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PIONEER HARMONIES:

MORMON WOMEN AND

MUSIC IN UTAH,

1847-1900

by

Jennifer L. Fife

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

History

Approved:

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, Utah

1994



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Anne M. Butler for her devotion in seeing me through the process of writing this thesis. I would also like to thank my other committee members, David Lewis and Brad Cole, for their suggestions and encouragement. I also thank Michael Hicks of Brigham Young University for taking time to help me with sources. I thank the Mountain West Center for Regional Studies, the Department of History, and the Women and Gender Research Institute for grants and assistantships that helped fund this research.

My greatest thanks goes to my family. I thank my parents, Marilyn Allison and the late Trenton B. Allison, for teaching me to thirst after knowledge and for giving me so much emotional and financial support throughout my entire education. Most of all, I thank Lance for his patience, encouragement, and help and I thank Allison for reminding me that family is the most important aspect of life.

Jennifer L. Fife

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ABSTRACT

Pioneer Harmonies: Mormon Women and  
Music in Utah, 1847-1900

by

Jennifer L. Fife, Master of Arts  
Utah State University, 1994

Major Professor: Anne M. Butler  
Department: History

By drawing on local newspapers and the diaries, journals, and autobiographies of nearly fifty pioneers, this thesis examined the varied musical experiences of Utah's Latter-day Saint women during the years 1847-1900, and sought to determine whether they followed national gender trends in music during this era. Women in nineteenth-century Utah participated in a wide variety of musical activities, including using music in their homes, taking lessons, and teaching. Women also composed and wrote song lyrics. Many women performed in community musical events, such as concerts and operas. Despite their accomplishments, women did face conflict over the demands of family responsibility and the desire to pursue public musical careers. In some cases, women retreated from performance or even abandoned their interest.

Nonetheless, music allowed these women to enrich their personal and social lives, express their feelings on a variety of topics, bond together in both religious and political sisterhood, and involve themselves more fully in their communities. In their many musical activities, women in Utah, often regarded as a singular or isolated population because of their affiliation with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, reflected changing trends for women throughout the United States. This became especially noticed as music became less a social accomplishment and more an expression of serious study through which women redefined their roles and society's acceptable standards for work and public performance.

(155 pages)

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The second half of the nineteenth century offered expanding opportunities to American women. Many aspects of women's lives, including cultural arts such as music, reflected this era of change. During the early and middle years of the century, women found ample opportunities for music-making in their homes. Girls and young women were encouraged to learn enough music to play some tunes and sing. Indeed, "the characterization of the feminization of music in nineteenth-century America . . . implied that music was a domestic, private, recreational, amateur, romantic accomplishment of no especial intellectual distinction . . . ." <sup>1</sup> Still, women used music, both professionally and as amateurs, to express their feelings, to expand their sphere of influence, to improve their personal lives, and to involve themselves more fully in their communities. As the turn of the century drew closer, music became less a social accomplishment and more a subject for serious study. Ideas of acceptable roles

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<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth Wood, "Women in Music," Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 6:2 (Winter 1980): 295.

for women in music had evolved to include professional musicians.<sup>2</sup>

In Utah, the women of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints demonstrated many of the ways nineteenth-century women participated in musical activities. Utah women used music as a means of self-expression and self-improvement and in support of the church and community. Like their counterparts throughout the nation, women in Utah were acknowledged and acclaimed for their participation in music, within certain boundaries prescribed by cultural values and norms. Most women chose to remain within those bounds as amateur musicians or even to replace music with other interests. Others decided to challenge the definition of women's appropriate place in music and encountered some difficulties. However, as Utah moved toward the twentieth century and a fuller integration with the rest of the nation, professional opportunities in music also increased for women.

This thesis examines the varied musical experiences of Utah's Latter-day Saint women during the second half of

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<sup>2</sup>See Judith Tick, "Passed Away is the Piano Girl: Changes in American Musical Life, 1870-1900," in Women Making Music: The Western Art Tradition, 1150-1950, ed. Jane Bowers and Judith Tick (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 325-48.

the nineteenth century, using local newspapers and the diaries, journals, and reminiscences of thirty-six women. Although this is a limited sample, it yielded sufficient information to allow for suggestions about the patterns of women's musical experiences. The popularity of music in Utah and its role in the home is discussed, along with an examination of women who took music out of their homes and into others' as music teachers. The importance of composition and music writing as a means of self-expression and female bonding is then explored. Finally, this paper examines the participation of women in church and community music, as vocal performers and instrumentalists. The boundaries of women's appropriate role and the problems inherent in redefining those boundaries are discussed.

For many years, music historiography largely excluded women. Indeed, historians frequently ignored music in general, especially failing to notice the "importance of music as a key to understanding American culture."<sup>3</sup> Recently, historians have used music as a focal point in women's history. In a review of "Women in Music," Elizabeth Wood considered two scholarly studies which

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<sup>3</sup>Alan Levy and Barbara L. Tischler, "Into the Cultural Mainstream: The Growth of American Music Scholarship," American Quarterly 42:1 (March 1990): 57.



exemplified the current state of research. Unsung: A History of Women in American Music, by Christine Ammer, and Women Making Music: Studies in the Social History of Women Musicians and Composers, edited by Jane Bowers and Judith Tick, give an overview of the scholarship on women in music. These books, argued Wood, demonstrate the need for more interdisciplinary research in the field, and serve as reminders "that many questions remain open about the conditions women have had to create, exploit, defy, deny, or succumb to, in order to have their music heard at all."<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it is not enough simply to place women into the already-painted picture of American music. Historians must consider the influence of women on American music as well as women's achievements as musicians.

Until recent years, most music history fell into three categories. First, music historians wrote sentimental biographies of famous composers. Second, musicians compiled catalogs or lists of compositions, either by composer or chronologically. Third, they interpreted styles of music in a historical context,

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<sup>4</sup>Wood, 290.

usually comparing inferior American music to European compositions from similar time periods.<sup>5</sup>

To look beyond the biographical studies and lists of music, musicologist Richard Crawford recently proposed five questions for both musicians and historians to consider: what music have Americans made; who has made music in America; how long has the making of music been financially supported; and what American music is most important and why?<sup>6</sup> Questions such as these focus on the role of music in American culture and the answers music may give to our historical identity. These types of questions can also be applied to a study of nineteenth-century women, to help illuminate the importance of music in their lives.

In nineteenth-century America, specific ideas of acceptable roles for women prevailed<sup>7</sup> -- even in the

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<sup>5</sup>In the field of women's music, examples include Julia Smith, ed., A Dictionary of American Women Composers (Chicago: National Federation of Women's Clubs, 1970); Aaron I. Copeland, Encyclopedia of the World's Women Composers (New York: R.R. Bowker, 1980); and JoAnn Showronski, Women in American Music: A Bibliography (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1978).

<sup>6</sup>Richard Crawford, quoted in Levy, 69-70.

<sup>7</sup>Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," American Quarterly 18 (Summer 1966): 151-74; Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth Century America," Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 1:1 (Autumn 1975): 1-29.

realm of music. According to one view, the "true woman" of the times embodied four cardinal virtues: piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity. These virtues "spelled mother, daughter, sister, wife," and kept women safely in the home, where they belonged.<sup>8</sup> These ideals also affected women's musical activities. For example, women used music to add culture and tranquility to their homes, and to encourage their children's musical talents, rather than to pursue their own careers in music.<sup>9</sup> When Fanny Ritter gave a speech entitled "Women in Music," at the Association for the Advancement of Women during the Centennial Congress of 1876, she stated that "with lady amateurs then will chiefly rest the happy task of preparing . . . the soil which must foster the young genius of future American art."<sup>10</sup>

In a study of music references in the popular nineteenth-century monthly Godey's Lady's Book, Julia Koza found a distinct association between music and the

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<sup>8</sup>Welter, 152.

<sup>9</sup>Adrienne Fried Block, "Women in American Music, 1800-1918," in Women and Music: A History, ed. Karen Pendle (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 148.

<sup>10</sup>Judith Tick, "Women in Music," in The New Grove Dictionary of American Music, vol. 4, ed. H. Wiley Hitchcock and Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillian Press, 1986), 551.

feminine sphere.<sup>11</sup> One Godey's columnist explained that the magazine published essays on music and music education "because the subject had become 'so important a branch in female education.'"<sup>12</sup> Other Godey's contributors echoed the same sentiments. Yet, many "restrictions concerning musical styles, instruments, and activities . . . were placed on women who wished to be considered ladies."<sup>13</sup> Women had to take care not to let musical activities take them away from their "proper" place or to let music interfere with the cardinal virtues of "true womanhood."

Opposition to women entering the professional realm led to the idea of female musicians as amateurs, with paid singers the only exception. However, even then, most female singers portrayed in Godey's left professional performance upon marriage. If they did not, they were doomed to "dangerous, unhappy, and unfulfilled" lives.<sup>14</sup>

Certain musical instruments also belonged in the feminine sphere, namely keyboard instruments. Many stories in Godey's used the piano to indicate a feminine

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<sup>11</sup>Julia Eklund Koza, "Music and the Feminine Sphere: Images of Women as Musicians in Godey's Lady's Book, 1830-1877," Musical Quarterly 75:2 (Summer 1991): 103.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 104.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 103.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 114.

touch in household decorating. As the piano "was an amusement eminently suited to the home circle and to private gatherings of friends," having a piano in the home fit within the prescribed role for women.<sup>15</sup> However, musically talented women who performed on the piano outside the home encountered difficulties. Fannie Bloomfield-Zeisler, described as a "piano virtuoso," emphasized in her writings that women's position in music was controlled by the "rules" which limited women in so many other aspects during the nineteenth century.<sup>16</sup> No matter how talented a woman might be, the prevailing ideals of society defined her appropriate boundaries as within the home.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, women began to expand their roles in music as music became less important as a social accomplishment. As the definition of women's work and roles changed, women moved beyond music in the home and turned to more community and professional activities. The tradition of a daughter or wife who played the piano as a social accomplishment "declined under social and economic pressures and a

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<sup>15</sup>Arthur Loesser, Men, Women, and Pianos: A Social History (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), 503.

<sup>16</sup>Fannie Bloomfield-Zeisler, "Woman in Music," American Art Journal 58:1 (17 October 1891): 1.

healthier, freer climate for creative American women."<sup>17</sup> The women's movement of the time helped redefine the acceptable boundaries of women's work.<sup>18</sup> Women began to teach music and to compose and write songs (despite the controversy over women's innate lack of ability). They also participated in opera and concert singing, choral organizations, music clubs, and instrumental music performances.<sup>19</sup>

Did women in nineteenth-century Utah follow these same national patterns? Historians suggest that the frontier environment of the West broke down many Victorian traditions, and that western women, in the words of Lillian Schlissel, "functioned far beyond the Victorian prescriptions for women."<sup>20</sup> The pioneer settlers from

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<sup>17</sup>Tick, "Passed Away," 344.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 326; for more information on the relationship between the women's movement and women's work see Alice Keesler-Harris, Out To Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women In the United States (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), and Carl N. Degler, At Odds: Women and the Family in America from the Revolution to the Present (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), chapters fifteen and sixteen.

<sup>19</sup>For a brief survey of women's nineteenth-century musical activities, see Judith Tick, "Women in Music."

<sup>20</sup>Lillian Schlissel, "Frontier Families: A Crisis in Ideology," in The American Self: Myth, Ideology, and Popular Culture, ed. Sam B. Girgus (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981), 160; see also Sandra L. Myres, Westering Women and the Frontier Experience, 1800-1915 (Albuquerque: University of New

the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who first moved to Utah from Illinois in 1847, arrived in family groups, and women never found themselves as greatly outnumbered as their counterparts in other western frontier settlements.<sup>21</sup> Mormon historians, such as Leonard Arrington and Vicki Burgess-Olsen, argued that despite arrival in family units, Utah women went beyond their western sisters in independence and nontraditional work.<sup>22</sup>

The idea of western women differing greatly from their eastern counterparts makes for an ongoing debate among historians. Whether western women's lives mirrored those of eastern women or diverged greatly remains central to historical inquiry. Views continue to shift as new historical evidence is examined and brought to light.

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Mexico Press, 1982); and John M. Faragher, Women and Men on the Overland Trail (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979).

<sup>21</sup>For more detailed information on Mormon settlement see James B. Allen and Glen Leonard, Story of the Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976); Leonard J. Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1958); and Eugene E. Campbell, "Early Colonization Patterns," in Utah's History, ed. Richard Poll, et al. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1989), 133-52.

<sup>22</sup>Leonard J. Arrington, "Blessed Damozels: Women in Mormon History," Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought 6:2 (Summer 1971): 23; Vicki Burgess-Olsen, Sister Saints (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), xii.

This thesis seeks to consider nineteenth-century Mormon women solely in relation to their musical activities and to determine whether these women reflected a national or regional pattern in their musical expression.

Gail Farr Casterline identified five images of nineteenth-century Mormon women, including that of western pioneers.<sup>23</sup> However, these women did much more than settle the land, and from their complex roles can be extracted more understanding of their involvement in music and its importance in their lives. They also functioned as "religious disciples," giving their time, means, and devotion to the religion that bound them together and brought them to Utah. Nineteenth-century Mormon women also lived as "celestial wives," both those who practiced plural marriage and those who lived in monogamous marriages. The Latter-day Saints attached great significance to the marriage covenant, believing that their marriages lasted into eternity and they would live together forever as families in a "celestial kingdom." Like their non-Mormon counterparts throughout nineteenth-

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<sup>23</sup>Gail Farr Casterline, "'In the Toils' or 'Onward for Zion': Images of the Mormon Woman, 1852-1890" (Master's thesis, Utah State University, 1974).



century America, Latter-Day Saint women were expected to find their highest fulfillment in their marriages.<sup>24</sup>

Casterline also found that popular literature of the day depicted nineteenth-century Latter-day Saint women both as "emancipated women" and as women living in a patriarchy. Yet, despite the patriarchal character of church leadership, some Mormon historians have commented on the unusual independence of women on the Utah frontier. Vicki Burgess-Olsen, for example, found that Mormon society "took a more progressive attitude toward women than did American society at large."<sup>25</sup>

Church leaders encouraged women to develop their various skills and talents, in an effort to capitalize on the highest potential of all the church members. Brigham Young actively preached that aside from their household duties, women should study, work in sales, business, and medicine, so as to "enlarge their sphere of usefulness for the benefit of society at large."<sup>26</sup> Women's contributions were especially important at the time

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<sup>24</sup>Larry Logue, A Sermon in the Desert: Belief and Behavior in Early St. George, Utah (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 64, 102.

<sup>25</sup>Burgess-Olsen, xii.

<sup>26</sup>Journal of Discourses, 26 vols. (Liverpool: Franklin D. Richards, 1854-86) 13:61, 18 July 1869, hereafter referred to as JD.

because many men left Utah to serve as missionaries for the Church. In an 1856 "general epistle" from church leaders, women were admonished to teach their daughters marketable skills, so "that when they shall becomes [sic] the wives of the Elders of Israel, who are frequently called upon missions, . . . they may be able to sustain themselves and their offspring."<sup>27</sup>

New York City journalist Horace Greeley, in an 1859 visit to Salt Lake City, noted an absence of working women, yet records indicate that Utah women participated in a variety of vocations.<sup>28</sup> Several Utah women returned to medical colleges in the East and became doctors; eventually a group of these female doctors opened the Deseret Hospital in Salt Lake City. In 1872, the Utah Bar admitted two women, Phoebe Couzins and Georgie Snow. Many women taught school at both the elementary and secondary levels, as well as in academies and colleges. Women also participated in local journalism, most notably through their publication, Woman's Exponent, begun in 1878. This bimonthly newspaper provided a forum for thought, as well

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<sup>27</sup>"Fourteenth General Epistle of the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," Deseret News, 10 December 1856.

<sup>28</sup>Ann Vest Lobb and Jill Mulvay Derr, "Women in Early Utah," in Utah's History, ed. Richard Poll, et. al. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1989), 340.

as opportunities for women to try their hand at editing, typesetting, and publishing a newspaper. In the first edition of the paper, the editor, Louisa Richards, noted that "the Exponent should carry with it the influence of women's movements, actuated by the spirit of a religion embodying all the grandest and holiest of principles that have ever been revealed from heaven."<sup>29</sup> Yet, while women did participate in these and other vocations, they often left their positions because of domestic obligations and a belief that the family superseded any outside activities in importance.

The reorganization of the Latter-day Saint Relief Society in 1868 also allowed women an expanding role in public leadership and aided in the development of women's personal achievements.<sup>30</sup> The main function of the Relief Society was to provide charitable care and temporal relief to the poor. Relief Society "sisters" also made goods such as carpets and curtains for the church buildings and temples. The Relief Society supported women's cultural

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<sup>29</sup>Woman's Exponent, 1 June 1878.

<sup>30</sup>See Kenneth W. Godfrey, Audrey M. Godfrey, and Jill Mulvey Derr, Women's Voices: An Untold History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 287.

and educational efforts and offered financial support for some of the women who went east to study.<sup>31</sup>

To support these and other programs, the Relief Society undertook a number of business ventures during the nineteenth century, including sericulture and a grain storage program. The experiments with sericulture began in 1868 and lasted through the turn of the century. Utah women raised silkworms, collected the silk, and made garments to be sold locally, but the experiment never proved itself financially.<sup>32</sup>

The grain storage program proved more useful. Beginning in 1876, Relief Society women all over Utah raised and harvested their own wheat crops and stored them against times of need. The church later sent wheat to the victims of the San Francisco earthquake, then sold the bulk of the wheat to the government during World War I.<sup>33</sup>

Generally, Mormon women found themselves set apart from other nineteenth-century women by the practice of

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<sup>31</sup>See Arrington, "Blessed Damozels."

<sup>32</sup>Chris Rigby Arrington, "The Finest Fabrics: Mormon Women and the Silk Industry in Early Utah," Utah Historical Quarterly 46:4 (Fall 1978): 376-96.

<sup>33</sup>Jessie L. Embry, "Relief Society Grain Storage Program, 1876-1940" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1974).

plural marriage.<sup>34</sup> Most Americans, particularly in the East, found the practice abominable, joining it with slavery as the "twin relics of barbarism," and the fight against polygamy gained national publicity. Women in Utah opposed to the practice formed an "Anti-Polygamy Society" in 1878 and published the Anti-Polygamy Standard. Their articles recounting the tragedies of polygamy fed "the fires of the nationwide crusade," and attracted the support of famous American women such as Harriet Beecher Stowe and first-lady Lucy Hayes.<sup>35</sup>

Historians have noted a variety of reasons for Mormon polygamy. Jessie Embry, in her excellent 1987 study, Mormon Polygamous Families, discussed the many reasons presented and concluded that "the desire to live their religion and follow their prophet has to be seen as the major argument why they accepted the principle."<sup>36</sup> Once committed to a polygamous marriage, the responses of women varied. Some women found polygamy to be a practical way of

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<sup>34</sup>The Latter-day Saints practiced polygyny, meaning men could marry more than one wife; however, they "used the general term of polygamy to define their practice or other terms such as the principle, plural marriage, or celestial marriage." Jessie L. Embry, Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), xvi.

<sup>35</sup>Lobb and Derr, 350.

<sup>36</sup>Embry, Mormon Polygamous Families, 52.

life, others "lived the principle" while struggling with personal doubts. Often, polygamy meant more work for wives because their husbands did not always reside with them. However, in other polygamous households, the opportunity for shared responsibilities developed. Many women formed deep friendships with their sister wives. On the other hand, some women found themselves plagued with feelings of jealousy and loneliness.<sup>37</sup>

For most Mormon women, whether they lived in a polygamous marriage or the more traditional monogamous relationship, the church's open practice of polygamy influenced their lives and attitudes, particularly as national opposition grew and Congress began enacting anti-bigamy laws. At that time, both monogamous and polygamous church members were subjected to economic, emotional, and criminal persecution. Monogamous and polygamous Mormon women in Utah banded together in defense of both polygamy and the church.

In their studies of Mormon polygamy, Larry Logue and Jessie Embry both emphasized the importance of Victorian values and gender-specific roles in both monogamous and

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<sup>37</sup>For a historical discussion of polygamy, see Jessie Embry, Mormon Polygamous Families; Larry Logue, A Sermon in the Desert; and Lawrence Foster, "Polygamy and the Frontier: Mormon Women in Early Utah," Utah Historical Quarterly 50:3 (Summer 1982): 268-89.

polygamous families in Utah.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, in terms of work patterns, polygamous families did not differ greatly from both Mormon and non-Mormon monogamous families.<sup>39</sup> Embry in particular stressed that Victorian values played a far greater role in determining life cycles than did polygamy.<sup>40</sup>

Among their demanding roles as wives, mothers, and church workers, Utah women found time for cultural arts such as music. Although the settlement of a new territory required long hours of hard work, Brigham Young and other church leaders encouraged patronage of the arts. As pioneers, religious adherents, wives, and Relief Society sisters, Latter-day Saint women in Utah found ways to use music as a means of self-expression and personal growth, as well as in support of the church and community. Their musical activities paralleled those of many other nineteenth-century American women, focusing on music at home and reaching from there into the realms of teaching, composing, and community performance.

The important role music played in Latter-day Saint culture aided women's participation in early Utah's

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<sup>38</sup>Logue, 102; and Embry, Mormon Polygamous Families, 89.

<sup>39</sup>Embry, Mormon Polygamous Families, xvi.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 89.

musical activities. Howard Swan, writing of musical traditions in the Southwest, noted that "the Mormon and his music were inseparable companions. Thus, any history of the Mormon church is complete only if the story of its music is included."<sup>41</sup>

Many of the church's early converts came from established religions such as the Methodists and Presbyterians, where music played a central role in Sabbath meetings. These first members also primarily lived in New England. Their Puritan traditions encouraged the use of religious music in worship services.<sup>42</sup>

In July 1830, three months after the organization of the church, leader Joseph Smith, Jr. asked his wife, Emma, to compile a book of hymns for use in meetings. In 1835, while in Kirtland, Ohio, church leaders published Emma Smith's compilation, A Collection of Sacred Hymns, for the Church of the Latter Day Saints. The preface stated the importance of a hymnbook for church use. "In order to sing by the spirit, and with the understanding, it is necessary that the church of the Latter Day Saints should have a collection of 'Sacred Hymns,' adapted to their

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<sup>41</sup>Howard Swan, Music in the Southwest, 1825-1950 (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1952), 3.

<sup>42</sup>For information on early converts to the church, see Allen and Leonard, Story of the Latter-day Saints.



faith and belief in the gospel. . . ."43 The book contained ninety hymns, a mixture of traditional hymns of the period and new compositions by Latter-day Saints. No tunes were provided. The Saints expanded the hymnbook in 1841 to included 304 hymns.<sup>44</sup>

When the Saints left Illinois in 1846-47 to retreat into the Rocky Mountains, they carried music with them. Brigham Young, leading the Saints west, asked them to come "with sweet instruments of music and melody and songs. . . ."45 Mormon music historian Michael Hicks noted that during the trek west, Young "appears to have kept the best players close to his own wagons to serenade his family, and occasionally called upon them to entertain the Saints."<sup>46</sup> Rachel Woolley, travelling in the same wagon train, recalled that "Brigham Young had all the music with him."<sup>47</sup> After the Saints' arrival in Utah,

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<sup>43</sup>Karen Lynn Davidson, Our Latter-day Hymns: The Stories and the Messages (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 9.

<sup>44</sup>Church missionaries in Great Britain also published a hymnal in 1840 in Manchester, England. Davidson, 10.

<sup>45</sup>Millenial Star, 15 March 1848.

<sup>46</sup>Michael Hicks, Mormonism and Music: A History (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 61.

<sup>47</sup>Rachel Emma Simmons Woolley, Journal, 1881-1891, compiled by Kate B. Carter, (Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1950), 162.

Young taught that "music belongs to heaven, to cheer God, angels, and men. . . ." <sup>48</sup>

Once in Utah, the church continued to publish various hymnbooks for use in Sunday services and other church organizations. In 1880, the church organization for children, the Primary, published The Children's Primary Hymn Book, and The Tune Book for the Primary Association of the Children of Zion. The Sunday School Union published its own hymnbook, The Deseret Sunday School Union Music Book, in 1884, and the church published another official hymnbook, The Latter-day Saints Psalmody, in 1886.

Church leaders and lay members promoted the growth of music and cultural arts in Utah. In their former headquarters of Nauvoo, Illinois, Mormons enjoyed public entertainment, including parties, dances, and concerts. <sup>49</sup> As the Saints settled into Salt Lake City and the surrounding areas, music provided important spiritual and emotional relief and served as an opportunity for community recreation. Throughout the territory, "cultural

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<sup>48</sup>Susa Young Gates, and Leah D. Widtsoe, The Life Story of Brigham Young, with a Foreword by Reed Smoot (New York: Macmillan, 1931), 263.

<sup>49</sup>For a discussion of the Nauvoo period, see Robert B. Flanders, Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965).

strivings [were] given outlet in tents and on hillsides, in log cabins and comfortable drawing rooms, in open air boweries, [and] tabernacles. . . ."<sup>50</sup>

Arthur Bassett, in his study of nineteenth-century Mormon culture, found evidence of "a few qualified and dedicated individuals," all men, "who were vitally concerned with raising the cultural level of the Saints."<sup>51</sup> Historians of nineteenth-century Mormon music have focused almost entirely on the various men who worked under the direction of Brigham Young as leaders of local brass bands, the Salt Lake Theater Orchestra, and the Salt Lake City Tabernacle Choir. Nonetheless, their work helps to elucidate the growing importance of music within the Utah community.

After the Latter-day Saints moved to the Salt Lake Valley, church leaders encouraged emigration of new converts, especially from Europe. Many of the prominent musical leaders in nineteenth-century Utah came from the British Isles as immigrants during the second half of the nineteenth century. Michael Hicks's history of Mormon

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<sup>50</sup>Bruce L. Campbell, and Eugene E. Campbell, "Early Cultural and Intellectual Development," in Utah's History, ed. Richard Poll, et. al. (Logan, Utah State University Press, 1989), 295.

<sup>51</sup>Arthur Ray Bassett, "Culture and the American Frontier in Mormon Utah, 1850-1896" (Ph.D. diss., Syracuse University, 1975), 285.

music devotes an entire chapter to these "Immigrant Professors," beginning with Charles J. Thomas, who arrived in Utah in the early 1860s.<sup>52</sup> Brigham Young appointed Thomas as leader of the Salt Lake Theater Orchestra and leader of Salt Lake's largest brass band; he also later took over leadership of the Tabernacle Choir.

Another musician, David Calder, also arrived in Utah about the same time. Under the highly publicized patronage and financial support of Brigham Young, Calder opened a singing school and organized the Desert Musical Association. Although he never became a leader of the city's orchestra or choir, Calder enjoyed the continued support of Brigham Young, particularly as the main patron of his singing school and music business.

George Careless, a British violinist, arrived in Salt Lake City in 1864, after studying at the Royal Academy of Music in London. His talents favorably impressed Brigham Young; soon thereafter Young sent Charles Thomas on a mission to St. George, Utah, and appointed Careless to Thomas's posts. Careless participated in all the major musical events in Salt Lake City, and set the tone for much of the music published by the church, as well as compositions used at the Salt Lake Theater.

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<sup>52</sup>See Hicks, 91-108.

Evan Stephens arrived from Wales in the 1880s. After a few years, he left Utah to study at the New England Conservatory, returning to Utah in 1887. He then formed his own opera company and choir. When church leaders noticed that his choir sang better than the Tabernacle Choir, they asked him, in 1890, to take charge of the Tabernacle Choir. Stephens led the choir at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, and took it on various tours throughout the West. He also played a significant role in the composition and publication of many church hymnals and served as a leader in church music until his death in 1930.

In their discussions of these prominent men, historians all but forgot the women involved in Utah's musical heritage. Perhaps they assumed that music's validity as a part of women's proper sphere meant women only participated in musical activities at home. Utah women did, in fact, enjoy music in their homes. However, they also participated in a variety of musical activities in the church and community. Following national trends, many nineteenth-century Utah women took music lessons, particularly piano, organ, and voice. Some also taught music, which gave them the opportunity to have professional involvement outside the home and offered a source of income.

Although evidence is scant, a few Utah women composed music and many participated in writing texts, especially hymn texts, as part of the home-music movement of the period. For example, tabernacle organist Edna Coray Dyer made comments in her diary about the difficulty of composing hymns. Eliza R. Snow, second president of the Relief Society, authored numerous hymns and folk songs. The Women's Exponent frequently featured hymn texts and published a booklet of suffrage songs written by Utah women. Authoring texts gave women a forum for expressing their thoughts about church doctrines, their lives, and the issues that they found important, such as suffrage and polygamy.

Salt Lake City newspapers such as the Deseret News, Salt Lake Herald and Salt Lake Tribune often noted the participation of Utah women in local concerts and operas. Women took part in community musical events as members of various musical clubs and societies throughout the territory. They also played instruments in orchestras and bands, and sang in Utah's many choirs.<sup>53</sup>

The Latter-day Saints who settled in Utah enjoyed and encouraged music in their homes, their churches, and the

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<sup>53</sup>Chapter 4 will discuss Utah women's role in community music in detail. For general discussions of women's involvement in community cultural events, see Godfrey, chapter 8; and Lobb and Derr.

community. Women formed a part of these cultural activities. For many nineteenth-century Utah women, music served to remind them of fond memories from the past, as well as helping them express their feelings about their present lives and circumstances. Music especially formed an important component in the female networks throughout Utah, binding women together on issues of church doctrine, polygamy, sisterhood, and women's suffrage. Also, the opportunities afforded these women as teachers, concert singers, opera performers, and choir members allowed them to expand their sphere of influence and enrich their personal and social lives, as well as the life of the community.

## CHAPTER II

## HOME MUSICIANS AND MUSIC TEACHERS

Following the dictates of the "Cult of True Womanhood" during the nineteenth century, most women interested in music played the piano or organ and sang at home as amateurs.<sup>1</sup> Home music soared in popularity as more Americans were able to purchase instruments. Music historian Arthur Loesser noted a boom in the American piano market during the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> This growing popularity of home music also offered women an expanding role, particularly as music teachers. In Utah, as throughout the nation, women enjoyed music in their homes. They sang at home, for enjoyment and relaxation; many of their songs served to remind them of pleasant days of the past. In keeping with the times, many Utah homes boasted a piano or organ, and young girls and women became increasingly involved in private or group lessons. As they became better trained musically, many women took advantage of the opportunities available to them as music teachers; this gave them a source of income and allowed them to share their talents with the community.

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<sup>1</sup>Block, 150; for the "Cult of True Womanhood," see Welter.

<sup>2</sup>Loesser, 549.



This chapter examines the popularity of music in Utah homes as demonstrated in local newspapers and personal writings. Some of the ways women combined music with their domestic responsibilities are detailed, along with examples of the difficulty involved in the combination of music and domestic tasks. The role of home music as a courtship tool is also discussed. Women's involvement in music lessons is explored, as well as the growing opportunities for women as music teachers.

As part of the domestic tasks consigned to them by the "Cult of True Womanhood," women adorned and decorated the home, both arranging the physical decorations and making sure that the home was a cheery, delightful place. Music historian H. Wiley Hitchcock noted the "social necessity" of having a piano in the parlor as part of a proper nineteenth-century home.<sup>3</sup> Sisters Catherine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, in their outstandingly popular guide, American Woman's Home (1869), also advised that a drawing room or parlor should contain at least two pieces of furniture, a sofa and a piano.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>H. Wiley Hitchcock, Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988), 78, see footnote 9.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 78.

Utah families displayed their interest in having home instruments by bringing them along on the arduous trek across the plains. In 1915, Susa Young Gates wrote "How Utah's Pioneers Carried Music Across the Rockies," published by Musical America, and noted that Heber C. Kimball brought the first piano to Utah in 1848 and one of Brigham Young's families brought a melodeon in 1849. Brigham Young's families also brought pianos in 1852 and 1856.<sup>5</sup> Other families returned later for instruments. For example, the Bunnell family journeyed back to Indiana from Utah to buy a piano, using money from an inheritance.<sup>6</sup>

As settlement in Utah developed, local newspapers commented on the progression of music in Utah homes. In 1865, the Deseret News noted that:

The necessity of home music, as an accomplishment and means of pleasure and amusement, had been so long felt and recognized, that in many places the piano is considered as indispensable an article of furniture as the side board, with all families who can afford it.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Susa Young Gates, "How Utah's Pioneers Carried Music Across the Rockies," Musical America (20 Nov 1915): 13.

<sup>6</sup>Christine Croft Waters, "Dr. Romania Pratt Penrose: To Brave the World," in Sister Saints, ed. Vicki Burgess-Olsen (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 346-47.

<sup>7</sup>Deseret News, 8 February 1865.

The article then discussed the difficulties of getting a piano for the home, noting that during the "last season," seven pianos had been shipped to private individuals in Utah, at a total cost of \$5600.<sup>8</sup> Since the railroad had not yet been completed, the arrival of seven pianos by wagon attested to the importance placed on music by Utah residents.

Another article published later that year on the subject of "Leisure Hours -- Mental Improvement" reported that "gaining a knowledge of the science of music is acquiring that which is a source of future pleasure and enjoyment."<sup>9</sup> The article's author felt that there was "no necessity for urging attention to this branch of improvement," the proof being "the quantity of music and musical instruments that had been and is being ordered. . . ."<sup>10</sup> In 1884, the Salt Lake Herald cited, as proof of musical progress in Utah, "the number of instruments to be found in the homes of the people, the number reaches scores in every settlement, the kind are largely harmony producing. . . ."<sup>11</sup> Again, in 1893,

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Deseret News, 28 December 1865.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Salt Lake Herald, 21 September 1884.

Ellen Ferguson wrote in the Women's Exponent, that "there are few homes in Utah without a piano or organ."<sup>12</sup>

Besides emphasizing the number of musical instruments displayed in Utah homes, local newspapers also commented on the important function of music in the home. The Deseret News, in an article on "Music -- Its Culture and Influence," reported that "it is in the home circle where it is calculated to sway the most beneficial influence . . . a family without music is like a world in miniature without light. . . ."<sup>13</sup> In 1874, the Woman's Exponent carried an article entitled "Music in A Family."

Music in a family is a means of domestic cheerfulness. A musical family, in spite of cares, perplexities, of even trials, may be a cheerful family. Music provokes good nature in a family; and in this world, where there is so much evil nature manifested in a thousand ways, and in the family sometimes, as well as elsewhere, anything which will promote good-nature is to be prized. Who can fret and scold when the very air around is blended with soft harmony?<sup>14</sup>

Since music was acknowledged as a benefit to the family and home, women could, as noted by one music historian, fulfill their role as "angel in the house" by performing, in a delicate and chaste manner, for their

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<sup>12</sup>Woman's Exponent, 1 September 1893.

<sup>13</sup>Deseret News, 8 February 1865.

<sup>14</sup>Woman's Exponent, 15 March 1874.

family and friends.<sup>15</sup> In their journals and autobiographies, several Utah women recalled singing at home, either for or with their families. Rosetta Snow Loveland of Brigham City wrote in her life sketch that music "was a favorite passtime [sic].<sup>16</sup> First, father bought an accordion, then a melodeon, and finally a piano. Every evening we seven older children would sing for the others."<sup>17</sup>

Nellie Druce Pugsley, well-known in Salt Lake City as a soloist, recalled her mother singing frequently. She noted: "Many were the afternoons I listened to mother and Apostle Franklin Richard's wife Charlotte singing through operas and oratorios they had learned in England, doing all parts and acting out the characters with great fun. . . ."<sup>18</sup> Music, for these two women, brought back fond memories of their homeland and pleasant past days. These women also enhanced their children's cultural

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<sup>15</sup>Block, 148.

<sup>16</sup>Rosetta Snow Loveland, "Sketch of the Life of Rosetta Snow Loveland," Mormon Biographical Sketches, Historical Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, hereafter referred to as HDC.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Phyllis Druce Pugsley Oblad, "Biographical Sketch of Nellie Druce Pugsley, Mormon Biographical Sketches, Ts., HDC.

upbringing, a reflection of a mother's important role in the musical training of their children.

After listening to her mother sing in their home, Nellie Pugsley combined music with her home life. She learned to play the organ and took singing and harmony lessons. She performed frequently in local concerts and musical productions, continuing her musical training even after she married and had children. She noted that "even when I had three and four children, some of my teachers came to the house to assist me in singing while my family was too young for me to leave home."<sup>19</sup> Pugsley wrote about practicing at home while doing chores, because "time was valuable." The neighbors soon grew accustomed to her singing, as "in seasonable weather the doors and windows were kept wide open for deep breathing."<sup>20</sup> Pugsley also described her "most unusual audience" -- a Jersey cow. The animal "would wander all over the yard in the morning . . . and when I would start to sing she would come up to the kitchen steps, put her feet up on the second or third step, look into the kitchen and just stand there until I

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<sup>19</sup>Nellie Druce Pugsley, "Autobiographical Sketch of Nellie Druce Pugsley," Mormon Biographical Sketches, microfilm, HDC.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

stopped singing."<sup>21</sup> Although she could not disrupt her daily domestic routines to pursue a career in music, Pugsley effectively reflected the ideal of a nineteenth-century musical woman -- she sang at home while caring for her family and chores.

Anna Lindquist Brady of Fairview likewise came from a family that combined music with everyday chores. Anna wrote in a life history that her mother, Louisa Lindquist, "always sang when she worked and would milk the cow to the rhythm of her singing."<sup>22</sup> These women, although interested in music, placed primary attention on their domestic tasks, and were fortunately able to practice their singing without disrupting their daily routines.

On the other hand, Mary E. Woolley Chamberlain encountered some difficulties when she tried to practice at home. Born in 1870 in southern Utah, Mary recalled that "in the evenings after milking and other chores were done we would gather in the little log cabin . . . and listen to Aunt Mishie sing and play on the little old organ."<sup>23</sup> Mary's father wanted to give her a chance to

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Anna Lindquist Brady, Papers, BYU.

<sup>23</sup>Leonard J. Arrington, and Susan Arrington Madsen, Sunbonnet Sisters: True Stories of Mormon Women and Frontier Life (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1984), 143, taken from Mary E. Woolley Chamberlain, Handmaiden of the

study music, and therefore offered to buy her an organ when she could play a tune. Mary wrote in her journal the feelings she had as she began lessons: "I had music in my soul but it was hard to get it into my fingers, as they were used only to sweeping, scrubbing, washing, milking cows, etc., . . . So it was quite a task and required almost more patience than I could muster."<sup>24</sup>

Nevertheless, Mary learned how to play "The Corn Flower Waltz" and "Nearer My God To Thee," so her father bought the promised organ.

Mary unfortunately found daily practice on the organ very difficult because of the pressing amounts of housework. When Mary went into the front room to practice she "would find the organ covered with dust and the children's clothing, playthings, etc., scattered over the floor, and I could not sit down to practice."<sup>25</sup> By the time she had cleaned up the room, other urgent tasks required her attention, and "thus it went day after day till I finally forgot what little I knew."<sup>26</sup> Unlike Pugsley and Lindquist, Mary found the conflict between

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Lord, An Autobiography.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 144.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.



music and domestic responsibility too complex to overcome. Fortunately, she excelled in other areas, and in 1911 became the first female mayor in Utah when the citizens of Kanab elected her to that post.<sup>27</sup>

Besides the use of home music for family entertainment and personal enjoyment, women also used music as a courtship tool. Since a "lady" could not actively pursue a man, music gave women an opportunity to impress potential suitors.<sup>28</sup> Godey's Lady's Book carried various stories about women using music to woo their suitors. Some of the stories were serious, while others parodied the actions of untalented women trying to use music as a social skill. Many drawings and engravings featured in the magazine also showed women playing the piano for male friends.<sup>29</sup>

Joan Mizrahi, in her study, "The American Image of Women as Musicians and Pianists, 1850-1900," found that one common image dealt with female pianists as frivolous amateurs with little skill, whose ornamental playing gave

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 147.

<sup>28</sup>Koza, 109.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 110-11.

them added attraction.<sup>30</sup> However, not all women who used their music skills to enhance their courtships had simply learned a few ornamental pieces for added attraction. Since the doctrine of true womanhood proclaimed marriage as a woman's highest aspiration, "the link between music and courtship meant that music was serious business; attracting a suitable mate, marrying happily, and raising a family were the most important endeavors a woman could undertake."<sup>31</sup>

Minerva Richards Young of Salt Lake City wrote in her autobiography about using her musical talents in courtship. Young served as the organist for her local church unit, although she claimed to know "little about music."<sup>32</sup> She met her future husband, Richard, at an open house in her home on New Year's Eve. She later wrote, "During the evening I sang for him -- one of the popular song hits of the day, 'Pretty As A Picture.' I played my own accompaniment on a Mason and Hamlin organ."<sup>33</sup> The display of talent evidently helped win

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<sup>30</sup>Joan Berman Mizrahi, "The American Image of Women as Musicians and Pianists, 1850-1900" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 1989), 209.

<sup>31</sup>Koza, 111.

<sup>32</sup>Minerva Richards Young, *Reminiscences: Autobiographical Vignettes of Minerva Richards Young*, HDC.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

Richard's heart, as Young later noted "I have somewhat of an idea that the song was largely responsible for the eventual winning of my husband. The song is romantic and bewitching, and he said that the way and manner in which I sang it added indescribable charm."<sup>34</sup> Although many amateur musicians abandoned music after marriage, Young continued to practice and participate in musical events. After her marriage, Young spent several years in New York, where she mentioned practicing the piano at a friend's house and where she also attended many music and theater performances.

Young's continued participation in music attested to a more than cursory interest in the art, contradicting the image of superficial women who abandoned music when they married. Many women more likely abandoned their musical interests after marriage because of pressing domestic responsibilities. For example, Mary Perkes, a teenager from Hyde Park, referred many times in her dairy to choir practice and singing in church, but after her marriage she never referred to any musical activity; all her entries concern her husband and baby.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Mary E. Perkes, Diary, 1867-1875, Archives and Special Collections, Utah State University, Logan, Utah.

Women first began taking music out of the home by participating in private and group lessons. During the nineteenth century, music lessons were a popular pastime among young women. Nationally, early seminaries and girls schools offered courses in piano, harp, voice, and guitar.<sup>36</sup> Later, violin and organ lessons also became popular. By the turn of the century, girls desiring professional training could enter conservatories.

In Utah, local leaders strove to make music a part of their children's regular schooling. Especially in the early years of Mormon settlement, when little distinction was made between civil and ecclesiastical government, schools could promote and emphasize common values and experiences important to the Latter-day Saint people. Since the influence of music "upon the juvenile mind is immense . . . [and] the songs of the people have much to do with the formation of their character and the direction of their feelings," cultivation of music in both day schools and the Latter-day Saint Sunday school program was encouraged.<sup>37</sup>

As early as 1852, Willard Richards advocated music education in the schools, because its influence would then

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<sup>36</sup>Block, 148.

<sup>37</sup>Deseret News, 28 November 1877.

"reach our domestic circle."<sup>38</sup> The Deseret News urged poets and musicians to help in the work of musically educating the public, and also advocated the practice of public singing. "General singing in public meetings," wrote one author, "is calculated to unite the feelings, soften asperities, and develop reverence, and affords an opportunity for the expression of unspeakable emotions. . . ."<sup>39</sup>

In 1884, the Salt Lake Herald said that the use of music classes at the Deseret University (later the University of Utah) constituted "the most important step yet taken," because then music would be taught to the children. "Let us at once have school teachers competent to teach music," stated the article's author; "Let music still make more and more rapid strides in Utah."<sup>40</sup> Later that year, the Deseret News gave notice of a "Musical Meeting," to be held in the assembly hall.<sup>41</sup> Local leaders wanted to "awaken a more lively interest in the art, as well as to urge and encourage musicians and teachers throughout the territory to take up the work of

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<sup>38</sup>Deseret News, 10 January 1852.

<sup>39</sup>Deseret News, 28 November 1877.

<sup>40</sup>Salt Lake Herald, 21 September 1884.

<sup>41</sup>Deseret News, 1 October 1884.

teaching the youth to read music."<sup>42</sup> This work would lay "a foundation for an intelligent development of their [the children's] musical powers . . . and the natural talent and liking our young folks have for it is becoming daily more and more apparent."<sup>43</sup> Included in the program for the meeting, several local children would demonstrate their ability to quickly learn music. "All interested (and who are not?) should attend," urged the announcement, "It will be a most pleasant and beneficial hour spent, and will doubtless result in much good."<sup>44</sup>

Music education for adults also received attention from the newspapers. In 1892, the Deseret Weekly announced that the tabernacle choir would be offering free classes to fifteen hundred people.<sup>45</sup> The choir members, under the direction of Evan Stephens, offered vocal training to "all members who desire them, provided they are willing to devote sufficient time and energy to the studies. . . ."<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Deseret Weekly, 22 October 1892.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

Like many colleges throughout the nation, the universities and colleges in Utah offered courses in music. In August 1878, the Brigham Young Academy in Provo opened a music department under the direction of Susa Young Gates. At the Brigham Young College in Logan, group and private lessons were available. The Utah State Agricultural College, by 1890, also offered music courses to students.

Several Utah women wrote about receiving musical training both in schools and in private lessons. Louisa Greene of Smithfield, later editor of the Woman's Exponent, attended singing school. The class was small and frequently postponed, which prompted Louisa to note one night that "I did not enjoy myself very well."<sup>47</sup> Greene, a schoolteacher, also participated in teaching music to the local children. On 11 April 1867 she noted that a singing school had been held at her home. "How pleasing it is," she wrote, "to see a class of quiet, orderly children gathered for the purpose of receiving useful instruction."<sup>48</sup>

After her marriage to Levi Richards, Greene moved to Salt Lake City. There she continued to pursue her

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<sup>47</sup>Louisa Lula Greene, *A Journal Kept by Louisa Lula Greene*, April 1867-March 1869, HDC, 18 April 1867.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 11 April 1867.

interest in music. On 11 November 1878, she noted the opening of a new music school, and wrote that her husband "would like me to attend and learn to sing, or at least, cultivate my voice."<sup>49</sup> The next day she attended her first class and "was much interested."<sup>50</sup> In January 1879 she noted that "the term paid for, for my lessons in voice culture has now expired."<sup>51</sup> However, she decided not to start another class, because of her many family responsibilities. Again, domesticity took precedence over cultural interests, yet Richards did not give up her music altogether. She continued to practice the organ, and noted attendance at various musical performances.

In Utah, church leaders encouraged the development of personal talents, including musical skills, in part to provide the church with members competent to provide needed services. Many young women who learned to play the piano or organ found themselves participating as accompanists in Sunday meetings. For example, Zina Boothe of Tooele County began taking music lessons at age nineteen. She noted in her journal, "Got the work done

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<sup>49</sup>Louisa Lula Greene Richards, Journals, 1878-1940, 11 November 1878, HDC.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 12 November 1878.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 31 January 1879.



early then went to take my first music lesson."<sup>52</sup> For many months afterwards, she noted every Thursday, "went to practice," or "did not go to practice." Boothe apparently learned quickly and became an asset to the church; within two years she wrote of playing at church meetings.

Alice Ann Paxman McCune of Nephi participated in "several Sunday School singing groups," and also received private organ lessons from a Mrs. Isaac Grace.<sup>53</sup> McCune enjoyed her lessons and admired her teacher, who "spared no time or effort in giving me the best training one could have."<sup>54</sup> McCune also learned rapidly and became the assistant organist, then the regular organist for her local church unit. In her autobiographical sketch, McCune recalled, "I loved my music; my whole soul was in it and I gloried in being able to add to the spirit of the meetings."<sup>55</sup>

Anna Lindquist also became an accompanist as soon as her skills allowed, playing "piano and organ accompaniments for church, school, and civic

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<sup>52</sup>Zina Olivia Boothe, Journal, January 1, 1896-August 22, 1899, HDC, 8 October 1896.

<sup>53</sup>Alice Ann Paxman McCune, Autobiographical Sketch, HDC.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

organizations" in Fairview. Weekly she took the train to a neighboring town and walked twelve blocks from the station to her teacher's home. Lindquist "played for the first school operetta" while in the seventh grade, and entered the Brigham Young Academy in 1903 as a special music student.<sup>56</sup>

As women moved into the work force in greater numbers, and with the increased quality of musical training, women turned their musical skills into a vocation, particularly as music teachers. Music historian Judith Tick used census data to document the rise of music and music teaching as a "major" female occupation from 1870-1900.<sup>57</sup> Tick found that the number of women in music-related profession rose from one-third to over one-half during this period.<sup>58</sup> The 1870 census showed that women comprised two percent of the musicians and sixty percent of the music teachers. After this census, no distinction was made between the categories of musician and music teacher, but the percentage of women in the two continued to rise.<sup>59</sup> Also, by 1897, women comprised half

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<sup>56</sup>Brady, Papers.

<sup>57</sup>Tick, "Professional Musicians," 97.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 98.

the membership of the Music Teachers National Association.<sup>60</sup>

Although women increased their numbers in the teaching profession during the nineteenth century, improved availability of work did not improve the status of teaching. Women were still expected to prefer and seek marriage above a career. Julia Koza found many examples in Godey's Lady's Book of the nineteenth-century attitude towards the female music teacher. For example, in one story the heroine "is saved from a life of drudgery when a rich young man marries her," then she and her sister "no longer need to give music lessons in their small school."<sup>61</sup> Another heroine "tries to hide the fact that she is a music teacher from her fashionable acquaintances because she fears her friends would no longer associate with her."<sup>62</sup>

Yet, despite negative images of music teaching, like those expressed in Godey's, many women did enter the profession, both out of professional interest and the need for an income. By the turn of the century, several American women had founded conservatories. For example,

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Koza, 116.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

in 1867, Clara Baur founded the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. Baur studied music in Germany, and modeled her school after the European style. In 1885, Jeanette Thurber founded the National Conservatory of Music in New York City. She also based her school on a European model after having studied in Paris.

Women in Utah also became involved in teaching music, using their skills to move into the public sphere and to earn money. Although cultural values discouraged women from working outside the home, many women in Utah needed a source of income. Some polygamous husbands left their wives alone much of the time and, either unconsciously or purposely, failed to provide a proper sustenance.<sup>63</sup>

Other women needed to earn a living while their husbands served as missionaries for the church in the East or in foreign lands. Some taught before their marriage, but gave up teaching afterwards. Some women never married and thus needed to use their skills to provide for themselves.

William Purdy, in his 1960 study of Mormon music and culture, noted that difficulties awaited a music teacher in pioneer Utah society. "Even though adequate clientele may have been available," he wrote, "teaching music in the

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<sup>63</sup>For example, see Annie Clark Tanner, A Mormon Mother (Salt Lake City: Tanner Trust Fund, University of Utah Library, 1991).

populated centers like Salt Lake City, Provo, and Ogden was largely difficult because of the lack of music and musical instruments. . . ."<sup>64</sup> On the contrary, the newspaper articles and personal writings examined for this thesis indicate that musical instruments were available and that music teaching became a popular profession within a few years of the Saints' arrival.

Sarah A. Cooke, described as "the pioneer teacher of class singing and piano playing in Salt Lake City," began giving music classes in the early 1850s.<sup>65</sup> She first taught voice lessons and her pupils presented an operetta under the patronage of Brigham Young. In 1858, Cooke opened a school for girls, offering English lessons and melodeon lessons for which she charged twelve dollars per quarter.<sup>66</sup> In 1860, the Deseret News advertised that "Mrs. Cooke, well known as a successful teacher, proposes to open a singing school for young gentlemen and ladies, to commence on Wednesday evening. . . ."<sup>67</sup> She also advertised for students wishing to study piano or melodeon.

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<sup>64</sup>William Earl Purdy, "Music in Mormon Culture, 1830-1876" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1960), 44-45.

<sup>65</sup>Salt Lake Tribune, 1 June 1895.

<sup>66</sup>Purdy, 47.

<sup>67</sup>Deseret News, 21 November 1860.

Unfortunately for Cooke, musician David Calder, a recent immigrant from England, opened a singing school the same year, and put Cooke's school out of business.<sup>68</sup> The highly advertised patronage given Calder by Brigham Young probably accounted for the popularity of his school and its success over Cooke's and exemplified the popular attitude that music, as a profession, should be left to men.<sup>69</sup>

Other than this incident involving Sarah Cooke and David Calder, little evidence exists to document the limitations imposed on Utah women by male competitors. However, the difficulties inherent in recovering historical accounts of women's experiences may explain this lack of evidence. Cooke's experience alerts one to the fact that Utah possibly reflected the national trend. Also, in their efforts to establish the church and community, Utah pioneers may have overlooked Cooke's individual achievements and fallen into national patterns of accepting males as more professional without really thinking. Certainly, at the national level, male teachers generally held higher status. Music historian Julia Koza noted that many schools "usually drew a clear distinction

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<sup>68</sup>Hicks, 54.

<sup>69</sup>Block, 149.

between professors, who were men, and teachers, who were women."<sup>70</sup>

In Utah, women did often find themselves excluded from higher positions in music performance and conducting, but this may have been a reflection of Mormon influence and the patriarchal nature of their leadership. Despite the usual pattern of male dominance, there were occasions when women transcended gender limitations. Several Utah women left records indicating that they taught music.

One Utah woman, Dr. Ellen Ferguson, opened a conservatory in Salt Lake City. Dr. Ferguson, a physician, began giving music lessons in her Provo home in 1876. In 1878, she established the Utah Conservatory of Music in Salt Lake City, modeled on the European style. The Woman's Exponent ran an advertisement for the conservatory, stating that "by this means pupils may receive competent instruction in vocal and instrumental music much cheaper than the usual terms."<sup>71</sup> The Exponent described Ferguson as "a lady of superior culture," with "the advantage of training in musical institutions in Europe." At the conservatory, Ferguson offered courses in

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<sup>70</sup>Koza, 116.

<sup>71</sup>Woman's Exponent, 1 November 1878.

voice, theory, notation, tone reading, elocution, and "all instruments in common use."<sup>72</sup>

Later Ferguson also advertised a summer music school, "for the benefit of those who cannot devote much time to these studies during the regular school year."<sup>73</sup> She offered classes in theory, harmony, note reading, and voice culture, as well as private piano or organ lessons. The classes in voice included both solo and chorus singing and cost eight dollars. Instrumental lessons (piano or organ) cost fifteen dollars for forty lessons with theory.<sup>74</sup> The conservatory prospered until the late 1880s, when the universities began to promote their musical departments.

In a study of the 1892-1893 Utah Gazetteer, Miriam Murphy found listings for almost 2000 working women.<sup>75</sup> Two women advertised as music teachers. Mrs. Fanny Stenhouse Gray advertised as a vocal instructor, and Gratia Flanders advertised as a teacher of piano and music

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<sup>72</sup>Woman's Exponent, 1, 15 February 1884.

<sup>73</sup>Woman's Exponent, 6 June 1880.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

<sup>75</sup>Miriam B. Murphy, "The Working Women of Salt Lake City: A Review of the Utah Gazetteer, 1892-93," Utah Historical Quarterly 46:2 (Spring 1978): 122.



theory.<sup>76</sup> Flanders demonstrated how some female music teachers improved their status during the century; by 1894 she held a position as chair of instrumental music at Rowland Hall, a Salt Lake City private secondary school. However, Flanders was very accomplished in her field; the Salt Lake Tribune described her as a virtuoso.<sup>77</sup> Flanders was also unmarried, and thus not bound by the domestic responsibilities felt by so many other women. By this time, unmarried women had also gained wider acceptance as professionals in the work force.

Susa Young Gates, daughter of Brigham Young, also earned professional status as the founder and director of the music department at the Brigham Young Academy. After founding the department in 1878, she taught twenty-two hours of lessons each week, in addition to directing the choir.<sup>78</sup> Like Flanders, Gates was also unmarried at the time.

Other young women in Utah made less frequent mention of music teaching, possibly indicating a passing interest in teaching as a career. For example, Sarah Leffler noted

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 123.

<sup>77</sup>Salt Lake Tribune, 6 January 1895.

<sup>78</sup>Rebecca Foster Cornwall, "Susa Young Gates: The Thirteenth Apostle," in Sister Saints, ed. Vicki Burgess-Olsen (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 69.

in her autobiography that she began teaching organ lessons at age seventeen, and continued as a music teacher for two years before abruptly quitting, probably to get married.<sup>79</sup> Edna Dyer, an assistant organist at the tabernacle, also gave piano lessons for a few years. Viola Macfarlane taught music in the Salt Lake City schools. She taught "half hour lessons, ten schools a day, fifty a week."<sup>80</sup> She later left Salt Lake City to take up a career in opera.

Young, unmarried women such as these nineteenth-century Utah girls used music teaching as a way to earn money and share their knowledge with the community. Perhaps they also used teaching as an amusement until marriage diverted their time and interests.

Music formed an important part of the home lives of the Latter-day Saints. Leaders encouraged the use of music in homes, and women enjoyed home music as entertainment and for relaxation. In a new pioneer community such as Utah, music also gave an added dimension to courtships.

As music teaching gained acceptance as a female profession, Utah women joined their counterparts around

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<sup>79</sup>Sarah Europa Brian Leffler, *Autobiography*, microfilm, HDC.

<sup>80</sup>MacFarlane.

the nation in receiving musical training and becoming music teachers. Yet, at the same time, female music teachers across America continued to struggle with negative images and competition with men. A small minority of Utah women taught on a professional level in conservatories and universities, proving that women could capably serve in professional positions, yet many others taught for a few years then discontinued teaching after their marriages.

As with many aspects of women's lives, the dilemma of domestic responsibility versus musical interests left most women abandoning or restraining their musical activities. Utahns Nellie Pugsley and Mary Chamberlain exemplified two possible solutions. Pugsley sang while going about her chores. Chamberlain solved her dilemma by abandoning music and concentrating on domesticity. Undoubtedly, many other women in Utah and throughout the United States followed similar paths. While viewed as different because of their religion, Latter-day Saint women in nineteenth-century Utah had musical interests and endeavors which paralleled those of women nation-wide, as did their conflicts with domestic responsibilities and outside interests.

### CHAPTER III

#### COMPOSERS AND LYRICISTS

Throughout the nineteenth century, American society and culture did not encourage women to express their creativity through composing music. Particularly in the last twenty years of the century, both male and female musicians offered a variety of reasons for the paucity of female composers, stressing women's inabilities to control their emotions and to learn mathematical sciences. However, as historian Glenda Riley found, "women composers were also illustrating that, despite such obstacles as lack of opportunities for training, prejudice against publishing their compositions, and the social and economic need to marry, they could produce fine work."<sup>1</sup>

In Utah, a handful of men in the forefront of Utah's musical activities composed most of the church's hymns and songs used for community use. However, a few Utah women composed music and contributed to the church hymnbooks. More often than composing, many Utah women wrote song lyrics, for hymns, suffrage songs, and folk songs. This chapter considers the importance of music composition and song writing as a tool for self-expression and bonding in

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<sup>1</sup>Glenda Riley, Inventing the American Woman: A Perspective on Women's History, 1607-1877 (Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1986), 135.

nineteenth-century Utah. The national controversy over women's ability to compose music will be examined, as well as the types of music women generally wrote. The compositions and texts written by Utah women will then be discussed and analyzed. The importance of their songs as a means of self-expression will be considered, as well as the role of these songs as a means of bonding in the community and in female networks.

At the heart of the national controversy over female composers, George Upton, a Chicago music critic, published Woman In Music, in which he hypothesized about the reasons why women could not compose. For Upton, women would remain recipients and interpreters of music, yet "for these and many other reasons growing out of the peculiar organization of women . . . it does not seem that woman will ever originate music in its fullest and grandest harmonic forms."<sup>2</sup> First, Upton felt that the emotional nature of women kept them from composing. Men controlled emotion inside, and could therefore express emotions outwardly in an artistic form.<sup>3</sup> Women, on the other hand, could not express, in an organized art form,

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<sup>2</sup>George Upton, Woman in Music (Boston: J.R. Osgood, 1880), quoted in Carol Neuls-Bates, ed. Women in Music: An Anthology of Source Readings from the Middle Ages to the Present (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), 210.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 207.

something they could not control. Women also failed as composers because they could not endure the disappointment and discouragement which accompanied the profession. The fact that composition required the use of math and the "rigid laws of harmony" also kept women from taking part.<sup>4</sup> Although poetic and romantic by nature, women were incapable of doing math, and thus could not compose. "The mere possession of the poetical imagination and the capacity to receive music in its fullest emotional power," stated Upton, "will not lead one to the highest achievements in musical art."<sup>5</sup>

Fanny Bloomfield-Zeisler, a concert pianist, agreed with many of Upton's arguments, and as of 1891 felt that until "recently," no woman had written anything "of even second rate merit."<sup>6</sup> Like Upton, Bloomfield-Zeisler felt that women's inability to cope with mathematical science kept them from composing. "Music is the most abstract of arts, and on the other hand the most bound by mathematical rules," she wrote, emphasizing that women could not function by technical rules.<sup>7</sup> Women also lacked the

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 209.

<sup>6</sup>Bloomfield-Zeisler, 2.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

"power of concentration," the "power of self-observation," and the "power of self-criticism and objective judgement."<sup>8</sup> Women could only make up "beautiful melodies," or feminine music. This, however, differed from composing. Bloomfield-Zeisler felt that composing was beyond women's capabilities and counseled that "women would show extremely good sense in not attempting to any great extent to be active in a field in which they would not get beyond mediocrity. . . ."<sup>9</sup> Although allowing that women did struggle against "obstinate prejudice," she felt that women should not attempt to imitate men, but rather, limit themselves to developing "those qualities which specifically belong to woman. . . ."<sup>10</sup> Although an accomplished career musician, Bloomfield-Zeisler still emphasized the ideals of true womanhood as a woman's final destiny.

Other female musicians and activists challenged Upton's theories. In 1891, leading feminist Alice Stone Blackwell argued that women had not received the training necessary to compose great music. "Girls as a rule are taught music superficially," she wrote, and "it is hardly

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 3.

reasonable to expect women during a few years of half liberty and half education to produce at once specimens of genius equal to the choicest men of all the ages."<sup>11</sup>

Helen J. Clarke supported Blackwell's argument in her article, "The Nature of Music and its Relation to the Question of Women in Music." According to Clarke, women struggled against prejudices unknown to men, because they were not supposed to possess genius. Like Blackwell, Clarke focused on the lack of training available to women, arguing that "until women have had the same sort of opportunity to devote themselves body and soul to the art of composition, it is manifestly unfair to declare them mentally and emotionally incapable of great work."<sup>12</sup>

In 1893, at the Congress of Women held in connection with the Chicago World's fair, several women gave speeches on music. Mrs. Gaston Boyd, a member of the World's Advising Council of Music, specifically rebutted Upton's arguments in her address. Boyd began by pointing out the commonality of Upton's arguments, noting that:

Were it not for the introduction of technical terms, one might easily conceive he was reading the old and half-forgotten theories why woman could never succeed . . . in any of the many

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<sup>11</sup>Tick, "Passed Away," 334.

<sup>12</sup>Helen J. Clarke, "The Nature of Music and its Relation to the Question of Women in Music," Music 7 (March 1895): 459-61, quoted by Neuls-Bates, 213.



avenues of life where woman has demonstrated her ability . . . ." <sup>13</sup>

Boyd gave three explanations for why women had not "succeeded" as composers. First, women's duties made it nearly impossible, limiting "her freedom or opportunities for the highest development of her powers."<sup>14</sup> Second, traditional expectations relegated women to domesticity. Rather than being born without "musical genius," as supposed by Upton, "custom, tradition, public sentiment, all required the subservience of the girl to a simple domestic life, and the discouragement of any efforts toward a place for herself in the world."<sup>15</sup> Third, women's desires to excel musically had actually been repressed by the lack of serious attention given to women's contributions. When women's musical activities became "something more serious than a drawing room accomplishment," then, felt Boyd, "we may look for that environment . . . which will play an important part in shaping the career of woman in music."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Mrs. Gaston Boyd, "Woman in Music," in The Congress of Women, Held in the Woman's Building, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, USA, 1893, With Portraits, Biographies, and Addresses, ed. Mary Kavanaugh Olham Eagle (Philadelphia: International Publishing, 1985), 570.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 573.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 572.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 573.

In 1900, the professional pianist Amy Fay added her arguments about the scarcity of women composers. In her mind, women spent far too much time encouraging men and repressing their own talents. According to Fay, over-encouragement of men led women to devalue their own talent and underestimate their abilities to compete in the same realm.<sup>17</sup>

In 1901, another female musician, Fanny Morris Smith, joined the argument, rebutting Upton's statements and giving two reasons why nineteenth-century women had been slow to compose. "The contributions of women in the past were greater than Upton allowed, while their opportunities in the present were far less than he claimed," she asserted.<sup>18</sup> Smith offered two explanations for the lack of female composers; first, men did not give emotional support to women who wished to compose, and second, women had no money to educate themselves or to attempt publication. Also, as historian Glenda Riley pointed out, "few American female composers of symphonies and concertos have been identified, but neither were there many American male composers. . . ."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Tick, "Professional Musicians," 108.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Riley, 135.

Nineteenth-century women did, in fact, compose music. However, as music historians Alan Levy and Barbara Tischler found, not only did turn-of-the-century writers emphasize "the paucity of women composers, they also implied that the pieces that women did write . . . were simply not an important part of American music."<sup>20</sup> Women were expected to write dainty, feminine songs, which by their nature would automatically be ineligible for greatness.

Music historian Judith Tick analyzed the differences between feminine and masculine composition during the nineteenth century. She found that the two types of composition differed in emotion, musical quality, and genre. While masculine composition displayed "powerful, broad, and noble" emotions, feminine music was "delicate, sensitive, graceful, and refined."<sup>21</sup> Men composed "intellectual music," which used theory and harmony expressed in genres such as symphonies, operas, and chamber music, while women composed "lyrical" and "melodious" songs, particularly piano pieces.<sup>22</sup> This "correlation between sex and the emotive content of a

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<sup>20</sup>Levy, 63.

<sup>21</sup>Tick, "Passed Away," 337.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

piece" put women composers on the periphery of musical composition, and thus indicated that they were incapable of composing great music.<sup>23</sup>

The simple piano pieces women did compose, known as parlor songs because of their suitability to playing at home, helped women reconcile the conflicting roles of woman and composer. Yet, even within this feminine genre of music, males outnumbered females. For example, most of the sheet music published in Godey's Lady's Book consisted of parlor songs. Julia Koza, in her study of musical references in Godey's, found that men contributed the majority of those songs. Because of the association between parlor songs and femininity, many men wrote songs for Godey's under female pen names. Only ten percent of the music published from 1830-1877 was attributed to women.<sup>24</sup> Within this ten percent, Koza found eight documentable cases of men using female pen names, thus narrowing the actual contributions of women even further.

But despite arguments that women could not and should not attempt to compose anything other than simple piano pieces, serious women composers emerged in the 1890s. Most notably, Mrs. H.H.A. Beach composed several classical

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<sup>23</sup>Tick, "Professional Musicians," 115.

<sup>24</sup>Koza, 105, 122.

pieces, including the "Mass in E-Flat," first performed in Boston in 1892, and the "Gaelic Symphony," introduced in 1896. From 1892 to 1889, the New York Manuscript Society, an organization of professional composers, doubled its percentage of women members, and in 1895 and 1900 performed concerts which exclusively offered compositions by women.<sup>25</sup> As the turn of the century approached, women began to succeed as composers, although they still faced many ambivalent responses to their musical contributions.

In nineteenth-century Utah, little evidence exists of serious composition by women. In an unpublished manuscript on the history of Mormon women, Susa Young Gates wrote, "Women in the earliest days of the Church of God in modern times were employed in making music for the people, both vocal and instrumental," but it is unclear whether she meant as composers or performers.<sup>26</sup> She did later write that "no Mormon women, but one or two in recent days have essayed to compose music."<sup>27</sup>

Utah did, however, provide an encouraging environment for women desiring to compose. When influences from non-

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<sup>25</sup>Tick, "Passed Away," 339.

<sup>26</sup>Gates, Susa Young, Papers, 1852-1951, Utah Historical Society, Salt Lake City, hereafter referred to as UHS.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

Latter-day Saint groups began to spread in Utah, Brigham Young started to promote "a rigorous self-sufficiency and to nurture a territory-wide obsession for 'home' production of all kinds."<sup>28</sup> In the realm of music, church music leaders indicated a desire to transcend "reliance on borrowed music of every sort, from hymn tunes to theater music and parlor songs."<sup>29</sup> The church even sponsored contests "to stimulate the production of either tunes or hymns."<sup>30</sup>

Yet, however much Brigham Young desired to "transcend" outside influences, music in Utah retained its similarities to non-Latter-day Saint music, especially since most church members were converts whose musical training had occurred outside Utah. Mark Leone, author of Roots of Modern Mormonism, characterized Brigham Young's method of separation as "separation but never with the intention of founding a new nation; [and] isolation but without self-sufficiency. . . ."<sup>31</sup> Michael Hicks

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<sup>28</sup>Hicks, 109. See for example JD 11:291-305, 3 February 1867.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid. See for example, Utah Musical Times, 1 May 1877.

<sup>30</sup>Helen Hanks Macaré, "The Singing Saints: A Study of the Mormon Hymnal, 1835-1950" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1961), 437.

<sup>31</sup>Mark Leone, Roots of Modern Mormonism (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 216.

emphasized the same idea within Mormon music, noting that "while Mormon sounding names on sacred songs tended to legitimize them to the Saints, the music and sentiment of most of the songs continued to emanate from the larger Christian culture. . . ." <sup>32</sup>

Still, whether drawing from the larger Protestant background or not, composing hymn tunes gave Utah women an opportunity to explore their musical skill. Before the 1870s, most Latter-day Saint hymns did not use a specific tune, and the hymnals did not include tunes. Instead, the music director chose a tune; many songs could be sung to various tunes.

In 1888, the Sunday School organization of the church published the Deseret Sunday School Union Music Book, described in the preface as "mostly the productions of our home composers and authors." <sup>33</sup> In the collection of over 100 hymns, only two are specifically attributed to women. Ann Fellows composed the music for "A Sacramental Hymn," and nine-year-old Ella Barker wrote two simple lines of music for the song "A Precious Jewel." <sup>34</sup> Since some

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<sup>32</sup>Hicks, 125.

<sup>33</sup>Deseret Sunday School Union Music Book (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1888), preface; hereafter referred to as Sunday School Book.

<sup>34</sup>Sunday School Book, 24, 81.

songs in the collection have no composer listed, possibly more women contributed anonymously.

The following year, the Latter-day Saint Psalmody appeared, compiled by the notable male musicians of the day, George Careless, Ebenezer Beesley, J.J. Daynes, Evan Stephens, and Thomas Griggs. The aim of the Psalmody was "to present a suitable and acceptable tune for every hymn in the Latter-day Saints' Hymn Book," and the compilers acknowledged the "contributions of those who have so readily placed their appreciated compositions at our disposal."<sup>35</sup> The compilers themselves contributed most of the hymn tunes in the book. Compositions by women accounted for only four hymns out of several hundred. One of those four women lived in England and had no connection to Utah or the LDS Church. One tune was attributed to Mrs. L. Careless, wife of musician George Careless, another to Annie F. Harrison. Edna H. Coray, who later became a tabernacle organist, composed the music to the fourth tune.<sup>36</sup>

Perhaps other anonymous tunes were submitted by women, such as the music to "Oh Say, What is Truth?" Karen Davidson, in Our Latter-day Hymns, indicated that

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<sup>35</sup>Latter-day Saint Psalmody, 1889 (Salt Lake City), preface.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 133, 236, 271, 343.



Ellen Knowles Melling composed the tune.<sup>37</sup> Little is known of Melling's life. She came from Scotland, settled in Ogden, and married music teacher John Melling. While serving as a missionary in Scotland, the author of the hymn's text, John Jaques, converted Melling to the LDS faith. Unlike parlor songs, which "call[ed] for a woman's voice, employ[ed] a limited range, . . . and [were] simple enough to be sung by an amateur," Melling's composition was written in four parts and meant to be sung by a congregation or choir.<sup>38</sup> Rather than dainty and fanciful, the tune is strong and anthem-like. The 1985 Latter-day Saint hymnbook indicates that the song should be played and sung "firmly."<sup>39</sup>

Edna Coray Dyer, after becoming a tabernacle organist, commented about the difficulty of writing hymns in her diaries. On 26 April 1895, she "wrote out part of my interludes for two hymns," and in June, finally "finished the wretched interludes. . . ."<sup>40</sup> One month later, J.J. Daynes "gave me some words to write a hymn for

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<sup>37</sup>Davidson, 410.

<sup>38</sup>Block, 157.

<sup>39</sup>Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), 272.

<sup>40</sup>Edna Coray Dyer, Journals, Howard Coray Family Collection, BYU, 26 April 1895, 16 June 1895.

the new Psalmody (or try to)."<sup>41</sup> Several weeks later, Dyer noted that she spent all evening remodeling her tune, and the next day finished "doctoring" it.<sup>42</sup>

Little other evidence exists of women composing in Utah, at least to any great extent. Utah women probably had little time to compose music, particularly due to the demands of their domestic roles. Even with Brigham Young's encouragement, women interested in music often encountered a conflict with the daily realities of their lives. Domestic tasks, Relief Society work, and all the demands of a family limited the time women had to devote to other interests.<sup>43</sup>

Also, the efforts women made at composition possibly went unrecognized and undocumented. Most church hymnbooks listed few female compositions but many anonymous ones. Composers, male and female, frequently used initials or nicknames. For example, in the 1889 Latter-day Saint Psalmody, hymn number 133 lists "Lavinia C.M." as the author, instead of using the full name of Mrs. Lavinia Triplett Careless.<sup>44</sup> In the 1889 Deseret Sunday School

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid, 15 July 1895.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid, 2 August 1895, 3 August 1895.

<sup>43</sup>See Chapter II, pages 33-36 for examples from the lives of Nellie Pugsley and Mary Chamberlain.

<sup>44</sup>Psalmody, 244.

Union Music Book, most of the compositions appear with initials, such as E.B. Wells, in place of Emmeline B. Wells.<sup>45</sup> This use of initials makes it more difficult to identify female composers, as not every name can be successfully traced through church records.

Although evidence of musical composition by Utah women is scant, many women did write song lyrics, especially hymn texts. The texts of Mormon hymns are important, because, "from the texts of the hymns that have been preserved, we can discern the values, the collective wisdom, the beliefs, hopes, fears, and even something of the history of the people who wrote them."<sup>46</sup> Several books have been published about Mormon hymns, including George Pyper's 1939 Stories of Latter-day Saint Hymns. Pyper gave no bibliographic information on his sources other than to mention that the biographical sketches were "largely reprints from the Improvement Era" (a church-sponsored magazine).<sup>47</sup> Pyper included biographical sketches of two female lyricists, Eliza R. Snow and Emmeline B. Wells, in his stories of selected hymns.

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<sup>45</sup>Sunday School Book, 30, 92.

<sup>46</sup>Davidson, 1.

<sup>47</sup>George D. Pyper, Stories of Latter-day Saint Hymns (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1939), introduction.

In 1963, J. Spencer Cornwall, director of the tabernacle choir, wrote Stories of Our Mormon Hymns. Cornwall also failed to cite any sources, probably because he lifted much of his material directly from Pyper's early work. He said little about women's involvement in Mormon hymnody.<sup>48</sup> Cornwall particularly failed to mention any female composers of hymns, such as Edna Coray Dyer or Ellen Melling.

In 1988, Karen Davidson published Our Latter-day Hymns: The Stories and the Messages, as a companion volume to the revised church hymnbook printed in 1985. Davidson included information on the origins of all 342 hymns in the new book. However, her book also lacks full documentation and gives no evidence of primary research. None of these three books gives much credit to female composers or lyricists, although Davidson made the effort to identify the author and composer of each hymn. These books instead focus on the doctrinal messages of the songs.

Although evidence of women's compositions is lacking, the nineteenth-century church hymnbooks included a wide variety of texts written by women. The Deseret Sunday School Union Music Book of 1888 included works from three

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<sup>48</sup>J. Spencer Cornwall, Stories of Our Mormon Hymns (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1963).

of Utah's most well-known literary figures, Eliza R. Snow, Louisa Greene Richards, and Emmeline B. Wells. Another Utah poet, Emily Hill Woodmansee, also contributed a text. These texts, as well as others written by women for hymnals, relate many themes important to the nineteenth-century Utah woman. The majority of the hymns focus on the doctrines of the church, as in the lyrics written by Eliza R. Snow. Known as "Zion's Poetess," Snow authored numerous hymns, and was also responsible for the publication of The Children's Primary Hymn Book and The Tune Book for the Primary Association of the Children of Zion, both printed in 1880.

One of Brigham Young's wives, Snow figured prominently in church administration as the second president of the women's Relief Society organization. Her hymns focus on the doctrines of the gospel; she wrote many songs for use during the communion service. Two of her most well-known hymns, "Behold, the Great Redeemer Die," and "How Great the Wisdom and the Love," describe the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. "Behold, the Great Redeemer Die" details the experience of the crucifixion. As the song progresses, Christ is mocked, crowned with thorns, and hung on the cross. Christ commends his spirit to God, and the "earth trembled, and

all nature sighed, in dread response, 'a God has died.'"<sup>49</sup> Then, "after the sorrow and grief of Christ's death, the final verse of the hymn states simply and joyfully, 'he lives -- he lives.'"<sup>50</sup> Possibly, no theme in sacred music is of greater solemnity and weight than that of the crucifixion.

"How Great the Wisdom and the Love," which appeared in the 1888 Deseret Sunday School Union Music Book, may, speculated Davidson, "be the most often sung . . . of all the hymn texts by Eliza R. Snow."<sup>51</sup> Instead of reflecting on the events of the crucifixion, this hymn refers to the meaning of Christ's sacrifice, and the "wisdom and love" of a divine father who organized a plan for redemption. The example of Christ's life "marked the path and led the way, and every point defines, to light and life and endless day, where God's full presence shines."

While these two songs reflected popular Protestant music of the era, another of Snow's well-known hymns, "O My Father," delineated a more specifically Latter-day

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<sup>49</sup>Utah Musical Times, 1877.

<sup>50</sup>Davidson, 205.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 207, originally published in Sunday School Book, 54.

Saint theology.<sup>52</sup> Beginning with a pre-earthly existence as spirits, Snow moved through the phases of life where people came to earth "for a wise and glorious purpose," while at the same time they felt as if they "had wandered from a more exalted sphere." Snow emphasized the possibility of returning to a heavenly home, where, she wrote, men would find not only God, but also "a mother there." This idea of a mother in heaven came from Snow's previous husband, church founder Joseph Smith, Jr. Smith first revealed the idea of a mother in heaven when comforting Zina D.H. Young, another of Brigham Young's wives, on the death of her own mother. George Pyper, a historian of Mormon hymnody, wrote that Snow received the inspiration for this hymn from this incident and other discussions with Smith about the resurrection and God's relationship to man.<sup>53</sup>

Snow's hymn gained widespread acceptance among the Mormons and has been included in most of the hymnals published by the church. In 1893, church president

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<sup>52</sup>Times and Seasons (Nauvoo, IL), 15 November 1845.

<sup>53</sup>Davidson, 294; For more detailed information on the origins of a God-Mother theology, see Linda P. Wilcox, "The Mormon Concept of a Mother in Heaven," in Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective, ed. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavinia Fielding Anderson, with a Foreword by Jan Shipps (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 64-66.

Wilford Woodruff praised the hymn's message, although simultaneously underscoring Snow's contribution with the statement: "That hymn is a revelation, though it was given unto us by a woman."<sup>54</sup> In his Stories of Latter-day Saint Hymns, George Pyper wrote, "Truly, 'O My Father' is the drama of eternal life: not merely a hymn, but a prophecy and a revelation."<sup>55</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, a twentieth-century Mormon leader, likewise noted that "this glorious truth of celestial parentage, including specifically both a Father and a Mother, is heralded forth by song in one of the greatest of Latter-day Saint hymns."<sup>56</sup>

Mormon historians have described "O My Father" as "the best known exposition" of the doctrine of female deity, and as "the crowning doctrine concerning women."<sup>57</sup> Linda Wilcox, in her study, "The Mormon Concept of a Mother in Heaven," noted the particular importance of this doctrine to nineteenth-century Mormon women. Wilcox

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<sup>54</sup>Millennial Star 56 (9 April 1894).

<sup>55</sup>Pyper, Stories, 6.

<sup>56</sup>Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 516-17.

<sup>57</sup>Wilcox, 65; Jill Mulvay Derr, Janath Russell Cannon, and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, Women of Covenant: The Story of Relief Society (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 58.



associated the doctrine with the women's rights movement and wrote that "to many, the concept of a Mother in Heaven was a fitting expression of a larger movement which aimed at raising the status of women and expanding their rights and opportunities."<sup>58</sup> As women's history and women's spirituality continue to undergo reassessment, more and more theological and intellectual weight has been given to Snow's thoughts, and the concept of a God-Mother "is receiving increased attention and expansion, and is becoming more personalized and individualized".<sup>59</sup>

In writing hymn texts, Utah women moved beyond the mentality of parlor songs into a spiritual realm. "Most parlor songs," wrote Adrienne Block, "are about love -- romantic, filial, maternal, sisterly, platonic, or unrequited."<sup>60</sup> In her study, The Feminization of American Culture, Ann Douglas noted that "hymns were not . . . to be intellectual," but rather, "should be well-written, tasteful, and beautiful . . . [and should] inspire, uplift, and cheer. . . ."<sup>61</sup> Douglas made

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<sup>58</sup>Wilcox, 68.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 74; For a discussion of current developments on this topic, see Wilcox, pages 72-74.

<sup>60</sup>Block, 157.

<sup>61</sup>Ann Douglas, The Feminization of American Culture (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977), 219.

several points about the largely feminine nature of nineteenth-century Protestant hymns, noting that hymns "were originally conceived as best adapted for domestic and familial uses," and that hymns did not become central to religious use until churches "had been redefined in domestic terms."<sup>62</sup> However, hymns had played an important role in Latter-day Saint worship services since the 1830s, and the hymns written by Utah women were meant to strengthen the church community, not just individual families. Both men and women in the Mormon community demonstrated a wide acceptance of the hymns and found the theology expressed in them to be compatible with church doctrines. Neither were these hymns unintellectual or light.

Some of Utah's leading female authors contributed to the church's music collections. The hymns of Louisa Greene Richards, first editor of the Woman's Exponent, were included in the Deseret Sunday School Union Music Book. In her short "Sacramental Hymn," Richards wrote about the love and mercy of Jesus Christ.<sup>63</sup> "Little ones, the Savior loves you; for He died that you might live, . . . fear no harsh, unkindly sentence [sic], mercy

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 217.

<sup>63</sup>Sunday School Book, 34.

sweet from heav'n is sent; come with faith and true repentance, and partake the sacrament." This hymn sends a gentle, loving message to children that they need not fear God.

Richards's other song, "I'll Be A Little Mormon," was also written for children.<sup>64</sup> This song expostulates precepts such as divine revelation and following the Savior's example, stressing the importance of supporting church leaders. The lyrics mention following Jesus and Joseph Smith, and conclude: "I'll strive from every evil to keep my heart and tongue -- I'll be a little Mormon, and follow Brigham Young."

Other hymns show how Mormons utilized all cultural aspects to remind the church population of earlier events, such as the repeated confrontations with hostile groups experienced in Illinois and during the 1857-58 Utah War.<sup>65</sup> For example, Hannah Last Cornaby's hymn, "Who's On the Lord's Side," centered on themes of conflict and war.<sup>66</sup> "Now is the time to show," declared Cornaby, to

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 57.

<sup>65</sup>For information concerning the anti-Mormon violence in Illinois, see Flanders, Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi. The Utah War refers to the occupation of the Salt Lake Valley by Johnson's Army. See Norman F. Furniss, The Mormon Conflict, 1850-1859 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960).

<sup>66</sup>Millennial Star, 29 September 1884.

which side one belonged. The Saints "wage no common war, cope with no common foe; the enemy's awake, who's on the Lord's side, who?" One historian of Mormon hymnody characterized "Who's on the Lord's Side" as "the fight song" of the Mormon polygamy era.<sup>67</sup> During such a time of intense persecution from outsiders, the community of church members could use such messages to reinforce faith. This hymn also displays an interesting and contradictory blend of war and a peaceful gospel.

On the other hand, the peace of the gospel message provided another song theme. For example, Ellis Reynolds Shipp, an early Utah physician, wrote the hymn "Father, Cheer Our Souls Tonight." Her hymn, described as "a beautiful prayer for comfort," reiterated the idea that God could take care of our needs.<sup>68</sup> He could "cheer our souls tonight, lift our burdens, make them light, . . . [and] bless our loved ones far away, grant them health and peace, we pray. . . ." One of Dr. Shipp's daughters wrote that her mother always thought about the needs of humanity.<sup>69</sup> Her hymn revealed the interest she had in people's spiritual needs, as well as their physical needs.

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<sup>67</sup>Macaré, 431.

<sup>68</sup>Davidson, 240; Hymns, 231.

<sup>69</sup>Susan Evans McCloud, Not in Vain (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1984), 186.

Emily Hill Woodmansee also poeticized the comfort of God when she wrote "Providence Is Over All," included in the Deseret Sunday School Union Music Book.<sup>70</sup> The shadow of fear vanished because "from heav'n above, his light and love, God giveth freely when we call; our utmost need is oft decreed, and Providence is over all." Mary Ann Morton's "Sweet is the Peace the Gospel Brings" went beyond the idea of God's watchful care and focused on the peace that came "to seeking minds and true," when embracing the gospel.<sup>71</sup> Morton's verses subtly reiterate the idea promoted in Cornaby's "Who's on the Lord's Side"; the Saints had the "true" gospel which brought peace. Morton also believed that the Lord's side would win: "Ere long the tempter's power will cease, and sin no more annoy, no wrangling sects disturb our peace, or mar our heartfelt joy." Another verse describes the Latter-day Saint belief in ongoing divine revelation: "That which we have in part received, will be in part no more, for he in whom we all believe, to us all will restore."

In all of these hymns, women articulated basic religious concepts. Male church leaders accepted and endorsed their messages. These songs would not have been

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<sup>70</sup>Sunday School Book, 98.

<sup>71</sup>Millennial Star, 1 May 1852.

included in church hymnbooks and sung by members throughout the Mormon community if the concepts taught did not mesh with church teachings. Thus, these hymns show that the religious thought of these women was acceptable.

Utah women also wrote songs for children, such as Eliza R. Snow's "In Our Lovely Deseret."<sup>72</sup> Snow wrote the words of this hymn to match the tune of a popular and catchy Civil War song. The verses taught the children a variety of simple concepts, such as to "listen and obey the gospel's sound," "how to watch and guard the tongue," and "to pray, night and morning every day." This song also described the injunction by Brigham Young to avoid certain harmful foods: "That the children may live long, and be beautiful and strong, tea and coffee and tobacco they despise, drink no liquor and they eat but a very little meat, they are seeking to be good and great and wise."

Hymns such as this offered an opportunity for teaching children good habits relating to both their spiritual and secular lives. In using her hymn to reiterate Brigham Young's advice on healthful eating, Snow reinforced an important concept in Latter-day Saint thought. "Health of the body," wrote historian Thomas

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<sup>72</sup>Hymns, 307.

O'Dea, "[became] a central religious concern in Mormonism, valued for itself and also as a necessary means for accomplishment and progress in the present life."<sup>73</sup> In this manner, "Mormons used homespun song to help transmit the lore of their faith to their children."<sup>74</sup>

Emmeline B. Wells, who served many years as editor of the Woman's Exponent and also served as a president of the Relief Society, wrote "Little Children, Love the Savior," instructing children to remember that "Jesus said love one another, and forgive each other too. . . ."<sup>75</sup> Wells's more famous hymn, "Our Mountain Home So Dear," displayed another common hymn theme of nineteenth-century Utah, a love for the Saints' new settlements.<sup>76</sup> Evan Stephens, a noted Salt Lake musician and leader of the tabernacle choir, asked Wells to write a hymn he could set to music. In answer to his request, Wells wrote "Our Mountain Home So Dear," originally published in 1884. The hymn, a blending of the spiritual and the earthly, praised the natural beauty of Utah, "where crystal waters clear, flow ever free, . . . [and] the fragrance on the air, the

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<sup>73</sup>Thomas O'Dea, The Mormons (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 144.

<sup>74</sup>Hicks, 116.

<sup>75</sup>Sunday School Book, 30.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 92.

landscape bright and fair, and sunshine everywhere make pleasant hours." Subsequent verses gave praise to "the hand of God," seen "in leaf and bud and tree, or bird or hummingbee [sic], or blade of grass."

Songs written by Utah women also reflected the sisterhood felt by women within the Mormon community. Bonding and networking among women was common throughout nineteenth-century America. One Mormon historian wrote, "lighthearted or soul searching, sharing among women was serious business. It was one means whereby they reaffirmed the reality and significance of their female culture. . . ." <sup>77</sup> Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, in her article, "The Female World of Love and Ritual," found that female networks became necessary as a result of the emotional and physical separation men and women experienced during the Victorian era. <sup>78</sup>

Women in nineteenth-century Utah also formed strong female bonds. Jill Mulvay Derr, in a study of Mormon sisterhood, noted that like the rest of Victorian America, the Mormon church "nurtured separate roles for men and women, . . . [both] philosophically, organizationally, and doctrinally," and also "simultaneously promoted and

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<sup>77</sup>Godfrey, 19.

<sup>78</sup>Smith-Rosenberg, 9.



impeded an identity of men's and women's interests, efforts, and understanding."<sup>79</sup> Derr defined sisterhood as "the bonding among women on both personal and public levels, from simple friendships to massive organizations."<sup>80</sup> The "main components of Mormon sisterhood," concluded Derr, were family ties and friendships; however, "overlaid onto this network . . . was the churchwide organization of Mormon women into local Relief Society units that . . . provided women with common goals and tasks. . . ."<sup>81</sup>

The sisterhood exemplified by the Relief Society organization also became the object of song, as in Emily Hill Woodmansee's "Song of the Sisters of the Relief Society," a lengthy poetic explanation of women's duties.<sup>82</sup> Originally published in the Woman's Exponent in 1874, three verses of the poem still appear in the current LDS hymnal under the title "As Sisters in Zion." Woodmansee covered a variety of topics in her ten verses,

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<sup>79</sup>Jill Mulvay Derr, "'Strength in Our Union': The Making of Mormon Sisterhood," in Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective, ed. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavinia Fielding Anderson, with a Foreword by Jan Shipps (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 157.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., 154.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., 171.

<sup>82</sup>Woman's Exponent, 1 December 1874.

beginning with sisterhood: "As sisters in Zion, we'll all work together." She described the sisters' mission as "the errand of angels, . . . a gift that as sisters we claim; to do whatsoever is gentle and human, to cheer and to bless in humanity's name." On a more practical note, "the daughters of Zion -- the angels of light," would "wear what is sensible, neat and becoming . . . the vain, foolish fashions of Babel despise. . . ." Women should also "bring up our children to be self-sustaining; to love and to do what is noble and right." Beyond the home, "nor shall our attention be wholly restricted to training our children or shaping our dress; the aged, the feeble, the poor and afflicted, our labors shall comfort, our efforts shall bless." All in all, she wrote, "how vast is our purpose, how broad is our mission, if we but fulfill it in spirit and deed. . . ."

Woodmansee's message defined the conventional role of women, setting the "Cult of True Womanhood" to music. Religion formed a key component of "True Womanhood," as "the core of woman's virtue, the source of her strength."<sup>83</sup> Religious historian George Marsden emphasized the "strong spiritual component" of Victorian ideals for women, writing that "women were expected to be

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<sup>83</sup>Welter, 152.

the spiritual leaders in the home . . . [and] the guardians of traditional Christian virtues."<sup>84</sup> Indeed, Marsden noted that religious women in nineteenth-century America often combined religion and domesticity, "carving out a spiritual domain in church and developing power domestically which provided them with meaning, vocation, and a sense of moral superiority. . . ."<sup>85</sup>

A more secular spirit of common sisterhood, the cause of women's suffrage, also gave Utah women an opportunity for bonding and using music. Latter-day Saint women "were conscious of the women's rights campaigns being mounted by their contemporaries in the United States, and certainly they were influenced by the widespread concern for expanding woman's sphere."<sup>86</sup> Utah women formed suffrage associations that "corresponded closely, if not absolutely, to local Relief Societies."<sup>87</sup>

In meetings of these local chapters, "Mormon women used popular songs and their church hymns as settings for suffrage verses they wrote themselves."<sup>88</sup> These songs

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<sup>84</sup>George M. Marsden, Religion and American Culture (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990), 83.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., 84.

<sup>86</sup>Godfrey, 289.

<sup>87</sup>Derr, "Strength in Our Union," 179.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid.

reflect Mormon women's sense of political involvement and their interest in taking an active role in the community. The lyrics of the songs stress the importance of moving forward in support of all women.

In the minutes of the Beaver Suffrage Association for 16 March 1892, a Miss May Buckley sang an "original suffrage song."<sup>89</sup> The association also sold copies of the "Women's Suffrage Song Book," published in Salt Lake City by the Woman's Exponent. The songbook featured a mixture of national songs such as "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and locally produced suffrage songs. Emily Woodmansee wrote "Equal Rights," to be sung to the tune "Hail Columbia."<sup>90</sup> As "mothers of the race," women had the right to "enjoy your heaven appointed place . . . [and] demand the rights the world accords. . . ." She asked "why should women still be banned, virtual slaves, in freedom's land . . . let others think 'tis woman's fate always submissively to wait, for equity we'll still contend, and work to gain the wish'd for end. . . ."

Louisa Greene Richards, in her song "Woman, Arise," begged women to "rouse from slumber," and poetically

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<sup>89</sup>Beaver Women's Suffrage Association, Papers, photocopy of Ms., 2 folders, BYU.

<sup>90</sup>Women's Suffrage Song Book (Salt Lake City: Woman's Exponent, undated), 4.

alluded to the historic curse of Eve.<sup>91</sup> "First to fall  
 'mid eden's bowers, through long suff'ring worthy  
 proved . . . woman 'rise, thy penance o'er, sit thou in  
 the dust no more." Augusta Crocheron, author of  
Representative of Women of Deseret, wrote "A Suffrage  
 Song."<sup>92</sup> She appealed to "ye daughters of freedom and  
 ease," reminding them to "rest not until justice amendeth  
 the laws; until mother and babe, widow and maid, may claim  
 without question the right in their cause." Crocheron  
 also reminded women of their great historic roles: "If  
 woman may rule on the throne, or may die as martyr for  
 faith or for country's dear sake, let the men she hath  
 borne yield the life debt they owe, and grant her the  
 rights that their manhood should make."

One song asked, "Oh Where is Freedom Gone?"<sup>93</sup> Men  
 in office and senators had taken freedom from women, their  
 knowledge "that women are most loyal, and well obey the  
 laws; yet they did not like to see them to the ballot box  
 repair, so they set a trap for freedom, her footsteps to  
 ensnare." This author promised that if freedom would

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<sup>91</sup>Ibid., 5.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., 6.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., 7.

return, "in Utah we would greet her, for her sweet incense burn. . . ."

Belle D. Edwards, in her "Song for Equal Rights," wrote of quickly dispersing with household chores, so as to "garner time to study, too, and teach our boys the way to wave the flag of equal rights in Utah."<sup>94</sup> Women should be given the opportunity, she felt, to "stand beside creation's noble lords and help to rule the land," in which capacity they could "close up saloons, improve the schools and lend a helping hand, . . . [for] our brothers must no longer sail the ship of state alone. . . ."

Although historians emphasize that Utah leaders granted women suffrage to protect the Mormon majority, the women themselves had a higher goal. Mormon women supported the national suffrage cause, and Mormon women attended national conventions as delegates. Mary Jane Mount Tanner, president of the Utah County Woman Suffrage Association, stated that "we desire to give the weight of our labors toward strengthening the hands of those who have so long and valiantly fought the good fight in behalf of the women of this nation."<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>94</sup>Ibid., 22.

<sup>95</sup>Derr, "Strength in Our Union," 179.

Women in Utah also used folk songs to express their feelings musically. In his compilation of Mormon folk songs, Thomas E. Cheney quoted folk song specialists Austin and Alta Fife, expressing the importance of Mormon folk songs. Mormons composed and sang folk songs so frequently, said the Fifes, that it would be possible, "from the folk songs alone, to reconstruct in some detail the story of their theology, their migrations, their conflict with the Gentiles, and the founding and development of most of their settlements. . . ." <sup>96</sup>

Cheney found many themes manifest in Mormon folk song. The songs he collected revealed "a people who are sentimental, highly emotional, kind, sincere, . . . loyal to their leaders, intolerant of outsiders, self-satisfied, . . . and able to laugh at themselves and others." <sup>97</sup>

Eliza R. Snow, a prolific writer of hymn texts, also wrote folk songs. Her folk songs tended to follow a religious theme, as in "The Camp of Israel," first published in 1848 in the Millennial Star. <sup>98</sup> This song recounts the move from Nauvoo, Illinois, to the Salt Lake

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<sup>96</sup>Austin Fife and Alta Fife, quoted in Thomas E. Cheney, ed. Mormon Songs from the Rocky Mountains: A Compilation of Mormon Folksong (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968), xi.

<sup>97</sup>Cheney, 7.

<sup>98</sup>Millennial Star, 15 May 1848.

Valley, and celebrates the Saints' ability to overcome their foes. In Nauvoo, the Saints enjoyed a well-organized city and comfortable life, yet "we'd better live in tents and choke, than wear the cursed Gentile yoke; we'd better from our country fly, than by religious mobs to die." So the Saints moved west, "to the wilds where reeds and rushes grow," and continued in their religious pursuits undaunted: "Tho' oppression's waves roll o'er us, we will praise our God and King; we've a better day before us -- of that day we proudly sing."

Other folk songs written by women dealt with the Latter-day Saints' practice of plural marriage. The hardships brought about by separation and persecution during the late nineteenth century led many women, and finally the church as a whole, to abandon the practice.<sup>99</sup> However, before the church officially ended plural marriage, women generally remained faithful to their husbands, although separated by imprisonment or in hiding. The words of the folk song "Ever Constant" are believed to come from a letter "of an unknown Mormon wife written to

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<sup>99</sup>The Edmunds Act of 1882 made the practice of polygyny illegal, and forced men and their wives onto the "underground." Many men were imprisoned for having more than one wife. On the underground, women generally dropped the use of their husband's name, as a precaution. See Gustive O. Larsen, "The Crusade and Manifesto," in Utah's History, ed. Richard Poll, et. al. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1989), 257-74.



her imprisoned husband."<sup>100</sup> Although "the dear ones have all been scattered from the homes where once we dwelled . . . and though I seldom see the faces that would greet me there with thee, still my own heart and prayers unchanging, meet and center all in thee." The wife vowed "Heart and soul I'm true to thee," despite the "dungeon walls" that surrounded her husband, and "though for your sake I may not own you, may not even bear your name. . . ." She promised to be "ever constant, ever true," despite the affliction and separation. Once again, women's songs extolled the deep importance of religious doctrines and practices in their lives.

Because of the difficulty in locating the origin of many folk songs, it is hard to know how frequently women wrote them. However, we know that women often participated in singing them. In the 1930s, folk song collector Lester Hubbard interviewed several Utah women who recalled singing various folk songs as children during the nineteenth century, reinforcing the important use of song as a tool in transmitting history and culture.

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<sup>100</sup>Cheney, 83.

The Mormon trek across the plains made a popular folk song theme, as in "The Handcart Song."<sup>101</sup> Mrs. S. P. Cardon told Hubbard that her mother taught her "to sing this song in dances and other social gatherings in Willard about 1874."<sup>102</sup> During the trek, "some will push and some must pull, as we go marching up the hill, as merrily on our way we go, until we reach the valley." In the Saints' eagerness to reach Zion, everyone helped: "Twill very much surprise the world to see the old and feeble dame lending a hand to push the same." The song also recounted the happy nature of the Saints: "Then with music and with song, so joyfully we'll march along. . . ." Possibly, this song intended to suggest that the hard trek to Zion should be accomplished with a merry spirit, and to organize travellers in their efforts and remind them that their goal was accessible. The 1989 Latter-day Saint Children's Songbook contains the following shortened version:

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<sup>101</sup>Hubbard, 399-402. Many of the church's British converts emigrated to Utah, some in handcart companies that arrived in Salt Lake City in 1856 and 1860. The pioneers walked while pushing and pulling their carts. Two of the companies encountered blizzards, and many of their members died on the journey.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid., 401.

When pioneers moved to the West, with courage  
 strong they met the test. They pushed their  
 handcarts all day long, and as they pushed they  
 sang this song: For some must push and some must  
 pull, as we go marching up the hill; so merrily  
 on our way we go until we reach the Valley-  
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Other songs focused on Utah themes, for example, "All are Talking of Utah," originally part of the 1868 Bee-Hive Songster. Mrs. Rose Seegmiller Thompson told Hubbard that "In the early days, the people of St. George sang this song at all the celebrations, especially when they assembled in large groups."<sup>104</sup> This song pinpointed the controversy surrounding Utah and the Mormons during the late nineteenth century; it talks of polygamy, the railroad, and federal military intervention. It apparently amused the Saints to find themselves so frequently in the news. "Hurrah! Hurrah!," they sang, "we Mormons have the name; Hurrah! Hurrah! we're on the road to fame. No matter what they style us, it's all about the same, for all are talking of Utah."

The construction of the Union Pacific Railroad also became the object of song, as in "Up Echo Canyon," related by Salley A. Hubbard, who recalled singing it in the early

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<sup>103</sup>Children's Songbook (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1989), 220.

<sup>104</sup>Hubbard, 450.

1870s.<sup>105</sup> The Mormon men hired to help with construction were, according to the author, "contented and gay," although they worked "ten hours each day," which more likely made them disgruntled and tired. Once completed, the railroad could be used "to bring the Saints from their far away homes, and bring them to Zion in peace here to stay, while the judgement of God clears the wicked away."

Like the hymns, most Utah folk songs emphasized Mormon culture and doctrine. Yet, folk song also allowed for a wider range of more secular topics such as the railroad. Folk songs also provided, on occasion, a more relaxing, humorous view of life. Songs were used as a means of transmitting culture, history, and current events, and catchy popular songs in particular fulfilled the musical requirement of hymnist Isaac Watts -- "If men were to sing . . . it must be in terms and tunes they understood, and enjoyed."<sup>106</sup>

As composers and lyricists, women in Utah paralleled their counterparts throughout the United States. In the nation at large, musicians in the late nineteenth century argued over women's ability to compose. In Utah, few songs specifically name female composers. However, the

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<sup>105</sup>Ibid., 243-44.

<sup>106</sup>Douglas, 217.

frequent use of initials instead of full names indicates that many women may have composed anonymously, like Ellen Knowles Melling, whose tune appeared anonymously in the 1888 Latter-day Saint Psalmody.

Despite the limited number of women composing, Utah women did take an active role in writing song texts. Stepping beyond the dainty, melodious parlor songs, they used their literary skills to author hymns which stressed important spiritual concepts. The spiritual language and doctrine of their hymns were fully accepted by the leaders of the church, from basic reflections on the crucifixion to treatises on the doctrine of female deity. Women also used music as a means for advancing the cause of women's rights with their suffrage songbook. Folk songs helped them describe their feelings about their culture and current issues, such as polygamy and the coming railroad. Music thus became a medium for expressing their feelings, strengthening their bonds of sisterhood, and reflecting their spirituality.

CHAPTER IV  
PERFORMERS AND INSTRUMENTALISTS

"It is painfully obvious that among the many chores required of the frontiersman and his family, writing symphonies and listening to string quartets was not high on the list of priorities."<sup>1</sup> In the opinion of this music historian, the nineteenth-century American frontier did not offer much in the way of musical entertainment. Historians Bruce and Eugene Campbell, however, described a different atmosphere in pioneer Utah, noting that the settlers sought to create "an environment in which architecture, education, arts, and letters could find early expression."<sup>2</sup> Early Mormon pioneers especially focused on the communal nature of the arts, encouraging group participation.

This chapter examines the participation of women in community and church musical events throughout nineteenth-century Utah. Women figured prominently in local operas and concerts, joined music clubs, played in orchestras, and participated in church choirs and singing schools. In most of these areas, women remained within the bounds of

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Shull, "Overture: A Look at the Resources of Music in the West -- from Antiquity to 1900," in Music in the West, ed. Paul Shull (Manhattan, KS: Sunflower University Press, 1983), 5.

<sup>2</sup>Campbell and Campbell, 295.

"respectability." Newspaper reviews of events gave some indications of the acceptability of women's role in community music. Also, as the century progressed, professional opportunities for women increased, especially for female vocalists, and a few Utah women embarked on operatic careers. However, this chapter also discusses the challenges faced by some women interested in professional recognition, specifically highlighting the case of organist Edna Coray Dyer.

Although women appeared on stage in musical performances in America as early as 1735, opera did not become popular until the mid-nineteenth century when European singers began touring the United States.<sup>3</sup> Historians note that during the nineteenth century, most female professional musicians were singers. Such prima donnas were the one exception to the idea of music being "a domestic, private, recreational, amateur, romantic accomplishment" for women.<sup>4</sup> Singing offered women an acceptable and accessible musical role; women sang in local concerts, church functions, and as vocal instructors.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Block, 144.

<sup>4</sup>Koza, 120; Wood, 295.

<sup>5</sup>Block, 147.

Several Utah towns had opera houses for home operas and theatrical productions.<sup>6</sup> The most well-known opera house in Utah, the Salt Lake Theater, opened in March 1862, just fifteen years after the arrival of the first Latter-day Saint colonists. The Salt Lake Theater hosted many musical plays, concerts, and operas such as "H.M.S. Pinafore," "The Mikado," "The Bohemian Girl," and "The Messiah." Although women participated in all these musical events, newspapers and history books did not preserve many details from their performances. For example, the coverage of "H.M.S. Pinafore," given at the theater in April 1879, simply listed the women involved. Likewise, other advertisements for theater entertainment listed women participants, but further information regarding their performances cannot be found. A concert advertisement for 28 February 1871 announced performances by Mrs. L. Careless, Miss Pascoe, Miss Rhoda Young, Mrs. V. Young, Mrs. S. Ellis, and "Little" Miss Georgie Clawson. Likewise, the following ladies "kindly assisted" at Farini's "Grand Opera Concert": Mrs. Thompson, Miss Golder, Miss R. Young, and Mrs. Spring.<sup>7</sup> But of all

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<sup>6</sup>In addition to the Salt Lake Theater, Corrine opened an opera house in 1870 and the Thatcher Opera House opened in Logan in 1890; Park City and Brigham City also had opera houses.

<sup>7</sup>Advertisements for the Salt Lake Theater, 28 February 1871, and 4 April 1871, Marriott Library, Archives and Special Collections, University of Utah, Salt Lake City,



the above mentioned women who participated in theatrical concerts, only Mrs. L. Careless can be easily identified.

Journalists referred to Lavinia Triplett Careless as "Utah's first great songbird," noting that "her voice was well known by all local musicians for its wonderful quality of tone, range, and volume," and "was the sensation of those days."<sup>8</sup> Careless's husband, George, trained his wife as a soloist. Susa Young Gates called Careless "the most beautiful singer of the 60s and 70s," with a voice that "partook of both dramatic and coloratura quality."<sup>9</sup> Careless's singing talents, wrote Gates, "gave her the first professional prominence occupied by a woman in this community."<sup>10</sup>

The Deseret News covered Careless's performance in "The Messiah," given at the Salt Lake Theater in 1875. The solo she sang, "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth," "was rendered magnificently," and "her effort was greeted with rapturous applause, and an encore was long and persistently

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photocopies in possession of author.

<sup>8</sup>Deseret News, 18 December 1915; George D. Pyper, "In Intimate Touch with George Careless," Juvenile Instructor 59 (May 1924), 235.

<sup>9</sup>Gates, unpublished manuscript on "Women's Professional Life," Papers, 1852-1951, UHS.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

demanded."<sup>11</sup> The Salt Lake Herald also noted that "Her singing was simply perfection. . . . If angels had human voices, surely hers would suggest heavenly music, indeed."<sup>12</sup>

The Deseret News continued its coverage by also commenting on the performance of Mrs. Haydon, who sang "Behold A Virgin Shall Conceive." Mrs. Haydon "is an accomplished vocalist and musician; every piece she sings shows a grace, culture, and finish that are looked for in vain from the amateur." However, the newspaper critic included a suggestion for Haydon, noting that occasionally her voice resembled "a distant horn, instead of the natural tone, which in her case, is so full and clear."<sup>13</sup>

This particular performance, however, offered more than simply an evening of artistic entertainment. It also illustrated an important concept in Latter-day Saint thought. Before the performance, Mrs. Haydon approached director George Careless and asked that the show be canceled due to her bad cold. Careless asked if she would sing and Mrs. Haydon replied that she would try her best. Presently, Mrs. George Careless appeared with an even worse cold; the

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<sup>11</sup>Deseret News, 4 June 1875.

<sup>12</sup>Salt Lake Herald, 4 June 1875.

<sup>13</sup>Deseret News, 4 June 1875.

record reports that "she could not vocalize; her voice was entirely gone."<sup>14</sup> Yet Careless still refused to cancel the show. He asked several male members of the chorus to administer to his wife, ministrations to the sick being a common practice in the Latter-day Saint religion. Mrs. Careless and Mrs. Haydon both recovered "miraculously" and gave marvelous performances.<sup>15</sup>

This experience again illustrates the importance of religion in all aspects of these women's lives. Clearly, they believed that the prayers and anointments with consecrated oil given them before the performance would enable them to sing. In a study of nineteenth-century St. George, Utah, Larry Logue found that "most interactions with God were requests for help with specific problems; chief among these . . . were prayers for recovery from disease or injury."<sup>16</sup> Although Brigham Young "made it clear that humans could indeed help God struggle against suffering," for many Mormons, "the importance of faith-healing makes it

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<sup>14</sup>Pyper, "In Intimate Touch," 235-36.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Logue, 27.

clear that God was seen as the principal reliever of suffering, if not the only one."<sup>17</sup>

The Deseret News also covered a performance of "The Bohemian Girl" which played at the Salt Lake Theater in June 1888. Nellie Druce Pugsley, another locally prominent singer, sang the main role. The newspaper criticized her acting as amateurish, but acknowledged that "her exquisite interpretation and rendition of the music, the rare beauty and sweetness of her voice, and the soul and sympathy she imbued it with, turned the tide of criticism overwhelmingly in her favor." Bessie Dean also performed as the Gypsy Queen. "Her singing was splendid," noted the paper, "and her voice filled the whole house with a rich and powerful melody."<sup>18</sup>

While applauding these women's vocal talent, the newspaper reviews sent conflicting messages about women's proper roles and musical abilities. All of these women sang as amateur performers, befitting their status as "ladies," yet reporters criticized their performances for being "amateurish." It seems as if women were expected to be

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<sup>17</sup>JD 4:24, 17 August 1856; Logue, 27-28; for a detailed study of Young's views on faith healing see Linda P. Wilcox, "The Imperfect Science: Brigham Young on Medical Doctors," Dialogue 12:3 (Fall 1979): 26-36.

<sup>18</sup>Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 11 June 1888.

amateurs performing with professional-level talent. Interestingly, several of these women received high acclaim from outside sources. A Chicago paper described Pugsley's voice as "almost unlimited," with a range "from high D to A flat below the scale being easy scope for her exceptionally pure voice."<sup>19</sup> The New York Metropolitan Opera offered her a position. Likewise, nationally acclaimed opera star Anna Bishop begged Lavinia Careless to tour Australia with her.<sup>20</sup> Neither woman accepted the positions offered, perhaps reflecting that, among other reasons, traditional gender roles won out over professional opportunity.

Towards the turn of the century, several young women did leave Utah and became renowned opera stars. For example, Viola Pratt Gillett MacFarlane, recognized at the turn of the century as "one of the great contraltos of the country," began her singing career as a child in the Salt Lake Theater.<sup>21</sup> In an autobiographical sketch, MacFarlane recalled her childhood debut; "I felt very important at the age of nine, when my first singing teacher, Evan Stephens, . . . gave me a solo to sing at a children's matinee and evening concert in the dear old Salt Lake

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<sup>19</sup>Oblad, 4.

<sup>20</sup>Pyper, "In Intimate Touch," 235.

<sup>21</sup>Deseret News, 18 July 1900.

Theater. . . ."22 Between shows, she fell into a puddle, and her new white dress had to be quickly washed and ironed. Even as a child, Macfarlane was subject to Victorian standards of proper public attire. As a little "lady," she had to dress her best to appear publicly. Similarly, Nellie Pugsley, who also made her debut at age nine, recalled that "my fondest recollection of this occasion will always be of the white Swiss dress with blue ribbons and not what I sang."23 As children, female musicians in Utah already followed the precepts of true womanhood, remembering more interest in their dress than in their musical performances.

As she grew up, Viola MacFarlane appeared in various opera performances at the Salt Lake Theater. She and several other young women who began their singing careers at the Salt Lake Theater became famous career opera singers in Europe and America during the early twentieth century. Emma Lucy Gates Bowen went to Europe in 1897 to study music and became a noted European prima donna. She returned from Germany because of World War I and began her own local opera company in Salt Lake City, thus demonstrating that local Utah talent could reach beyond the amateur level.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>MacFarlane.

<sup>23</sup>Oblad, 1-2.

<sup>24</sup>Lobb and Derr, 353.

In addition to patronizing the performances of local women, men and women in Salt Lake City also enjoyed the visits of female opera singers from New York and abroad. In 1884, European opera star Adelina Patti came to Salt Lake City. Mary Ann Weston Maughan of Logan journeyed about ninety miles to hear Patti sing. In her journal entry, Maughan noted "Adelina Patti sang in the Tabernacle she is a fine looking woman and a good singer."<sup>25</sup> Even as a professional singer, Patti's appearance was noted first, her talent second.

Minnie Johnson Jepperson could not attend the Patti concert and disappointedly noted, "I regarded this as a cruel deprivation. I opened my heart to my Heavenly Father and asked Him to give me a daughter who would sing. After this I felt relieved and glad."<sup>26</sup> Minnie's daughter, Florence Jepperson Madsen, became a well-known twentieth-century soloist and head of the music department at Brigham Young University. Once again, music and religion intertwined. Faced with the disappointment of missing a special concert, Jepperson saw nothing unusual in asking God

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<sup>25</sup>Mary Ann Weston Maughan, Journals, 3 vols., Typescript by Joel E. Ricks, 1955, USU, vol. 3, p. 2, 1 April 1884.

<sup>26</sup>Grace Hildy Croft, With a Song In Her Heart: Biography of Dr. Florence Jepperson Madsen (privately printed, Nicholas G. Morgan, 1960), 42.

to reward her with a musically talented daughter. Jepperson may well have believed that the musical abilities of her daughter Florence were the direct result of her request.

Emma Abbott, an American opera star, frequently visited Salt Lake City. Abbott formed her own opera company, and "gave abridged -- and sanitized -- versions of opera in English translation to audiences in America's West. . . ." <sup>27</sup> In his journal, Abraham H. Cannon noted his family's attendance at two of Abbott's performances in 1887, praising her as a "brilliant success." <sup>28</sup> Utah's music patrons thus followed the national trend in recognizing opera as an acceptable musical activity for women, although their own women would not have been encouraged to pursue a full-time musical career.

Local women also participated in the many concerts given at the Salt Lake Tabernacle. In December 1862, the men and women of the Deseret Musical Association gave a concert there, with the Deseret News highly praising their performance. <sup>29</sup> In April 1889, the Woman's Exponent covered an organ recital at the tabernacle. The paper only mentioned one woman, Miss Bessie Dean, who sang "in her

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<sup>27</sup>Block, 146.

<sup>28</sup>Abraham H. Cannon, Journal, BYU.

<sup>29</sup>Deseret News, 17 December 1862.



exquisitely happy style," and was "warmly welcomed."<sup>30</sup> Utah men and women participated in and patronized such local concerts within a short time after the Saints' arrival.

In connection with their roles as mothers and nurturers, women also participated in preparing children for community musical performances. In Provo, Lucy M. Smith wrote in her journal about the preparations made for a 24th of July concert. Smith composed several short pieces and made copies for the children by hand. Her songs, she felt, were a success, as the children "sang with such inspiration that the whole audience were perfectly delighted," and she "felt proud of the little angelic choir as they sang so sweetly. . . ."<sup>31</sup> Smith and other Utah women who encouraged their children thus followed, probably unconsciously, the admonitions of Fanny Ritter and others, to "foster the young genius of future American art."<sup>32</sup>

Music clubs and associations emerged in the East in the early 1800s. The most well-known, Boston's Handel and Haydn Society, boasted an all-male membership and invited women to sing with them "as needed." However, as the century

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<sup>30</sup>Woman's Exponent, 1 May 1889.

<sup>31</sup>Godfrey, 270-71.

<sup>32</sup>Tick, "Women in Music," 551.

progressed, women became more involved in these societies and often formed their own clubs and choral organizations.

In Utah, women frequently joined local musical associations. Historians Ann Lobb and Jill Derr found women highly visible "in the lecture and dramatic societies and musical assemblies that dominated Salt Lake City's cultural life in the 1850s."<sup>33</sup> The Deseret Philharmonic Society was organized in 1855 "to promote the love and study of harmony throughout the Territory. . . ."<sup>34</sup> Officers of the society asked "our musical brethren and sisters" to report to the society as they arrived in town.<sup>35</sup>

The Deseret Musical Association was organized in 1862 and another philharmonic society in 1888. This society included two women on its executive committee. These two women played a role in decision making, helping to shape the goals of the association -- to cultivate music in Salt Lake City, to "produce oratorio and other musical works in their entirety," and to fund a building project.<sup>36</sup>

The Polysophical Society promoted literary and musical achievements. Founded in 1854, just a few years after the

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<sup>33</sup>Lobb, 340.

<sup>34</sup>Deseret News, 1 March 1855.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Journal History, 25 January 1888.

Saints' arrival, the society defined its purpose as "impressing the mind with heavenly wisdom and classic lore."<sup>37</sup> Both men and women participated as members. Martha Heywood wrote in her journal about meetings filled with essays, music and singing.<sup>38</sup> Utah historian Maureen Ursenbach Beecher described a meeting of this society, where members "listened to each other recite original poetry, perform on instruments, expound extemporaneously, and, on rare and special occasions, sing in tongues."<sup>39</sup>

Singing in tongues (singing spontaneously in an unknown language) offered another example of the link between music and religion. According to Mormon theology, a person had to receive a special gift from God to sing in tongues.<sup>40</sup> Soon after the organization of the church, Joseph Smith, Jr. sanctioned the practice of singing in tongues. Michael Hicks noted that the practice diminished in popularity after the Saints moved west, but evidence of singing in tongues appeared into the early twentieth century.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Campbell, 305.

<sup>38</sup>Martha S. Heywood, Journal, 1850-1856, Typescript, BYU, 27.

<sup>39</sup>Campbell, 305.

<sup>40</sup>Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1988), 86.

<sup>41</sup>Hicks, 50 (footnote 9).

Amy Brown Lyman attended a similar polysophical society at the Brigham Young Academy, where "excellent literary and musical programs were given by the best talent available in the school."<sup>42</sup> Other small towns in Utah also formed musical societies, such as the Parowan Harmonic Society, which reported a successful concert to the Deseret News in December of 1865. Its repertoire included various female soloists.<sup>43</sup> The Eagle, a newspaper from Brooklyn, New York, also reported that Salt Lake City had "a women's musical society."<sup>44</sup>

Throughout the nation during the late nineteenth century, women struggled to gain recognition as participants of orchestras and bands. In previous decades, "ladies" only played the piano or the organ because these instruments "required no facial expressions or body exertions that interfered with the portrait of grace and attractiveness that the female performer was supposed to emanate."<sup>45</sup> However, in the late nineteenth century, women instrumentalists emerged, particularly in Boston and New York City. Two professional violinists, Camilla Urso and

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<sup>42</sup>Amy Brown Lyman, In Retrospect: Autobiography of Amy Brown Lyman (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1945), 19.

<sup>43</sup>Deseret News, 28 December 1865.

<sup>44</sup>Deseret News, 27 April 1891.

<sup>45</sup>Tick, "Professional Musicians," 98.

Maud Powell, helped pave the way for increased acceptance of women musicians. Urso, a French violinist, debuted in New York City in 1852 as a ten-year-old child prodigy. She performed frequently in the United States, and in 1867 received an unusual award from the Harvard Musical Association. The members "presented her with a written testimonial declaring her the equal of the best male violinists."<sup>46</sup> Of course, by offering her such an award, the association implied that women instrumentalists, as a rule, were inferior to men. Urso also became an honorary member of the Philadelphia Philharmonic Society.

Throughout her career, Urso actively encouraged female musicians. She presented a paper at the 1893 Women's Musical Congress entitled "Women and the Violin: Women as Performers in the Orchestra," in which she outlined several reasons why women should actively participate as violinists. Refuting previous arguments about the suitability of instrumental playing by women, Urso argued in favor of the violin as an instrument of "lightness and grace."<sup>47</sup> She noted that the violin was "easily handled and carried," as

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<sup>46</sup>Block, 155.

<sup>47</sup>Camilla Urso, quoted in Susan Kagan, "Camilla Urso: A Nineteenth-Century Violinist's View," Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 2:3 (Spring 1977): 732.

well as "truly melodious."<sup>48</sup> Urso also believed that "women as a rule play in better tune than men," and "with greater expression."<sup>49</sup> For these reasons, she advocated equal participation (and equal pay) for women in American orchestras.

Another nationally renowned violinist, Maud Powell, also advocated greater acceptance of female instrumentalists. Referred to as "the outstanding American violinist of the late nineteenth century," Powell left Pennsylvania to study music in Europe.<sup>50</sup> She made her debut in 1885, and during her lifetime "played with leading orchestras in Europe and the United States, toured the world, and organized and led her all-female string quartet and later her own trio."<sup>51</sup> Despite her success as a musician, Powell experienced firsthand the discrimination against women. At the time of World War I, Powell stated, "When I first began my career as a concert artist I did pioneer work for the cause of the woman violinist . . . A

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 733.

<sup>50</sup>Block, 156.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

strong prejudice then existed against women fiddlers, which even yet has not altogether been overcome."<sup>52</sup>

The status and acceptability of women instrumentalists continued to improve during the late nineteenth century, fueled in part by the continuing success of musicians such as Urso and Powell. The popularity of women's orchestras soared after the Vienna Damen Orchestra performed in New York City in 1871. In the 1880s, Julius Eichberg, director of the Boston Conservatory of Music, formed the Eichberg String Quartet from among the female members of his classes. In 1888, the six-member Boston Fadette Orchestra began performing under the direction of Caroline Nichols. By 1898 the group increased to twenty members. In New York, the Ladies' Elite of Atlantic Garden became the most popular female orchestra, and by 1900 numerous female orchestras existed throughout New England, including the Ladies Schubert Quartette and the Women's String Orchestra of New York.<sup>53</sup>

Despite the popularity of these orchestras, listeners expected a light and feminine repertoire. The Woman's Journal, a publication of the suffrage movement, was delighted to note in 1893 that "women as players and

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 157.

<sup>53</sup>See Tick, "Passed Away," 330.

composers are coming into prominence in musical festivals and on great public occasions."<sup>54</sup> The great occasion referred to was the performance of "a grand orchestra of 65 women players" as part of the Columbian Festival in Boston, where the orchestra would perform "the same compositions played by the N.Y. Symphony Orchestra and the Sousa band at the Carnegie Music Hall."<sup>55</sup> The women gave thanks "for this recognition of women as orchestral players in the higher class of composition."<sup>56</sup> But this exceptional performance did not deter the Musical Courier from declaring, in 1895, that "with a light repertoire, no traveling to do and no arduous rehearsals, [female orchestras] might make a success as a unique feature in social engagements."<sup>57</sup>

Utah did not boast a female orchestra until the early twentieth century, when Salt Lake City violinist Romania Hyde started the Romania Hyde Ladies' Orchestra. Martha Tingey Cook, in her thesis "Pioneer Bands and Orchestras of Salt Lake City," noted only the participation of men in Utah's nineteenth-century instrumental groups, a practice in

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 331.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., 330.



line with national trends of the time.<sup>58</sup> Women did however, play in local orchestras and bands. In 1892 the Deseret News referred to the Salt Lake Symphony Orchestra as an "orchestra of nearly forty men," but in the list of performers, a Mrs. J. Bell played the zither, and Mr. and Mrs. Professor Hartman played the oboes.<sup>59</sup> Kate Carter, a historian and former president of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, found that in 1880 the Huish family of Provo organized a home band that included their daughter Florette. Florette played the drums, thus proving that Utah women did occasionally venture outside the prescribed musical boundaries of piano and organ playing and into the men's world of brass band instruments.<sup>60</sup> The popularity and permissibility of female instrumentalists increased during the 1890s and into the twentieth century, and Utah women also participated in this change.

While bands did not encourage female membership, the men certainly did not hesitate to ask for women's help when they needed a favor. In her journal, Lucy Meserve Smith relates how the Provo Brass Band came to her when they

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<sup>58</sup>Martha Tingey Cook, "Pioneer Bands and Orchestras of Salt Lake City" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1960).

<sup>59</sup>Deseret News, 30 March 1892.

<sup>60</sup>Kate B. Carter, "Bands and Orchestras," Pamphlet (Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1976), 118.

wanted a flag made. In the midst of many busy activities, she wrote: "What next? The Provo Brass Band want a nice flag. They chose a committee and sent to me desiring me to boss the concern."<sup>61</sup> Smith oversaw the project, even though details of her journal reveal that before she and her Relief Society sisters made the flag, they had to raise money and buy the materials themselves at a total cost of seventy-six dollars, "not counting our time or labor."<sup>62</sup> However, Smith was also very proud of her flag, which took a prize at the territorial fair.

Throughout the nation, religious organizations gave women opportunities for "making music outside the home," particularly as participants in church choirs.<sup>63</sup> Local church choirs were prominent throughout Utah Territory, offering women a chance to sing at church and community events. In 1891, the Deseret News noted that "there is scarcely a settlement in this whole territory, however new and small, which cannot boast a choir of trained voices."<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Godfrey, 269.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 270.

<sup>63</sup>Block, 150.

<sup>64</sup>Journal History, 4 April 1891.

Cedar City organized a choir in 1853, soon after pioneers settled the area. Mary Anne Wilson Lunt sang in this early choir. Before joining the Mormon Church and moving to Utah, Lunt had performed as a soloist in the Church of England choir and sang for Queen Victoria. Once in Utah, she "made good use of her training in the fine arts," and "became known as Southern Utah's nightingale."<sup>65</sup> Lunt's daughter, Violet, also sang in the choir. The director invited Violet to join the group when she was only twelve, a responsibility she took very seriously. In her autobiography, Violet recalled that "the choir took part in all public functions, both civil and religious."<sup>66</sup>

Lucy Meserve Smith "met with the Provo Choir of Singers twice a week two years and a half in succession which I enjoyed very much."<sup>67</sup> In Hyde Park, teenager Mary Perkes sang with the choir, but she "wish[ed] we had a better choir."<sup>68</sup> One Sunday, Perkes commented that "there was scarcely any of the quire [sic] there so we had miserable singing. Ellen and I were the only women folks there and we

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<sup>65</sup>Cynthia Williams Dunaway, "A Historical Study of Musical Development in Cedar City, Utah, from 1851-1931" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1969), 19.

<sup>66</sup>Violet Lunt Urie, *Autobiography*, Ts. ca. 1960, HDC, 30.

<sup>67</sup>Godfrey, 267.

<sup>68</sup>Perkes, 27 May 1867.

were laughing a part of the time."<sup>69</sup> Finally, a man from the neighboring town of Logan came to direct and teach the choir, but Perkes got married and stopped mentioning any involvement in the group.

Because of the significant role music played in the church and community, Brigham Young often requested that communities form choirs, and "he made certain that musically gifted church members were part of each new colonizing group in the region."<sup>70</sup> Elizabeth Thomas's husband, tabernacle choir director Charles J. Thomas, was called by Brigham Young in November 1865 to move to St. George to teach music to the Saints in that area.<sup>71</sup> Although not given her own "call" from church leaders, Thomas accompanied her husband. While in St. George she used her musical talents to assist her husband in forming choirs and singing classes, demonstrating once again a link between religious and musical activities. Joanne Doxey, in a program on "Women's Contribution to the Hymns of the Church," noted that musicians such as Charles and Elizabeth Thomas "accepted

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 18 May 1867.

<sup>70</sup>Hicks, 44; see also Gates, manuscript draft of The Life Story of Brigham Young, Chapter 27, "Brigham Young as Patron of the Arts -- Music," Papers, 1852-1951, microfilm, reel 5, HDC.

<sup>71</sup>Amy H. Adams Thomas, "A Brief Sketch of the Life of One of the Sweet Singers of Israel: Elizabeth F.L. Thomas," Mormon Biographical Sketches, HDC.

mission calls to organize musical activity in remote Mormon settlements," because they "considered the presentation and dissemination of good music as a part of their religious responsibilities."<sup>72</sup>

Mormon communities not given "music missionaries" tried to attract trained voices. One community even resorted to advertising for musically talented settlers. The Deseret News ran an advertisement for the city of Mendon in Cache County, asking for a good bass, tenor, alto, and soprano. Local leaders there offered to give ten acres each "of the best land in the settlement, to four such singers . . . provided they are good members of society, good readers of music, and will guarantee to attend meetings regularly."<sup>73</sup>

Other communities organized choral societies such as the Ogden Choral Union, begun in 1884 with approximately 100 young men and women "for the improvement of singing in Ogden City, . . . also to give concerts and entertainments for the benefit of the public as well as themselves."<sup>74</sup> The Union elected one female committee member, Miss Lizzie Stanford, as their treasurer.

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<sup>72</sup>Joanne B. Doxey, "The Hymns and Hers: Women's Contribution to the Hymns of the Church" (Salt Lake City: by the author, 1986), 7.

<sup>73</sup>Journal History, 3 April 1870.

<sup>74</sup>Journal History, 29 September 1884.

Young men and women also found the opportunity to sing at school. The Brigham Young Academy in Provo offered a choir for its students. Susa Young Gates directed the choir with enjoyment, although she wrote one day to her mother that "I am obliged to sing each part with everyone. . . . It is indeed very wearing on the lungs and nerves."<sup>75</sup> Utah women in smaller communities enjoyed local singing schools.<sup>76</sup>

The largest and most well-known Utah choir from the time of Mormon settlement to the present, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, unofficially began August 22, 1847, just one month after the first Latter-day Saints arrived in the Salt Lake Valley. That day a Welsh choir, which included "a few" women, sang for a general conference of members on the site of present-day Temple Square.<sup>77</sup>

Although historical works on the choir widely fail to mention women's participation, primary sources reveal that women routinely sang with the choir. The Woman's Exponent of 1 July 1878 advertised a forthcoming tabernacle choir concert, where "Mrs. L. Careless, Miss S.E. Olsen, and other

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<sup>75</sup>Godfrey, 335.

<sup>76</sup>For example see Heywood, also Margaret Greer Nuttall, *Diary, 1896-1897*, BYU; Rachel Andora Woolsey Lee, *Journal, 1856-1860*, BYU.

<sup>77</sup>Charles Jeffrey Calman, The Mormon Tabernacle Choir (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), 21.

vocal and instrumental performers will take part in the performance. . . ."78

Women such as Rose Berry West and Bardella Shipp Curtis referred to their participation in the choir in their autobiographies. West sang in the choir from 1882 to 1884 under the direction of Evan Stephens. Curtis sang with the choir on two of their most memorable occasions, the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple and the competition at the 1893 World's Fair.<sup>79</sup>

A commemorative photo card made to celebrate the tour to the Chicago World's Fair in 1893 also documented the participation of women in the choir. The picture showed 157 women, compared to 122 men, and featured three female soloists. Unfortunately, the pictures are unlabeled.<sup>80</sup>

However, one of those female soloists, Nellie Druce Pugsley, left an account of the trip. Born on 11 April 1864 in Salt Lake City, Pugsley grew up in a musical family. Her parents carried a melodeon across the plains in their wagon and she quickly learned to accompany herself and to play the organ. She began formal singing lessons at age fifteen, and

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<sup>78</sup>Woman's Exponent, 1 July 1878.

<sup>79</sup>Rose Berry West, Pioneer Personal History, Federal Writer's Project, Ts. USU; Bardella Shipp Curtis, "Highlights: An Epitome of an Autobiography," Ms. HDC.

<sup>80</sup>Tabernacle Choir Photo Card, 1893 Chicago World's Fair, HDC.

also began singing at the Salt Lake Theater that same year. Pugsley sang in many operas and "parlor concerts," or small home parties. She performed solos in many Salt Lake City churches, including the Unitarian, Congregational, and Catholic churches. Her daughter recalled that the Catholic priest even came to their home to coach her mother in Latin.<sup>81</sup>

Pugsley sang with the tabernacle choir for forty years and referred to the tours as the "climax" of her work. When the choir left for the 1893 World's Fair, Pugsley had recently given birth to a daughter. However, "Brother Stephens insisted that they must have my solo work, so the baby went along with my sister Louisa to care for her. . . ."<sup>82</sup>

At such a time, Pugsley may well have felt a conflict in her roles and desires. Victorian values dictated that she care for her baby. She probably also had to nurse the baby, making separation for long periods of time difficult. On the other hand, by describing the choir tours as the "climax" of her work, she indicated a deep commitment to singing. The insistence of the choir director made it "necessary for [her] to take a six weeks' baby," accompanied

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<sup>81</sup>Oblad, 3.

<sup>82</sup>Pugsley.



by Pugsley's sister as a nurse.<sup>83</sup> This unusual situation illustrated the degree to which church leaders were willing to allow flexibility within women's roles. Because the choir's competition at the World's Fair was important to the church, the choir, and Pugsley, leaders temporarily accommodated both domestic and musical roles.

After the choir's second-place triumph at the World's Fair, the New York Metropolitan Opera offered Pugsley a job, but she declined in favor of returning home to raise her family. Susa Young Gates, later writing about early Utah women, referred to decisions such as Pugsley's:

With these gifted daughters of Zion all preferring the harmonies of loving homes and the music of children's voices, the truth is emphasized that women in this Church use their righteous choice in noble ways, thus remaining simply and wholly home artists and local professionals.<sup>84</sup>

Besides singing, women also accompanied the choir. Yet J. Spencer Cornwall, whose history of the choir focused on the contributions of conductors and organists, failed to mention any women in connection with choir accompaniment.<sup>85</sup> Susa Young Gates recorded that "Fanny Young, lovely daughter of Brigham Young, a charming singer and musician, was the

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid.

<sup>84</sup>Gates, "Women's Professional Life."

<sup>85</sup>J. Spencer Cornwall, A Century of Singing: The Salt Lake City Mormon Tabernacle Choir (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1958).

first organist in the Tabernacle."<sup>86</sup> Barbara Owen, in her book The Mormon Tabernacle Organ, listed Fanny Young Thatcher and Sarah Cooke as organists, and Katherine Rommey Stewart as an assistant organist.<sup>87</sup> Also, the journals of Edna Coray Dyer, a contemporary and friend of Katherine Stewart, indicate that Dyer frequently accompanied the choir during the latter years of the nineteenth century.

Born in August 1875 in eastern Utah, Edna Coray Dyer began learning to play the organ at age nine. Within four years, she served as the official organist for her local church unit. At a young age, thirteen, she demonstrated enough confidence and talent to play for Sunday services.<sup>88</sup> Dyer loved music; in a letter to a girlfriend she wrote: "And then there's my music; life would indeed be barren without the light of my soul."<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>Gates, "Music in the Church."

<sup>87</sup>Barbara Owen, The Mormon Tabernacle Organ: An American Classic (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1990), 107.

<sup>88</sup>For more information on Dyer's personal life, see the collection of her journals in the Brigham Young University Archives, which begin with January 1895, a time when nineteen-year-old Edna was in high demand as an organist. See also JoAnn Jolley, "On Wings of Suffering and Song: Edna Coray Dyer," paper presented at the Women's History Archives Symposium, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 7 February, 1979.

<sup>89</sup>Dyer, letter to Helene, 30 October 1898.

In 1892, Dyer's family moved to Salt Lake City and she began lessons on the pipe organ, soon becoming an assistant organist for the tabernacle choir. On 8 January 1895, she became the "permanent" organist at the University of Utah and the organist for the 19th Ward of the church.<sup>90</sup> In April, she first mentioned playing for the choir, an occupation that made her very nervous: "Worried all day thinking of the coming night; practiced three hours, played for the Tabernacle Choir at night . . . did not do myself proud by any means."<sup>91</sup>

Dyer felt many qualms about her abilities as a tabernacle organist. On 28 April 1895 she again wrote of playing and worrying. "Everything seemed to go with a hitch and the whole affair was almost a failure . . . ," yet a few days later the conductor complimented her work.<sup>92</sup> In June, she finally admitted to satisfying herself "for the first time."<sup>93</sup>

Dyer accompanied the choir on its 1896 tour to California, and also participated in the choir's performance at the statehood celebration that same year. However, her

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<sup>90</sup>Ibid., 8 January 1895.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., 25 April 1895.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., 28 April 1895.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., 13 June 1895.

anxieties about playing continued. A small, undated slip of paper tucked into her journal for 1897 revealed her fears. Apparently she was taking part in a concert on a Sunday afternoon. While watching the audience assemble, she "wrung [her] hands until they [turned] purple. . . ," and felt "weaker than a little child in the hands of a giant."<sup>94</sup> After she played she wrote, "Oh what a relief! The worst part of my organ playing is over, . . . I wonder if my blunders stood out as glaring before the eyes of other people as in mine. . . ."<sup>95</sup>

Dyer continued playing the tabernacle organ into the twentieth century. However, she played with the "absence of official recognition."<sup>96</sup> In 1902, Professor John J. McClellan, the official tabernacle organist and Dyer's teacher, hinted that "he had thought of recommending me to the Authorities [church leaders] as assistant organist. . . ."<sup>97</sup> However, instead of the recommendation, McClellan began a quarrel with Dyer and "ordered me to confine my practice to one hour a day only . . . and threatened to deprive me of even that

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<sup>94</sup>Ibid., 1897.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid.

<sup>96</sup>Jolley, 11.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid.

privilege. . . ."98 On 11 April 1902, Dyer wrote, "I've grown so used to his failure to keep his promises that I no longer expect him to do so."99 Dyer wrote to Emmeline B. Wells, general president of the Relief Society, for help, but was eventually denied practice time, supposedly because too many others needed to use the organ. Within weeks, all hope of an official position had ended and Dyer vehemently wrote in her journal "I now feel that I hate him [McClellan] most completely, and I would as soon study with Satan himself as to stoop to receive instruction from such a consummate liar, hypocrite, and defamer as John J. McClellan."100

Finding other organs for practice, Dyer continued her musical training at the First Congregational Church and as an organist for the Relief Society General Board. After her late marriage at age fifty-four, she continued to play for a variety of church functions, yet she never received the official recognition and status that her talent merited. The prominent positions in church music, especially at the tabernacle organ, were always occupied by men.

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<sup>98</sup>Ibid., 12.

<sup>99</sup>Dyer, 11 April 1902.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., 27 April 1902.

Women actively participated in Utah's community musical events as concert and theater performers, and as members of musical associations, bands, orchestras, and choirs. Yet their presence often went unnoticed, perhaps because people felt that public recognition diminished their reputations. Two newspaper articles illustrate this possibility. In December 1862, the Deseret News praised the performance of the Deseret Musical Association, specifically noting that "in justice to our own feelings, we can scarcely refrain from particularly and personally referring to some of the ladies . . . ," but because of "prudential considerations" the paper did not mention any names.<sup>101</sup> Similarly, in an 1890 Christmas edition of the Salt Lake Herald, one journalist discussed the musical events of the year and wrote: "and the ladies -- whom I dare not name least I offend -- how much they have done with their noble enthusiasm, keen judgement, and excellent ability to advance the cause of music!"<sup>102</sup>

Utah women received a variety of responses, sometimes conflicting, to their musical involvement in the church and community. Both the church and communities were perfectly willing to exploit women's musical talents, asking women to

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<sup>101</sup>Deseret News, 17 December 1862.

<sup>102</sup>Christmas Herald (Salt Lake City) 25 December 1890.

perform at a variety of functions. Yet women were expected to remain in their proper sphere. As singers, women were expected to be amateurs, yet sing with professional quality. Two Utah women were offered jobs in national opera companies, but refused them to remain with their families. However, by the turn of the century, young, unmarried Utah women did begin to take advantage of such opportunities. Women not interested in professional careers or solo performances found an acceptable outlet for their talents in Utah's many musical associations, choirs, and singing schools, yet they were, with few exceptions, excluded from participating in bands and orchestras.

Two Utah women from this period left accounts of unusual responses to their musical activities. Nellie Pugsley received acclaim for her vocal talents, and church leaders made special efforts to accommodate her family needs. On the other hand, Edna Dyer, a talented and unmarried organist, was eventually denied the privilege of even practicing on the tabernacle organ. The reasons behind the suppression of her talents are speculative, but seem to suggest that jealousy and gender conflict played major roles. At the turn of the century, Utahns still reflected ambivalent ideas about women's proper place in public musical performances.

## CHAPTER V

## CONCLUSION

In 1893, the Woman's Exponent featured an article entitled "History of Music in Utah," by Ellen Ferguson. In her article, Ferguson gave a general outline of the activities of prominent leaders in Utah's musical scene. The only woman she mentioned was Lavinia Careless, to whom "belongs by right of her rare genius, the highest niche of fame among our musical stars."<sup>1</sup> Six months later the Exponent ran the article again; this time Ferguson had added her own music school and also mentioned a few other female vocalists.<sup>2</sup>

In 1895, the Salt Lake Tribune featured an article entitled "Echoes of Music in Utah." The author of this article gave a little more credit to women, noting especially the "great work" of Sarah Cooke as a "pioneer teacher of class singing and piano playing," and the "virtuosity" of Gratia Flanders, "chair of instrumental music in the faculty of Rowland Hall."<sup>3</sup> The paper also paid tribute to numerous female vocalists who had graced

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<sup>1</sup>Woman's Exponent, 1 September 1893.

<sup>2</sup>Woman's Exponent, 1, 15 February 1894.

<sup>3</sup>Salt Lake Tribune, 6 January 1895.



the concerts and operas of Salt Lake City during the nineteenth century.

Women in nineteenth-century Utah participated in a variety of musical activities far beyond those mentioned in these newspaper articles. These women used music as a means of self-expression and self-improvement and in support of the church and community. This thesis examined some of their many musical experiences.

Newspapers documented the value placed on music throughout Utah territory. Articles on music appeared frequently, praising music as "a great power," "a blessing that brings peace and love," "a mediator for all our thoughts and feelings," and "a taste of the grand and the beautiful."<sup>4</sup> Other articles documented the number of musical instruments in Utah homes and urged continued involvement in musical activities. By 1893, the Woman's Exponent claimed that "we are in Salt Lake especially a music loving and appreciative people, and . . . no territory, and but few states in our land can equal Utah in the progress made in the divine art."<sup>5</sup>

Out of the thirty-six women studied for this paper, twenty-eight mentioned music in their diaries, journals,

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<sup>4</sup>See Woman's Exponent, 15 September 1884, 1 November 1880, 1 August 1883.

<sup>5</sup>Woman's Exponent, 1 September 1893.

or personal histories. However, many of these women adhered to the prevailing Victorian values and confined their musical activities to the home. Some women, like Louisa Lindquist and Nellie Pugsley, successfully combined music and domesticity, singing as they went about their daily chores. Other women, such as Mary Chamberlain, tried, but failed to incorporate music into the daily routine. Often young women stopped mentioning musical activities after their marriages, probably indicating that domestic responsibility had taken precedence over cultural enjoyment.

Utah women took advantage of the opportunity for music lessons; many then used their skills at church and social gatherings and sometimes to enhance their courtships. As opportunities for female music teachers grew, women in Utah also took advantage of the chance to teach. Some young women taught for a few years then married; a smaller minority struggled to gain professional status. Yet the few women who did teach on a professional level in schools and conservatories still faced negative images and competition from men.

Women in Utah were also involved in composing music and writing song texts. Although evidence of female composers in Utah is scant, the hymnbooks of the LDS Church included several songs composed by women. Many

other songs from this period have only initials for identification, or are anonymous, making it difficult to positively identify some composers.

The song texts written by Utah women during the nineteenth century covered a wide variety of topics and served many purposes. Hymn texts especially offered women a means of expressing their feelings about their religious beliefs. Religious songs such as Eliza Snow's "In Our Lovely Deseret" also allowed women to pass their religious beliefs and cultural practices on to their children.

Sisterhood, both religious and political, also became the object of song in nineteenth-century Utah. The Woman's Exponent published a booklet of locally authored suffrage songs. These songs, as well as the hymns and Utah folk songs, all became mediums through which nineteenth-century Latter-day Saint women could express their views and strengthen each other as neighbors and spiritual sisters.

Women in Utah also played significant roles in community musical events such as operas and concerts. They performed in orchestras, bands, and choirs. But as performers, women encountered conflicting opinions of their duties. On the one hand, as "ladies," the public expected them to remain amateurs. On the other hand, the public as an audience wanted professional-level

performances. Newspaper reviews often expressed these conflicting messages, praising women's talents yet labelling the women as amateurish or not giving women personal recognition by name. Some women, such as Lavinia Careless and Nellie Pugsley, successfully combined professional-level talent with approved behavior. They displayed their talents locally, but remained true to the values of the "Cult of True Womanhood"; both turned down offers from professional opera companies and remained in Utah to raise their families.

Other Utah women struggled with the desire to be acknowledged on a professional level. Edna Dyer left a record of the difficulties she encountered as an organist. Talented and unmarried, with few domestic responsibilities, Dyer dreamed of a position as an assistant organist in the Salt Lake City Tabernacle. But for reasons not entirely known, she was denied the appointment and later denied even the opportunity to practice on the tabernacle organ.

However, as the turn of the century approached, other young women in Utah did become professional musicians. During the early years of the twentieth century, Romania Hyde started a female orchestra and Florence Jepperson studied in Boston, became a successful concert singer, and headed the music department at Brigham Young University.

Viola Macfarlane and Emma Lucy Gates became popular opera stars in both America and Europe.

In their many musical activities, women in Utah reflected trends of women throughout the United States. Nationally, nineteenth-century women enjoyed music in their homes and also found opportunities for taking their music to a more professional level. Despite the narrowly defined boundaries of "lady-like" behavior, women in the United States expanded their roles in music as teachers, composers, and performers. They wrote symphonies, formed orchestras, and founded conservatories. Music became "less often perceived simply as a social accomplishment," as women redefined their roles and acceptable standards for work and public performance.

The second half of the nineteenth century provided an era of change for American women, an opportunity for the expansion of their lives out of the home and into the public arena. Further study on the role cultural arts played in helping women redefine the boundaries of their lives will give a more complete picture of women's progress. Despite the differences of their religion, Mormon women in nineteenth-century Utah paralleled national trends common for women throughout the United States. Thus, this study of Utah women provides an example of how music helped nineteenth-century women

enrich their personal and social lives, express their feelings on a variety of topics, bond together in both religious and political sisterhood, and serve their communities as they simultaneously worked to understand and redefine the boundaries of acceptable roles for women.

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