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Polygamy and the Public Library: The Establishment of Public Libraries in Utah before 1910.

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POLYGAMY AND THE PUBLIC LIBRARY: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN UTAH BEFORE 1910

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Utah's libraries were perceived as instruments for "the establishment of a recognized social order" by each successive group that came to power and were often founded as the result of conflict between Mormon culture and the larger American society. On their arrival, Mormons established libraries primarily to provide access to information necessary to the practical aspects of establishing their new utopian "Kingdom of God." As conflict with the mainstream culture grew, religious, political, economic, and social groups in American society looked to libraries to eradicate polygamy; undermine the Mormon religion, culture, and political power; and establish the recognized American social order as the dominant culture in Utah. The period of conflict was followed by reconciliation, unification, and assimilation as the Mormon Church and society abandoned its utopian ideology and sought acceptance into the greater culture of the United States. Utah's women, previously sharply divided, organized into women's clubs and literary societies to found these institutions. By 1910, the public library in Utah had become an institution of a generally accepted American secular social order.

> A library will, by bringing the divergent classes of this community together upon the common platform of the free public library, go a long way toward solving that unmentionable problem which legislation has thus far failed to accomplish.
> (William McKay, 1899)

Introduction

Early library historians demonstrated that personal benefit, the nineteenth-century effort toward increased democratic participation, and the growth of scientific knowledge and reason were factors underlying the growth of

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the public library in the eastern and midwestern United States during the nineteenth century [1–2]. Later researchers emphasized the Progressive movement's view of the library as a social stabilizer and instrument of reform, particularly for moral instruction and guidance, and for controlling and directing the disparate elements of society [3–6]. This Progressive view of the role of the library allowed women and women's literary clubs to become publicly involved in the founding of free public libraries, as women were able to justify their new civic activism as "municipal housekeeping," a natural extension of their traditional responsibility for morality, child rearing, education, and homemaking [5, 7–9].

While libraries in the American West were founded for many of these same reasons, the desire for social stability often played a larger role in Western mining and railroad towns, with their large numbers of young single men, than it did in eastern cities and midwestern farming communities. In Bisbee, Arizona, for example, the directors of the Copper Queen mine created a church and library to provide "a Christian and an educational influence" after a murder and lynching at the camp [10, p. 4]. The city of Tucson established a public library in 1885 in order to provide people with a place to go during the "long winter evenings . . . and thus keep out of more pernicious society" [11]. In addition, libraries were founded as symbols of a socially, economically, and commercially stable community, and they were an advantage in attracting new businesses and new settlers.

Because of a lack of wealthy men to endow public institutions, as was common in the eastern United States, women's clubs played a larger and more vital role in the establishment of public libraries in the Midwest and West, where they founded and supported thousands of libraries through their fund-raising activities, public advocacy, and political lobbying efforts, while club traveling libraries often formed the core of later public libraries. Many of these clubs were founded expressly for the purpose of establishing a public library, rather than solely for the self-improvement of their members, as had been the rule in the East. In common with their sister clubs in the rest of the country, these clubs looked to the library to "Americanize immigrants," "improve reading taste, promote literacy, and to supplement the public schools," "enhance community life and ensure social order," and supply "'home-influence' to the young, unattached men of their town" [5, pp. 125–27; 8, p. 149; 11; 12, pp. 8–15; 13–21; 22, p. 108].

The establishment of libraries in Utah was influenced by these same economic and social factors and by social and cultural factors unique to the state, in particular, the Mormon doctrine and practice of polygamy.[2]

2. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints or its members, also called Latter-Day Saints, or LDS. The term "Mormon" will be used in this article in accordance with common

In order to eradicate this practice and "Americanize" the Mormons, many non-Mormon churches established mission schools and libraries in Utah during the mid-nineteenth century. After the Mormon Church renounced polygamy in 1890, the religious conflicts within the state gradually abated as a pluralistic, secular government and society were established. Utah women, no longer in public opposition over plural marriage, organized into voluntary social organizations, which began to work together to establish free public libraries and other educational institutions throughout the state. The value, meaning, and goals of these libraries paralleled those prevalent in the rest of the country and reflected the desire of the citizens of Utah to begin to establish a social order that would be acceptable to the dominant American culture.

This study demonstrates that, while the desire of non-Mormons to eradicate polygamy promoted the establishment of public libraries under Protestant control, the struggle between Mormons and non-Mormons for control of public institutions inhibited the establishment of tax-supported free public libraries prior to statehood. In particular, the conflict over the doctrine of polygamy seriously retarded the development of these tax-supported free public libraries in Utah by preventing the formation of the integrated women's clubs that were so vital to the establishment of public libraries in other western states.

Library Development in Utah

Mormon settlers entered the Utah Territory in 1847 to escape persecution and mob violence in the eastern and midwestern states and to establish the "Kingdom of God on earth," a utopian social order based on their own religious and social principles that included a theocratic, rather than democratic, political order; communal living and farming; a cooperative economic system independent of the national economy; and a polygamous family structure. Although church president Brigham Young was replaced as territorial governor by a non-Mormon appointed official in 1858, he and other high-ranking members of the church continued to govern under a "shadow" government at least until his death in 1877 [23, pp. 126–36; 24, p. 142].

During this period, the vast majority of Utah's public institutions, including libraries, supported the doctrines, promoted the values, and served the political, economic, and cultural needs of Mormon utopian society. Therefore, any consideration of social, cultural, or political institutions in

usage. As the taking of more than one spouse was restricted to men, it would more properly be called "polygyny." However, I will follow common usage of the time.

Utah must necessarily include a consideration of the influence and impact of the Mormon Church, and of polygamy, the single most controversial practice of that church, which was openly practiced by 5–25 percent of Mormon men from 1852 until 1890. They were primarily wealthy, influential church and community leaders whose wives by extension were the female elite of the church and community [25–30].

The first public library in Utah may have been the Seventies Library, founded in Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1845, to support the church's missionary endeavors [31] and possibly reestablished in Utah as early as 1847.[3] A constitution for the library was framed by 1856, and the Seventies Library and Reading Room was incorporated by the territorial legislature in 1864, but no records after 1869 can be located [32, p. 1; 33, p. 157; 34, pp. 19–20; 35, pp. 22–23].

In 1850, the legislature petitioned Congress for aid in establishing a territorial library to serve as a reference library for the Territorial Assembly and a public library when the assembly was not in session. Congress granted $5,000 with which a library of more than three thousand volumes was established in 1851. The bulk of the collection was nonfiction, primarily histories, biographies, scientific works, and the religious works of the Mormon Church, all useful for building character and promoting material and cultural progress. The collection contained no popular fiction or literature, apart from Shakespeare and a handful of novels. An early visitor to Utah, Jules Remy, remarked that "the majority of the Saints do not properly estimate these advantages as they ought to do" [36, vol. 2, p. 188]. The library closed in 1890 because of a lack of appropriations [33].

Nevertheless, the vast majority of wagon trains that came to Utah brought with them books to form the nucleus of libraries. Brigham Young instructed each stake throughout the territory to establish a library of useful and instructive works, particularly architecture and gardening, from which to learn the practical work of building and farming.[4] Novel reading was discouraged because it did not prepare the reader for the rigors of pioneer living and could lead to the delinquency of young men and the discontent of young women [33, pp. 161–63]. These libraries, which served as joint church, school, and public libraries, were to be used to establish and maintain the social order envisioned by Mormon leaders and adherents. None survived until statehood. From the scant accounts that remain, they appear to have closed because of a lack of funds [32, 37].

3. The arm of the church charged with the oversight of the missionary effort. The name is derived from Luke 10:18 in the New Testament, "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come."

4. A stake is a group of wards (congregations) roughly equivalent to a diocese.

The completion of the transcontinental railroad in Ogden, Utah, in 1869 led to an influx of non-Mormons, many of whom sought to reduce the political power of the Mormon Church, undermine adherence to the Mormon faith and its utopian order, and promote a politically and economically pluralistic secular American culture in the territory. One non-Mormon resident who had arrived in 1864 called the railroad "the salvation of all of us [non-Mormons] out here" [38]. Because of the railroad, the percentage of non-Mormons in the territory increased steadily from 8 percent in 1860 to 34 percent by 1890; most of these people lived in mining and railroad communities [39].

Several unsuccessful efforts were made to establish a secular public library in Ogden. The Ogden Literary and Debating Society Library Institution opened a subscription library in 1868 and then changed its name to the Ogden City Library Society in 1869. The association and the society appear to have dissolved by 1874 when an Ogden City Library Association was organized once again. Its library closed in 1876. "A few citizens wishing to encourage a reading habit among young men" opened a small reading room in the 1880s but abandoned it after a few years for lack of funds [32; 35, pp. 28–30; 40–41].

Political, religious, and social leaders both within and outside the territory opposed Mormonism as "un-American and anti-American" and in "open revolt with every one of the American ideals," as well as a great "moral evil" [42, p. 35; 43, p. 355; 44; 45, p. 3; 12; 46, p. 3]. Statehood was denied numerous times before 1896 primarily as a result of the practice of polygamy, decried along with slavery in the Republican Party platform of 1856 as one of "the twin relics of barbarism," and the political domination of the Mormon Church. This Mormon domination of territorial and local government and the practice of polygamy, as well as a church-mandated boycott of non-Mormon businesses throughout the state, led to religious, political, and social divisions that impeded community improvement, including the establishment of such public institutions as the tax-supported free public library, which would have relied on the support of a cohesive community for their establishment and survival.

Among those opposing Mormonism were "educational missionaries," whose goal was to eradicate polygamy and convert Mormons to conventional Protestant Christianity by founding religious academies and libraries in Utah. By 1889, the New West Education Commission, founded in 1879 in Chicago by Colonel C. G. Hammond, a superintendent of the Union Pacific Railroad who had lived in Salt Lake City, Utah, boasted twenty-six schools, including the Ogden Academy and the Proctor Academy in Provo, Utah, and with 2,500 students throughout Utah, nearly three-quarters of them from Mormon families [47; 48, p. 53; 49–51].

These parochial schools, which offered liberal financial aid to Mormon

students, teachers trained in modern pedagogical methods, and well-stocked libraries, presented a potent challenge to the fee-based Mormon schools staffed primarily by untrained local girls and women [37, 47, 52–54]. U.S. Secretary of State William H. Seward wrote in 1869 that such schools "would do more to solve the Mormon problem than the army and Congress of the United States combined" [43, p. 365].

As a result, in 1873 Brigham Young called on Mormon girls and women to "take in hand to furnish the schools and families of the Saints with suitable, intelligent and truthful reading matter" [55]. That same year, Utah's "young and inexperienced teachers" were encouraged to attend the newly inaugurated Territorial Normal Institute, conducted by recognized Mormon educators, which suggests that the mission teachers, their methods, and the books they provided were perceived as a threat to Mormon culture and society [56]. According to Mrs. L. L. Gillogly, an educational missionary who arrived in Ogden with her Episcopalian minister husband in 1870 to establish a mission school, Mormon Church leaders declared that parents who sent their children to the school might "better send them to hell" [57, p. 11]. In Logan, Utah, the local Mormon leadership excommunicated members who sent their children to the St. John's Episcopal school and instituted a boycott against non-Mormon businesses [58, p. 145]. Commission teachers throughout Utah reported that they were subject to antagonism, ostracism, and slander [59, pp. 11–12].

Although these schools did not achieve the success for which their founders had hoped—eradicating polygamy and converting the population to other forms of Christianity—they did establish a non-Mormon presence in the territory and helped to maintain religious and social segregation. In a letter to the New West Education Commission, attorney Ransford Smith of Ogden wrote that the "mission schools enable the non-Mormon population to remain in the Territory, and by example, to show to a hardened, polygamous people the advantages of monogamy" [59, pp. 70–71]. Female teachers married local non-Mormon men and remained in Utah, strengthening non-Mormon communities and institutions and increasing social and cultural diversity. Graduates of the schools became local public school teachers and promoted a secular public system. In addition, many of the academy libraries would later form the nucleus of tax-supported free public libraries.

Women's Clubs before 1890

The period following the Civil War witnessed the entry of a select group of educated, dedicated, single, middle-class women into public affairs through the cause of female suffrage, and organizations such as the set-

tlement house movement, the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the Young Women's Christian Association, and voluntary social clubs, all under the rubric of domestic feminism or, as it was more commonly called, municipal housekeeping. As members of these organizations, women worked to combat poverty, political corruption, unsanitary conditions, and other social ills such as prostitution, gambling, and alcoholism brought about by escalated industrialization, rapid urbanization, and a massive influx of immigrants to the cities. As part of their commitment to education and social reform, these women's clubs founded thousands of libraries throughout the country [7; 8, pp. 79–174; 60, pp. 13–14; 61, pp. 3–11, 133; 62, pp. 155–58, 198; 63, pp. 44–75, 122–23].

The first women's organization in Utah territory, the Mormon Relief Society, was established in 1867 with Eliza R. Snow, plural widow of Joseph Smith and plural wife of Brigham Young, as president. A Relief Society was soon organized in every ward, and active membership was considered a religious obligation. Its object was to aid the needy, although meetings included readings, discussions, lectures, and music. Members of the society often served as volunteer librarians of their local stake libraries. The society was also responsible for teaching homemaking skills and economic self-sufficiency to young women. Its members opened cooperative stores that sold home-manufactured goods, were involved in industries such as silk manufacturing [64], and provided instruction in health care and financial support for the first female doctors in the territory [65, pp. 8–10].

In 1872, a group of Salt Lake City's prominent non-Mormon women formed the Ladies' Library Association and opened a subscription library of about four hundred donated volumes, primarily fiction. They were motivated by the many "homeless, motherless young men" in the city and a desire to "advance the literary tastes of all classes of the community" [40, p. 17]. The association supported the library through a lecture series as well as by soliciting donations. The library failed in 1876, but the Masonic Lodge (which Mormons were forbidden to join) added the books to its existing private collection and opened the library to the public in 1877.

The first non-Mormon women's literary club in the territory, the Blue Tea Club, was founded in Salt Lake City in 1875 by Jennie Anderson Froiseth to provide women an opportunity to "exchange the petty but wearing cares and vexations of domestic life for communion with the great thoughts of great souls" [66]. Froiseth, who had come to Utah with her husband, an Army surveyor, called Utah a "border-land whose intellectual night has not as yet been penetrated by the farthest rays of their sun" [66]. The Blue Tea Club was an exclusive literary and cultural club limited to twenty-five nonpolygamist women. Almost no records of the club survive [67–69].

Two years later, Blue Tea Club members who felt that "a club should

stand for the education of the many rather than the culture of the few" founded the Salt Lake City Ladies' Literary Club [70, p. 50]. Although the club did not exclude Mormons in its constitution and bylaws, by "common understanding" none of the members in the early years were Mormons [70, p. 51]. Eventually, the Ladies' Literary Club absorbed the Blue Tea Club. Membership continued to be restricted to nonpolygamist women [53, 65, 71]. In order to achieve their goal of "education of the many," the club supported the Masonic Library financially and politically for more than twenty years. Many members were wives of Masons and had been members of the defunct Ladies' Library Association. [32; 35, pp. 31–46; 40; 70–72]. The only other secular club known to be founded during this period was a branch of the anti-Mormon and antipolygamist WCTU in Ogden in 1883. Newspaper accounts indicate that the club hosted lectures and fund-raising events and operated a free library, a reading room, and a lunch room [73, p. 57; 74].

During these years, while women in other parts of the country organized for self-improvement, civic improvement, and moral reform, the majority of Utah women were in public opposition over the issue of polygamy. Raids carried out until 1893 by federal officials enforcing antipolygamy laws greatly inhibited Mormon women's public activities, severely disrupted community life throughout the territory, and fostered distrust and suspicion of strangers in general and non-Mormons in particular as plural wives went into hiding under assumed names or moved into neighboring territories from which they could not be extradited [75–76].

The need for secrecy and anonymity prevented these women from becoming involved with civic improvement projects and thus deprived their communities of female leaders. The time and energy of prominent and influential plural wives, many of whom were educated professionals, was expended on promoting cohesion within the Mormon community, campaigning to retain female suffrage in the territory, and defending "The Principle" of polygamy as a commandment of God that preserved female purity and the sanctity of the home by containing men's sexual urges within a family structure, thereby reducing prostitution, adultery, and illegitimacy. Relief Society women founded the *Woman's Exponent* in 1872, edited by Emmeline B. Wells, in order to report on the Relief Society, uphold the principles and leaders of the Mormon Church, and furnish an image of Utah women to the world and to themselves as pious, pure, submissive, and domestic Victorian "True Women" [77–83].

Meanwhile, many prominent non-Mormon women in the territory expended their time and energy attacking polygamy. Froiseth and other members of the Blue Tea Club founded the Ladies's Anti-polygamy Society of Utah in association with the WCTU in 1878. The society became the Woman's National Anti-polygamy Society in 1880 and published a news-

paper, the *Anti-polygamy Standard*, with Froiseth as editor, until 1883. The paper attacked the Mormon Church as an organization "constantly advocating the dishonoring and enslaving of womanhood . . . whose guiding principles are hostility to the government and degradation to woman" [84], and it lauded educational missions as "the most powerful agency which can be employed in order to revolutionize Utah" [85, 86].

Although both Mormon and non-Mormon women invoked the Victorian values of "True Womanhood," self-restraint, and the sanctity of the family in defense of their position and believed that their primary duties were to their religion and to the physical, moral, and educational welfare of their homes and families, their definitions of woman, religion, home, and family were incompatible and antagonistic. Mormon women supported a new utopian social order based on a new religion that provided a new definition of home and family, while non-Mormon women advocated the established American pluralistic secular social and political order, the established religious denominations (primarily Protestant), and the established monogamous family structure [25; 28–29; 54; 83; 87, pp. 283–86; 88–90].

The conflicts and divisions within Utah began to abate in 1890 when the Mormon Church renounced polygamy to secure statehood and integrate Mormon society with the national culture. With that renunciation, the church and its members officially abandoned their goal of establishing a utopian "Kingdom of God" and began to accommodate themselves to the recognized monogamous, democratic, capitalist, pluralist, and, at least nominally, secular American social order. Public elementary schools were established that same year with the passage of the Territorial Free School Law. In 1889, voters in Ogden elected Fred J. Kiesel, founder of the Liberal Party in Utah, as the first non-Mormon mayor in the state. The next year, a non-Mormon was elected mayor of Salt Lake City, and a majority of seats on the city council went to the Liberal Party. A fusion ticket of Mormons and non-Mormons won in the Salt Lake County elections later that year and in Ogden in 1891. By 1893, the Republican and Democratic parties had replaced the Mormon People's and non-Mormon Liberal parties, and other national political parties were established in the territory. In 1895, many Mormon and non-Mormon women united in a successful campaign to include woman suffrage in the state constitution, which also contained a clause separating church and state that was even more explicit than the one in the U.S. Constitution.

Once the majority of Utah women were no longer publicly divided over the issue of polygamy, they turned to other social and political activities. The Utah Woman Suffrage Association was founded in 1889 and was superseded on statehood by the Utah Council of Women, which represented women of all faiths and political parties [53, p. 303; 91, p. 38; 45]. Wells and Froiseth jointly organized Republican women's clubs throughout the

territory [92, p. 6]. Women throughout the state contributed to the 1893 Columbian Exposition [53, pp. 310–14].

In the first two decades after the Mormon Church renounced polygamy, Mormon and non-Mormon women founded numerous secular women's clubs around shared interests and used these organizations to work together toward mutual goals of social, civic, and self-improvement. Although the clubs worked together on causes of mutual concern, many remained religiously segregated for nearly another decade.

In 1893, the Utah Federation of Women's Clubs (UFWC), an affiliate of the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), was created by the Ladies' Literary Club, Cleofan, the Utah Woman's Press Club, and the Woman's Club of Salt Lake City; the La Coterie of Ogden; and the Nineteenth Century Club of Provo. Utah was the second state in the nation to so affiliate. State membership had risen to seventeen clubs by 1898. Although UFWC officers were non-Mormons in those years, Mormon clubs were included in the federation, signaling the beginning of joint efforts among Utah women regardless of religion [53, 65, 93–96].

In her 1898 history of the GFWC, Jane Croly, founder and first president of the General Federation, describes the UFWC as "one of the strongest factors of modern growth and social advancement in Utah," in which "every woman working for the establishment of a recognized social order felt the strength of this whole body of women behind her" [93, p. 1113]. Federation women lobbied for libraries, kindergartens, public parks and playgrounds, protective legislation for women and children, juvenile courts, and preventive health measures throughout Utah [53, p. 309]. In her 1896 presidential address, non-Mormon Federation President Eurithe K. LaBarthe proclaimed, "We represent the women of Utah of diverse ages, tastes and faith, banded together by common interest in all that pertains to the advancement and progress of women" [53, p. 310].

In Ogden, women organized La Coterie in 1890 for the study of the history of the seventeenth century. Aglaia was founded in 1893 for the study of current topics and history, the Home Culture Club in 1894 for the "mutual improvement of its members in literature and vital interests of the day" [97, "Morrison," p. 24], the Ladies' Literary Club in 1899 to study current events and "the best books of the day" [98, p. 2], and the Historical Society in 1896. The Child Culture Club was founded in 1898 for "organized effort to improve the environment of children" [99, p. 2]. Their first project was a free kindergarten [99, p. 1]. A group of fifteen of Ogden's single young ladies founded the S.O.O.B. club in 1895 as a social club but were soon discussing the "New Woman" and woman suffrage [100–102]. Members of these clubs included Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Unitarians, Catholics, Mormons, eastern-born wives of federal officials, native daughters of Utah pioneers, housewives, and career women

such as Republican attorney and politician Mary Anna Coulter and socialist and anarchist journalist Kate Hilliard. Despite their diverse political and religious views, the women were able to organize around shared social and cultural values and goals [103–105].

The women of Provo were relatively segregated prior to statehood, with Mormon women belonging to the Relief Society and non-Mormon women to the Nineteenth Century Club, founded in 1891. The members of the latter were primarily middle class, educated in eastern and midwestern schools and colleges, married to businessmen and professional men, and affiliated with the Protestant church [94; 106]. In contrast, Mormon women in Provo, some the wives of polygamists, organized Utah Sorosis in 1897 in order to "promote the highest development of its members through any avenues of study or work that may seem profitable" [95, p. 1] and to raise funds for a future public library. Founding members were largely educated in the local schools, appear to have been middle class or working class, and were married to farmers and small businessmen. Although non-Mormon women joined Utah Sorosis soon after its founding, Mormon women do not appear to have joined the Nineteenth Century Club until much later in the twentieth century.

Public Libraries after 1890

When Utah became a state in 1896, only seventeen towns in the Intermountain West had populations of more than five thousand. Only two cities, Denver and Salt Lake City, had populations of more than one hundred thousand. The entire area of 1,114,000 square miles supported fewer than 2 million white settlers. The Denver Public Library, which had opened in 1889 under the direction of John Cotton Dana, was the largest in the state and probably the entire region. By 1900, there were approximately 124 nonschool libraries of more than one thousand volumes in the West, exclusive of California; only two were in Utah [12, 107–109].

The religious and political divisions created by polygamy and the desire to eradicate it coupled with the struggle for control of public institutions had a continuing effect on the establishment of public libraries in Utah. Given that missionary schools, female suffrage, and legislation had not destroyed social acceptance of the institution, antipolygamist groups turned to other methods, including the establishment of free public libraries, as an aid in building a properly monogamous character and in the continuing moral reform of Mormon society.

Salt Lake City

Efforts to establish a public library free of Mormon control in Salt Lake City demonstrate this concern. John Eaton, U.S. commissioner of education from 1870 to 1886 and president of the Presbyterian Sheldon Jackson College in Salt Lake City from 1897 to 1901, wrote to Andrew Carnegie in 1899 to encourage his support of a public library. "Salt Lake City . . . is subject to Mormon influences. . . . A library, therefore, under any public auspices is in danger of being perverted to the purpose of this modern Mohammedanism." He noted that "a library under the direction of Presbyterian auspices is safe against this perversion. . . . The Presbyterians have now four academies . . . located in different sections of the State and under the same control are centers of light over against the darkness of Mormonism" [110].

William Iglehart, editor of the non-Mormon *Salt Lake Herald* and a director of the Salt Lake City Public Library, argued that increased public funding would bring about "a revolution in favor of educational progress more quickly than money spent in any other way. Nor do I know of any other means that could so quickly dispel the antagonism of one class of our people toward the spread of liberal culture which has blocked the more progressive element so constantly" [111]. He also proposed offering university extension courses at the library "so that the library would become the center of a great educational and moral force, almost unlimited in its possibilities for good" [111].

Judge William McKay encouraged Carnegie to cast a grant upon the "waters of benighted Utah . . . where we are so sadly deficient in all that aids or makes for intelligent public opinion and education . . . by bringing the divergent classes of this community together upon the common platform of the free public library." A properly administered public library, he argued, would "go a long way toward solving that unmentionable problem [the continuing social acceptance of polygamy] which legislation has thus far failed to accomplish" [112]. All three men, writing nearly ten years after its official renunciation, viewed polygamy as a continuing social and moral evil and the public library as an appropriate institution with which society could resolve this and other educational, social, and cultural problems.

Eight years earlier, in 1891, the leaders of the Masonic Library had incorporated the Pioneer Library Association and transferred to it responsibility for the library. Soon thereafter, the Ladies' Literary Club hosted a five-day "kirmess" (carnival) that raised $3,100 and saved the library from closing. In 1893, the city appropriated $1,000 annually to support the library but ceased to provide funds in early 1895. A library board was appointed in 1897, and a library tax was levied, under the 1896 library bill

passed by the first state legislature.[5] The club, by then open to women of all religious beliefs, had lobbied for passage of the bill and later acquired the signatures necessary to levy the permitted tax in Salt Lake City [32; 35, pp. 31–46; 40; 70–72].

The city council was charged with discrimination when it appointed only two Mormons to the first nine-member library board. Council members finally agreed to change a non-Mormon for a Mormon, giving the majority Mormon community one-third of the seats, which suggests that the city was still concerned about Mormon control. The Pioneer Library Association officially transferred its debt-ridden library to the city in 1898, making it the first tax-supported free public library in Utah. In 1900, John Q. Packard, a Salt Lake philanthropist and mining magnate, donated a site and money for a building and book stacks [32, 35]. The first librarian, Annie E. Chapman, had moved to Utah from Medina, Ohio, in 1880 to join her brother, a prominent Salt Lake City dentist. She had taught English to Chinese immigrants through the Congregational Church's American Home Missionary Society until 1894, when she was appointed assistant librarian of the Pioneer Library [40, 113–114].

Ogden

In 1889, Professor H. W. Ring, director of the New West Education Commission's Ogden Academy, informed commission supporters that "a good working library for the school is much needed; then a good general library should be added, as there is no library in the city where the people can gain useful information, or cultivate a taste in literature" [115, p. 43]. Responding to public interest, ten of the city's prominent Mormon and non-Mormon women founded the Ladies' Public Library Aid Society in December 1890. They raised $250 for the library through a two-day kirmess in February 1891. On August 1, 1892, a library of one thousand volumes, primarily adult fiction, opened to the public in a room in City Hall. The board remained exclusively female until 1901, with Harriet S. Emerson, president of La Coterie from 1891 to 1894, as president during that time. A native of Vermont, she was the widow of federal judge Philip Emerson, a member of the Congregational Church, a prominent woman in social

5. The act permitted first-class (population 20,000 or more) and second-class (5,000–19,999) cities to levy a one-third of a mil property tax in support of a public library on petition by one thousand legal voters and property tax payers in the case of first-class cities and 250 in second-class cities. Third-class cities (1–4,999) could place a measure to levy a tax of not more than one mil on the ballot on petition of fifty legal voters. At the time, Salt Lake City was the only first-class city and Ogden, Provo, and Logan were the only second class.

circles and civic activities, and, in 1897, was elected city auditor [32, 35, 41, 116–119]. Nearly all other female board members were also members of one or more of Ogden's many women's clubs; these included Coulter, a Unitarian, founder of Aglaia, and president of the UFWC from 1900 to 1904 [120, p. 173]; Minnie Kiesel, daughter of Mayor Fred J. Kiesel and founding member of La Coterie and S.O.O.B. [103]; and Ellen Hamer, a daughter of Utah pioneers and a founder of the Child Culture Club [73; 74; 99, p. 2; 121–129].

After the city rejected a petition by its citizens to levy a tax for its support in 1894, private donors maintained the library until 1896, when the council appropriated $25 a month for its maintenance. Finally, a tax was levied in 1901.

Ogden City became the first recipient in Utah of a grant from Carnegie and dedicated the Ogden City Carnegie Library in 1903 [32, 35, 41, 116–117]. "By reason of the religious differences which have affected this region for so many years but which are now, we hope, dying out, the material advancement of the city has been greater perhaps than its intellectual advancement," claimed the library board in a letter to Carnegie in 1901. "Or perhaps it would be more correct to say that the people have been thrown upon sectarian as distinguished from public and united efforts for their social and united opportunities." The board assured Carnegie that if the grant were made, "there is no doubt sufficient local pride in Ogden that all other differences would be laid aside and that the people unitedly would do all that the law allowed in providing a site and a revenue and other such conditions could be attached to the gift as would forever prevent any sectarian control of the same" [130]. As in Salt Lake City, the primarily non-Mormon Ogden library board continued to harbor fear and suspicion of Mormon dominance and control of public institutions [130].

All of the speakers at the 1903 library dedication credited the board women with keeping "alive the library during all the trying years of financial distress" through "self-sacrifice, untiring zeal, and conscientious efforts" [131, 117]. The WCTU's four hundred–book library formed the core of the collection, and the S.O.O.B. donated seventy-nine books. In subsequent years, the S.O.O.B. donated additional books and cash, the Child Culture Club donated twenty-one books, and the Ladies' Literary Club donated twenty subscriptions to juvenile magazines [96, 131]. Women who a generation earlier might have been attacking each other publicly over polygamy were now working together toward a common cause.

In 1904, librarian Zoe Faddis, an Episcopalian and native of Minnesota, requested additional funds from Carnegie for children's books for the collection, which consisted mainly of government documents, adult fiction and literature, and selected adult nonfiction, primarily biographies, history, and reference works [119]. "These people have large families which we

must try to educate," she wrote, "the Mormons are not given to reading, nor do they encourage it." Her strongest argument for the money, however, was the eradication of polygamy. "The old system of polygamy . . . the evil effects of which constitute a blighting heritage upon the younger generation, can only be eradicated by education, by reading." She declared that "every book a Utah boy or girl may read, whether history, biography or a novel breathes unconsciously the spirit of monogamy, which is contrary to faith of his fathers. In behalf of these boys and girls, whom this nation expects to lead monogamous lives, I ask for further aid" [132]. The grant was denied, however. Carnegie did not provide money for books.

Provo

The founding of the Provo City Library in 1906 reflects ongoing changes in the social climate after statehood. As with Ogden, diverse groups worked together to achieve a public goal. However, unlike Ogden, religious differences are not explicitly mentioned in any of the documents, suggesting that such conflicts no longer seriously divided the public, at least overtly. Women's clubs were the driving force behind the public library campaign, and social reform and individual self-improvement were the primary motivating factors.

In 1902, a Carnegie grant for a building was denied because the tax levy permitted by law did not raise the amount Carnegie stipulated for a community the size of Provo [133]. Soon after, Elizabeth Calder, a member of the Nineteenth Century Club, organized a Book Club to work toward a Carnegie building and patterned it after an organization to which she had belonged in her native New York state. Members of the three women's organizations in Provo—the Nineteenth Century Club, Utah Sorosis, and the Relief Society—and other citizens joined the Book Club and worked toward building a public library in Provo by subscribing to magazines, raising funds through lectures and teas, and donating books from their personal libraries. The club stored the books collected at the home of a Nineteenth Century Club member until they could find space for a library. They soon opened a circulating library staffed by women of the clubs [94; 134, p. 223; 135–136]. Newspaper editorials characterized the library as "a place where boys who now run the streets can find a snug corner and a pleasant book . . . the workingman's friend, the book-lovers' delight, and the students' necessity," and they urged the public to "work together in the good cause" [137].

The Book Club applied for a Carnegie grant on July 1, 1904, but received no response. In January 1905, they again attempted to secure a Carnegie grant, which was again denied because of inadequate tax funds [133,

138–139]. Logan, in Cache County, was facing the same problem. Utah County and Cache County representatives jointly supported an amendment to the library act that would raise the levy from one-third of a mil to one mil for cities of second-class size, so that they could qualify for a Carnegie grant. The state senate rejected the amendment in early 1905, but both houses unanimously passed it in 1907 [94, 140–141].

In the meantime, the city council established the Provo City Free Public Library in May 1905 and levied the permitted tax for its support. The mayor appointed a board in September, which included Mormon physician Fred W. Taylor as president, and as members Brigham Young University President George H. Brimhall, Mormon Mayor William M. Roylance, Mormon teacher S. P. Eggertsen, Mormons and members of Sorosis Mrs. Mariette R. Beesley and Mrs. Maynetta King, Mormon Relief Society members Mrs. Caroline B. Pratt and Mrs. Maude R. Taylor, Congregationalist minister Reverend Samuel H. Goodwin, non-Mormon John E. Bott, Congregationalist businessman R. R. Irvine Jr., and Nineteenth Century Club member Mrs. Rosetta Schwab, who also served as secretary. They secured a room in the basement of the courthouse, where the members of the Nineteenth Century Club "gathered with buckets, mops, soap and cloths and scrubbed the place on their hands and knees" [135]. The library opened on January 2, 1906, with about 2,500 donated volumes. The women's organizations raised more than $700 that year through a joint fair, which involved more than four hundred women. The amount was equal to the tax levy on the entire community and was almost three-quarters of the first year's operating budget [142]. Many other groups and individuals in the community "worked together in the good cause" of the public library [135]. The pupils of the Parker School contributed $24.50, and the manager of the skating rink donated one day's proceeds to the fund. The Opera House, Woolf Stock Company, the Elks Club, and many private citizens and organizations also donated cash and materials [143].

After the tax law was amended permitting Provo to raise the required funds, a Carnegie grant of $17,500 was awarded in 1907. The library was built on land donated by Jesse Knight, a local Mormon mining magnate. In another show of support for civic improvement, the local architect selected to design the building, Mr. R. C. Watkins donated all of his salary above $500 to the library fund. Maude May Babcock, a nationally known actress, a University of Utah professor of oratory, speech, and physical education, and former Provo resident, donated $129.50 from a recital, while the Commercial Club donated $187.50 from a ball held to benefit the new library [142].

That the Library Board was determined to maintain the public library as a nonpartisan, secular public institution is demonstrated by Goodwin's motion in 1910 that the library lecture room not be used for religious or

political gatherings. The rules he framed at the board's direction prohibited the discussion of questions "pertaining to partisan politics and religious faiths or denominations or secret societies," topics that had been the rule of the day scarcely more than a generation earlier [142].

Logan

Although the leaders of the City of Logan were so desirous of establishing a public library that they instigated the movement to increase the permissible mil levy in 1905, the city did not establish a tax-supported public library until 1916. The community's intense and long-standing religious and political rivalry abated at a slower pace than in Salt Lake City, Ogden, and Provo, and it extended even to the provision of library services. The Common Room Club of St. John's House at the St. John's Episcopal Church opened a circulating library of 1,200–1,500 books in 1908, and the next year, the Mormon Church's youth group began collecting books, finally opening a small library of books donated by the public and the Mormon Church in 1912 [144–147]. Both collections were eventually donated to the public library.

A primary factor in the city's inability to establish a tax-supported library at an earlier date was the lack of secular women's clubs in the city. The first such clubs founded in Logan were sororities and clubs affiliated with the Agricultural College, which restricted their membership and activities to the college [96, 104, 148]. Other women's clubs were founded to support the U.S. World War I effort and so did not begin supporting the library until after it ended. The Business and Professional Women started a perpetual Library Equipment Fund in 1923 and donated $1,000 for new library equipment when the county library building, the first built in Logan, opened in 1932. Logan's other women's clubs donated furniture, books, and magazines to the new library [149], demonstrating the importance of women's club support.

Conclusion

Although the establishment of public libraries in Utah was affected by social, educational, and economic factors common to other western states, the utopian aspirations of the Mormon Church were unique to the area. Initially, the Mormons utilized libraries to support missionary work, reinforce church doctrine, and establish a new utopian social order in the Great Basin. After the completion of the transcontinental railroad, and the consequent importance of the territory to the United States, religious,

political, and social groups within the greater American society envisioned free public libraries under sectarian control as one means of eradicating polygamy, undermining Mormon political and social power, and establishing mainstream American culture in Utah. Evidence suggests that the community conflict over control of public institutions contributed to the failure to establish tax-supported public libraries during this period. Evidence also demonstrates that women in Utah were engaged in public debates over definitions of female purity, the sanctity of the home, and the protection of families and children under the rubric of Victorian ideals of "True Womanhood" and the woman's sphere rather than in organized efforts toward community improvement, such as creating public libraries.

The effects of such cultural conflict on library development are demonstrated by a comparison between Utah and California, which became part of U.S. history at almost the same time. Mormons entered Utah in 1847, two years before the discovery of gold in California. Many "49ers" passed through Salt Lake City on their way to northern California. The Territorial Library of Utah and the California State Library were both established in 1850. Both Utah and California were home to more than half the libraries in their respective regions between 1851 and 1875. However, Utah society was still sharply conflicted and divided socially and politically both internally and with the rest of the nation, when California passed its first public library law in 1878. Utah did not achieve statehood or begin founding public institutions for another generation. The first public library law in Utah became effective in 1898, the same year that the California Library Association was founded. The Utah Library Association was not founded until fourteen years later.

Because of this delay in establishing the necessary social and political unity, Utah achieved statehood and passed its first library law at about the same time as or after its neighboring states, many of which were created from the original Utah Territory. Colorado became a territory eleven years after Utah, yet achieved statehood in 1876, twenty years sooner. The Denver Public Library was transferred to the city in 1898, the same year that Salt Lake City established its public library. Nevada (part of Utah Territory until 1866) passed a library law in 1895, one year after statehood. Idaho (organized as a territory in 1863 and granted statehood in 1890) and the territory of Arizona (granted statehood in 1912) both passed library laws in 1901 [11, 20, 150–151].

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, library development accelerated throughout the West, due in part to increased economic prosperity and urbanization. By 1876, the West had 4 percent of the U.S. population and 100 nonschool libraries, about 4 percent of all U.S. libraries. In 1900, the West had 6 percent of the population and 243, or 7 percent, of the libraries; in 1923, it had 9 percent of the population and 464, or 11 percent, of the

libraries. In 1895, California had twenty-nine tax-supported public libraries, most in the larger cities; by 1917, the state boasted 150 such libraries. Although the much less populous state of Utah established fewer public libraries during this time, the number of tax-supported public libraries had grown from one in 1898 to thirty-six in 1917 [107, 151–152]. Women's clubs had supported the establishment of at least eleven of these.[6]

The first period of public library development in Utah closed with the passage of the new Library-Gymnasium bill in 1907. During that period, three cities in the state (Salt Lake, Ogden, and Provo) had established public libraries as part of their effort to "Americanize" Utah society by replacing the earlier theocratic, religious, and polygamous social order with a democratic, secular, and monogamous one. As a symbol of civic unification and a force for social improvement and education, it provided an opportunity for diverse social and religious groups to unite in a nonsectarian, mutually beneficial cause, although the leadership was disproportionately non-Mormon. The need for adequate tax support united political factions, while the need to arouse public support and solicit donations united the social and commercial elements. Women's united, organized activities were vital to the success of these efforts. Working together regardless of religious affiliation, women's clubs initiated the library movement in their communities, raised funds through bazaars and other means, solicited donations of materials, served on boards of trustees and other committees, staffed the libraries, and campaigned for support of legislative resolutions. As Ogden City library board member, attorney, and state representative Mary Anna Coulter said, "owing to the confining attention of leading men to commercial pursuits the task of keeping up the high standard of intellectuality would depend upon the women, and they could be trusted to do the duty well" [153].

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