

Brief Notices

Religion, Mental Health and the Latter-day Saints, edited by Daniel K. Judd. Vol. 14, Religious Studies Center Specialized Monograph Series (BYU Religious Studies Center and Bookcraft, 1999)

The role of religion in psychology and mental health has been a subject of much debate. Some studies assert that high religiosity can lead to good mental health, and others assert that it may be a cause of emotional disturbance. Daniel Judd has analyzed fifty-eight studies and found an overwhelming relationship between an individual religiosity and mental health. In *Religion, Mental Health and the Latter-day Saints*, Judd selects twelve of those studies that evaluate Latter-day Saints, their religiosity, and their mental health. All but two of the studies have been previously published.

The articles in this impressive collection provide a careful review of the literature, and the authors employ sound research methods and data analysis. Not only were Latter-day Saints studied, but also individuals from other religions as well as those without religious affiliation or inclination. Importantly, sample populations were often drawn from geographical areas outside Utah.

Significantly, these studies revealed a number of interesting results: depression is not more prevalent for Latter-day Saint women (33–46); “LDS women who work [outside the home] are able to reconcile their church’s emphasis on remaining at home and their employment” (71), and they do not exhibit more guilt feelings, depression, or self-esteem problems (71–92); and neither geography nor concentration of Latter-day Saint youth were directly related to delinquency but peer influences were, and “youth for whom religion was an important internal aspect of their lives resisted peer pressures . . .

and avoided delinquency to a greater extent” (159, 129–68).

The weakest study examined six homosexual Mormons and their feelings about themselves, others, and God (179–214). Although the findings were interesting, the sample was too small, and further studies with broader sampling are needed for more reliable results.

Other investigations examined topics such as LDS implications for religious lifestyles; family size; marriage, divorce and remarriage; changing views of young Mormons toward African Americans; suicide; and alcohol and drug abuse. In the final chapter, Richard Williams and James Faulconer suggest that we focus on agency choices rather than cause and effect (deterministic) analysis (281–302), concluding that religiosity becomes a more meaningful expression of individual identity than the total of our past environments.

Bringing these studies together makes an important contribution to the study of the influence of religion on the mental health of its practitioners. The volume will appeal to LDS scholars in the behavioral sciences, religious leaders, and LDS people who have struggled with one or more of the issues studied. I agree with Judd, who concludes that “the research evidence clearly indicates that Latter-day Saints who live their religion report better mental health than those who are less committed to the faith” (xiii).

—Marvin E. Wiggins

Principles of Priesthood Leadership, by Stephen D. Nadauld (Bookcraft, 1999)

The explosive growth of the LDS Church in recent years poses the major challenge to Church leaders at all levels to

nurture capable, caring leaders in this dynamic environment who will be able to carry out the Church's worldwide mission. Stephen Nadauld, as a BYU management professor and a former General Authority, is well equipped to help Church leaders learn how to deal successfully with their myriad responsibilities. In this volume, he has prepared a "primer" on priesthood leadership, focusing his attention on "a few simple principles which can be mastered by men and women of any level of education or background" (vii). He is appealing to a broad audience of Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood leaders at all levels and to sisters serving as leaders in Church auxiliaries. The language and examples he uses are easy to read and understand.

The scope of the topic of leadership in the modern Church is vast, particularly when leadership in all Church auxiliaries is included. However, the author demonstrates a commendable mental discipline in limiting his range to a small number of concepts or principles that will be most helpful. He feels that leaders can be successful by concentrating their attention on a few foundational principles, as opposed to management techniques, and "by doing a few *right* things" (117, italics in original). Three core principles are discussed in separate chapters: teaching the plan of redemption, ministering, and vision and focus. The author also includes chapters specializing in Aaronic Priesthood leadership and the leadership process.

Nadauld's focused approach should be edifying and clarifying to Church leaders who may easily feel overwhelmed by the complexity that they often face in their callings. He has succeeded in providing a simple, useful conceptual framework for leaders from all backgrounds and experience to help them concentrate their attention on basic principles and dedicate their energies to those things that matter most.

For those that seek to learn more about Church leadership, there are two

other recent books that merit attention: *Counseling with Our Councils*, by Elder M. Russell Ballard (Deseret Book, 1997); and *Lead, Guide, and Walk Beside*, by Ardeth Greene Kapp (Deseret Book, 1998).

—Terry Dahlin

Sacred Places; New England and Eastern Canada: A Comprehensive Guide to Early LDS Historical Sites, by A. Gary Anderson, Donald Q. Cannon, Larry E. Dahl, and Larry C. Porter. Vol. 1, Sacred Places, edited by LaMar C. Berrett (Bookcraft, 1999)

This handy travel book begins a six-volume series of guide books to early Latter-day Saint historic sites. Under the general editorship of BYU professor emeritus of Church history and doctrine LaMar C. Berrett, the intent of the Sacred Places series is to provide a tool for those who wish to visit the sites where the seminal events of the Restoration took place. "Sacred Places endeavors to bring the history and geography of the early period of the Church to life" and to "function as a resource for academic historians and amateur Church history enthusiasts alike" (vii).

Volume one covers historic sites in all six New England states and eastern Canada including Ontario, Quebec, and the Atlantic provinces. Three of the authors are professors of Church history and doctrine at BYU, and all have researched and written extensively on nineteenth-century Mormon history.

Each chapter includes a general road map of the state or province under consideration and a discussion of specific places and persons relevant to Mormon history in that region. Another valuable feature is the occasional reference to an American history site that provides vacationers information on other places to visit while on their Mormon history tours (for example, Revolutionary War sites in and around Boston). The reader will also