sisterhood bound us together and now that peaceful homes and smiling plenty have succeeded those bitter hardships, these invaders come seeking to spread desolation by sundering these sacred family ties.  

Numerous speakers added their testimonies of the success of polygamy and claimed that prostitution among the Latter-day Saints did not exist and that men did not deny their wives and children. As if the women of the church needed to be reminded of the legitimacy of plural marriage, speakers frequently discussed why plural marriage held such an important place in their religion. Here we see reflected the ideograph <God’s principle>. As noted earlier, the Mormons believed the principle of plural marriage was divinely sanctioned by God. Individuals attending the meetings were reminded of this fact. At the Beaver mass meeting held the 13th of December 1878, Mrs. Eleanor Willden expressed the belief that the doctrine of plural marriage came from God: "It [plural marriage] was practiced by Abraham and Jacob [prophets in the Old Testament], whose children we are." The Mormon women refused to give up their husbands or brand their children as illegitimate just because they followed God’s commandments. Perhaps M. Elizabeth Little best represented the Mormon women’s belief
on this issue:

We are determined to stand by the right. . . . Better let us hide in the dens and caves of the earth, than give up any of the pure principles of the holy Gospel of the Son of God. The winds may howl and the waves dash against the old ship, Zion; some of the seamen are washed overboard, yet she rides majestically on, for at the helm stands the Lord God of Hosts, and I hear the still small voice say, "Fear not, my children, I will fight your battles and bring you safe to that desired haven of peace and rest."

Also, the speeches delivered at the smaller protest meetings reflected the constitutional rights ideograph. Speaking at the Beaver protest Dellia F. Cox stated: "We have a right to worship God according to the dictates of our own consciences, and no one has a right to interfere with our religion." Similarly, Mrs. Lucinda Howd commented: "Our enemies have no more right to interfere with our religious faith in plural marriage than they have in baptism or any other ordinance of the gospel."

The anti-polygamists published their reaction to the 1878 mass meeting held in Salt Lake in various newspaper accounts. Generally, the non-Mormon press viewed the meeting unfavorably. The Salt Lake Daily Tribune called the meeting "a performance never before played on the American stage." The press charged that the Priesthood had manipulated the Mormon women.

In another account, the press claimed that the "helpless and deluded Mormon wives" only obeyed the priesthood in their support of plural marriage.
writer believed that the "feeble talk" of the speakers was "enough to bring the blush of shame to the face of every right-thinking person that in this land of universal intelligence, women can be found so lost to all sense of decency as to parade their shame before the whole world." In the minds of the non-Mormons, the spectacle of the mass meeting served as proof that polygamy should be abolished.

In a subsequent report printed a few days later, the non-Mormons replied specifically to the <constitutional rights> position articulated by the Mormon women at the mass meeting. They objected to polygamy not as a religious issue but to the position that,

> every woman has the constitutional right, if she is young and fresh, to steal the heart of a man from the wife of his youth and the mother of his children, to crawl into her place by his side, and smooth 'his athletic frame that perhaps needs a plural wife.'

In review, the speakers at the 1878 mass meeting supported the practice of plural marriage. The Mormon women, not content to sit back and let the false charges against them go unanswered, chose to speak out against the attacks made on their church. Rather than refuting the specific claims made by the Anti-Polygamy Society, they presented the positive side of plural marriage. The ideographs <in the toils>, <God's principles>, and <constitutional rights> appeared in the speeches delivered by the Mormon women. If anything, their rhetoric reflected a strong commitment to freedom and to their religion.
Participants Characterized Self and Opponents

A discussion of how each group characterizes themselves and each other would help to understand the ideology driving each group. Accordingly, the next section summarizes how each group viewed themselves and their opponents in their public discourse. Four questions guide this section: How did the Mormon women characterize themselves? How did the Mormon women view their opponents, especially the non-Mormon women residing in Utah? How did the non-Mormon women characterize themselves? How did the non-Mormon women view their opponents?

Mormon Women Characterize Themselves

During the nineteenth century, the nation witnessed a growing number of individuals, especially women, who actively campaigned for women’s rights. At this same time, the "proper role for women" became a popular topic of discussion in public speeches and newspaper articles within the territory of Utah. In Utah, however, the discourse, especially that of the Mormon women, supported the more traditional roles for women.

The Mormon women held strong puritanical beliefs on morality and family life. In the 1870s, however, a few women in Utah questioned the economic and political status of women as depicted by Victorian England. E. hinted at the
Mormon's view on the proper sphere for women in society:
"Woman's true status is that of companion to man, yet protected by law in the possession of those rights which will enable her to act in an independent sphere, would he abuse his position and the union unendurable." The Mormons, as expressed in the Woman's Exponent, rejected the belief that women should be treated as a chattel, owned as property, or handled as a fragile toy without brains:

The most obsequious deference is ostensibly paid to their [women's] slightest wish. . . . She must not be allowed to stand if a seat can be found by a man vacating it. She must be preserved from the slightest blast of trouble, petted, caressed, dressed to attract attention, taught accomplishments that minister to man's gratification; in other words, she must be treated as a glittering and fragile toy, a thing without brains or soul, placed on a tinselled and unsubstantial pedestal by man, as her worshipper. This elevation of status is by courtesy, not by right."

Progressive in matters related to economics, the Mormons permitted women to own property. Even so, the Mormons held conservative views with respect to the roles women should play in daily life. Writers and speakers consistently emphasized that the woman's place was in the home. One writer claimed, being a mother and a wife was "the most noble, dignified and graceful position she [could] occupy." The first stanza of a poem titled "Woman's Rights" underscored the importance of the role of wife and mother for the Mormons:

A woman's truest empire is her home;  
Nor should she idly from its precincts roam;
Nor in her neighbors seek some fault to find,
But strive her own affairs alone to mind.\textsuperscript{12}

Failure to honor and look after the family would lead to
unhappiness, so the Mormons believed.

Although the status of women in the Mormon culture
appeared somewhat elevated from Victorian England, the
church still expected women to be wives and mothers. Any
philanthropic work or employment outside the home came
second to that of becoming a wife and mother. This is not
to say that women could not work outside the home or should
not care for the sick or the elderly. In fact, Brigham
Young, President of the Mormon church for close to twenty-
seven years, sanctioned employment for women as long as it
suited her nature and talents.\textsuperscript{13} In settling a new area,
the Mormons still needed workers to continue building the
kingdom. Women were encouraged to work if the job suited
her nature. If women worked, men were free to assist in
other work assignments to build the territory.

Mormon women, in addition to seeing themselves as wives
and mothers, characterized themselves as free, intelligent,
and industrious. As Emmeline B. Wells expressed, Mormon
women are "real, genuine, rational beings" not "vain,
frivolous, fickle and deceitful."\textsuperscript{14} Women, in the eyes of
the Mormon faithful, had an identity separate from their
family or spouse. In fact, the church frequently admonished
Mormon women to broaden their knowledge in other spheres of
interest beyond the family and the home. The Mormon women
were so counseled because of the positive influence the
training would have on raising children. Seeing the
advantage of a broad interest, Wells wrote:

Women must be something more than a toy, or
plaything, or fashion plate, or even [a] household
duty. She must become enlightened on all points
pertaining to life and its purpose, not only how
to bear and rear children, but how to make them
physically, morally, and mentally superior. ⁸⁵

Mormon women also thought of themselves as intelligent
rather than domestic drudges, as the anti-Mormons pictured
them. Several writers tried to represent Mormon women as
degraded and oppressed with no possible escape from their
situation unless they received outside assistance. In
reply, the Mormon women claimed that they were not fallen
and were not degraded but in actuality were "cherished and
respected" by the Mormon men. ⁸⁶

Next, the Mormon women pictured themselves as playing
an important role in the building of the territory. Since
many of the Mormons were pioneers and had helped settle the
area, they characterized themselves as busy, honest, and
frugal citizens. ⁸⁷ As pioneers, they crossed the plains and
settled a desert: Their crops were devoured by insects,
their lives were endangered by Indians, they had built
homes, and had created new cities in the territory. Honest
toil by both men and women pioneers provided the means for
survival. ⁸⁸ As a result of this pioneer experience, the
women became more self-reliant than other women living
during this period.
Mormon women also pictured themselves as pure-minded with exalted ideas and virtue. In the ladies' mass indignation meeting held in Heber, Utah on the 13th of December, 1873, Mrs. L. B. Pratt depicted the Mormon women in this manner: "There are no purer minded women in all the reactions of God than are lying [sic.] in plural marriage." Believing that the Mormons were noble women and exhibited strong individuality, Pratt further declared that only the "pure-minded and high souled women can sufficiently comprehend the design of these [plural marriage] covenants. . . ."99

The Mormon women practicing plural marriage believed that they were obeying a religious principle and should not be labeled as idiots simply because they followed their religious convictions. Reasoning analogically, one writer compared the Catholic nuns to the Mormon women: "Is it [plural marriage] any sign of imbecility? The Roman Catholic Nuns follow their religious convictions when she takes the veil, yet she is not considered an idiot."90

Besides viewing themselves as free, intelligent, industrious, pure-minded wives and mothers, the Mormon women also saw themselves as loyal American citizens. As citizens, they had a legitimate right to claim specific individual freedoms. As Mrs. L. W. Kimball argued: "I am the granddaughter of a man who fought and was wounded for the liberty of our country, and when I remember his bent
form and stories of citory, I cannot but claim my rights as an American citizen. . . ."91 In the Beaver mass protest against the Anti-Polygamy Society's misrepresentations, Mrs. R. W. Tyler adamantly claimed that "the Latter-day Saints are loyal to the Constitution of our country and Congress has no right to interfere with our religion."92

In their discourse, the Mormon women seldom characterized themselves as followers of Christ, but they did picture themselves as a God-fearing people. When responding to an anti-polygamy petition, M. Elizabeth Little depicted the Mormon women as servants of God.

"We serve the true and living God; we are willing to keep His commandments and to raise up to Him a God-fearing people-noble stalwart sons, virtuous spiritual-minded daughters, who will build up a kingdom of righteousness, and make the earth fit for the coming of the Son of man."93

In general, the Mormon women described themselves in very positive terms. They saw themselves as wives of polygamists, mothers, and citizens. But they also believed they were an industrious, intelligent, and pure minded people. In contrast, the Mormons viewed their opponents less positively.

Mormon Women Characterized Opponents

The Mormon women characterized their opponents in a variety of ways. Initially, they held some sympathy for the non-Mormon women over the non-Mormon men during the 1870-1878 time period. But even so, they characterized their
opponents in very unflattering terms. For example, one speaker labeled the non-Mormon women as "impure."94 Another called them "poor, silly things."95 While a third thought they were "foolish women."96 For the Mormon women, the non-Mormon women appeared more dangerous because they were of the same sex. In an 1879 issue of the Woman's Exponent, a woman from Grantsville made this point: "The greatest enemy woman can have is woman."97 Even though the Mormons had experienced previous public attacks from their opponents, never had members of their own sex opposed them so vociferously.

Following the first anti-polygamy meeting in 1878, the Mormon women felt their opponents only attempted to tear down society and offered no option to build the society in a better way.98 Additionally, they felt the non-Mormon women had been tools of the anti-Mormon crusaders. As Mrs. Zina Young Williams said in an 1878 mass meeting in Provo, "I pity those who are the tools of the adversary of mankind."99 Mary, from Grantsville, advanced a similar position. "Those ladies who allowed themselves to be the cat's paw in this crusade can't be thinking; they do not think for themselves, they are merely echoes for others, who with or without reason, hate the Latter-day Saints."100 Likewise, M. Elizabeth Little agreed that the men manipulated the non-Mormon women. In a very florid writing style she wrote:

By flattery and poor-pussyism them [men] have so blinded these women that they fail to comprehend
the motives of these unprincipled men, and are led
on to become traitors to their fellow sisters, to
their good common sense, and to themselves as
ladies of this enlightened age.\textsuperscript{101}

Thus, the Mormon women believed that the non-Mormon women
had been hoodwinked into speaking against plural marriage
and the Mormon women.

In addition to believing that the non-Mormon women were
being manipulated to support the anti-polygamy campaign, the
Mormon women very pointedly offered their opponents advice.
They frequently admonished the non-Mormon women to stay home
and watch their own husbands. Mrs. Tennie Smoot advised
this while speaking at the Utah county mass meeting in 1878:
"It would be far better for the anti-polygamist, instead of
coming here to oppose our religion, to stay at home and
watch their own husbands, lest perchance they should not
keep to the path of virtue."\textsuperscript{102} Mrs. H. A. Beebe's advice
employed even more colorful language: "The Gentile ladies
of Salt Lake and elsewhere could plain see as they thought
the mote of polygamy in Utah, but failed to see the beam of
infanticide of such magnitude in the East."\textsuperscript{103}

In contrast, the Mormon women became even less
sympathetic towards the non-Mormon men who opposed polygamy.
Surmising the men were the enemies of women's rights, the
Mormon women called them "political frauds,"\textsuperscript{104}
"unscrupulous tricksters,"\textsuperscript{105} and "blackheads in the
Christian communities."\textsuperscript{106} The Mormon women presumed
certain men living in the territory of Utah were scheming to
try and gain political advantage over the Mormons. In their effort to gain control, these men deliberately had used the non-Mormon women and the religious clergy in the United States in order to gain political domination in the territory.\textsuperscript{107}

The Mormons viewed their male opponents with greater skepticism. They questioned their motives for opposing polygamy and labeled them as corrupt power seekers. With respect to the non-Mormon women, they held a more sympathetic attitude. They believed the non-Mormon women were being manipulated by individuals wishing political and economic advantage in the territory.

**Non-Mormons Characterize Opponents**

In general, the non-Mormons expressed their feelings against polygamy and suffrage rather than attacking the Mormon women. The non-Mormons saw the practice as "a festering sore, a putrid spot in the heart of this nation, that would have to be cut out, or very severe remedies applied, or the chances were that it would kill the patient."\textsuperscript{108} In the non-Mormon view, the Mormon men not the Mormon women were the culprits because they initiated polygamy and used female suffrage for their political gain. The Mormon women, the non-Mormons believed, had been tricked into joining the Mormon church and, thus, were forced to practice polygamy. For example Reverend R. G. McNiece,
while speaking before the Woman's National Anti-Polygamy Society Union Meeting in 1889, called polygamy "An outrageous swindle imposed on the people by their priestly leaders to further the wicked schemes of power and lust." The non-Mormons blamed the Mormon priesthood for sanctioning polygamy and expressed their concern for the Mormon women. In fact, they felt it their duty to rescue the unsuspecting female from the clutches of the priesthood and the debasing marriage practice of polygamy. Their fight, they believed, was not against the Mormon women but against polygamy as a practice and the priesthood authority of the Latter-day Saint church.

As reflected in their discourse, the non-Mormons' view toward Mormon women seemed maternal. For example, popular lecturer Kate Field, in one of her public addresses criticizing polygamy, claimed that Mormon women were trapped by the custom and had little choice but to remain in misery. In her lecture delivered in 1886 in Washington, D.C., Field characterized the Mormon woman as "ignorant" but "humble." Using the lyrics of a song to substantiate her point, Field charged that the priesthood manipulated the women:

    Now sisters list[en] to what I say,
    With trials this world is rife,
    You cannot expect to miss them all,
    Help husband get a wife.

    Now this advice I freely give
    If exalted you would be,
    Pray that your husband may be blessed
    With more wives than thee.
Then, oh, let us say
God bless the wife that strives
And aids her husband all she can
To obtain a dozen wives.\(^{110}\)

Not only did the non-Mormons depict the Mormon women as deluded and pawns of the priesthood, but the non-Mormons worried about the priesthood’s control over the voting behavior of the Mormon women. Believing the Mormon women were ill prepared to assume the responsibilities of voting, Sarah Cooke, president of the Anti-Polygamy Society, sent a letter to the editor of the \textit{Citizen} and the \textit{Ballot Box}. The \textit{Anti-Polygamy Standard} later reprinted her message. In the letter, Cooke insisted that:

\begin{quote}
The Mormon women know nothing about the responsibilities on them as voters, and the exercise of the liberty is not disconnected from religion. A good Mormon woman does as she is told and asks no questions. On election day the ticket is given her by the Bishop or one of the Teachers of the ward in which she lives and she votes it.\(^{111}\)
\end{quote}

Probably the strongest and most frequently used language against polygamy called the practice a sin. Relying on St. Paul’s message to the Christians of Corinth, the non-Mormons frequently noted: "Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."\(^{112}\) In fact, the editors of the \textit{Anti-Polygamy Standard} reprinted St. Paul’s admonishment below their mast head. They label polygamy a sin and felt the Mormons committed a crime since the practice violated the 1862 law prohibiting bigamy.

Beyond religious and legal grounds, the anti-
polygamists opposed the practice of polygamy because they felt it debased and degraded women and society. As members of the Anti-Polygamy Society frequently stated, polygamy was "degrading to man and woman, a curse to children, and destructive to the sacred relation of family, upon which the civilization of nations depends. . . ." At the very least, polygamy, in the eyes of its opponents, made women no more than slaves and created an unhealthy environment in which to raise children.

Overall, the non-Mormon's discourse reflected a more sympathetic attitude towards the Mormon women. They saw the men of the Latter-day Saint church as the instigators and perpetuators of plural marriage. The non-Mormons wished to rescue the Mormon women from the evils of polygamy and control the male-hierarchy of the Latter-day Saint church for political reasons.

Non-Mormons Viewed Themselves

Since the non-Mormons believed that the males of the Mormon church controlled the women through the power of the priesthood, the logical step would be for the non-Mormons to free the Mormon women from polygamy and priesthood domination. As such, the anti-polygamists pictured themselves as rescuing the Mormon women from the clutches and evil power of the priesthood. This is not to say that rescuing the Mormon women became the sole reason for
opposing polygamy. Many anti-polygamists opposed polygamy because they felt the custom in and of itself reprehensible. Others saw themselves as angels of mercy rescuing the Mormon women and children from evil. Cornelia Paddock in her book *In the Toils* explained her altruistic motives for opposing polygamy:

> It is my business [to oppose polygamy] because I am a woman, and polygamy degrades my sex below the level of humanity; because I am a wife, and polygamy makes that sacred name a by-word; because I am a mother, and polygamy makes maternity a curse, and puts the brand of shame on the innocent foreheads of little children.¹⁴

The non-Mormons, therefore, saw their role as one of rescuer or redeemer releasing the bonds of polygamy and saving the deluded Mormon women.

Many anti-polygamists had another reason for opposing polygamy and requesting federal curtailment. These individuals sought control over the territorial courts, legislature, and administrative positions of government in Utah. The demise of polygamy and the abolition of suffrage for all women in Utah and all males practicing polygamy gave the non-Mormons new political and economic leverage in the territory.

**Discussion of Motive**

Both the Mormon and the non-Mormon women were adamant in their views concerning polygamy. Each assumed a non-conciliatory posture toward each other. This non-
conciliatory posture inhibited the groups from negotiating a local compromise to the problems they encountered.

The first ten years of the polygamy debate centered on the rights of citizens and the role of women in western America while highlighting issues of morality. The Mormon women characterized themselves as loyal American citizens, law-abiding individuals, industrious and God-fearing people. They denied that they had been overridden and downtrodden by corrupt men whose object was to oppress or injure them. The Mormon women held strong puritanical beliefs on morality and family life. The Mormons rejected the belief that women should be treated as a chattel, owned as property, or handled as a fragile toy without brains.

The Mormons consciously set themselves apart from the dominant values commonly held during the nineteenth century in the United States. They wished to practice their religious faith and worship their God in private. The Mormon women’s world vision, as reflected in frequently used ideographs, showed a strong commitment to specific ideals—a commitment to God and the principles that He revealed, and a strong sense of individual freedom. The Mormon women’s world tended to be self-centered and driven by a desire to follow God’s commandments. A faithful woman, who followed the commandments of God, received exaltation in the next life. For the Mormon women, the road to exaltation consisted in following God’s principles, toiling for
righteousness, and placing her trust in a just and fair God.

The non-Mormons, on the other hand, desired political influence and power in territorial affairs. They disliked the practice of polygamy and did not enjoy being governed by a theocracy. They saw themselves as rescuing the Mormons from the evil practice of polygamy. The non-Mormon's ideology clashed with the Mormons. The Mormons supported polygamy, the Non-Mormons opposed it. The Mormons enjoyed political dominance in the territory. The non-Mormon thought that political officials committed treason. They felt, the solution to the conflict rested with federal intervention to control polygamy and Mormon political domination. During the 1880s, Congress passed the Edmunds Bill and the Edmunds-Tucker Act in order to end polygamy and strip the Mormon's of territorial power. Both documents limited suffrage in the territory. The next chapter addresses the Mormon and non-Mormon women's involvement with the 1882 Edmunds Act and the 1886 Edmunds-Tucker Act and the dispute over the right of females to vote in the Utah territory.
Notes

1 Speech by Della F. Cox, "Ladies' Mass Meeting at Beaver," Deseret News 15 Jan. 1878: 787.

2 Speech by L. B. Pratt, "Ladies' Mass Meeting at Beaver," 1878, 787.


9 Proceedings in Mass Meeting of the Ladies of Salt Lake City, to Protest against the Passage of the Cullom's Bill, January 14, 1870 ([Salt Lake City: n.p.], 1870) 1-8.

10 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 2.

11 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 3.

12 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 7.

13 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 5.

14 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 1.

15 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 5.

16 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 4.

17 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 2.

18 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 3.
19 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 6.

20 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 5.


22 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 2.

23 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 6.

24 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 2.


26 An official rule of the Mormon faith is to obey the law of the land. The twelfth article of faith reads: "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law."

27 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 2.


29 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 3.

30 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 5.

31 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 1.

32 Proceedings in Mass Meeting, 1870, 2.

33 For a brief historical account of the formation of the Anti-Polygamy Society see "The Ladies' Anti-Polygamy Society of Utah," *Anti-Polygamy Standard*, May 1880: 1. Also see Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah*, vol. 2 (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons, 1898) 56-75. Whitney claimed the Owen case "Brought the Anti-Polygamy Society into being, and it was that Society which gave birth to the wide-spread political and religious agitation that led to the enactment of the Edmunds law."

34 In a letter to the editor of the *Salt Lake Daily Tribune*, Miss Owens refuted many of the charges that had been leveled by the Mormons concerning her situation. She reported: "My husband has never informed me that he had another wife, and outside my own suspicion, I have no knowledge that he has one. I have heard him most emphatically deny that he married the girls of which I was jealous." Carrie Owens, "Miss Owen's Letter," *Salt Lake Daily Tribune*, 6 Nov. 1878: N. pag.


"One More Effort," 1878, 649.

"One More Effort," 1878, 649.

"One More Effort," 1878, 649.


"One More Effort," 1878, 649.

"One More Effort," 1878, 649.

Mary Pitchforth, "Woman’s Mass Meeting at Nephi," *Woman’s Exponent* 1 Jan. 1879, 118.


"Women’s Mass Meeting," *Woman’s Exponent* 1 Dec. 1878, 103

"Women’s Mass Meeting," 1878, 102.

"Women’s Mass Meeting," 1878, 102.

This is not to say the arguments presented were never refuted directly. In fact, the issues raised by the members of the Anti-Polygamy Society received specific comment in the press.
57 "Women's Mass Meeting, 1878, 99.
58 "Women's Mass Meeting, 1878, 102.
64 "Woman's Mass Meeting," 1878, 98.
65 "Women's Mass Meeting," 1878, 98.
70 Speech by Mrs. Hindley, Hunter, 1878, 733.
72 Little, 1879, 255.
73 "Ladies' Mass Meeting at Beaver," 1879, 787.
74 "Ladies' Mass Meeting at Beaver," 1879, 787.
77 "That Testimony Meeting," 1878, N. pag.


E., 1872, 29.


Blanche Beachwood [Emmeline B. Wells], "Real Women," *Woman's Exponent* 1 Jan. 1874: 118.

Blanche Beachwood [Emmeline B. Wells], "Woman as Subject," *Woman's Exponent* 1 Nov. 1874: 82.


"Provo Ladies' Mass Meeting," 1878, 716.

"Ladies Mass Meeting at Beaver," 1879, 736.

Little, 1879, 255.

Speech by Margaret Cluff, "Provo Mass Meeting," 11 Dec. 1878, in *Defense of Plural Marriage by the Women of Utah County*, (n.p., [1879]), Latter-day Saint Church Archives, Salt Lake City, UT.


Little, 1879, 255.


Mary, "Woman-Women's Worst Enemy," 1879, 117.

Little, 1879, 255.


Mary, "Pipsey Papers," 1879, 123.


Kate Field, "The Mormon Monster," Lecture delivered in the Congregational Church, Washington, D. C., 15 December 1886, N. pag. Latter-day Saint Church Archives, Salt Lake City, UT.


1 Cor. 7: 2.

"One More Effort," 1878, 649.

A. G. Cornelia Paddock, In the Toils or Martyrs of the Latter Days (Chicago: Dixon & Shepard, 1879) 5.
CHAPTER VI

THE POLYGAMY AND SUFFRAGE DEBATE, 1879-1886

Introduction

The decade of the 1880s saw a change in polygamy enforcement. The federal government continued to pass legislation giving territorial officials more power to punish polygamy offenders. Even with additional legislation, both the Mormon and non-Mormon women still petitioned Congress to assist in the Utah affair. The Mormon women sought federal assistance to keep their political rights and abolish the Anti-Bigamy Act. The non-Mormon women desired that the federal government revoke the political privileges of the Mormons, including the voting rights for all polygamists and women in the territory.

The stories aired in the public dispute demonstrate the intensity of the conflict. Predominantly, the conflict centered on what means could be used to eliminate polygamy and the political domination of the Mormon church. Suffrage became central to this dispute. On the part of the Mormons, they believed that the right of suffrage had been constituted properly in 1870. They believed the privilege granted had now become a right because it had been exercised for so many years. In fact, the Mormon women felt it their
sacred duty to vote:

It is the sacred duty of every woman who has the right of suffrage to go to the polls on election day and deposit her ballot, for every vote adds strength as well as numbers to the People's Party. Every person should consider the vote he or she casts as though it was the one to turn the scale in favor of the man or men to be elected. It is not only the public duty, but it is an individual responsibility and one that no one can perform for his friend or neighbor, but must be done in person."

Consequently, the Mormons sought to retain their political rights.

The non-Mormons took an adamant position in requesting the abolition of polygamy and revoking of political privileges of the Mormons. Although they did not want to hurt or punish the Mormon women per se, they did ask that the government deny women specific political rights. Uniformly, the non-Mormons thought polygamy a felony and that the offenders should be punished. Abolishment of polygamy would cause serious complications and unhappiness, but if handled judiciously, the complications for plural wives and their children would be minimal. The plans to accomplish the care of plural wives and children varied. Angie Newman, a non-Mormon philanthropist, argued for an Industrial Home to care for the plural wives and children leaving polygamy. Others argued that a husband or father should make suitable provisions for their families in accordance with their means." After passing through Utah in the summer of 1881, Dora Darmore, an editor of the Golden
Dawn in San Francisco, thought that "an army of moral, industrious, intelligent young men" sent to Utah to marry the Mormon girls would solve the problem. Even with the variety of plans, the 1880s saw increasing pressures over polygamy and political control in the territory.

As the national campaign to eradicate polygamy heated-up, so did the public argument between the Mormon and non-Mormon women. This chapter details the conflict between Mormon and non-Mormon women during 1879-1886. In part, the nature of the argument between the two camps changed. The Mormons focused more on legitimating plural marriage and protecting the rights of children and plural wives. The non-Mormons, in attempts to gain political power within the territory, argued that the federal government had a <sovereign> right to control a territorial government that was un-American (i.e. not a <republic>). The Mormons had enfranchised women to assure political dominance in the territory; they violated the Anti-Bigamy Act; they controlled the ballot box. With such flagrant un-American activities, the federal government had little choice but to control the issue or their power would be eroded.

This chapter identifies the prominent motives driving each group by isolating the ideographs employed in their public speeches, editorials, and memorials on polygamy and suffrage. This chapter is organized into four sections: First, a discussion of the Supreme Court’s ruling in
Reynolds v United States and its effect on the public dispute over polygamy/suffrage; second, a synopsis of the ideographs employed in the Mormons' 1879 memorial to Congress and the non-Mormons' reply; third, a summary of the ideographs used by the non-Mormons and Mormons during the suffrage debate. This section reports the ideographs used by the non-Mormons supporting the 1882 Edmunds Act, the 1886 Edmunds-Tucker Act, and the ideographs used by the Mormons in their 1886 mass meeting opposing the Edmunds-Tucker Act and supporting suffrage. Finally, the last section contains a discussion of the motives driving both camps.

Reynolds v United States

The Mormons always maintained that the 1862 Bigamy Act was unconstitutional. They thought it infringed on their freedom of religion, so they ignored the law. But in 1875, Church officials arranged with U. S. Attorney William Carey to test the Morrill Act. The Mormons entered the test case believing that the courts would rule in their favor and overturn the 1862 law because it infringed on religious freedoms. A grand jury indicted avowed polygamist George Reynolds in October, 1874. The court convicted Reynolds, Brigham Young's personal secretary, but the conviction did not come easy. Reynolds actually provided the witness against himself. His second wife, Amelia Jane Schofield,
admitted to the polygamous relationship after being
subpoenaed. A year later, the territorial court overturned
the ruling because of problems in empaneling the jury. Utah
officials arranged a second trial and the court found
Reynolds guilty based on his wife's testimony.

Church officials sought an appeal to the U. S. Supreme
Court. Chief Justice Waite on January 6, 1879, delivered
the unanimous opinion of the Court in Reynolds v United
States. Waite saw polygamy as an evil act over and believed
Congress had power to remove it. With respect to the
legality of polygamy, his opinion centered on two arguments.
First, Congress had the right to legislate on territorial
matters. Utah had not received statehood so the federal
Congress held legislative jurisdiction over issues in the
territory. Second, Waite established the belief/action test
as the standard permitting government the right to control
religious practices. "Laws are made for the government of
actions," Waite wrote while laws "cannot interfere with mere
religious belief and opinions, they may with practices."
Allowing organizations to place religious dogma above the
law of the land in effect authorized citizens to disobey the
law. Asking the question whether religious belief would
excuse practice different from the law, Waite reasoned that

[t]o permit this would be to make the professed
doctrines of religious belief superior to the law
of the land, and in effect to permit every citizen
to become a law unto himself. Government could
exist only in name under such circumstances."
Waite ruled that religious belief was not an acceptable justification for ignoring the legal law of the land. The Reynolds decision made no attempt to deny that plural marriage was a religious doctrine of the Mormon church but only that society could forbid anti-social practices.  

The Chief Justice further explained why government could control action:

Suppose one believed that human sacrifices were a necessary part of religious worship, would it be seriously contended that the civil government under which he lived could not interfere to prevent a sacrifice? Or if a wife religiously believed it was her duty to burn herself upon the funeral pile of her dead husband, would it be beyond the power of the civil government to prevent her carrying her belief into practice?

The Mormons had not expected the Court’s ruling in Reynolds. Since Reynolds effectively struck down the defense of plural marriage, the Mormons faced the prospect of denying their religion or violating the law of the land. With steadfast tenacity, the Mormons did not submit. As historians Arrington and Bitton noted: "God was all-powerful; certainly He would not expect His people to abandon a practice He had commanded."

Ray Davis, Professor of Law at the University of Arizona, concluded that Reynolds "had no immediate impact upon the Mormon marital system." In part, this occurred because testimony documenting marriages could not be readily attained. Even John Taylor, President of the Mormon church, disregarded the Reynolds decision. In an interview with
government officials, Taylor was asked what effect the Reynolds decision would have on the church membership. He responded that he thought there would be little effect except to unite the church members together.¹⁰

To further control polygamy, Congress enacted the Edmunds Act in 1882. Edmunds fulfilled the anti-polygamist’s 1879 request and made cohabitation with more than one woman a misdemeanor in the territory. The law corrected the flaw in previous legislative efforts that required proof of a polygamous marriage or relationships. Now the court could use unlawful cohabitation as the standard. Beyond misdemeanor charges, violators faced six months in prison and a fine of $600. Historian B. H. Roberts estimated that during the 1880s around 1,300 men were found guilty of violating federal law and were imprisoned on cohabitation charges.¹¹

To avoid prosecution, many Mormons chose to leave the territory, or were forced into hiding under the pressure of the anti-polygamy crusade. "Hunting cohabs" became a game and often a source of income for informers. "Spotters" reportedly received twenty dollars if the information led to an arrest. "Night-prowlers," often disguised as tourists, peddlers, tramps, or artisans, pried information from neighbors and children.¹²

In review, the Supreme Court in Reynolds v United States ruled on the constitutionality of the 1862 Bigamy
Act. The Court found that religious liberty protected by
the First Amendment did not include the right to commit
immoral or criminal acts, even though these acts might be
sanctioned by religious doctrine.13 The decision of the
Court, in essence, meant that the Mormons were in direct
violation of federal law when they practiced plural
marriage.

The 1879 Memorials

In an attempt to influence the federal government to
take a more sympathetic view towards the Mormons, Emmeline
B. Wells and Zina Young Williams, both wives of polygamists,
traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with President Hayes
during March of 1879. While there, they also presented a
memorial to Congress requesting the repeal of the 1862
Bigamy Act. Joined by suffrage leaders Susan B. Anthony,
Sarah Spencer, and Joslyn Gage, they tried to show the
President what misery would occur, especially for the women
and children, if the Government enforced the 1862 Bigamy
Act.

In addition to meeting with the President, Wells and
Williams submitted a written letter to him requesting that
he "extend a fatherly care over an oppressed people."14
Wells and Williams reminded the President that polygamous
marriages were contracted when the parties believed that
"the Constitution would protect these marriage rites as
religious ordinances." As such, they requested protection for the wives and children from the consequences of the Reynolds decision:

[We do beseech you to use your influence as the Chief Executive of this great nation, to protect the thousands of women and children, who must so severely suffer under a rigid enforcement of the Law of 1862 now declared to be constitutional by the late decision of the Supreme Court of the United States.]

The two women choose not to challenge the Reynolds ruling. They ignored Waite's belief/action standard and instead adapted previous used arguments to the current situation.

An analysis of the letter to President Hayes revealed three dominant ideographs. Initially, the Wells and Williams' letter employed the <in the toils> ideograph. In the letter, they recounted the hardships members had suffered because of their religious beliefs. Besides the <in the toils> ideograph, they used the <constitutional rights> ideograph but in a slightly altered form. No longer did the Mormon women claim that the constitution protected plural marriage. Rather, they argued that as loyal <citizens> they sought only "to serve God and bless mankind." As good citizens, the Mormon women should be treated with compassion. They no longer demanded an absolute <constitutional right> to practice plural marriage, they sought religious tolerance from governmental officials.

The third ideograph identified in the letter to President Hayes might be labeled <love of family>. As noted
earlier, the Mormons believed that exaltation would come only to those who married in righteousness. Wells and Williams believed that the Reynolds decision and the rigid enforcement of the 1862 Bigamy Act would destroy the families of polygamous marriages—a unit they wished preserved:

[W]e ask you in the name of One who sees not as man sees, who would not permit a sparrow to fall to the ground without His notice, to expect your influence, to avert any harsh measures, and to preserve unbroken the existing relationship of families. . . . 19

In addition to meeting with the President, Wells and Williams also delivered a memorial to Congress requesting the repeal of the 1862 Bigamy Act. As law abiding citizens who desired to obey the laws of the land, Wells and Williams requested Congress to repeal the 1862 law in order to protect Mormon families. They also asked Congress to enact such legislation as will securely legitimatize our children and protect our names from dishonor by preserving unbroken the existing relationship of families which are already bound together by the strongest ties of affection and whose lives would be forever wrecked through separation. 20

As can be seen, Wells and Williams desired to obey the law of the land. Continued practice of polygamy violated the Bigamy Act, a law they felt unable to follow. As they saw it, their problem could be solved if Congress would repeal the law. The argumentative rationale for this appeal rested on preserving the <family unit>. In their request of President Hayes and Congress, they sought protection for the
legal rights of women and children.

Wells and Williams were not very successful in their appeal to the President and Congress. Later in the year, President Hayes recommended in a speech titled "The Suppression of Polygamy" that "more comprehensive and more searching methods for preventing, as well as punishing this crime [of polygamy] be provided." 21

Like the Mormons, the non-Mormons sought federal assistance. In March of 1879, the members of the Anti-Polygamy Society of Utah memorialized Congress. The anti-polygamists wished to counter recent petitions for amnesty from the Mormons. Allegedly, George Q. Cannon, territorial delegate to Congress, and other representatives of the Mormon church had petitioned for amnesty and had promised obedience to the 1862 Bigamy Act. The Society believed that the Mormons had no intention of giving up polygamy and wanted to inform Congress of that fact. Under the leadership of President Sarah E. Cooke and Vice President Victoria Reed, the Society requested that Congress pass legislation lowering the standards of proof needed to prosecute polygamy cases. Specifically, the Society requested that the 1862 Bigamy Act be amended by "making the general reputation of conjugal relations, proof of marriage and living together to constitute the offense." 22

John Taylor, president of the Mormon church, had indicated in an interview that neither Congress nor the
Supreme Court had any authority to interfere with his religious views. Since the leadership of the church still favored polygamy, the anti-polygamists easily inferred that the Mormons had no intention of curbing their practice.

For additional support that the Mormons had not changed their views on polygamy, the framers of the memorial demonstrated that Mormons still performed unlawful marriages. They provided three examples of individuals who had entered into polygamous relationships. In all three cases, the marriages had been performed after the Supreme Court had ruled on the constitutionality of Congress banning polygamy in the Reynolds case.

In an effort to convince Congress that the Mormons had no intention of supporting the Reynolds' ruling, the memorializers documented two cases where the Mormons publicly had reproached the Supreme Court's ruling. First, the Deseret News had declared that the decision in Reynolds was rendered by "feeble-witted and cloudy-minded" judges. Second, the Mormons as a group had reacted negatively to the ruling: "The most violent diatribes [in Mormon meetings] have been uttered against the judges and the judgment of the highest court of the land."

Through the memorial, the members of the Anti-Polygamy Society desired to show that the Mormons had not changed their attitudes towards polygamy, thus necessitating further Congressional action to control the problem.
Unless the prosecuting officer of the Government is enabled by some such appropriate legislation to prosecute and punish offenders against the above named law [polygamy], we feel warranted in saying no regard will be paid to the statute; polygamous marriages will be as numerous as ever. . . .

Thus, the memorial relied extensively on the <federal control> ideograph.

The <polygamy as barbaric> ideograph also appeared in the non-Mormon's 1879 memorial but in a significantly modified form. In the 1878 mass meeting, the non-Mormon women had opposed polygamy because it debased and degraded women. They felt the principle in and of itself reprehensible. Any abolition of the practice would have improved the morals of the community. Now they opposed polygamy because it violated the law. They contested polygamy on legal grounds--the continued practice of polygamy violated the law of the land.

The Mormon women criticized the Anti-Polygamy Society's memorial. Penning her response in the April 1879 issue of the Woman's Exponent, Mary denied the charge that Delegate Cannon had not petitioned Congress for amnesty:

Now I never heard through any other source that Brother Cannon ever made such a promise. I read in the "Deseret News" that certain members of Congress proposed something of the kind to him, but I feel positive that he never accepted it. If he had, he would have died politically and religiously, for he has borne testimony in public that plurality of wives was revealed to Joseph Smith the Prophet, and that it was a true principle. . . .

Although sincere, Mary's logic really supported the
opposition's position that the Mormons were not going to abandon polygamy.

With respect to the News attack, Mary simply noted that other newspapers in the East had objected even more vehemently to the Supreme Court's decision. On the need to strengthen the proof standard, Mary ironically wrote:

Oh! Oh! Oh! Just to think of Congress making such a law. What would become of them if they did, our penitentiaries would be filled full of men who fill high positions and are honored members of the best society, and there would be but few left to receive Anti-Polygamy petitions."³⁹

As can be seen, the Mormon women rejected the non-Mormons' concern as inconsequential. In response, the non-Mormons initiated the Anti-Polygamy Standard in April of 1880 to oppose polygamy. In a column published in the first issue of the paper titled "Our Policy," the non-Mormon women explained the goals they envisioned for their paper. They had no war to wage against the Mormon women, but they wanted to search for themselves the foundations of polygamy. They wanted to show Mormon women that polygamy was against the law of the country, against the law of God, and "contrary to the holiest sentiments of a woman's heart and all the teachings of nature." ³⁰ The initiators of the Standard thought that hundreds of Mormon women would leave polygamy if a path was opened to them.³¹

The non-Mormons formed the Anti-Polygamy Society in 1877 as a means to educate the nation about polygamy. In
1880, they changed the name of the society to the Woman’s National Anti-Polygamy Society and strived to get local groups established in the territory and gain national support. For example, in September, 1880, Park City formed a branch and selected Mrs. L. F. Gerrish as chair. The group adopted the constitution of the Woman’s National Anti-Polygamy Society and discussed the means by which polygamy could be suppressed. Similarly, Bingham and Ogden established branch organizations. At Bingham, the group requested that the parent Society map out a plan of operation that could be followed by the branches. At Ogden, the women discussed how to encourage others to support the organization.

The Society founded its organization on the belief in the supremacy (sovereignty) of national law. A community built upon "lust and blood" versus properly teaching its people the nature of the rule of law needed correction. As such, the organization dedicated its efforts to curtailing polygamy but also "appeal[ing] directly to Congress for such legislation as will make it possible to enforce existing laws and punish the crime of polygamy as any other felony would be punished." As the preceding discussion shows, the Mormons and non-Mormons each tried to promote their position by memorializing Congress or by appealing to individuals who had the power to initiate additional legislation or to
repeal the Bigamy Act. Once the Court announced the Reynolds decision, the Mormon women were forced to adapt their rhetoric. No longer could they argue that plural marriage was a sacred religious rite protected by the First Amendment.

By the end of the decade, the Mormon question became a national concern not just a territorial issue. The Anti-Polygamy Society, through their national memorial campaign, had forced the Mormon women to take their appeal to Washington D. C. From 1870 to 1879, the Mormon women had defended plural marriage. Now they requested Congress protect the wives and children of polygamous families. Both the Mormon and the non-Mormon women remained adamant in their views concerning polygamy. Each still assumed a non-conciliatory posture toward their opponents.

**The Suffrage Debate**

The territory of Utah experimented early with female suffrage. The Legislature enfranchised women in 1869. Ten years later the women's franchisement came under attack. Originally, many non-Mormons had thought that if the female could vote she would cast off polygamy.

The non-Mormons claimed that the franchise did not benefit the women in Utah. In fact, they alleged that the women misused the ballot because the priesthood dictated how the women should vote. The ideograph <suffrage a curse>
represented the non-Mormon's argument against suffrage. During the early 1880s, the Anti-Polygamy Standard included columns criticizing female suffrage in the territory. Often the writers told stories of the way the Mormon males controlled the ballots even allowing mules to vote.

For example, a Prophet's Daughter wrote that suffrage "has been nothing but a curse in the past. What benefit can it be to women who are driven to the polls like a heard of sheep or cattle, and the ticket they are to vote placed in their hands by one of their masters?" The writer goes on to document violations: "I remember one woman having the temerity to ask the bishop 'what the voting was for,' and he answered 'that it was none of her business,'--with a broad expletive--'to do as she was told and ask no questions.' Some non-Mormons believed that a good Mormon woman did just that. If she didn't "she would be cut off from the Church, turned over to the buffetings of Satan, and in addition be subjected to every species of persecution which the malice of the priesthood could event."

Other non-Mormons questioned the legality of enfranchising women. They argued that women wrongfully had been permitted to vote since 1870. In particular, non-Mormons argued that the Mormons used suffrage as a political tool to maintain their power in the territory, and in order to do this, enslaved the women in polygamy.

Not only bigamists, polygamists, aliens and animals of the male persuasion could vote "early
and often," but a still more numerous and superstitious crowd of alien females, desirous of attaining exaltation as the willing instruments of lustful priests, were wrongfully permitted to vote under the Territorial law of 1870.39

Rather than defending against polygamy, female suffrage had become "one of the strongest defenses of priestly bestialism in Utah."40 In general, the articles concluded that female suffrage had become a "rivet in the bonds of the priesthood, a curse instead of a blessing."41

National suffrage leaders criticized the non-Mormons for disapproving of female suffrage in the territory. In an open letter to the suffragists of the United States adopted unanimously at a regular meeting February 7th, 1882, the Anti-Polygamy Society reaffirmed that the ballot in the hands of women from Utah had not "accomplished any result of any kind, except to retard the day of Utah's deliverance from priestly bondage and to rivet their own fetters more securely."42

The non-Mormons opposed the circumstances in the territory because the Mormons violated political sovereignty. At a mass meeting held February 25th, 1882, at the Methodist Church, the Anti-Polygamy Society unanimously adopted resolutions of protest against the Mormons. In particular, they argued that the sovereignty of the community had been violated because for more than thirty years Utah had been controlled by the Mormon priesthood. During this time "the rights of real citizens
have been stolidly denied; the ballot has been prostituted; [and] women dishonored and every sacred element of home destroyed."^{3}

The non-Mormons rationalized that felons, who held allegiance to a higher power, should not manage the territory because in a sense they were not real citizens and in turn violated the <sovereignty> of the territory. The federal government could not continue to allow such a menacing power to resist the laws. The members of the Anti-Polygamy society recommended measures be approved immediately to "take from the Mormons all political privileges until they conclude to accept as <sovereign> the laws of the United States."^{4}

The request for federal action to protect <sovereignty> became a popular plea. For example, the anti-polygamists often used former wives of polygamists to testify of the evils of polygamy and how it enslaved women. For example, Mrs. Hunt spoke at the December 11th, 1882, Woman's National Anti-polygamy Society meeting. Hunt, basing her opinion on personal experience, argued the federal government had a duty to correct the wrongs endured by the victims of polygamy.^{5}

Besides employing the <sovereignty> ideograph, the non-Mormon women argued that Mormon men dominated their wives. Women were taught to believe that <women were inferior>. For example, S. A. Cooke, President of the Anti-Polygamy
Society, and L. W. Rivers, Secretary of the Society, wrote in the *Anti-Polygamy Standard* that women in the Mormon religion were taught that they were man's *inferior*:

> [T]here is no place in Christendom where women are so systematically and thoroughly taught to consider themselves man's *inferior* as in Utah. No Mormon woman, either in polygamy or out of it can ignore the well taught doctrine of man's superiority to her, that he is her *Lord* in every sense of the term, that she can not enter the Celestial Kingdom, or even be raised from the dead except through some man.46

The *Ballot Box* published an indictment of the Mormon church and argued that "Polygamy is utterly and entirely opposite to equality." As such, the Mormon's practice of *male superiority* carried over into territorial government. One of the resolutions passed at the National Woman's Suffrage Convention read: "Resolved, That the theory of a masculine head to rule the family, the church or the State is contrary to *republican principles*, and the fruitful source of rebellion, discord and corruption."47

### The Mormon 1882 Memorial

In an attempt to stop passage of stricter laws against polygamy, the Mormon women again memorialized Congress in March of 1882. Not only did the adult Mormon women petition Congress but the young women submitted a request to Congress testifying of the value of polygamy. The arguments appeared similar to the statements made in the Mormon 1878 mass meeting, especially on the topic of rights and liberty.
The Mormon women objected to the passage of the Edmunds legislation. If passed, the legislation would destroy the peace, tranquility and prosperity that characterized the Mormon's homes.

In their resolutions, the women claimed individual freedom to practice their religious beliefs without constraint from Congress. Divided the argument falls into four parts--three examples and one joining clause. First, the women relied on the <in the toils> ideograph by using historical touchstones to justify their <rights> For example, to avoid persecution the Saints had been forced to flee to the tops of the western mountains in the name of freedom. Second, the non-Mormon women compared their fight for religious freedom with the American Revolution and other battles. Thirdly, the Mormon pioneers labored in a barren desert against Indians and wild beasts to settle the territory. Finally, as a result of these experiences the Mormon women claimed the birthright as "bequeathed" by their "noble ancestors." The three parts of this diachronic argument demonstrated a rationale for claiming religious freedom based on good deeds. This approach differed from relying on a <constitutional> justification of separation of church and state. As such, the speakers tried to create additional grounds justifying for polygamy since Reynolds had denied the religious freedom position.

As in earlier protests, the Mormon women declared they
were not downtrodden but were victims of misrepresentation. They felt that individuals opposed to polygamy and the Mormon faith were trying to rob their homes or plunder the public treasury: "These schemes have been concocted by sectarian priests and political demagogues, and designing men, both men and women unscrupulous in their enmity, and mendacious in their statements. ..." The women declared emphatically that they were satisfied with their current marriage relationships. They had happy homes and they desired no changes. They declared that Mormon women enjoyed more rights and freedoms than anywhere in the nation. The young ladies testified to how polygamy did not degrade but created happy homes:

[W]e, the young ladies of Utah Territory, do most solemnly and truly declare that neither we nor our mothers are held in bondage, but that we enjoy the greatest possible freedom socially and religiously; that our homes are happy ones, and we are neither low nor degraded: for the principles of purity, virtue, integrity and loyalty to the government of the United States have been instilled into our minds and hearts since our earliest childhood.

Thus, the Mormon explained their sentiments by showing that further polygamy legislation would destroy the tranquility of their homes.

In the last portion of the memorial, the Mormon women requested Congress not to act hastily on the Utah issue. A better alternative might be to commission a group to investigate conditions in the territory. Following passage of the 1882 Edmunds Act, the federal government empowered a
commission to govern elections but not to investigate the original charges of abuse.

The five-person Commission barred over 12,000 Mormons from voting, or nearly one-fourth of eligible Mormon voters. The number of those banned exceeded the number of polygamists in Utah. The Mormons challenged the exclusion of voters by the Commission. Although the Court upheld the disfranchisement provision of the Edmunds Act in Murphy, the court scolded the Commission and restricted the commission's future use of voter qualification standards and the administering of voter's oaths.

In an effort to stop enforcement of the 1882 Edmunds Act, Emmeline B. Wells and Zina Young Williams went to Washington D. C. to deliver a memorial asking for the repeal of the anti-polygamy law of 1862 and for legislation to protect the women and children residing in the Utah Territory.

In an attempt to rid the territory of polygamy, justice officials aggressively sought punishment for those practicing polygamy. To convict a person of cohabitation, the court did not have to prove a polygamy relationship existed only that there was an association or friendship. The Mormon women felt that the sheriffs and court officials had gone too far. Legal wives were forced to testify against their husbands, children were forced to testify about their fathers, wives were asked very private questions
concerning their marital relationships with their husbands, and polygamist husbands were forced to abandon their families. The Mormon women claimed that the Edmunds legislation broke-up the honorable bonds of matrimony, separated women from their families, and denied them protection from their husbands. Additionally, the children of a polygamous relationship were treated as outcasts.

Probably one of the more flagrant court abuses involved Lorenzo Snow, an official of the Mormon church. Snow had lived with only one wife since Congress had passed the Edmunds Act. He had not even visited his other wives or families except to speak to one of his sons. Judge Orlando W. Power convicted Snow of cohabitation because he supported his other wives and children, fined him $900 and court costs, and sentenced him to eighteen months in prison.

Other examples of the abuses experienced by Mormons were printed in the proceeding of the protest. Women refused to testify against their husbands and were held in contempt and imprisoned like criminals in the penitentiary. Some women and children forcibly were required to testify in court against their husbands or fathers. For example, Annie Gallifant appeared November 14, 1882, before a grand jury and refused to answer a number of questions. She declined to name the man to whom she was married. Consequently, the judge charged her with contempt and sent her to the penitentiary even though she was expecting a baby.
Like Gallifant, Belle Harris experienced a similar situation. Judge Twiss in the Second District Court at Beaver fined her $25 and imprisoned her for three and a half months because she refused to answer whether she was married. She told the grand jury: "Gentlemen, you have no legal right to ask this question, and I decline to answer it." She declined to respond because the question dealt with her social relationship and not to her knowledge of any crime. With a babe in her arms, the court sent her to the penitentiary and imprisoned her with criminals. Harris left a second child with her mother.53

In an attempt to control polygamy and gain political advantage in the territory, the non-Mormon women encouraged the disfranchisement of all women. All polygamists, both men and women, had lost their ballot privileges in 1882 with the passage of the Edmunds Act. Now non-polygamist female members of the church risked the loss of political rights.

From 1882 until passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Act in 1886, the Mormon and non-Mormon women argued the expediency of disfranchising the female population. Both camps memorialized Congress on the suffrage issue. The Mormons argued that suffrage had become more than a privilege. Since they had voted since 1870, they felt that ballot had now become a vested <right>. On the other hand, the non-Mormons argued that the ballot had been conferred by the Mormon <theocracy> as a tool to maintain Mormon dominance.
and legitimize polygamy in the territory. In essence, the territorial legislature enfranchised women so that the priesthood could retain political dominance. A republican form of government in Utah required that the non-Mormons gain some political advantage. If they did not, the Mormons would continue to allow polygamy and disregard the non-Mormon's wishes in the community.

As an outgrowth of the anti-polygamy campaign, representatives from national religious groups joined forces with the non-Mormon women within the territory. They supported disfranchising women so that a republican form of government might be established in the territory. There was little doubt of the authority of the Mormon church in civil matters even into the 1880s. Even though Brigham Young, President of the Mormon church until 1877, gave up the position of governor following the Utah war in 1857, faithful members of the LDS church staffed the legislature, the militia, and the lower probate courts. A government committed to the Lord's work appeared un-American to the non-Mormons within and outside of the territory.

Other women not living in the territory joined the non-Mormon women to wage war against the polygamy monster. Angie Newman, probably one of the more aggressive representatives of the non-Mormon women, advocated the removal of female suffrage to control polygamy in the territory. A Methodist from Lincoln, Nebraska, Newman first
traveled to the territory in 1880. With her flair for writing political petitions and an extremely energetic personality, Newman directly assisted in the establishment of a house of refuge for abandoned or repentant plural wives. She also submitted petitions to Congress calling for the disfranchisement of all female voters in Utah. Her devotion to the task of ridding the territory of the twin relic of barbarism partially can be explained by her religious fervor and her concern for women and children. Unlike many of the appeals to Congress that requested federal action, Newman's involvement mobilized Utahns to find solutions to the problem of polygamy within the boundaries of the territory. For example, if Congress passed a bill that stringently would enforce polygamy laws, then the territory needed a solution to accommodate the splitting and disruption of family life. An Industrial Home became one way to help women and children hurt by the halting of polygamy.

Participants at an 1881 Methodist church conference outlined the need for a house of refuge for abandoned plural wives. The group raised $660 to support the refuge. The Woman's Home Missionary Society promised an additional $3,000 of its annual allotment for the development of the home. Newman attended the first meeting as a participant but C. M. Parks of Logan popularized the idea of a house of refuge in a public address.
The Woman's Home Missionary Society's executive committee unanimously passed a resolution at its national session in October, 1883, to investigate the ballot and polygamy in Utah. Sponsored by the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Woman's Home Missionary Society requested:

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to confer with the civil and religious authorities at Salt Lake City, and make careful investigation of the relation of the ballot in the hands of the women of Utah to Territorial legislation, to Congressional representation at the national capital, and above all, to its power to perpetuate the religious bondage and domestic slavery of the women so enfranchised; and if they shall find the facts to warrant, they shall draft petitions to be circulated for signatures, which shall be presented to the Congressional committee at Washington, asking for the disfranchisement of the women of Utah, or for a radical change of the whole form of government.  

The conference appointed four members which included Superintendent of Methodist Missions in Utah Reverend T. C. Iliff, author Cornelia Paddock, Judge Boreman of Salt Lake, and Angie F. Newman of Nebraska.

In November 1883, Newman met with the Woman's Home Missionary Society in Cincinnati. At the meeting, she strongly supported the need for federal authority in the territory. Offering a petition to the members in attendance, Newman suggested the building of an industrial home for women and an asylum for orphans in the Utah territory. The home would offer protection to those less fortunate who needed comfort and wished to throw off the shackles of polygamy. Supporting her attack on polygamy and
conditions in the territory of Utah, Newman produced letters of support from Reverend Iliff and Governor Thomas of Utah. Both men endorsed the creation of an industrial home.

The Daily Tribune of December 2nd, 1883, praised Newman's efforts in Cincinnati. Her resolutions and letter, according to the article, inspired those attending the meeting. As a result of her speech, she raised $6,500 from contributions and life memberships costing $20 in less than one hour.  

The committee obtained 250,000 signatures of Christians, and forwarded the petitions to the Senate. In June of 1884, Senator Hoar introduced the petitions to Congress. The report recommended curtailing the female's vote as one means to rid the territory of polygamy and to give non-Mormons more political power.

Women received the ballot for the "sole purpose of neutralizing the votes of non-Mormons," argued the committee. The petition also explained the inequality in voter qualifications for men and women in Utah. A wife of a native born or naturalized citizen could legally vote while a male had to be twenty-one years of age and be a citizen. Residence requirements also differed between a female and male voter. As a result, the Mormon women did not cast their ballot freely. They obeyed priesthood authority or faced the penalty of excommunication from the church.

Finally, the committee charged that the Mormons had
repealed the dower in an attempt to deprive the female of her freedom. Without the right of dower, the wife could not claim any of her husband's property or earnings. Therefore, the plural wife did not have the economic means to leave a polygamous relationship. The husband could compel the wife to enter into a plural marriage because she could not risk the loss of her home and the means of her support. The committee applied a similarly structured argument to voting. A wife would not "risk the loss of a home and the means of support by voting in opposition to the commands of her husband the authority of the Church." Hence, the females, did not exercise independent ballots.

The solution to the voting difficulties in the territory would be to repeal female suffrage. The repeal of universal suffrage in the territory would weaken the power of Mormon leaders, reasoned the committee. The loss of 12,000 voters would possibly permit the election of county officers or legislators who were not Mormons.

Outraged by Newman's comments, the Mormon sisters replied in editorials printed in the Woman's Exponent. The Mormons defended their homes and themselves. They believed the truth needed to come forward. "Silence on the part of the Mormon women," they contested, "would be an ignominious reproach."56

The November 15th, 1883, Woman's Exponent published a refutation of the arguments advanced by Newman in
Cincinnati. Newman thought that every Mormon house in the territory was "a house of prostitution," and "a man may take for his wives his mother, grand-mother, or sister." Using the <polygamy as barbaric> ideograph, she felt that polygamous marriages did not offer love or tenderness. The Mormons denied this charge as false and cruel. Under plural marriage, Mormon women followed a strict law of chastity. Correspondingly, children in a plural marriage are pure. Although the Mormons countered Newman's argument, they offered little proof for their claims.

Replying to Newman's claim that "there is no love, care or tenderness" in Mormon marriages, the Mormons replied that <polygamy was positive> and argued that polygamy developed stronger family ties. The burden of polygamy was small when compared with abuses to females under monogamy. The Mormon women developed intense affection because they were forced to bear "the scoffs and reproaches heaped upon them by those who cannot understand the position they occupy, nor the motives which influence them. . . ." The women found "comfort and solace under plural marriage." Plural marriage "unite[d] them in the strongest bonds of human sympathy."18

The clash between Newman and the Mormons continued for the next three years. In most instances, the Mormon women defended their life-style, while Angie Newman attacked polygamy and female suffrage legally.
The Mormon 1886 Mass Meeting

With Congress considering disfranchising all women voters in the territory and with the District Courts punishing polygamy offenders, the Mormon women again used the public platform to protest. Eliza R. Snow, President of the Mormon Female Relief Society, conceptualized the purpose of the protest as giving free expression to the injustice and oppression heaped upon the Mormon women by the local legal system and the possible passage of the Edmunds-Tucker legislation. Although Snow did not attend the protest, she did correspond with the women organizing the affair. In her letter, she raised the question: "Why should we remain silent when our dearest rights as American citizens are trampled upon, and every vestige of our liberties threatened with annihilation?" The <citizen's rights> position continued as the dominant ideograph in the 1886 protest.

Disturbed about the abuses in the court, Mrs. M. I. Horne, Mrs. H. M. Whitney, Mrs. E. S. Taylor, and Dr. R. B. Pratt published a general invitation to all women to join in protest on March 6th, 1886. The women protested against the indignities and insults heaped upon their sex in the District Courts, and also protested against the disfranchisement of those who were innocent of breaking the law. The Mormon women enthusiastically responded to the call and approximately 2,000 women, including a few men and some non-Mormon women, assembled in the Theatre in Salt Lake
City. The official report of the meeting indicated that "The standing room in the aisles and promenade quickly was taken and crowded almost to suffocation, and hundreds of people were unable to gain admittance." 60 The Deseret Evening News called the meeting "a vast and enthusiastic assemblage of ladies...true to themselves, their country and their God." 61

In less flattering terms, the Salt Lake Daily Tribune, the non-Mormon press, called the meeting "a petticoat 'protest'" and "a first class minstrel show." 62 Anti-polygamist Angie F. Newman, writing in The Salt Lake Daily Tribune, described the assemblage as a "monstrous blasphemy" and felt the speaker's words were "treasonable": "Any woman in the States who should so insult the representatives of this great Republic would meet with a fate more speedy, and none the less terrible, than that of J. Wilkes Booth." 63 The San Francisco Bulletin, as reprinted in the Daily Tribune, saw the Mormon women as "deluded victims of a soul-destroying superstition" and thought the Mormon priesthood had made the women "victims of their scheme." 64

Regardless of the non-Mormon reaction, the meeting was probably one of the greatest female assemblies ever organized in the history of the west. The Tabernacle choir sat on seats to the left of the platform. Wives and daughters of men who had been incarcerated for polygamy
filled the stage. The women who addressed the congregation sat on chairs at the front of the stage. Two tables, one on the left and one on the right, were placed on the stage for the secretaries and the press. The speakers delivered their addresses from a stand placed in the middle of the stage. Stationed in the orchestra, the Sixteenth Ward Brass Band played while the audience entered the Theatre.

Those attending the protest heard speeches from thirteen speakers, listened to two poems, passed a number of resolutions of protest, plus approved a memorial to be forwarded to the President of the United State and Congress. In addition, nine speeches, not delivered at the meeting, and correspondence from prominent women throughout the territory were published with the proceedings of the meeting.

An initial question needs to be asked. Why did the Mormons hold a mass meeting protest? Like a cut diamond, the answer is multifaceted. A close look at the minutes from the meeting revealed a number of explanations. First, many women felt, as in earlier protests, it their duty to object because they had been misrepresented. Second, others joined the protest for selfish reasons. Third, some deemed that federal actions to control polygamy had been inappropriate and beyond the intent of the law and the women desired protection from the harshness of the legislation. Finally, the most significant motive driving the Mormon
women to speak in public rested on their belief that their
rights were being trampled. Mary Ann Pratt, when she opened
her address at the protest, captured the <rights> argument:
"It has become necessary for us, the women of Utah, in the
majority, to assert our <rights> as American citizens; to
express our indignation at the attempt made to deprive us of
our <rights>.

The Mormon women relied extensively on the <citizen's
rights> ideograph during the 1886 mass meeting. There were
four supportive ideographs: <Cruel enforcement>, <right of
suffrage>, <right of religion>, and <right to worship God>. Additionally, the Mormon women employed two other
ideographs, <polygamy as positive> and <love of family>. In
overview, the Mormon women constructed seven ideographs as
they struggled with the conflict between God's law and man-
made laws.

Not only did the number of ideographs increase since
the Mormons held their first mass meeting in 1878, but the
reasoning backing some of the ideographs had altered
significantly. At the 1878 meeting, they had employed the
<in the toils>, <citizens rights> and the <women of God>
ideographs. Now they had adapted their ideas to the
changing circumstances in the community. The Reynolds case
had upheld the ban on polygamy. The Edmunds bill had
disfranchised all polygamists and permitted enforcement
against cohabitation. The Edmunds-Tucker bill threatened to
disincorporate the church, garnish monies from the Perpetual Immigration Fund, and disfranchise all women in the territory. The Mormon women faced some difficult times; they encountered an increasing hostile territorial government, their homes and political rights were threatened, and their children faced disinheretance. The arguments that their husbands and fathers had fought in wars and that the Constitution guaranteed religious freedom no longer were compelling positions.

As a consequence, they adapted their reasoning. The focus of the <citizens rights> ideograph changed. In 1878, the Mormons argued that the Constitution sanctioned religious freedom. Now they advanced that the <cruel enforcement> of polygamy legislation violated their <rights>. For 16 years, they had held the <right of suffrage> as a sacred trust. Now the government infringed on their <rights> by considering disfranchising all women. As <citizens> they had the <right to religion> and could worship God according to their own dictates. The government infringed on their <rights> by curtailing polygamy. Each of the <rights> ideographs became separate reasons for opposing changing territorial affairs. A federal government had legislated a solution to polygamy and lessened the Mormon’s political influence in the territory by questioning the life style and values of church members. To further explain the <citizen’s rights> position, I would like to discuss how the
Mormons developed each ideograph.

**<Cruel Enforcement>**

The Mormon women protested against the <cruel enforcement> of the law by the courts. They felt that unscrupulous men had enacted unlawful legislation because of their own interests. As Mrs. H. C. Brown penned in a letter read at the mass meeting, the women used "their influence to stay the shameful proceedings by which pretended courts of justice are converted into courts of inquisitions." 65 Honest Christian women were being subjected to insult and abuse by being forced to testify in court against their spouses. Hannah T. King complained that women were asked questions about their sexual relationships "that even their closest friends would not have presumed to ask." 66 For example, in the preamble and protest resolutions passed at the meeting, the Mormons cited the following abuses:

Whereas, Womanhood is outraged by the compulsion used in the courts of Utah to force mothers on pain of imprisonment to disclose their personal condition and that of their friends in relation to anticipated maternity, and to give information as to the fathers of their children. When the women refused to answer they are sent to prison on contempt charges.

Emmeline B. Wells complained that a first wife often had been coerced to testify against her husband contrary to established law and custom. 67 The Mormon women were being subjected to these abuses even though they had not committed a crime.
The Mormons argued that they had voted intelligently. They considered the franchise a "priceless boon." The women had exercised the ballot for fifteen years and they "would not barter [it] away for gold." They wanted to continue to vote because they saw the ballot "as a sacred trust."

The Mormon women believed that federal legislators were seeking to deprive women of the ballot because of religious intolerance. Then denied that women voted under coercion or that the priesthood overshadowed them. As Dr. Ellen B. Ferguson explained:

The women of Utah, the majority of them, belong to the kingdom of God, and because they exercise their <rights> and privileges so as to assist in building up that kingdom, for that reason they are to be deprived of them."

Women of God obeyed the law of God. The Mormon women had made covenants with God when they had joined the church. As such, a civil law assumed secondary status to God's commandments. As God-fearing individuals, the Mormons tried to live good lives. They obeyed the golden rule and even prayed for those who abused them. All they wanted to do was "to <worship God> according to the dictates of their own consciences."
The <right to religion>, <right to worship God>, <cruel punishment>, and <right to suffrage> ideographs all supported the <citizen's rights> ideograph. Every citizen needed to defend freedom. Citizens should have the <right> to vote, the <right> to fair treatment under the law, the <right> to worship God if they were law abiding. The women had committed no crimes. They were mothers and daughters that should have the <right> to peaceably occupy their homes without interruption.

<Polygamy is Positive> and <Love of Family>

Probably the major difference between the ideology expressed in 1886 over the 1878 mass protest meetings lay not so much with the <rights> position, but with the Mormons' defense of polygamy and support of their <family>. Plural marriage was a celestial order for the Mormons, and they believed that participation in the system produced positive ends. The <polygamy is positive> ideograph did not appear consistently throughout all the speeches but those who used the ideograph thought God blessed the individuals who entered into a plural marriage arrangement. As Dr. Romania B. Pratt explained:

Our faith and confidence in the chastity and pure motives of our husbands, fathers, mothers and sons are such that we challenge the production of a <better system of marriage> and the records of more moral or purer lives. Hand in hand with celestial marriage is the elevation of woman. In church she votes equally with men, and politically she has the suffrage raising her from the old
common law, monogamic serfdom, to political equality with men. Rights of property are given her so that she, as a married woman, can hold property in her own individual right."

The Mormons believed they had a right to marry. The current criticism of plural marriage potentially could damage the home and destroy the family. Similar to the 1882 Memorial, the <love of family> ideograph motivated the women to protest against further legislation that would destroy their lives. As tax paying <citizens>, the Mormons wanted to protect the rights of their children and preserve their <families>.

The 1886 Non-Mormon Memorial

Following Congressional funding of the Home Association, Newman again memorialized the Senate and the House of Representatives. Petitioning Congress, Newman requested the repeal of female suffrage in the territory. On June 8, 1886, Senator Edmunds presented another petition on the issue of woman suffrage in Utah from Angie F. Newman. She requested that Congress revoke suffrage because "woman suffrage in Utah only means woman’s suffering." Her rationale for ending suffrage in the territory rested on her belief that suffrage had been conferred illegally. Conferred by a theocracy, exercised under its dominance, made to conserve its power, the franchise perpetuated polygamous life and clothed lawlessness with authority."

An identification of the prominent ideographs in Newman’s
petition revealed one diachronic ideograph, <national sovereignty> supported by four synchronic ideographs.

Initially, Newman presented her qualifications for making an appeal to Congress. Attempting to establish her knowledge of affairs in Utah and her practical experience on the topic of female suffrage, Newman wrote:

As an eye witness of the ceremonies at the theater meeting, as a long and close observer of the effect of female suffrage in Utah, having definite personal knowledge of the Gentile sentiment touching this question, as a member of the committee who drafted and circulated the petitions... asking the repeal of the act conferring the elective franchise upon the women of Utah... the undersigned... respectfully submits the following memorial... ."³

An expertly reasoned document, Newman's petition responded to the statements and resolutions submitted to Congress from the Mormon women's mass meeting. Newman developed a strong philosophical reason for curtailing the ballot. She outlined, although briefly, the relationship between law and human action. Other appeals, speeches, newspaper articles had relied on a theoretical rationale of the relationship between <sovereignty> and polygamy. In her appeal, Newman tied law, <sovereignty>, and the ballot together.

In a <republican form of government> the people comprise the <sovereign>. "All law, human or divine," wrote Newman, "is the exponent of <sovereignty.>" The degree of obedience to law or "the duty of the individual," reasoned Mrs. Newman, "is measured by the nature of that
Newman next argued that there existed a difference between divine and human law. The former is unconditional and has no appeal. Human law, "a synonym of despotism," included "the arbitrary edicts of rulers, the very antonyms of justice." She further explained: "Under a republican form of government the people are the sovereignty." The territories lack sovereignty and are "the nation’s dependencies." If the federal government is the parent, then the state is the child and the territory its minor. Newman used this theoretical rationale to support the repeal of female suffrage in Utah. If a non-republican government improperly enfranchised voters then the suffrage law was not divine but human. Any human law, especially an improperly legislated law, should and must be repealed.

Newman’s petition provided a strong position for disfranchising all women in Utah. To prove her position, Newman demonstrated that an un-republican government existed in Utah, and the ballot was a privilege not a right. The civil polity in Utah, disputed Newman, "is un-republican." Hostile and anti-American individuals, at least in sentiment, governed the territory. Unknowledgeable and unfamiliar with a republican form of government, the Mormon’s theocracy designed and implemented rules for their own purposes.

The franchisement of females in Utah, argued Newman,
never was passed legally. No federal governmental representative authorized the act. The women were enfranchised by the Latter-day Saint Church for its own purposes. Church authorities wanted "the church impregnable to outward attack, independent and hostile in civil attitude."\(^8\)

The Organic Act stringently defined the powers of the legislation assembly in Utah in Section 6:

> The legislative power of said Territory shall extend to all rightful subjects of legislation consistent with the Constitution of the United States and the provision of this act. All the laws passed by the legislative assembly and governor shall be submitted to the Congress of the United States, and if disapproved shall be null and of no effect.\(^8\)

The Organic Act had defined citizenship as limited to "the free white male inhabitant." The Organic Act also gave the Legislative Assembly the power to define voting qualifications as long as "the right of suffrage shall be exercised only by citizens of the United States."\(^8\)

Coupling the above pieces of information, Newman declared female enfranchisement contrary to the Organic Act and "a repudiation of <national supremacy>."\(^8\) In her opinion, the statute should be null and void because women earned citizenship status through their husband or fathers not on their own qualifications.

Supporters of the 1870 suffrage act believed any repeal of the legislation violated <vested rights>. Newman disagreed. In her appeal, Newman argued that the Mormons
disregarded federal law. Using the same rationale as Judge Waite had used earlier in the Reynolds case, Newman advanced that any continuation of female voting privileges would "subordinate the federal government to the L.D.S. church." The 1882 Edmunds Act only partially corrected the voting abuses. The legislation mandated an age and resident requirement for females when registering to vote. In retaliation to the 1882 act, the Mormon priesthood, Newman asserted, had the "daughters of eligible fathers and the first wives and widows of polygamists vote." As an outcome, the Mormon church still resisted <sovereignty>.

Looking for historical touchstones to support her ideograph, Newman searched for conditions under which government might alter voting rights. The power to grant suffrage on the federal level also applied to the States since the power of self-government was a delegated power. However, a city government was different. One legislature might authorize municipal suffrage while another governing agency might repeal the ballot. Territorial status was similar to city government. Even if Congress approved a law from the territorial legislature, they could still repeal its approval as long as the new policy did not contradict the Constitution. Since the Constitution of the United States did not authorize female suffrage, Congress had the power to repeal any action granting suffrage to women in the territory.
Newman next turned to discussing the franchise by examining the 1870 statute and comparing the statute with the territorial Organic Act. The franchise when conferred was a privilege. Suffrage, Newman construed, "becomes a 'right' by possession." The ballot can not be denied except by annulment. Individuals casting a vote inherently hold the power to retain the franchise. Revolution follows any law-maker's attempt to withdraw the ballot. In England and America, Newman noted, individuals had been added to the list of voters, but once added, withdrawal was next to impossible. The exercised ballot, as a privilege, perpetuates itself. Newman believed the Act enfranchising women violated fundamental principles of <republicanism> since voter qualifications in the Utah territory differed between men and women. As noted earlier, a female had no restrictions except to be a wife, widow, or daughter of a native-born or naturalize citizen. The male had to prove citizenship, residency, and age requirements plus pay taxes.

Aliens easily received citizenship, claimed Newman. In the first election following the passage of the Edmunds Bill "two thousand . . . aliens, most of whom voted their wives and daughters as well, were naturalized in the two district courts of Ogden and Salt Lake City." In her flamboyant style, Newman questioned the voting practices of the Mormons:

The inequality of the statute and its license of power is seen in its application to emigrants.
The trains freighted with recruits for Zion, which arrived a day or two preceding elections, were taken to tithing headquarters. Women and girls were then and there selected by aspirants for sealing orders, taken to the endowment house, and the marriage ceremony performed. On the morrow these wives of "native-born or naturalized citizens," wholly ignorant of our language or laws, or the significance of the franchise with the odor of the emigrant ship still upon their clothing, were full-fledged voters, and deposited their ballots in full conformity with the statutory requirements. 88

Newman relied on Fannie Stenhouse, a strong anti-Mormon, for much of her substantiation. For example, Stenhouse had written:

I have often seen one solitary man driving into the city a whole wagon load of women of all ages and sizes. They were going to the polls and their vote would be one. Many have voted two or three times. Men christened their mules, conferring upon them the names of men, and make them vote also. 89

In her petition, Newman replied to many of the arguments raised by the supporters of female suffrage. A frequently employed pro-suffrage position related to the idea of equality under the law. "If you disfranchise the women why not disfranchise the men?" 90 Newman criticized this argument because it lacked logic. "An interrogation is not a reason," she taunted. In her opinion, the call for disfranchising all voters lacked political wisdom. A national constitution authorized male suffrage. The women voting in the territory of Utah received the ballot by "an alien church organization, which render[ed] no allegiance to the government." 91 In essence, the Mormons violated the
<sovereignty> principles of sound government when they authorized the ballot for women.

Further, Newman thought the ballot gave the Mormons more power than the non-Mormons. The ballot in the hands of the non-Mormon women was not as potent as the vote of the Mormon women. Many of the miners were unmarried men or their families lived in the east. As a result, "the vote of the Mormon women nullified Gentile political power." Since the non-Mormon women rarely voted in the territory, they had very little political influence.

Continuing her philosophical discussion of <sovereignty>, Newman reasoned that authority and responsibility in government must rest somewhere. A <republican> government must be administered by the hands of the people. Willing to forgo the ballot, the non-Mormons would sacrifice voting privileges so that "civil order" could evolve "out of civil chaos."

Calling for a repeal of the 1870 Suffrage Act, Newman believed female disfranchisement would equalize the non-Mormon and Mormon element. The denial of the vote to polygamists by the 1882 Edmunds Bill had not diminished the Mormon's power:

Mormonism and polygamy are in collusion. Polygamists control the elections. The priesthood selects the candidates, and no man is put upon the ticket, either for legislative or municipal office, who is not pledged to support 'the divine order.'

Showing the need for other elected officials in the
territory beyond Mormons, Newman indicted the territorial legislature for failure to pass laws dealing with sexual crimes. The Mormon legislature, she charged, "has never framed a statute touching incest, seduction, adultery, bigamy, or polygamy, save once." The one exception occurred when the legislature hastily adopted the California Code. During the next legislative session, the governing body repealed the law. The only sexual crime punishable in the territory was rape. The Legislature had passed a bill delegating to the city of Ogden the power to punish sexual crimes. Under this law the municipality, not the territory, would be responsible for punishing sexual abuses. If the bill had passed at the territorial level, it would then apply equally to Mormons as well as non-Mormons. However, on a city level, agents could enforce the law more discriminately favoring the Mormons. Governor Murray vetoed the Ogden Charter bill. He opposed the legislation because it would have transferred power illegally:

While lust can blight the whole Territory without finding any rebuke at the hands of the legislature, the attempt to confer power on a municipal corporation to punish local transgressions against the morality in the indefinite, inadequate, and inoperative way done in this bill cannot have my sanction."

Offering additional proof of the inadequacy of the territorial legislature, Newman focussed her attention on marriage. The territorial body, she criticized, had been silent on the topic of marriage. "No marriage licenses, no
certificates of marriage, no civil records of marriage, are required" in the territory. The church authorized and performed marriages in the endowment house. The crime of polygamy becomes a virtue since the statute of limitation curtailed prosecution after three years. Only under non-Mormon leadership, pushed Newman, would the legislature pass laws suppressing sexual crimes.

Newman believed the territorial government, under the direction of Governor Brigham Young, passed defensive measures to insure church political power. For example, mining operations frequently were halted by Young, and for a number of years military personnel guarded the miners for safety reasons. In October 1869, E. T. Harrison, editor of the Utah magazine, published an article supporting the mining interests in the territory. W. S. Godbe, a Mormon resident, endorsed the article. Not pleased with Harrison and Godbe's comments, church authorities summoned the two men to church headquarters to answer the following question: "Do you believe President Young has the right to dictate to you in all things, temporal and spiritual?" Harrison and Godbe replied no to the question and the church excommunicated them. By tying the church and territorial affairs together, Newman showed that the government in Utah was not a <republican> form. The scheme to enfranchise the female voters grew out of the controversy to retain political superiority. By enfranchising females, the
Mormons benefitted and extended their civil power through voting wives and daughters. The non-Mormons, since they usually were single or their families did not reside in the territory, would never benefit from enfranchising women.

Continuing her argument that the 1870 suffrage act was not <republican>, Newman drew support from a Utah judge. In the 1882 test case on suffrage, Judge Emerson stated: "All regulations upon the subject [elective franchise] must be uniform and impartial. Any provisions which should impose upon particular class of citizens conditions and requirements not required of all others is void."  

In a highly emotive attack on polygamy, Angie Newman compared it to prison life. "The primal effect of polygamous life," she stated, "is to build prison walls about its victims, whose ponderous gates never swing outward except to crush the hand that tampers with the locks." Polygamy, she charged, necessitated the subjugation of women.

Newman's position rings of abolition rhetoric. In the pre-civil war period, the economic system in the South demanded a large work force to till the fields and pick cotton, the major crop in the Confederate states. Unlike the slowly industrializing north, the South required a cheap economical work force to operate the large plantations. Since the South required slavery to retain any economic worth, community legislation reflected the need to keep the
blacks in a position of servitude. The customs and legislation subjugating blacks served as prison walls. Entrapped like the blacks in the South, the women in Utah could do nothing to alter their lives. The priesthood had introduced and perpetuated the slavery of women through polygamy. They supported plural marriage by keeping control over the women and constructing walls enclosing polygamous relationships.

The Mormon women did not care for Newman's efforts in their behalf. The *Exponent* labeled Newman's attack as "petty and sensational." The *Exponent* alleged that Newman had designed to move "Congressional hearts by pathetic appeals."100 Infuriated by Newman's accusations, the Mormon women charged that Newman had misrepresented their position. Newman, however, believed she had a right to expound her beliefs in behalf of "motherhood outraged and compromised children crying for bread."101 Similar to the earlier argument refuting Newman's speech in Cincinnati, the Mormons declared: "There are no children in Utah crying for bread, no poor houses or orphan asylums needed for 'Mormon' children, but the same cannot be said of other states and territories."102

Newman's argument assumed that the Mormon women were unable to speak for themselves. This statement lacked credence knowing that the Mormon women recently had convened a large mass meeting in Salt Lake City to reaffirm publicly
their opposition to the Edmunds Bill. Newman had attended the convention:

I listened for four hours to a repudiation of national <sovereignty>, a vilification of illicit alliances, which made me shiver. The report of that meeting has been greatly toned down, as my own notes and the notes of Dr. Jackson, of Fort Douglas, and others will amply attest.\textsuperscript{103}

The meeting had not shown women freely supporting polygamy but instead showed women unpatriotically criticizing the government. Newman did not indict the Mormon women, but used their actions at the mass meeting as proof for needing federal assistance. Controlled and directed, the Mormon women were not responsible for the statements they made nor the subsequent newspaper reports of the protest. Contrary to their public declaration, really wanted freedom from polygamy.

On March 15th, 1886, the Industrial Home Association of Utah was incorporated. Lacking sufficient funding, the organization requested $100,000 in federal aid to supplement the association. Congress granted the request. Organized on a Christian but a nondenominational basis, the Industrial Home Association sought to found, build, equip, provide for, maintain and regulate. . . industrial homes, boarding houses, schools, hospitals and places for instruction, aid, betterment, and general benevolent and charitable purposes at Salt Lake City and other places in the Utah Territory.\textsuperscript{104}

Three months after the formation of the Industrial Home Association, the organization wanted to start a school to
help support dependents in the territory. Officers
President Jeanette H. Perry, Vice President Margaret C.
Zane, and Secretary Cornelia A. Paddock prepared a memorial
justifying the establishment of the institution. Members of
the Christian Home Association requested $100,000 "in behalf
of those who cannot speak for themselves, except by their
silent appeal to the nation's God." 105

In their appeal, the officers of the Association
cursory outlined the rationale for federal involvement. The
petitioners felt the need for a home because of the
"anomalous conditions" in the Utah territory under Mormon
authority. Noting the lack of an independent school in the
territory, the group argued that a Mormon dominated
legislature would not authorize funds to correct an evil
that the leaders of the Mormon church did not believe
existed. A <republican> form of government had an implicit
duty to protect helpless minorities, especially when the
minorities were women and children.

The erasing of polygamy in the future depended upon
offering alternative self-support systems. The officers
assured Congress that many individuals would abandon their
marriage relationships given available facilities.
Legislating against polygamy without providing for the
"terrible exigencies" arising from the execution of federal
law was futile. Without an alternative, no one deliberately
would impose disaster on children by obeying national
polygamy legislation.

Commenting on the Industrial Home and directly censuring Newman's involvement in the appeal, the June 11th, 1886 Deseret News reflected the Mormon's displeasure with the continued meddling from outsiders. The News charged that Congress had been led away by the fantastic stories told by an experienced religious subscription circulator." Further, the Deseret News stereotyped the members of the Industrial Home Association as "a little knot of schemers."105

The Exponent, similar to earlier conflicts, served as the Mormon women's means for public defense. The newspaper published the Association's funding petition and attempted to correct the false statements included in the appeal. Mostly the "glaring errors" of Newman's remarks were denied by the Mormons.

Newman's words always antagonized the Mormon women. Repeatedly, her language showed that she wanted to rescue the unfortunate individuals trapped by the shackles of polygamy and unable, in most instances, of helping themselves: "I am here in behalf of women whose lips are sealed by the priesthood, whose hands are shackled by their own ballots. . . . women who are denied the right of petition by the very men who enfranchised them."107

Like the plantation owners in the South, the priesthood controlled and directed slaves. Only this time, the slaves
were women who lacked the ability to rise up in revolt against the slave masters. Newman assumed the role of deliverer and the Home Association became the railroad to free the women from slavery.

The Mormon women, however, were not convinced that they were enslaved and even less persuaded by the argument that they needed to be delivered from the "shackles" of the priesthood. For example, the Exponent published the following biting reply to Newman: "Every person who read Mrs. Newman's petition," wrote the Exponent, "can see how false is the ground she takes, and her reasoning is all from false premises." Newman's petition scarcely had "a thread of truth to hold the whole thin spun fabric together." 108

The articles published in the Exponent suggested an alternate motive for Newman's request. The petition for funding was not for the assistance of women in Utah, but a move to collect "funds under false pretenses to bolster up a Church whose resources are failing to supply the demand and furnish salaries for ministers and teachers." The Mormon women had no objection to the building of an Industrial Home but they objected strongly to other women "begging on their account." The Mormon women would when necessary "plead their own case before Congress." The Mormons would not have to "go there and abuse 'gentile' women to get a hearing." 109 The Industrial Home attracted very few Mormons and eventually the Utah Commission closed its doors in 1892 and
admitted that the project failed.\textsuperscript{110}

Further, the Mormons did not see the need for a new educational institution since educational programs existed in Utah. The Methodists, the individuals requesting funding, already had established schools in the territory and consistently had challenged and tried to induce children in Mormon homes to attend their schools. Like the response to the Industrial Home, few Mormons responded to their plea. Also, the territory already had district schools so a need for the citizens of the east to send their tax money to educate either Mormons or non-Mormon children in Utah really never materialized.

With respect to voting, the Mormons claimed suffrage had not been misused: "No women could vote who was not a citizen in her own right, either natural born or \textit{legally} married to a natural born of naturalized citizen, and it was quite a common occurrence for women to be naturalized as well as men."\textsuperscript{111} For example, Sarah A. Fullmere, a Mormon from Orangeville, wrote in the \textit{Woman's Exponent} in 1883 that she had never been compelled to vote:

\begin{quote}
I have enjoyed the right of franchise for twelve years, and have never failed to exercise that privilege, (until it was taken from me) and I was not at any time compelled to vote, only as I felt in my own mind, was right. Living under the law of the Lord, it was to my interest to work for the God of the people that were living under the divine inspiration of God, our Heavenly Father.\textsuperscript{112}
\end{quote}

As noted earlier, Newman believed the Mormon women had
received the ballot by an alien church organization, while the men had been enfranchised by national authority. Newman reported that after the passage of the Edmunds Bill, the court ruled women could be denied voter registration on the basis of an invalid statute. In actuality, court cases in 1879 and 1882 substantiated the legality of female suffrage. The ballot could not be denied without due process of law.

Showing the legality of the ballot, the *Exponent* compared the granting of suffrage in Utah with Wyoming. The women of Wyoming received the ballot in the same manner as the women in Utah. The legislature passed a bill and the Governor signed the bill into law. As legal voters, Mormon men had elected the Utah legislature. A legislature legally elected had the *right* to create new laws.

In her petition to Congress, Newman had requested the disfranchisement of Mormon women. In a rebuttal, the *Exponent* compared the refined and educated Mormon voter to the drunkard, the gambler, and the saloon keeper who were non-Mormon voters. In the Mormon view, Newman wanted to "throw the balance of power" to individuals "who would use their utmost influence to destroy the youth of the land by the sale and use of ardent spirits and other vile practices of various kinds." The Mormon women feared the dreadful consequence of giving the non-Mormons too much power.

The Mormons felt that Newman, nor any other person, did not have the *right* to interfere with female suffrage in
the territory. As legal voters, the Utah women had never disobeyed any law. The mourning in the territory came from the enforcement of the Edmunds law, not from the bonds of plural marriage. The Edmunds law cruelly disrupted families and severed ties, and caused "women's hearts to break" and filled "the land with desolation and morning."

Reaffirming their belief in God and the eternal principle of plural marriage, the Exponent closed with a plea to the women for continued support of polygamy. Like the Savior, the Saints must "endure <trials and persecutions> until our Father says it is enough, and 'God will protect us in doing what's right.'"14

Discussion of Motive

The Anti-Polygamy Society undoubtedly kept the plural wife issue alive in the United States through their petitions and articles published in the Anti-Polygamy Standard. Even though the Constitution guaranteed religious freedom, the non-Mormons desired to limit the Mormon's political rights to gain advantage in the territory.

In her petition to Congress, Newman pictured the Mormon women as slaves. As one Mormon replied, "If we are slaves, let us serve the masters we love and who love us; bondage on such terms is tolerable."15 The alternative to priesthood chains would be the branding of women as harlots and the children as bastards and the Mormon sisters would receive
"the poor, pitiful pity of the world."\textsuperscript{116}

The non-Mormons had initiated the idea of granting suffrage to women in Utah. Once enfranchised, the women should have voted off the shackles of plural marriage. They, however, had no desire to "sell the rights and liberties of her friends and protectors... for less than a mess of pottage."\textsuperscript{117} The Mormon sisters sustained their husbands, fathers, and sons. They struggled beside the men while settling the barren wilderness, so they would stand by them during the anti-polygamy crusade.

The non-Mormons’ protest saw their public reasoning improve in sophistication. In order to protect <sovereignty>, the federal government needed to take additional <actions> to assure that an impartial government existed in the territory. They also needed to punish offenders who chose to disregard the law. Failure to enforce the laws would make the LDS church a power unto itself. The Edmunds-Tucker bill assured that territorial officials could punish polygamy offenders more easily. But to do so challenged the <rights> of its citizens. The Edmunds-Tucker bill severely punished the LDS church and its membership financially by disincorporating it for continuing the practice of plurality of wives. The Edmunds-Tucker bill also required first wives to testify against their husbands, and denied <suffrage rights> to all females in the territory after 16 years of voting. The non-Mormons believed that the
<ballot was a curse> and they were willing to give it up in order to control polygamy.

The Mormon women used mass meetings, memorials, and the Woman's Exponent to protest against the loss of their <rights>. As mothers, wives, and daughters of citizens, they did not want their characters maligned: They objected to the insults alleged against them in the Courts, they objected to the law disfranchising honorable American citizens, they objected to being denied the <right of religion>, they objected to their children losing their inheritance rights. By 1886, the Mormons contended that as citizens they had earned these <rights> because of their faithful <toil>. Their arguments had accommodated to the exigencies of the situation. They relied less on a religious justification for polygamy and developed a legalistic rationale for protection of their rights and the rights of their families.

President John Taylor operated the Church in hiding and continued to support the practice of polygamy until his death in 1887. In 1889, Congress considered even stricter anti-polygamy legislation, the Cullom-Struble Bill. Faced with harsher actions, the church accommodated to the anti-polygamy laws and promised to cease polygamy. Taylor's successor, Wilford Woodruff initially persisted in his support of polygamy. But with increasing financial pressures on the church and the need to assure the temporal
salvation of members, Woodruff public announced in September 1890, the demise of polygamy in a Manifesto. Woodruff declared: "I publicly declare that my advice to the Latter-day Saints is to refrain from contracting any marriages forbidden by the law of the land."[[8] During the 1880s, the Mormons continually defended their life-style. They had not developed the external grass-roots support nationally as the anti-polygamists had done through the Anti-Polygamy Society. At best, the Mormon women's mass protest and petitions delayed government action permitting the growth of the church.

Chapter VII contains a discussion of how the ideographs employed by the Mormons and non-Mormons changed over time. The non-Mormon public language seemed to have greater universal appeal. Their appeals legitimized the claim for <federal action> better than the appeals of the Mormon women. An explanation of why the non-Mormons' appeals seemed to be more successful in getting the federal government to oppose polygamy is offered in the final chapter.
Notes

1 "Ladies, Go and Vote," Woman's Exponent 15 July 1884: 28.


5 Reynolds v United States, 98 U.S. 165 (1879).


7 Reynolds, 166.

8 Arrington and Bitton, 1979, 203.


13 Reynolds, 145.

14 Emmeline B. Wells and Zina Young Williams, "To His Excellency Rutherford B. Hayes President of the United States," 29 Jan. 1879, [p. 2], Latter-day Saint Church Archives, Salt Lake City, UT.

15 Wells and Williams, 1879, [3].
Wells and Williams, 1879, [3].
Wells and Williams, 1879, [1-2].
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Wells and Williams, 1879, [4].
Wells and Williams, 1879, [4].

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39 "Woman Suffrage in Utah," 1882, 43.


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44 "Large Anti-Polygamy Mass Meeting," 1882, 93.


46 Cooke and Rivers, 1882, 89.


49 "Memorials to Congress," 1882, 149.


51 "Mormon" Women's Protest, June 1886, 83.

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55 As recorded by Robert Joseph Dwyer, The Gentile Comes to Utah (Salt Lake City: Western Epics, 1971) 206.
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"Mormon" Women's Protest, 1886, 77.

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"Mormon" Women's Protest, 1886, 13.

"Mormon" Women's Protest, 1886, 14.

"Mormon" Women's Protest, 1886, 69.

"Mormon" Women's Protest, 1886, 31.


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Newman, June 1886, 1.

Newman, June 1886, 1.

Newman, June 1886, 2.

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79 Newman, June 1886, 5.
80 Newman, June 1886, 5.
81 Newman, June 1886, 5.
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88 Newman, June 1886, 4.
89 Newman, June 1886, 4.
90 Newman, June 1886, 6.
91 Newman, June 1886, 6.
92 Newman, June 1886, 8.
93 Newman, June 1886, 7.
94 Newman, June 1886, 7.
95 Newman, June 1886, 8.
96 Newman, June 1886, 8.
97 Newman, June 1886, 3.
98 Newman, June 1886, 4.
100 "Mrs. Newman’s Extravaganzas," 1886, 12.
103 "Mrs. Newman’s Extravaganzas," 1886, 12.
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CHAPTER VII

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

General Overview

Heather Symmes Cannon, in an essay published in *Mormon Sisters*, studied the political involvement of the Mormon women during the later part of the nineteenth century. As noted in Chapter IV, she determined that "the mass meetings [of the Mormons] evolved from defenses of polygamy and threats of national defiance in 1870 to legalistic protests against judicial excesses and abuses of female rights in 1886."¹ Although accurate, her judgment only partially interprets the non-Mormon's public argument during this period. In the Mormons' eyes, the anti-polygamy sought political advantage in the territory. As Mary wrote:

>This is the secret of the whole movement--to excite the country against us and induce Congress to pass the bills of all sorts, planned by political frauds for the oppression and annoyance of this people. They care nothing about the virtue or purity, or they would note the glowing vices that have been gaining among us since we have been open to the "refining influences" of modern Christianity. Polygamy, even allowing it to be wrong, (which we do not) presents far purer state of society than the practices of monogamy can show.²

Polygamy and suffrage became linked to political control in the territory.
women's public support of polygamy and suffrage evolved during this time. Additionally, I will review the development of the non-Mormon attacks on polygamy and suffrage for sixteen years. I will discuss how each group's ideographs established or sustained relations of domination during the period. In doing this, I will rely on the mode of legitimacy as outlined by John Thompson.

In review, this study has traced the public argument in suffrage and polygamy by females within the territory of Utah during 1870-1886. When human beings think and behave in groups they accept as part of their consciousness the ideas that are expressed by group members. Thus, the clearest access to a group's ideology is through the symbolic forms or language they use to express their thoughts or arguments. Political language preserves ideology in ideographs, phrases or slogans that control and influence the shape of a person's world view or reality. An ideograph symbolizes or stands in for a fully developed argument and essentially describes or evaluates the speaker's public motives. This study identified the ideographs embedded in the public language of the Mormon and non-Mormon women as they attacked or defended polygamy and suffrage.

According to Michael McGee, ideographs function as guides, warrants, reasons or excuses for behavior and belief. As noted in Chapter II, ideographs are either
diachronic or synchronic. A diachronic ideograph structures motives vertically and serves as a grammar. A diachronic ideograph compares touchstones from the past that influence the group's discourse in the here-and-now. We come to learn the values or ideas of the group by learning how an ideograph has been constructed from historical experiences. A synchronous ideograph develops horizontally, a rhetoric that is situationally defined. When a synchronous ideograph comes in conflict with other ideographs, the ideograph cluster reorganizes to accommodate to changing circumstances.

If ideographs structure motives, knowing how the ideographs help to establish or sustain relations of domination seems appropriate. Thompson suggests that we can answer this question by attending to the interplay of meaning and power that grows out of the situation. He believes it would be of use to identify the general modes by which ideology functions. Ideology can operate through legitimation, dissimulation, unification, fragmentation, and reification. These may not be the only ways ideology operates but they provide a starting point. If a mode exhibits ideological properties then it serves to sustain, subvert, establish, and undermine relations of domination.

The ideographs used by the Mormons and non-Mormons appear to exhibit the mode of legitimation more than any
other. Legitimate means worthy of support. In their protests, each camp appealed to the federal government to take some kind of action. As such, their arguments needed to defend or justify a position showing that it was worthy of support. The speeches and documents supporting their appeal should reflect the reasons justifying why a group is deserving of dominance over the other party.

The ideographs employed by Mormon and non-Mormon women exhibited an intriguing tension between their two world views. Each group made numerous appeals to the federal government either defending or justifying their concerns on polygamy and suffrage. As the clash between the Mormons and non-Mormons developed during 1870-1886, some ideographs remained stationary while other ideographs cluster and reformulated. A summary of each camp's ideographs seems in order.

**The Mormon's Ideographs**

When the Mormon women initiated their first indignation meeting in 1870, they wanted to legitimized their choice of living arrangements. Feeling they could no longer avoid public argument against their opponents, they saw public denial as a potentially effective strategy to counteract the non-Mormon's opposition in the territory. By sharing their feelings publicly and correcting the misinformation being bantered around, the Mormon women desired to reduce the mounting pressures between the Mormon and non-Mormon
population in the territory.

The Mormon women assumed that the opposition to polygamy marriage was based on poor or inaccurate information. By describing their life under plural marriage, they hoped to persuade their opponents that the custom was good and convince federal official to not meddle in territorial life. By supplying this information, the Mormon women hoped to change the attitude of the opposition and forestall conflict. Although minimally successful in altering public sentiment, the Mormon women's public defense of plural marriage served as a means to build cohesion among the Mormon faithful.

There are a number of conclusions that can be drawn concerning the ideographs used by the Mormons (See Table 4). First, in the 1870s, the Mormon women used more diachronic ideographs. These ideographs relied on examples and experiences of the Mormon women or their family members. The <in the toils> ideograph would be a representative example. The Mormons pictured themselves as hard working, industrious people. In speeches delivered during the 1870s, the Mormons described themselves as pure, honorable, modest, tender, chaste, and women of God. The Mormons pictured themselves as determined and capable of managing their own lives. They felt they had been misrepresented by the non-Mormons in public and denied they were downtrodden, oppressed, or slaves to the male priesthood. They saw
### TABLE 4. Chronology of the Mormon Women’s Ideographs

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<td>Polygamy as Positive</td>
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themselves as helpmates and partners in settling the west and in developing the kingdom of God on earth. They had withstood intolerant persecution and would defend their religious ideals.

The <constitutioal rights> ideograph developed similarly. As citizens, they could claim the rights guaranteed in the Constitution. Their husbands and fathers had fought in the Revolutionary War to assure political prerogative, and so they had a right to claim these privileges. By the 1880s, the Mormons, as a result of accommodating to extensive and intensive pressures, described themselves in more concrete terms. They pictured themselves as temperate, God fearing, law-abiding, family oriented, citizens.

In the 1870s, the Mormons defended polygamy from a religious perspective. They believed that God authorized plural marriage and as faithful servants they should follow His commandments. This is not to say that all Mormon women supported polygamy. But uniformly in all of the public documents, the speeches at the mass meetings, the memorials sent to Congress and the President, and in articles in the Exponent, the women always defended polygamy as a religious tenet. Plural marriage, an ancient requirement from God, offered women the opportunity to receive the highest blessings in eternal life—a chance to progress in a family relationship.
The Mormon church practiced plural marriage based on revelation. As such, the practice did not rest on natural law but on divine positive law. The Mormons believed that the consequences of eternal marriage and family ties on earth carried into the next life. A person entered into plural marriage for eternity. As Douglas H. Parker, Professor of Law at J. Reuben Clark Law School, Brigham Young University, indicated: "Polygamy was part of the blueprint for establishing a perfect society during life on the earth and for establishing eternal families, including spiritual offspring, in the life after death."3

The Mormons and non-Mormons tested the boundaries of religious rights during the anti-polygamy crusade. The Reynolds case eliminated the strongest argument justifying polygamy, freedom of religion, from the public defense of the practice. The Court found that religious liberty protected by the First Amendment did not include the right to commit immoral or criminal acts, even though these acts were sanctioned by religious doctrine. The decision of the Court, in essence, meant that the Mormons were in direct violation of federal law when they practiced plural marriage. The Mormon women never contested the belief/action standard established in Reynolds. Failure to challenge the decision while at the same time continuing to practice polygamy left the Church in a precarious position.
This gave the anti-polygamist the grounds to challenge the church's power legally. Each group tried to promote their position by memorializing Congress or appealing to individuals who had power to initiate additional legislation or to repeal previous bills.

Once the Court announced the Reynolds decision, the Mormon women were forced to adapt their rhetoric. Eventually, members of the Anti-Polygamy Society propelled the Mormons to abandon polygamy. The boundaries between religious practices and the law had been tested. Reynolds had eliminated the most compelling argument justifying polygamy—freedom of religion. The Mormons lost some control over the territorial government because polygamy was at odds with Victorian America.

By 1886, the ideographs grew more complex and situationally defined. The women interpreted their position in legal terms. They had earned their <constitutional rights> and as <citizens> they wished to claim these guarantees: <Suffrage rights> were threatened; they experienced <cruel enforcement> at the hands of sheriffs and court personnel who enforced anti-polygamy legislation; their <rights of religion> were being denied. These synchronic ideographs clustered around the <constitutional> or <citizen's rights> ideograph, the umbrella ideograph. The Mormons appealed to the federal government to change the law because their rights were being denied.
By 1886, the Mormon women had narrowed their perspective and insisted polygamy had practical advantages. Polygamy assured a woman at least part of a righteous husband; it allowed all women to have a family; it protected women from loneliness and prostitution assuring that they remain pure; it allowed a woman to enlarge her personal sphere by developing her talents and interests. In essence, polygamy elevated the independence of women.

Neither the religious appeal nor the <polygamy as positive> appeal provided a compelling explanation for uniquely protecting polygamy. Having only one wife could assure the highest blessings in eternal life, multiple wives were not needed. Criminal laws could protect against prostitution. Women could develop their spheres without being in a polygamous relationship. The Mormon women lacked a rationale for needing plural marriage once the Reynolds decision removed the legal issue of <right to religion>. Nothing in their argumentation produced a legitimate and compelling reason to keep polygamy. Thus, their ideas lacked the necessary argument perspicuity to convince federal officers to repeal the anti-polygamy legislation.

The ideographs show that the Mormons believed God's law more important that societal law. As <women of God> they desired to follow <Gods principles> to assure exaltation. The Mormon women's public defense of polygamy reflected their private reasons for accepting polygamy rather than an
ideology the public would support.

The ideograph <love of family> grew out of a need of the Mormons to defend their homes and children from disinheritance. The <love of family> does form the basis of an intriguing dilemma. Why get rid of an evil--polygamy--if the solution would cause other evils--disruption of families? Subsequently, the government took action and assured inheritance rights for children. As the non-Mormons argued, discontinuing polygamy might injure a few individuals but the benefits of freeing the Mormon women and changing the political power base in Utah was worth the damage. Opponents of polygamy, including officials in the federal government, held patronizing attitudes towards the Mormons during this time period. When Congress had considered enfranchising women in Utah as a test for female suffrage, proponents had argued that if the experiment failed the only ones hurt would have been the Mormons. Now polygamy could be stopped and little concern was shown for families who entered the marriage believing it was legal.

Although the Mormon women’s arguments lacked the specificity and universal appeal to legitimize polygamy for the federal government, their public protests legitimized the activity in their own eyes. They carefully controlled and orchestrated mass meetings. The detailed memorials helped the Mormon woman more readily accept plural marriage. In private, plural marriage met with mixed reactions. Often
church leaders had to remind members that God had commanded the practice. The Mormon women's articulation of the religious rationale for plurality helped to unite them together. As <women of God>, the found a common bonding when defending polygamy, suffrage, and their families.

The Non-Mormon's Ideographs

Whereas the Mormon women's ideographs show a rhetoric defending polygamy in public, the non-Mormon's ideographs exhibit a more offensive posture (See Table 5). The ideographs <polygamy as barbaric>, <treason>, <government of theocracy>, and <republican principles> rely on historical touchstones for their meaning. Consequently, the non-Mormons relied more on historical context and example to legitimate their position. The specific attacks on suffrage and the treatment of women as inferior grew out of violations of the immediate or synchronic context, often based on testimony from eye witnesses or individuals who had experienced the abuses first hand.

The non-Mormons developed a grass roots organization to oppose polygamy within and outside the territory. They adopted a protective attitude toward the Mormon women. The non-Mormon women's attacks on the church relied on ideographs closely tied to the images of ideal Victorian America and showed that they wanted to rescue the Mormon women from the slavery of polygamy. A way to correct
<theocracy> in Utah and to assure <sovereignty> was to rid the territory of any <un-republican> form of government. The non-Mormons supported monogamy and saw <polygamy as barbaric>. The non-Mormons favored removal of suffrage for females because it had been misused. The legislature had erred and violated the intent of the Organic Act when establishing woman's citizenship on the basis of her husband or father's citizenship.

Based on a legal rationale, the non-Mormon women's arguments had more universal appeal. They constructed an image of the Mormon male as domineering, manipulative, controlling and disrespectful of the law. Polygamy not only violated the moral principles of Victorian America, but those who practiced it were felons and should be punished. Not only had the Mormons violated <sovereignty> in how they managed the ballot, but the Mormons continued to violate the law by practicing polygamy. When the church still counseled its members to practice polygamy, when a <theocracy> still controlled the territory, when citizens still committed acts of <treason> against the government, then the federal government had the right to take any means to assure <sovereignty> in the territory. The Mormon women had been deluded and the only way to correct the situation was to have the federal government get rid of polygamy. The eradication of polygamy, when tied to the need to assure a fair and impartial government, became a compelling reason to
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limit the power of an offending party.

General Conclusions

The public dispute between the Mormons and non-Mormons centered on who controlled political matters in the territory. Issues concerning the family became the central motive compelling each disputing camp. Polygamy threatened Victorian ideals and as such, the non-Mormons argued that polygamy violated family morals. On the other hand, the Mormon religion held family as central to its religious core. The Mormon religion taught that families were eternal. When the non-Mormons attacked polygamy and tried to abolish it, they were in effect attacking a central belief of the church.

Polygamy generated massive moral indignation. The nation did not want to condone polygamy. If polygamy continued, it would not be confined to "moral-minded religious persons who viewed its practice in spiritual terms." If not stopped, the licentious element would have license to follow the practice. Besides, the nation assumed that the reason individuals practiced polygamy was immoral, especially "unbridled sexual immorality and male sexual gratification."

The Mormon women tried to accommodate their response on polygamy and suffrage abuses to the developing situation. When the non-Mormons phrased reasons for why the Mormons
flagrantly violated the law, the Mormons' ideographs shifted to a legalistic perspective. <Trust in God>, <women of God>, or suffering <in the toils> were not values that legitimized a continued violation of the law. The Mormons showed that as citizens they had <rights> under the law to promote their position.

The <love of family> ideograph reflected the Mormons' view of family ties for eternity, but the argument that polygamy legislation would hurt families seemed a less immediate problem when compared with the domination by the priesthood of women and non-Mormons in the territory. The non-Mormons talked about <polygamy as barbaric>, <suffrage as curse>, and <treasonable actions> by priesthood officials in the territory. These were legitimate problems that were so serious the government needed to address these issues immediately.

The Mormons' public argument rested on moral grounds. In public they shared their commitment to their religion and to its practices. When joining a group, one takes on the group's values as well as its customs. As church members, they shared the obligation of publicly defending polygamy. Although their public rhetoric might have been consciousness-raising for themselves, the ideas the Mormons advanced did not convince the government that the problems in Utah were just territorial issues.

When speaking in public, the non-Mormon women
constructed a more appropriate public account than the Mormons. They depicted the Mormon women as enslaved and the church as unbending. The only way the problem would be corrected was to assure <sovereignty>, and the federal government needed to assume this responsibility. They persuaded a national audience to help change power relations within the territory. The non-Mormons' public argument assumed a more rational form. They endorsed <sovereignty> as a value and showed how polygamy and women's suffrage, if continued, would assure a loss of this important value. The non-Mormons added urgency to the Utah issue. They aroused a profound sense of expediency by emphasizing broad issues of <rights>. They persuaded their audience that the problem concerned the nation and not just the territory.

With respect to influencing each other, neither group made much headway. The Mormons rejected Angie Newman's attempt to help them escape the bonds of polygamy. The Mormon women defended polygamy in public, yet the non-Mormon women argued that the Mormons could not speak for themselves. As Gouldner illuminated: "Ideology allows the believer to influence, but not to be influenced reciprocally by the nonbeliever."
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4 Parker, 1991, 813.

5 Parker, 1991, 813.

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