

Brief Notices

Special issue on homosexuality,
AMCAP Journal 19, no. 1 (1993)

Few subjects offer more opportunities for missteps by Christian-oriented professionals than discussions of male and female homosexuality. It is a credit to the integrity and the ability of those who produced this special issue of the journal of the Association of Mormon Counselors and Psychotherapists that they avoided such missteps. One misstep would have been to produce a parochial apology for LDS views. The second most tempting misstep would have been to give undue space to the politically driven views of homophilic clinicians. Instead they have brought under one cover useful articles about the ongoing biological debate, secular clinical approaches that apply to Latter-day Saint clients, historical perspectives on policies of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and insights from people who personally have struggled with homosexual thoughts and behaviors.

This volume is a necessary tool for any responsible student of the subject, any competent therapist, and perhaps most usefully, for those who have experienced homosexual emotions.

The effectiveness of this edition underscores a larger need, however. Those who insist on using the term "homosexual" as defining a

complete human being and "homosexuality" as a functional culture betray the hopes of so-called homosexuals who would reorient themselves to a full range of life-giving emotions and relationships. Homosexuality no more defines the complete person than does heterosexuality!

One anticipates the day when LDS social scientists address the far larger subject of *human* sexuality and its encompassing ramifications.

—Victor Brown Jr.

Rocky Mountain Divide: Selling and Saving the West, by John B. Wright (University of Texas Press, 1993)

John B. Wright's *Rocky Mountain Divide: Selling and Saving the West* contains a unique examination of Mormon attitudes toward land conservation. In spite of inaccurate statements about Mormon history, doctrine, and practice, the book is a valuable resource on land conservation in the West and a careful examination of the present status of conservation efforts in Utah and Colorado.

Wright's book is intended to be a call to arms for voluntary land conservation through land trusts—"private, nonprofit citizen groups which engage in land protection activities" (14). The mission of the

land trust is to conserve private lands of significant natural, scenic, and historic value. Most land trusts receive tax-exempt status from the U.S. Treasury Department's Internal Revenue Service. At the time Wright's book was written, Utah had only one land trust while Colorado had twenty-seven (14).

Wright seizes upon the dramatic contrast in land trusting in Colorado and Utah and recounts, as a historical geographer, the evolution of land use and land conservation in the two states. As one would expect, Wright finds Utah's Mormon heritage its most significant distinction. Recounting the initial settlement efforts of Utah, Wright notes the reverential attitude of the early pioneers toward their new territory: "Over and over in their diaries, pioneers noted streams, flood-plains, excellent soils, tall grass, and a dry climate tempered by cooling canyon winds" (162). He also finds that early Mormon statements on land use were very high-minded.

But the book also contrasts the Saints' early idealism with the reality of their monopolization, deforestation, and overgrazing and recounts the land and water exploitation that has now filled the Salt Lake Valley with development. Wright contends that Utahns conserve only incidentally, not as a matter of focus. He blames the Mormon belief in millennialism for Utahns' attitude toward their lands. If "earth will appear as the Garden of Eden" and "be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory" (A of F 10), there is little reason to

pay attention to the state of the land now.

Wright is also disturbed that little has been done by the Church in land conservation leadership. He suggests that the LDS Church sponsor a Mormon Trail land trust and a Sanpete County cultural park to simultaneously exemplify Mormon values and land conservation (242; see also 246, 255).

Wright's book represents an important opportunity for self-examination as Utah finds itself with one of the highest growth rates of any state in the nation. The unfortunate factual errors and use of controversial sources will impair Wright's ability to reach the general Mormon audience he needs to persuade. Nevertheless, the book's overview of land conservation efforts in Utah and Colorado makes it a valuable resource.

—David Nuffer

West from Fort Bridger: The Pioneering of Immigrant Trails across Utah, 1846-1850, edited by J. Roderic Korns and Dale Morgan; revised and updated by Will Bagley and Harold Schindler (Utah State University Press, 1994)

Trailing the Pioneers: A Guide to Utah's Emigrant Trails, 1829-1869, edited by Peter H. DeLafosse (Utah State University Press, 1994)

For the earliest pioneers making the overland journey to the west coast, Utah was a problem that most chose to go around. By providing excerpts from early explorers' journals and reports, *West*