

Notes and Comments:

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PRO-MORMON DRAMA

I should like to make two comments on Dr. Lael Woodbury's statement:

No pro-Mormon drama has yet achieved commercial success, although a number of young LDS writers such as Doug Stewart, Louise Hansen, Don Oscarson, Gerald and Carol Lynn Pearson, and Scott Card, show promise of reaching that goal. (*BYU Studies*, 12:2, Winter, 1972, pp. 238-239.)

First, Dr. Woodbury's list most probably ought to be longer, including at least such names as Buddy Youngreen, Max Golightly, Charles Whitman, Clinton Larson, and Albert Mitchell, all of whom have used LDS materials more or less successfully in producing dramas.

Second, Dr. Woodbury's phrase, "achieved commercial success," is not clearly defined. Most certainly there have been no money makers like *Polygamy or a Celestial Marriage*, or *The Danites*, or even *The Girl from Utah*, but there has been money made from pro-Mormon drama—Buddy Youngreen's *Porter Rockwell*, for instance, grossed thousands of dollars last summer at Sundance Theater in the mountains east of Provo, Utah. The problem, perhaps, is more semantic than economic. If Dr. Woodbury uses "pro-Mormon drama" to mean only that drama which presents, explores, and/or analyzes Mormonism *thematically* as a way of life and thought, and not to refer to plays or dance-dramas which *use* Mormonism and/or Mormon history as background, then there is little problem. He is right. There has been precious little "Mormon" drama of any depth, intellectually or emotionally, and certainly precious little accompanied by financial success.

Richard Grant Ellsworth, Provo, Utah