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Mormonism and Masonry, Revisited:
Fraternalism and Unity in Mormon Nauvoo,
1839-1846

by

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A Thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in the Department of History

Idaho State University

Spring 2021

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Mormonism and Masonry, Revisited

Thesis Abstract -- Idaho State University (2021)

The debate surrounding the relationship of Mormonism with Freemasonry has been dominated by partisan bickering and airing of grievances, distracting from the true significance of their joining in Nauvoo, Illinois. When examined together, it becomes clear that both movements share fundamental characteristics that epitomize nineteenth-century America while both attracting and repelling potential members. An examination of these attracting and repelling attributes demonstrates that while both Mormonism and Masonry received many nineteenth-century Americans into their respective institutions, Mormonism largely disrupted the status quo of national manhood while Masonry sought to appease mainstream sensibilities. This singular, though broad-reaching, difference underlies both the success of Masonry in its rise to prominence in American social circles, as well as the Mormon expulsion from the United States. These similarities, differences, and applications should be taken together to examine Mormon-Masonic history as a pair of inherently-male, American microcosmic societies, rather than being harnessed for sectarian gain.

Key Words: Mormonism; Freemasonry; Antebellum Era; Anti-Mormonism; Anti-Masonry; Civil War Era; Fraternalism; Illinois; Masculinity; National manhood; Nativism; Nineteenth century; Victorian Era; David B. Davis; Lynn Dumenil; Michael A. Halleran; Mervin B. Hogan; Michael W. Homer; Michael Kimmel; Dana D. Nelson; Charles G. Sellers; Laurel T. Ulrich.

Introduction

The Mormon-Masonic Collision in Nauvoo

Solemn Processions: An Illustrative Contrast

On September 27, 1881, the streets of Chicago were closed, and its buildings draped in black crepe and adorned with mourning banners. A solemn procession of some 15,000 militiamen in six divisions was stretched along a parade route of approximately a mile and a half, composed of infantry and cavalry, buglers and drummers, and artillery with their pieces, draped in mourning vales. Veterans, politicians, and representatives of the cities many civic and social organizations joined the soldiers in the funeral march as a demonstration of the city's wealth and importance to the United States, a sign solidarity with the nation, and a showing of respect for the fallen. The parade carried no remains, but rather an empty catafalque, escorted by the state of Illinois' leading Freemasons and representing the late President James A. Garfield, a member of that fraternity. The procession in Chicago was timed to begin in concurrence with that carrying the president's remains to his home state of Ohio from their temporary place of honor in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol Building.¹ Like that of Chicago, funeral processions were held in cities throughout the country, no doubt including Masons of each respective community in a place of honor as they mourned their fallen brother, ultimately killed by an assassin's bullet. The Masons of Ohio remembered Brother Garfield at their annual communication in October of that year, along with preeminent Masonic historian Albert G. Mackey, who died that same year.²

¹ Eleanor L. Hannah, *Manhood, Citizenship, and the National Guard: Illinois, 1870-1917* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007), 70-73.

² Allen E. Roberts, *Frontier Cornerstone: The Story of Freemasonry in Ohio, 1790-1980* (Worthington: Grand Lodge of Ohio, 1980), 146.

The Mormons of Nauvoo, Illinois gathered on June 28, 1844 *en masse* to receive the bodies of their prophet, Joseph Smith, Jr., and his brother, Hyrum Smith, who had been killed the day prior while being held in jail on a charge of treason at Carthage, the seat of government for Hancock County. Instead of a regal catafalque, the brothers were placed in rough, wooden boxes, on two wagons, covered in hay, blankets, and brush; instead of a 15,000-man procession was an eight-man guard of the Nauvoo Legion, of which Joseph was commander-in-chief and Hyrum was general chaplain, led by Joseph and Hyrum's younger brother, Third Lieutenant Samuel Smith. This small party left Carthage that morning and was received by the entirety of the Nauvoo Legion — estimated by Captain John Singleton of the Illinois militia to be “something over 2,100,” during his review of the Legion the day prior, which was ordered by the governor — and the city's residents, under the direction of the city marshal, that afternoon. The brothers' bodies were taken to the Nauvoo Mansion House under strict guard, presumably by Joseph Smith's personal contingent of “Life Guards.” At 8:00pm of June 28, a viewing was held before their bodies were buried under the building's cellar — for fear that anti-Mormon agitators would attempt to steal the remains.³

Though, like James A. Garfield, Joseph and Hyrum Smith were Masons, they received no Masonic escort sanctioned by the Grand Lodge of Illinois. Indeed, some of the men accused of murdering the brothers were Masons. One Mark Aldrich was even elected as Worshipful Master of Warsaw Lodge while under indictment for the crime.⁴ The dispensation under the authority of which Nauvoo Lodge had been organized and set to work was suspended on August 11, 1842,

³ Richard E. Bennett, et al., *The Nauvoo Legion in Illinois: A History of the Mormon Militia, 1841-1846* (Norman, OK: Arthur H. Clark Company, 2010), 99, 247-49, & 252-53.

⁴ E. Cecil McGavin, *Mormonism and Masonry* (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft Publishing, 1956), 15-22.

restored on November 2, 1842, then finally revoked on October 2, 1843, and in so doing, the lodge and its members were declared “clandestine.”⁵ The Legion had been disarmed by order of the governor and under the direction of Joseph Smith on June 27, 1844. The charter for the city of Nauvoo, under which its militia and university were authorized, was repealed on January 29, 1845.⁶ In a short five years of incorporation, the city of Nauvoo had grown to approximately 12,000 residents — the Mormon residents, added with the Mormons in the settlements surrounding Nauvoo, is believed to be closer to 20,000 — and had the distinction of being the second largest city in Illinois. The relations between the Mormons and their neighbors of Hancock County had soured, apparently beyond repair, and they were forced to leave the state, beginning on February 4, 1846.⁷ What followed was a procession in exodus of an estimates 15,000 saints from Illinois over the following months, similar to the funeral procession of Chicago for President Garfield in size only.⁸ The honors of Garfield’s attendant Masons in contrast to the utter banishment of Smith’s pioneers form a clear representation of the respective nineteenth-century fortunes of Mormonism and Freemasonry, one crowned with respect and prestige, and one hounded with ridicule and violence.

Mormonism & Masonry Since Nauvoo

Though perhaps unnoticed outside of Utah, the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of that state witnessed a monumental change in 2008 when it was presided over by a

⁵ Robin L. Carr, *Freemasonry and Nauvoo, 1839-1846* (Normal: Illinois Lodge of Research, 1989), 8-26; Samuel H. Goodwin, *Mormonism and Masonry* (Washington, DC: Masonic Service Association, 1924), 24-36.

⁶ Richard E. Bennett, *The Nauvoo Legion in Illinois*, 99, 247-49, & 252-53.

⁷ Randall J. Soland, *Utopian Communities of Illinois: Heaven on the Prairie* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2017), 26 & 40-42; Richard E. Bennett, *We’ll Find the Place: The Mormon Exodus, 1846-1848* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), 22-25.

⁸ Richard E. Bennett, *We’ll Find the Place*, 40.

man who, prior to 1984, would not have been permitted to enter a local lodge in that jurisdiction, much less serve as its governing body's highest officer. Discrimination of race, ethnicity, gender, sex, and class played no direct part in this man's story, but, unfortunately, that of religion did. Working as a prominent defense attorney in Salt Lake and having published several novels, Glen Cook's most notable accomplishment, arguably, was his election as Utah's first Mormon Grand Master following the repeal of a century-long ban on Mormon membership in Utah Freemasonry.⁹ The issues at hand in the Mormon-Masonic feud and the justifications given for the ban have been the subject of tireless, partisan debate epitomized by Past Grand Master (PGM) Sam H. Goodwin's 1924 pamphlet, *Mormonism and Masonry*, defending Mormon exclusion, listing irregularities in Nauvoo Masonry, and detailing similarities in Mormon temple worship and symbolism with Masonic tradition.¹⁰ Goodwin's work was followed by a pointed, monographic response, *The Relationship of "Mormonism" and Freemasonry* by President Anthony W. Ivins of the First Presidency of the Church in 1934, providing a categorical critique of Masonry in addition to a response to Goodwin's charges. Ivins was followed-up by church historian E. Cecil McGavin — whose first chapter is entitled, "False Accusations" — in 1956, questioning the originality of Masonic ritual and symbolism allegedly imitated in Mormon temple worship and casting blame for decades of conflict.¹¹ Striking a different tone, PGM Mervin B. Hogan challenged his Grand Lodge's ban on Mormon membership and he, alongside many other Masons in Utah and beyond who opposed exclusion, eventually succeeded in the

⁹ Carrie A. Moore, "A Mormon Mason: New Grand Master Is the First in a Century Who Is LDS," *Deseret News*, March 29, 2008, accessed March 2, 2021, <https://www.deseret.com/2008/3/29/20079121/a-mormon-mason-new-grand-master-is-the-first-in-a-century-who-is-lds>.

¹⁰ Goodwin.

¹¹ Anthony W. Ivins, *The Relationship of "Mormonism" and Freemasonry* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News Press, 1934); McGavin.

push to reverse the ban.¹² Likely resulting from such conciliatory efforts as Hogan's at the Utah Grand Lodge, the squabbling has largely quieted in recent years and a more exhaustive 2020 work on the subject, *Joseph's Temples: The Dynamic Relationship between Freemasonry and Mormonism* by Michael W. Homer, brought the debate further into the academic realm.

Though certainly a seminal monograph that has truly defined the field, Homer's work seeks to demonstrate the connections between Mormonism and Masonry that have been neglected in historians' treatment of the two movements' intersection in Nauvoo. Further, Homer argues that the greatest challenge now for historians of this topic is re-evaluating, "the implications of [Joseph] Smith's mistaken belief, shared by many of his contemporaries, that Freemasonry had ancient origins and that it could trace its rituals back to Solomon's Temple."¹³ This study seeks to step away from the "fray," so to speak, and evaluate Mormonism and Masonry, not in terms of either's divine or temporal originality, but rather as two kindred, quasi-religious social movements that, in many ways, represent microcosms of nineteenth-century America. Examination of the Mormon hierarchy during the Nauvoo Era demonstrates its shared attributes with Freemasonry that both attracted and repulsed neighbors and potential adherents. With the Mormon and Masonic hierarchies as its focus, this paper aims to demonstrate that Mormonism and Masonry were not two organizations that connected briefly in Illinois by chance to interchange beliefs or ideals, nor were they merely parallels in symbology or secrecy; Mormonism and Masonry shared fundamental characteristics that provided their respective, nineteenth-century members with a refuge from a turbulent world of economic and social

¹² Mervin B. Hogan, *Mormonism and Freemasonry: The Illinois Episode* (Salt Lake City, UT: Campus Graphics, 1977), 323-34; Hogan, *Mormon Masonry in Illinois Reviewed by a 'Grand Master,'* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, College of Engineering, 1984).

¹³ Michael W. Homer, *Joseph's Temples: The Dynamic Relationship between Freemasonry and Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2020).

change, while also inviting upon themselves the criticisms of their contemporaries. Though this shelter could be felt by all members of their respective constituencies, not all Americans connected with Mormonism or Masonry on equal footing. This applies to racial relations but, for this study, the focus is gender relations. In terms of their hierarchies, Mormonism and Masonry are inherently male institutions with governance firmly in the hands of the patriarchal priesthood and the fraternity's initiated, respectively. With the separate-spheres doctrine of the day, of course, this would come as no surprise to most observers. The distinct, verifiable, and ceremonious separation of the Mormon male from the Mormon female and the Masonic brother from his wife and daughters in ritual secrecy, however, demonstrates a significant unifying element of both organizations, placing increased importance on the maleness of each.

This shared maleness binds Mormonism and Masonry together and brings into focus twin identity crises in nineteenth-century America. Dramatic changes to the political, economic, gender, and racial relations of the day both epitomized and upset the fabric of American society in the Antebellum and Civil War Eras. This change, Michael Kimmel argues, prompts mankind to seek out the eternal and transcendent, the stable and immovable. Sure enough, American men were desperately searching for an unerring and unifying definition of both manhood and Americanism throughout the nineteenth century.¹⁴ This quest both championed the acceptable and attacked the objectionable of each sect, or organization, however. It's true, both Mormonism and Masonry provided definitive answers to the swirling social questions of the day, but if and how their respective solutions conformed to the mainstream would deliver either success or failure. As a result of their differing answers and beliefs, Mormonism and Masonry each occupied very different positions within the status quo of American masculinity, Mormonism

¹⁴ Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: Free Press, 1996), 5.

disrupting and Masonry appeasing. In a broad view, this difference underlies both the westward expulsion of the Mormons from the United States into autonomous seclusion, as well as the rise of Freemasonry's influence and prestige in American social circles between the mid-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, though the fraternity had suffered its own setbacks in the early Antebellum Period.

The Mormon & Masonic Roads to Nauvoo

On December 9th, 1822, delegates of the Masonic lodges within the fledgling state of Illinois met in the town of Vandalia to organize a Grand Lodge over the state to constitute future lodges and regulate Masonic activities within their newly founded jurisdiction in order to govern themselves. Prior to this, as is the case with all Masonic lodges in a new jurisdiction, the lodges in Illinois were founded under the authority and guidance of a Grand Lodge established over a neighboring jurisdiction, such as those of Kansas or Missouri.¹⁵ This practice is as old as the order itself, with the first lodges in the American colonies having been founded and regulated under the auspices of British Grand Lodges, thereby ensuring Masonry continued to operate according to “ancient” tradition in each new locale to which its members spread. If a lodge or its members refuse to follow the instruction of their respective Grand Lodge, they may be declared “clandestine,” thereby revoking their status as recognized Masons and barring their access to “regular” Masonic lodges. This reliance and subordination of local lodges to foreign Grand Lodges would continue until such a time as there were enough lodges — typically five or more — to authoritatively hold a convention, draft a constitution and by-laws, and, thereby, claim

¹⁵ John C. Smith, *History of Freemasonry in Illinois, 1804-1829* (Chicago: Rogers & Smith, 1905), 13-81; Everett R. Turnbull, *The Rise and Progress of Freemasonry in Illinois, 1783-1952* (Springfield: Grand Lodge of Illinois, 1952), 8-65; Alphonse Cerza, *A History of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite in Illinois, 1846-1965* (Springfield: Illinois Council of Deliberation, 1966), 29-38; Carr, vii-viii & 5-6.

jurisdiction — this would, typically, only take place in an area not previously included in a Masonic jurisdiction, such as a new territory or state, or in a portion of a jurisdiction now separated politically from the rest, such as with the detachment of Washington, D.C. from Maryland and Virginia — under their own Grand Lodge, as was planned in Illinois in 1822.¹⁶ Although this first convention was held according to long-standing Masonic traditions, its membership included such notable and respected figures as the first governor of Illinois, Shadrach Bond, who would also serve as the Lodge's first Grand Master; and although the member Masons almost certainly had every expectation that their Most Worshipful Grand Lodge would stand the test of time, events beyond their control would, within a few short years of its establishment, lead to the dissolution and collapse of the first Grand Lodge of Illinois.¹⁷

On a contrary note, a monument to the very outside forces that brought the Grand Lodge's collapse *has* stood the test of time. In another part of the country dubbed the “Burned-Over District,” of New York state — so named for the economic upheaval emanating from the Erie Canal at its center and the frequent religious revivals that, arguably, said upheaval precipitated — stands a 38-foot-tall monolith remembering “a martyr to the freedom of writing, printing and speaking the truth.”¹⁸ The man whose statue sits atop this towering obelisk, William Morgan, was a disgruntled Mason — though records proving his induction into the Craft are not forthcoming, causing some to suggest Morgan was never duly raised, but was “book-made,”

¹⁶ Kenton N. Harper, *History of the Grand Lodge and Freemasonry in the District of Columbia* (Washington: Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, 1911), 34-41; Steven C. Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730-1840* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 114-121.

¹⁷ John C. Smith, 162-65; Turnbull, 63-83; Carr, 5-6.

¹⁸ Charles G. Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 217-22; William J. Whalen, *Christianity and American Freemasonry* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1958), 8.

having gleaned enough from exposes and other printed works to gain admission as a visiting Mason — in Batavia, New York, who disappeared a short time after announcing his intention to publish an expose of the fraternity, its ritual, and its secrets. Suspicion for the disappearance, naturally, fell on his brother Masons who, despite a seemingly endless cycle of arrests and trials, appeared to walk away from the scandal free and unscathed. This was, to many, an apparent testament to the power that Masonry, through its loyal members, held over civil authorities and offices, as well as the perceived Masonic obligation to shield fellow Masons from harm or punishment, right or wrong. What followed were several years of fever-pitch, anti-Masonic outrage culminating in the rise of this nation's first major political third party.¹⁹

Not far from Batavia in the town of Palmyra lived Joseph Smith, Jr., an adventurous treasure hunter and, later, prophet who would found one of the nation's most iconic new religions — the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or “Mormon” Church — within a few short months of Morgan's disappearance. The physical and chronological proximity of the Smiths to the Morgan scandal, as well as the fact that Joseph's older brother, Hyrum, was a Mason in Palmyra, have often been cited to claim that Joseph must have been familiar with the inner workings of the fraternity long before his induction into the Nauvoo Lodge, U.D. — lodges with “U.D.” following their name are operating on a temporary basis “under dispensation,” and lack a permanent charter — in 1842; this, critics claim, demonstrates that Mormonism, its scripture, and its temple ritual had no divine origins, but were, rather, constructed and influenced by the environment surrounding their founder, also evidenced by apparently anti-Masonic

¹⁹ David B. Davis, “Some Themes of Counter-Subversion: An Analysis of Anti-Masonic, Anti-Catholic, and Anti-Mormon Literature,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 47, no. 2 (September 1960): 205-24, accessed May 10, 2020, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1891707>; Louis P. Masur, *1831: Year of Eclipse* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2001), 88-91.

passages in the new book of scripture translated by Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon.²⁰ These anti-Masonic tones in church literature and the oft-alleged similarities between Masonic ritual and Mormon temple worship — said similarities were used as evidence to declare that Mormonism was the practice of a clandestine form of Masonry, having taken and altered the original, to some “ancient,” ritual of the Masonic tradition — formed the bulwark that, along with Mormon polygamy in early Utah, served to justify the Mormon exclusion from the mysteries of Freemasonry in that jurisdiction.²¹ Still, many of the other Grand Lodges within the United States and beyond took pause at the idea of excluding otherwise-eligible men and women from Freemasonry and its auxiliary organizations based, to their view, solely on the petitioner’s choice of church. Unfortunately, the Mormons were not so fortunate in sympathizers in the mid-nineteenth century as they would be later.

Illinois in the year 1840 saw the swampland of Commerce, as its primary settlement was known at the time, explode with new life as a near-endless stream of Mormon converts filed into the city, soon-to-be called Nauvoo, systematically erecting more than a few impressive homes, mills, stores, social halls, and more. So rapid was the growth of Nauvoo that it would boast a population of over 12,000 — making it the second-largest city in Illinois — by the time of the Mormon expulsion from the state in 1846.²² While a fair few of these new inhabitants were newly converted European immigrants, many were of the old guard, mostly from New England,

²⁰ Gregory A. Prince, *Power from On High: The Development of Mormon Priesthood* (Salt Lake City, UT: Signature Books, 1995), 135; Goodwin, iv-vi.

²¹ Wilhelm Wyl, *Mormon Portraits or the Truth about the Mormon Leaders from 1830 to 1880*, vol. 1, *Joseph Smith the Prophet His Family and His Friends: A Study Based on Facts and Documents* (Salt Lake City, UT: Tribune Printing and Publishing Company, 1886), 123, 128, 146-47, 268-70; Goodwin, 50-64 & 104-6; Hogan, *Mormonism and Freemasonry*, 267-74.

²² Benjamin E. Park, *Kingdom of Nauvoo: The Rise and Fall of a Religious Empire on the American Frontier* (New York: Liveright Publishing, 2020), 22-23, & 267; Soland, 26.

who had been driven from New York to Ohio in 1831 by intolerance, from Ohio to Missouri in 1838 by economic ruin and violence, and, finally, from Missouri to Illinois in 1839 and 1840 under threat of an “extermination order” issued by the governor of Missouri, Lilburn Boggs.²³ These beleaguered saints were met largely with kindness and charity as they crossed to the east side of the Mississippi River, manifest in gifts of clothes and food from the people of Illinois, as well as temporary lodging and protection. The Mormons were also permitted to purchase extensive tracts of land along the river and would receive a very generous charter from the state legislature granting them the broad-reaching rights of self-governance — not to mention state-sanctioned militant protection in the form of the Nauvoo Legion — they had sought after for so long, but never received in their previous communities.²⁴

While not to the same degree in terms of physical violence or in its concentration on one particular community, American Masons, like the Mormons, faced organized, popular persecution radiating from upstate New York and across the nation in the first decades of the nineteenth century. This anti-Masonic fervor in the 1820s and 1830s caused many Masons to renounce their membership and abandon their lodges, causing many to disband; those lodges that managed to continue operating during these years lost membership and, therefore, funds and were unsuccessful in attracting many new members.²⁵ In the year 1840, however, with the better part of the anti-Masonic crusade ebbing in the rear-view, the Masons of Illinois, like the Mormons, took advantage of a newly-receptive environment and swelling membership across

²³ Marvin S. Hill, *Quest for Refuge: The Mormon Flight from American Pluralism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 27, 39-40, 53-54, & 93-100.

²⁴ B. H. Roberts, *The Rise and Fall of Nauvoo* (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft Publishing, 1965), 21-32; Park, 49.

²⁵ William L. Stone, *Letters on Masonry and Anti-Masonry Addressed to the Hon. John Quincy Adams* (New York: O. Halsted, 1832), 169-202; Piatigorsky, 171-75; Whalen, 9.

their several lodges, meeting together that same year in Jacksonville to form the second and current Grand Lodge of Illinois.²⁶ For American Masonic jurisdictions, as a whole, the 1840s would mark the beginning of a new golden age for the fraternity in which its membership would grow to such an extent that most every major town would have a Masonic Hall, each state a magnificent Masonic Temple, and Masons were so numerous in the ranks of the Union and Confederate Armies that they could easily identify and collect themselves together in camp, not to mention seek help from opposing Masons on the battlefield, in the coming Civil War.²⁷ In summary, after over a decade of persecution and, for Masonry, decline, both organizations and their respective communities emerged with a fresh start and growing power in Illinois.

²⁶ Grand Lodge of Illinois, *Reprint of the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Illinois from Its Organization in 1840 to 1850* (Freeport, IL: Journal Print, 1892), 3-12; Turnbull, 108-10.

²⁷ Lynn Dumenil, *Freemasonry and American Culture, 1880-1930* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), xiii; Michael A. Halleran, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Freemasonry in the American Civil War* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 4-5.

Chapter I

Attraction: Providing Shelter from an Era of Constant Change

Attraction: An Introduction

Both the success enjoyed, and the persecution weathered by nineteenth-century Mormons and Masons stemmed from an era of fear, doubt, and change that epitomized the nineteenth century in the United States. In a variety of ways, the United States saw extensive democratization in the nineteenth century. The individualism espoused by the doctrine of Jacksonian Democracy and a rising capitalist economy focused on the consumer created a new desire for individualized religious experiences and teachings. Michael Hubbard MacKay postulates in his 2020 work, *Prophetic Authority*, that a “mistrust of politics and government, along with concern for an unknown future,” as well as ever-present “sectarian squabbles and partisan conflict,” caused many to eagerly accept democratic religious leadership that both acknowledged the individual while offering definitive instruction from on high.²⁸ The individualism sought for and uncertainty feared — cited here by MacKay — by nineteenth-century Americans can, in part, be seen in the individualism of the entrepreneur in the mass market and the uncertainty of the risk undertaken by him for economic advancement. This kind of economic change, Charles Sellers explains in his 1994 work, *The Market Revolution*, was evident in the fall of subsistence farming, which was necessary for the rise of the mass market in the nineteenth century. Alongside this rise was the introduction of cheap consumer products, such as cloth and clothing. The new ability of nineteenth-century Americans to efficiently acquire products like cloth outside the home that, traditionally, would have been provided by

²⁸ Michael Hubbard MacKay, *Prophetic Authority: Democratic Hierarchy and the Mormon Priesthood* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2020), 10-12.

traditional skilled labor undertaken for the family by the wife, mother, daughter, or sister, such as the successive tasks of spinning, weaving, and sewing, effectively did away with female, economic production within the home. Further, Sellers states, a decreased reliance on the family farm for economic support devalued — not necessarily in terms of monetary value, but rather in terms of its viability as leverage used by the owner over his dependents — the inheritance of the homestead, decreasing the influence of the patriarch over his wife and children.²⁹ A fear that the American patriarchy was in decline — caused, in part, by the factors presented by Sellers — was shared by many American men. For fraternal organizations, this is perhaps best demonstrated in the degree work and ceremonies of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, meant to emulate, “the good men of the Patriarchal and Prophetical ages.” Though more circumstantial, this is also seen in the naming of the uniformed — and most prestigious — branch of Odd-Fellowship, the Patriarchs Militant.³⁰ For Mormonism, these fears would, eventually, be calmed by the introduction of polygamy and temporary bans on female-only meetings, church, social, or otherwise. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, however, asserts in her 2017 work, *A House Full of Females*, that though our retrospective, broad view of women’s rights in the nineteenth century demonstrates a relegation of women to the parlor and active suppression from the public sphere, contemporary views of the 1840s point to a rise in political and social activism among American women who founded benevolent societies throughout the United States in support of abolitionism, temperance, and universal suffrage that alarmed and incensed many American

²⁹ Mark C. Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 76-78 & 107-16; Sellers, 9-16, 22 & 28.

³⁰ Thomas G. Beharrell, *The Brotherhood: Being a Presentation of the Principles of Odd-Fellowship* (Cincinnati, OH: Applegate & Company, 1861), vii, 33-34, 61, 74, & 79-80.

men.³¹ An ability to counter the uncertainty and, to some, moral decline of the day would define the success of Mormonism and Masonry in the decades to come.

“Going Through the Chairs”

Both Mormonism and Masonry in the nineteenth century claimed to provide their members with ancient and, in theory, unchanging moral and spiritual instruction in contrast to the ever-shifting political, social, and economic questions of antebellum America; for Masonry, this knowledge and authority was purportedly preserved and passed down from generation to generation — though it should be noted that not all Masons believe in the legendary view of the fraternity reaching back to or through biblical history — in secret within the sanctity of the lodge and regulated by the Grand Lodges in accordance with the instruction and authority given to the first Masons by the Grand Architect of the Universe;³² for Mormonism, this knowledge and authority was restored to the Earth after centuries of apostasy in the forms of newly translated, ancient records and the ministering of angels to Joseph Smith.³³ This certainty of eternal knowledge and authority countered the doubt and fear of change in American life, while also creating a paradox of democratic inclusion for both Masonry and Mormonism; while no man could change the designs of God’s plan, as revealed to the prophet and apostles, and while no man could alter the ancient teachings of Freemasonry, as preserved and dictated by the many Grand Lodges, — any attempt to do so would, necessarily, result in excommunication for the former and expulsion or branding as clandestine for the latter — both offered opportunities for

³¹ Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A House Full of Females: Plural Marriage and Women’s Rights in Early Mormonism, 1835-1870* (New York: Vintage Books, 2017), 102-107; Carnes, 76-78, 81-84, 88-89, 111-13, & 115-16.

³² Delmar Duane Darrah, *History and Evolution of Freemasonry* (Chicago: The Charles T. Pownor Company, 1967), 19-39; Dumenil, 23-24; Carnes, 22-24.

³³ Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 49-59, 80-84, & 100-102; MacKay, 13-14, 17-36, 72, & 100.

advancement and distinction for all members, to a large extent, regardless of wealth, education, or familial power and history. These opportunities for service and distinction within such a hierarchy, as well as the stability offered by the same, likely would not have been available to many men outside of these two organizations.³⁴ The same could not be said of all churches or fraternal orders of the day.

Mormonism not only provided its membership with a stability in universal doctrine, ensured by a certainty of prophetic knowledge, but also a social stability embodied in interwoven hierarchies of ecclesiastical bodies and authorities providing the church with a support structure allowing for the oversight of lower officers and judicial appeals to higher officers; so too were Mormons provided with authoritative leadership at all levels of the church strictly enforced to align with that of the prophet. Though outside the chronological focus of this study, a leadership struggle during the last months of the church's stay in Kirtland, Ohio, narrowly rebuffed by Joseph Smith and those loyal to him, followed by another in Missouri led to a stricter power dynamic in the years to come.³⁵ As a result, church leaders were held on a short leash by the prophet and easily excommunicated by the High Council, if necessary. New restrictions aside, Mormon men were presented with a promise of personal growth and advancement through varied opportunities to hold progressive offices and callings within the priesthood, to serve in the support structures of the church, and to earn the distinction inherent in that service. Due to the

³⁴ Dumenil, 14-16; MacKay, 66-84, 89-93, & 100-2; Bullock, 234-37.

³⁵ John Whitmer, *An Early Latter Day Saint History: The Book of John Whitmer, Kept by Commandment*, edited by F. Mark McKiernan and Roger D. Launius (Independence, MI: Herald Publishing House, 1980), 19-21, 156-66, & 176-78; MacKay, 67-70 & 90; Hill, 54, 57-64, 67, 70-77, & 96-98.

massive population and resulting organizational growth of the church in Nauvoo, the number of these opportunities was constantly expanding during the Mormon sojourn in Illinois.³⁶

Though Joseph Smith was a very active participant in the governance of Mormon Nauvoo and in the church's administration, Smith, alone, could not keep both the church and the city running smoothly. While the development of a church hierarchy began well before the saints' arrival in Nauvoo, new complexity in civic and social needs arose during the Illinois years that had not been experienced to such a degree in New York, Ohio, or Missouri, such as those of an exponentially larger community, a massive new militia, and even a university.³⁷ As a result, an increasingly-complex hierarchy — in which the distinction between church calling and civil service was very blurry, at best — formed under the prophet to conduct business, raise funds, seek out new converts, and regulate church activities. Power and authority pooled in collective bodies like the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the Council of Fifty, and the High Council, which often performed legislative and judicial duties. The High Council, particularly, saw to the financial and organizational welfare of the church in Nauvoo, increasingly taking on responsibilities previously held by members of higher bodies such as the First Presidency. Boggled down — in one such case — by the growing burdens of religious administration and civic governance, Joseph Smith requested in June 1840 that the newly-elected High Council “relieve him from the temporalities of the Church,” as “he felt it his duty to engage, more particularly, in the spiritual welfare of the Saints.” The Council promptly obliged by appointing one Henry G. Sherwood to take over Smith's duties in the deeding of city lots and even

³⁶ John A. Widtsoe, *Priesthood and Church Governance in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1939), 25-31.

³⁷ Soland, 12-56; Robert B. Flanders, *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1975), 52-53, 56, & 109-14.

authorized the necessary expenditures for the prophet to hire a new clerk (or clerks) to assist him in his other duties translating Egyptian papyri and dictating church doctrine and revelations. This growing support structure not only relieved Smith “from the anxiety and troubles necessarily attendant on business transaction,” but also saw to the relief of the poor, settling of disputes, punishment of wrongdoing, construction of public buildings, and lobbying of the civil government.³⁸ As such, Mormon men were, by pure necessity, provided with opportunities for advancement in the priesthood serving their fellow church members, wielding power and influence heretofore kept exclusively by their prophet, and earning the respect of their peers by taking on a growing number of priesthood offices and callings.

The organizational priesthood comprising the male hierarchy of the Mormon Church includes holders of the lower Aaronic priesthood and holders of the higher Melchizedek priesthood, as well as varying offices and callings assigned to the two priesthoods that require certain “keys,” bestowed by a higher authority to hold. For example, a Deacon, Teacher, and Priest all hold the Aaronic priesthood, but receive additional keys with each office, conferring new duties and authority. Similarly, the president of a Deacons Quorum holds the same office of a Deacon as the members of his quorum but receives additional keys beyond that office to fulfill his calling to govern that body.³⁹ This progression is laid out by Gregory A. Prince in his 1995 monograph, *Power from On High: The Development of Mormon Priesthood*, as, among others, “angelic authority,” conferring the Aaronic priesthood, the “high priesthood,” conferring the Melchizedek priesthood, and, finally, the “fullness of the priesthood,” with its many keys to the

³⁸ John S. Dinger, ed., *The Nauvoo City and High Council Minutes* (Salt Lake City, UT: Signature Books, 2011), 355-86; Widtsoe, 186-92, 206-32, 278-79, 284-85, & 314-16; MacKay, 5-7, 71-102, & 106-8.

³⁹ Joseph B. Keeler, *First Steps in Church Government: What Church Government Is and What It Does* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News Press, 1906), 35-38; Widtsoe, 32-79 & 154-73.

kingdom.⁴⁰ This is to say that prior to the martyrdom of Joseph Smith in June of 1844, all priesthood authority, keys for governance, and, later, ordinance-related keys were provided by angelic ordination to, primarily, the prophet and from him down through the hierarchical chain of ordained officials below to provide the authority — as well as the necessary oversight — needed by each officer of the church to perform his duties. In his 1852 book, *The Government of God*, Apostle John Taylor explains further that, in the fullness of times, “all who have held keys of Priesthood, will then have to give an account to those from whom they received them.”⁴¹ Until that time, Mormon men would advance through the priesthood, collecting increasing levels of intangible spiritual authority and keys that translated into very tangible benefits and temporal influence. Francis G. Bishop, for example, was suspended from the church by one of the Quorums of the Seventies and appealed his case to the standing High Council at Nauvoo in 1840. After brief deliberation, Bishop was restored to his former standing by the Council because, as he claimed to be a High Priest, it was determined that he lay outside the jurisdiction of the lower-standing Seventies and, therefore, was not subject to their judgement. Though this decision was later reversed — Bishop was unable to prove that he had, in fact, ever been ordained a High Priest and, as a result, was returned to the Seventies in April of 1840 and thereafter excommunicated — this example demonstrates the temporal advantages of advanced priesthood office in Nauvoo, as well as the desire of nineteenth-century Mormon men to progress through the priesthood and achieve higher standing in the church and its community or, if necessary for some, even falsely claim that they had achieved such standing.⁴²

⁴⁰ Prince, *Power from On High*, 3-45.

⁴¹ John Taylor, *The Government of God* (Liverpool: S.W. Richards, 1852), 68-82 & 115-18.

⁴² Widtsoe, 193-205 & 233-47; Prince, *Power from On High*, 136-37; Dinger, 355-86.

Similar to the stability derived from prophetic knowledge in Mormonism, Masons in nineteenth-century America took comfort in the certainty and, purportedly, ancient origins of the moral and spiritual instruction they received, not to mention the confidence of collective belief, shared not only with other American Masons, but also those in Europe and throughout many of the European colonies around the globe.⁴³ This doctrinal stability provided by Masonry — in which one can, theoretically, receive the same instruction in an Illinois lodge as one would in any of the many lodges of London or Paris, though in practice all Masons would admit this as an impossibility — was supplemented by a hierarchy uniform amongst local lodges, as well as a governing hierarchy uniform amongst Grand Lodges. Although Masonry, like Mormonism, offered all of its accepted members access to multiple leadership structures with opportunities for service and advancement, it has been pointed out by many scholars that once accepted, it is unlikely that a Mason will progress through the many leadership offices of blue-lodge Masonry, much less any higher body. At an even more fundamental level, many critics of Freemasonry — including President Anthony W. Ivins of the First Presidency — have demonstrated that merely being accepted to become a Mason is no guarantee with the Masonic practice of balloting to accept or reject new members that maintains an exclusivity incompatible with an increasingly-egalitarian American society.⁴⁴ This is to say that when a man petitions for membership in a lodge, he is investigated, his application is read aloud as part of the regular business of the lodge, and a secret vote is taken by its members to either accept or reject the petitioner. However, Lynn Dumenil explains in her 1984 work, *Freemasonry and American Culture, 1880-1930*, that though Masonry was frequently subject to these criticisms declaring the fraternity to be

⁴³ Alexander Piatigorsky, *Freemasonry: The Study of a Phenomenon* (London: Harvill Press, 1999), 73-74; Dumenil, 4-7 & 22-24.

⁴⁴ Ivins, 97-98; Whalen, 20.

incompatible with democratic society, anti-egalitarian, or elitist, the fraternity was, to an increasing level with each passing year, largely willing to accept any adult man of good character — typically being a man of good reputation, in practice, as means for investigation were typically limited to the lodge’s local community — in nineteenth-century America, provided they believed in a higher being and were free-born.⁴⁵ It should be noted that this requirement of being “free-born,” was used for centuries as a legalistic means of rejecting African American petitioners to the Craft; in a more abstract view, this requirement was also used to encourage the exclusion of Mormons and Catholics who, to some Masonic observers, were not free to make their own decisions due to their allegiance to the prophet or the papacy, respectively.⁴⁶

Discrimination of religious and racial minorities aside, Masonry admitted white, protestant petitioners, regardless of their wealth, education, or occupation and welcomed them “on the level,” meant to convey that once a man is “raised,” to the “sublime,” degree of Master Mason, he is the equal of all brother Masons in the lodge and is entitled to the same benefits and opportunities to hold office as any of his new peers. This ostensible equality among the brethren, along with opportunities to work and gain economic advantages in trade with fellow Masons, was a significant drawing factor for nineteenth-century men who would join the fraternity in the decades following 1840.⁴⁷ As one of the oldest and, certainly, one of the most widespread

⁴⁵ Dumenil, xii-xiii, 3, & 5-8, 10-12; Halleran, 152-57.

⁴⁶ Corey D.B. Walker, *A Noble Fight: African American Freemasonry and the Struggle for Democracy in America* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 129-30; M.R. Delaney, *The Origin and Objects of Ancient Freemasonry: Its Introduction into the United States and Legitimacy among Colored Men* (Pittsburgh: W.S. Haven, 1853), 16-32; John J. Lanier, *Masonry and Protestantism* (New York: Macoy Publishing, 1923), 13-26; Goodwin, ix-x & 66-73; Whalen, 1-2 & 88-99; Darrah, 259-68.

⁴⁷ Dorothy A. Lipson, *Freemasonry in Federalist Connecticut, 1789-1835* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), 9-10, 18, 40, 44, 131, & 211; Sellers, 279-80, 349, & 359; Dumenil, 21-22.

fraternal orders, Freemasonry's massive hierarchy provided its members not only with opportunities to serve and hold office, but also an organizational stability rivaled, perhaps, only by that of civic governments or the Roman Catholic Church.

Freemasonry's hierarchy includes both a hierarchy of organizations, their respective governing bodies, and the degrees they confer, as well as a hierarchy of officers in each organization and in their respective governing bodies. The organizational hierarchy is formed by standard "blue lodges," which confer the main three degrees of Freemasonry — Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason — and are overseen by the Grand Lodges. In the United States, there is a Grand Lodge for each state and territory, as well as one for the District of Columbia. Attempts to form a national-level United Grand Lodge like that of England have all failed resulting from the same jealous protection of sovereignty — here of the Grand Lodge of a state against the potential usurpation of a national body — that have so plagued the popular politics of the states with the national government. Alongside blue-lodge Masonry are also the many appendant bodies that build off the first three degrees up to a 32nd degree, as well as an honorary 33rd degree for distinguished members.⁴⁸ It should be noted here that Masonic teachings specify that the hierarchy of degrees includes only the first three; additional degrees conferred by appendant bodies are to be considered lateral advances alongside the degree of Master Mason, reaching which grants the full privileges of membership. Whether or not the progressive degrees beyond the third are, in fact, lateral moves in the minds of those Masons who seek to achieve the 32nd degrees is another matter, entirely. The main appendant bodies of

⁴⁸ Arthur Preuss, ed., *Dictionary of Secret and Other Societies* (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Company, 1924), 137-44; Allan E. Iding, ed., *Forward Freemasonry: A History of Freemasonry in Wisconsin*, vol. 1 (Dousman: Grand Lodge of Wisconsin, 1996), 7-15; Dumenil, 15-17; Whalen, 199-234.

Freemasonry are organized under the Scottish and York Rites and include the Knights Templar and the Masons of the Royal Arch, among others. Each organization includes a hierarchy at the local and state level, and, unlike blue-lodge Masonry, some are even organized at the national and international level.⁴⁹ This paper will only examine the hierarchies of the local blue lodges and their governing Grand Lodges at length, but the existence of the appendant bodies and their many scaffolded hierarchies should be kept in mind when considering the extent of Masonry's collective organizational structure and the stability it imparts.

Within the blue lodges, one finds a standard organizational structure. The main hierarchy includes an elected Worshipful Master, who serves as the presiding officer of the lodge; a Senior and Junior Warden, who serve as the second and third elected officers of the lodge; a Senior and Junior Deacon, messengers of the Master, appointed by the Master; lastly, the Senior and Junior Stewards are appointed by the Master to assist the Deacons and the Wardens in the execution of their duties. Additional appointed officers sit outside the main hierarchy and serve supporting roles, such as the Secretary, Treasurer, Marshal, Tiler, and Chaplain. Members may also be called on to serve in various committees overseeing background investigations, finances, or special events. A Grand Lodge largely mirrors this hierarchy with Grand Master, Grand Senior Warden, Grand Junior Warden, etc.⁵⁰ Although an election determines the first three officers of the lodge (Worshipful Master, Senior and Junior Wardens) each year, it is common for the Senior Warden to succeed the Master, as the Junior Warden will succeed the Senior Warden, and so on. This is known as "going through the chairs," and is used to ensure that all lodge members who wish to serve in officer roles are given that chance. It has also been noted by Dumenil,

⁴⁹ Darrah, 367-77.

⁵⁰ George Oliver, *The Book of the Lodge or Officer's Manual* (London: R. Spencer, 1849), 97-101 & 109-18.

however, that the initial need of appointment to “the line,” as a Steward or Deacon can result in a limitation of access contrary to this purpose. Further, although this practice is common in the United States today, it is not immediately clear, comprehensively, how prevalent it was in nineteenth-century American Masonry. Michael A. Halleran states in his 2010 work, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Freemasonry in the American Civil War*, however, that “military rank had no bearing on status within the lodge itself, and the lodge officers were comprised of a mix of officers and enlisted men.” Whether or not a military lodge was presided over entirely by officers, enlisted men, or a mix, the mere fact that both enlisted men and officers met together in one lodge is significant.⁵¹ Regarding Masonry in Nauvoo, it is also telling that Mervin B. Hogan would identify Joseph Smith, — at once prophet, mayor, and lieutenant general of the Legion — along with fourteen apostles and five future prophets, as members of Nauvoo Lodge, U.D. who would meet in the lodge alongside hundreds of members listing their occupations as farmer, brick or stonemason, etc. and lacking any other social distinctions that would have provided them with such consistent access.⁵² Though the social dynamics of Nauvoo Lodge are difficult to pin down with any real degree of certainty, a comparison with the average blue lodge would suggest that each member was individually identified during their respective degree ceremonies — making them known to any attendant members of the lodge — and had free access to the officers and other members of the lodge before, during, and after meetings. This, again, ostensible equality in the confines of the lodge provided these admitted members with opportunities to interact closely with the leadership of the church, almost in its entirety, whenever the same met as Masons. If a Mason on the Union line can gain access to field-grade

⁵¹ Dumenil, 14-15; Halleran, 140-52.

⁵² Mervin B. Hogan, *Vital Statistics of Nauvoo Lodge* (Des Moines, IA: Research Lodge, No. 2, 1976).

officers and a Mason in Nauvoo can gain access to the prophet and apostles at a lodge meeting, one can imagine the incentive and drive some might develop to seek out economic advantages, networking, and opportunities for trade in the lodge.⁵³

“For the Relief of the Poor Saints”

As subsistence living gave way to a growing market economy, Charles Sellers explains, the predictable cycle and balance of home life was increasingly replaced by the necessities of capital and entrepreneurial risk for economic provision and advancement. With this increasing uncertainty in mind, many Americans sought out new ways to provide some financial security to their families, some going as far as to join new experimental utopian religious communities with focuses on communal living and mutual aid.⁵⁴ In the case of the Mormons, the economic side of their successive utopian experiments was most pronounced in Kirtland, Ohio where church leaders, though the Kirtland Safety Society, communal living, and industrial cooperatives, sought to provide their community and its members with much-needed liquid capital and some manner of economic stability, but ultimately failed. Though fiscal experiments cropped up again in force when the Saints arrived in the Salt Lake Valley, the economic side of church doctrine remained in force from the Kirtland years to the present. The Law of Consecration, as the church’s fiscal policy is known, is the bedrock of its welfare plan, providing resources from tithes and other offerings and authorizing church officers to use these church funds for the relief of the poor or sick. Today, people who have fallen on hard times — member or not — can, at a Bishop’s discretion, receive food aid or even financial support through the Mormon Church with

⁵³ Hogan, *Vital Statistics of Nauvoo Lodge* (Des Moines: Iowa Lodge of Research, 1976); Dumenil, 14-15 & 21-23; Halleran, 140-52.

⁵⁴ Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: Economic History of the Latter-Day Saints, 1830-1900* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1958), 1-35; Sellers, 4-63; Dumenil, 21-22.

essentially no strings attached. Though the church in Nauvoo was not so well-established financially as it is at the present and, therefore, likely could not afford to extend a supporting hand as freely as it would today, church officials did actively concern themselves with the fiscal wellbeing of the Saints to the greatest extent possible, despite mounting levels of debt.⁵⁵ The Nauvoo High Council, for example, met on January 8, 1840 first on motion to mortgage lands owned by the church in Iowa to pay off loans made to the church by Isaac Davis, a member. Similarly, the Council voted to send out and authorize “committy-men,” to “obtain monies for the relief and benefit of the Church of Jesus Christ.” They had met a week earlier to authorize church authorities to take out loans from institutions or seek out loans like those made by Brother Davis to buy more land in Illinois. Of more pressing concern, the Council dispatched Dr. H. Rogers with “the sum of forty seven [dollars] and seventy-five cents,” in May of 1839 to “save the Committee of the Church at Quincy [Illinois] from being sued” for the cost of “ferrying the poor across the Mississippi river [sic.],” these Saints having been driven from Missouri in the months prior. This cycle of debt maintained by the church, however, did not prevent the second motion of January 8, “authorizing and directing” one Seymoure Brunson, a leader of the church in Springfield, Illinois, “to make loans of all monies possible for the relief of the poor Saints.” Outside of capital, the High Council would also provide land, construction material, and labor to certain Saints. Such was the case on January 19, 1840 when the Council “voted that a City Lot in Nauvoo be donated to Brother James Hendricks,” and another to “Father Joseph Knight,” — it should be noted here that referring to someone as “Father,” did not denote religious authority or

⁵⁵ Albert E. Bowen, *The Church Welfare Plan* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1946), 5-17; Marvin S. Hill, et al, *The Kirtland Economy Revisited* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1977), 42-43 & 69-70. Ruth & Reginald Kauffman, *The Latter Day Saints: A Study of the Mormons in the Light of Economic Conditions* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 264-95; Arrington, 131-60.

office in the early Mormon church, as it might in other religions, but was a practice developed to distinguish the elder “Father Joseph Smith,” from his son, the prophet — along with the appointment of committees to construct homes for Hendricks and Knight on their respective lots in the city. The Council had determined in 1839 to dedicate substantial capital and labor to the construction of a boarding house to provide lodging to destitute saints coming from Missouri or new arrivals from Europe. Also, with many church officials, particularly Joseph Smith, as well as his assistant presidents and counselors, dedicating the entirety of their time to church administration, the High Council also appointed stewards authorized to use the collective funds of the church to “see that all the necessary wants of the First Presidency be supplied,” especially when said church officials are called away and their families left in need of care.⁵⁶ It was in these many ways that the hierarchy of the church in Nauvoo provided for the economic stability of the Saints to the best of their abilities and strove to ensure that the families of those in service to the church were provided for when their patriarch was called away or unable to provide.

With similar emphasis on assisting a brother in need, Freemasonry has, over its several years existence in the United States, become well-known for charitable giving, though that may not be the most obvious economic benefit of membership to most. With combating economic instability as a focus, the reader may — and many have — get caught up in thoughts of fraternal bargains made in secret behind the closed doors of the lodge. Lynn Dumenil notes that these thoughts were rampant in nineteenth-century America and states that most Masonic spokesmen, “were dismayed by the possibility that men joined Masonry for mercenary reasons, and repeatedly emphasized that one of the Masonic pledges included the oath that the initiate had not been influenced by the desire for personal gain,” the reality that Masons would seek out other

⁵⁶ Dinger, 355-86.

Masons socially, at church, or in trade was unavoidable; after all, “Masons did have a reputation for ‘sticking together.’”⁵⁷ Freemasonry appeared long before many other fraternal organizations would be found in the United States; as such, its founding principles are unlike many others. One of the largest fraternal organizations outside of the auspices of Freemasonry is the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. The Odd Fellows, like their Masonic counterparts, practice a system of moral and spiritual improvement conferred in degrees and observed, to the greatest extent possible, in secret. Many of the degrees, organizations, and terminology are remarkably similar to Freemasonry as well, but there are also several key differences. Fundamentally, Odd-Fellowship differs from Freemasonry most significantly in that it was founded as a beneficiary society, offering its members — who, in nineteenth-century America, were predominantly of the laboring and middle classes, as were the order’s founders — financial benefits such as assistance in finding work, stipends or other assistance similar to an indemnity or disability insurance policy, should they lose the ability to work for a period of time, long-term care for the chronically disabled member, and aid for their orphans and widows, should they pass.⁵⁸ While Freemasonry offers its members no stipends and guarantees no payouts, a Mason is charged with assisting brothers in need should they make that need known. So too is it considered by many to be a duty of the lodge to take up a collection, when needed, for a brother in need or his family. Freemasonry, as a result, has served as the catalyst for the establishment of a significant number of Masonic Homes for elderly members or their orphans, as well as Masonic hospitals and

⁵⁷ Dumenil, 22; Carnes, 1-2, 31-33.

⁵⁸ Theodore A. Ross, *The Illustrated History of Odd Fellowship: A Documentary and Chronological History of the Origin, Rise and Progress of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows throughout the World* (New York: Ross History Company, 1916), 547-81; John O. Raum, *The Mission of Odd-Fellowship: An Address Delivered before the Odd Fellows of Trenton* (Trenton, NJ: Murphy & Bechtel, 1864), 3-4, 10-11, & 13-20; Preuss, 334-38; Carnes, 1, 5, 21, & 29; Halleran, 36.

educational institutions throughout the United States. Means of providing for these institutions, financially, took on a cultural importance of their own moving into the twentieth century, key examples being the Grand Lodge of New York's annual fashion exposition held to benefit its Masonic Home and hospitals, the farm adjoining the Grand Lodge of Texas' Masonic Home, maintained and staffed by its residents, or the typist school and printing office contained within the Grand Lodge of Kentucky's Masonic Home.⁵⁹

Outside of official institutions, Masonic charity has been widespread in American history and often transcends political, religious, or social divides present at a given time, as was the case in the nineteenth century, especially. In his quest to find verifiable stories of Masonic influence in the Civil War, Michael Halleran offers extensive examples of assistance rendered in the form of gifted money, food, and clothing to distressed Masons on the battlefield, in field hospitals, or in prison camps; Halleran further offers examples of conquering Masons protecting the belongings of a fallen or injured Mason and, in several cases, soldier Masons preventing theft from the homes of Masonic widows. The importance of helping a Mason's family and, specifically, his spouse is a profound doctrinal matter for Freemasons, epitomized by the primary call of distress in which a Mason makes himself known to those around him as being "the son of a widow," in need of aid. This "widow," refers not to the Mason's own mother or even his spouse, should he die, but rather heralds back to the widowed spouse of Hiram Abiff, the Master Mason of Solomon's Temple and Freemasonry's principal martyr. In the many accounts of the Civil War examined by Halleran, it was in returning home the property of fallen Masons; in the

⁵⁹ Grand Lodge of New York, *Official Exposition Record and History of Masonry in the State of New York: In Connection with the First Annual Fashion Exposition for the Benefit of Masonic Hospital Activities* (New York: Grand Lodge of New York, 1922), 20-36; Frank J. Thompson, *Masonic Homes, Educational Institutions and Cognate Charities: Report Made to the Grand Lodge of North Dakota* (Fargo: Grand Lodge of North Dakota, 1908), 3-24; Turnbull, 225-35.

ferrying home the remains of a fallen Mason; or in providing financial assistance to the spouse of a fallen Mason that the most well-documented and organized outpourings of Masonic charity were seen in the conflict. The fact that charitable acts and, particularly, financial acts of charity were both so common and transcendent of the political alignments of the Masons, Rebel or Union, is a significant example of constancy and stability offered by Freemasonry to its members and their families during, arguably, the most unstable and chaotic period of American history, the American Civil War.⁶⁰

“If You See Females Huddling Together...”

The necessity of providing for the spouse and children of church authorities or brother Masons — in reality or merely perceived — demonstrates the fiscal and, thereby, authoritative dynamic of the nineteenth-century Masonic or Mormon household, likely derivative of the fundamentally-patriarchal and male-centric nature of their respective spiritual systems and the values they impart. This reliance on the patriarch and, in his absence, the church or fraternal order for economic provision is demonstrative of the shifts explained by Charles Sellers as transitioning women away from economic production to the domestic sphere as products once made by the wife, mother, daughter, or sister could be acquired more affordably and efficiently from the market. Despite this shift and relegation to the domestic sphere — or, perhaps, because of it — American women were increasingly found in political and social activism in the United States.⁶¹ Benevolent societies founded, managed, and staffed by American women cropped up throughout the nation with any number of different causes or goals. While on the front lines of the temperance and abolitionist movements, as well as in their own fight for suffrage, women’s

⁶⁰ Halleran, 37, 59-61, 64-67, 74-77, 80-81, 85, 89, 120-36, 148-49, & 162; Dumenil, 19-21.

⁶¹ Sellers, 8-12, 24, 155, 203-9, 225, & 240-44.

influence over the father, husband, and home was still, in the eyes of some, growing despite active repression. Laurel Ulrich cites the example of *The Peacemaker*, a pamphlet produced by one Udney Hay Jacob and, supposedly, published in Nauvoo under the authority and name of Joseph Smith, — Smith denied doing any business with Jacob, let alone publishing his work — that decried the expanding roles of women in domestic and public life. American women had, in Jacob’s mind, become “all-powerful,” and their expanding influence needed to be checked. It was in this necessity that Jacob both defended and promoted polygamy — heretofore a secret doctrine of the church — as a means of ensuring that no one woman would have a level of influence in the home great enough to impact the patriarch’s decision-making.⁶² Though Jacob’s dramatic and urgent approach seems laughable in retrospect, Mark Carnes also cites a decline in paternal power within the home and a growth in maternal influence in matters of religion, morality, and child-rearing.⁶³

Drama notwithstanding, Jacob’s notions of growing female power and the decline of the American patriarchy were not an isolated example and likely found more than a few welcoming subscribers; Masons among them, according to an analysis of Lynn Dumenil of lodge culture and humor. In evaluating the jokes common among lodge members, published in Masonic periodicals, Dumenil observes that women were, “depicted as domestic tyrants who must be tricked if their husbands are to have their freedom,” a view which, to Dumenil, “illustrate[s] the separate spheres of Victorian men and women and the tension that accompanied the segregation of their leisure.” Within the powder keg of female ambition and male apprehension, and, perhaps, with an aim to ease domestic tensions and unify male and female approaches to

⁶² Ulrich, 102-5.

⁶³ Carnes, 106-16.

spiritualism and morality in their leisure time, Mormonism and Masonry saw to the establishment of female auxiliaries to the male-only hierarchies of both organizations, assigning their wives and daughters authority over their own rites and allowing them, “to duplicate their husbands’ [and fathers’] experience of secrecy, ritual, and sociability.”⁶⁴ The ability of these periphery bodies to appease the aspirations of inclusion and purpose on the part of female adherents to an ‘acceptable’ level alongside their respective patriarchs, while maintaining separation from and subordination to the latter by the former, insulated Masons and Mormon men from the tumults of shifting — however slight — roles of American women in the public sphere.

Female involvement in Freemasonry was not a new phenomenon in nineteenth-century America, but the oldest continuing female-inclusive auxiliary body to Freemasonry in the United States was founded between the years 1850 and 1867 — doctrine and ritual were circulated as early as 1850, the organization was originally instituted in 1855, but would be scrapped and reconstituted in 1867 — as the Order of the Eastern Star. Before the founding of this order, androgynous ritual and degrees were experimented with throughout the eighteenth century in Europe through Lodges of Adoption that became popular in the metropolises of Paris and London. Despite the initial and, in some locales, continuing popularity of these adoptive organizations and rituals, most were eventually dissolved by the governing Masonic bodies who had tolerated them for some time amidst significant and heated opposition to female involvement among their male-only Masonic membership. Later, the Order of the Holy Royal Arch introduced the degree of the “Heroines of Jericho,” which “is a degree conferred only on Royal Arch Masons, their wives and daughters.” This specific requirement for eligibility — that female

⁶⁴ Ulrich, 64-66; Carnes, 107; Dumenil, 25-26.

initiates be directly related to a Mason in good standing — was then and continues today to be carried by many androgynous Masonic orders or degrees, to include the Order of the Eastern Star. As such, women could join their “husbands, fathers, and brothers,” in a new, Masonic family.⁶⁵

The system and degree work of the Eastern Star were largely produced by PGM Robert Morris of Kentucky, who traveled extensively, teaching the ritual of the Eastern Star and unfortunately, also being required to frequently offer defense of the new order and its androgynous nature.⁶⁶ Morris succeeded in authoring and organizing the Order, but it was ultimately Robert Macoy, to whom Morris ceded much of the control over the Eastern Star, who succeeded in selling the new order and its degree work to American Masons.⁶⁷ Though a factor of appeal for Freemasonry, as this study seeks to frame the Order of the Eastern Star, the opposition to female involvement in American Freemasonry was extensive and heated; indeed, it may even continue among some to the present. This opposition, nonetheless, places the extended success of the Eastern Star in contrast to the ultimate failure of Adoptive Masonry in the eighteenth century, made possible and, arguably, necessary by the same tumultuous change in economic and familial relations heretofore examined. The history previously cited, written by Jean M. Kenaston, herself a Past Worthy Matron of the Eastern Star, certainly provides the reader with a glowing evaluation of the Order, its founder, its ritual, and its tenets.

“Dr. Rob Morris,” Kenaston writes, “builded better than he knew... while ill with an attack of rheumatism, Dr. Rob Morris produced the beautiful system of the

⁶⁵ Jean M. Kenaston, *History of the Order of the Eastern Star* (Cedar Rapids, IA: Torch Press, 1917), 24-25, 29-51, 61-63, 74, & 96-98; Preuss, 369-73.

⁶⁶ Kenaston, 24-25, 29-63, 74, & 96-98.

⁶⁷ Whalen, 116-17.

Order of the Eastern Star... in every village, he invited a union of the ladies with their husbands, fathers, and brothers in the Lodge room, and to the united assembly gave his beautiful system entitled the Eastern Star. Though the country was wild with political and sectarian strife (mutterings of civil war) he talked of nothing but Freemasonry... all this established, without the possibility of a doubt, the value of one great army of women and men, united in this work of benevolence, to promote the higher development of humanity... ”⁶⁸

In detailing the virtues and benefits of the Order of the Eastern Star, Kenaston does not, however, neglect to also provide the reader with an account of the Order’s opposition. Though Dr. Morris was highly respected for his Masonic poetry and philosophy, Kenaston informs us, he was also subjected to frequent attack for his support of female auxiliaries to Freemasonry.

“...the conditions of the country were negative and the minds of the people not prepared to accept secret Orders conducted by women... so that it is beyond doubt that the general sentiment of the Fraternity is against this system of female Masonry... [with] opposition in many of the States to the introduction of the Eastern Star, and the censure heaped upon Dr. Morris... Disapproval was manifest, critics were severe, and threats were made to bring the author before his Lodge and warn him against further presenting his female Masonry. ”⁶⁹

Whether or not this opposition did, ultimately, end with the dragging of Dr. Morris before the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, as Kenaston indicates was threatened, others did face charges and

⁶⁸ Kenaston, 51, 62-63, & 74.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 24-25, 45, & 55.

censure before their individual Grand Lodges for their involvement or complicity in the advancement of “Masonic degrees conferred on the ladies.” Such was the case of the Worshipful Master of Belvidere Lodge, no. 60, Daniel H. Whitney, in 1851 when he was compelled to submit a defense, in part, of his part in conferring several new degrees upon “the ladies,” of Belvidere, Illinois, among them the androgynous degrees of Royal Arch Masonry, before the Grand Lodge of Illinois.⁷⁰ Despite this opposition, the Order of the Eastern Star has enjoyed extensive success in the United States — though the Grand Lodges of England and Scotland imposed *de facto* bans on the Order — in the century and a half since its founding. Similarly, additional female auxiliary bodies welcoming the female family members of Master Masons, such as Job’s Daughters and Rainbow Girls, have become commonplace for many American lodges in the twentieth century on. It has been emphasized that the Eastern Star does not impart Masonic secrets to its members and makes no use of Masonic doctrine, but, nonetheless, a Master Mason is required to sit as patron for each chapter to oversee their work as they meet in the lodge. As a result, the Order of the Eastern Star largely mirrors the structure of Freemasonry, though led by its own doctrine, and remains dependent on Masonry for its legitimacy and meeting places, both in the dependence of each chapter of the Order on a patron, as well as each member’s dependence on a male Mason relative to act as their sponsor. This separation and subservience model embodies most recognized forms of adoptive, female Masonry now in practice, as well as that of the eighteenth century in Europe.⁷¹ Outside of Masonry, this structure has also served as the model for many female auxiliaries to otherwise male-centric organizations.

⁷⁰ Daniel H. Whitney, *Defence before the Grand Lodge of the State of Illinois* (Kenosha, WI, 1852), 23-24.

⁷¹ Kenaston, 29-46; Preuss, 369-73.

With the official governance of the Mormon Church being incumbent on the male priesthood, women had very few roles to play in church affairs in the early years of Mormonism, though the latter years of the Nauvoo Era would present many new and exciting opportunities for Mormon women. As men were called upon to improve roads, serve in the Nauvoo Legion or on proselytizing missions, and assist in the construction of the temple, women were largely left out of public or church service in the first years the church was headquartered in Nauvoo. Beyond the normal work expected of them in the home, however, many of Nauvoo's leading women actively involved themselves in sewing drapes for public buildings or clothing for men working on the temple. At the laying of the cornerstone, the women of Nauvoo presented their prophet, outfitted in splendid military regalia as the Nauvoo Legion's commanding officer, a silk American flag on which many had contributed. Carol Madsen observed in her 1994 work, *Women and the Story of Nauvoo*, that women had a great deal to gain in the temple's completion and, likewise, sold what little they had to contribute to the temple construction fund or opened their home to men assisting with the construction.⁷² Ulrich details the example of Sarah G. Kimball, wife of Nauvoo City Alderman Hiram S. Kimball, who found creative ways to make her contributions,

“when their first child was born, she asked Hiram if he thought their son was worth a thousand dollars. When he assured her that the boy was worth that and more, she asked if he agreed that she owned half of him. When he acknowledged that she did, she said she intended to contribute her half to the construction fund for the Nauvoo Temple. Amused rather than annoyed, Hiram shared the joke with Joseph Smith,

⁷² Carol C. Madsen, *In Their Own Words: Women and the Story of Nauvoo* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1994), 20-21, 180, 185, & 205.

who responded in kind, telling him he could redeem his baby for five hundred dollars. Hiram paid.”⁷³

Sarah Kimball also “agitated the subject of organizing a Sewing Society. The object of which would be to aid in the erection of the Temple.” Kimball’s sewing society concept later evolved into the establishment of the Female Relief Society, the primary female auxiliary of the Mormon Church that not only endowed Nauvoo’s women with a benevolent purpose in providing for the temple fund or for the poor, but also provided them with authority to see to their own moral instruction and policing. After a constitution and by-laws were drafted and presented to Joseph Smith, he thanked the women for their work on the documents but informed them that said documents were not necessary as their society would be based on divine authority, instead. From then on, Smith took great interest in the formation and governance of the Relief Society, which he endeavored to organize, “in the order of the Priesthood,” as he “now [had] the key by which [he] could do it.” Upon its establishment, Smith ordained several of the women composing the Relief Society “to administer to the sick and comfort the sorrowful,” and, after his wife was elected president, largely allowed the women to see to the Society’s affairs without intervention.⁷⁴ With rumors spreading of sexual indiscretion and the secret doctrine of plural marriage, the Relief Society wielded significant authority in an almost inquisitorial fashion under Emma Smith’s leadership to uncover extra-marital relationships and punish those involved, with her husband, the prophet, indicating that the women of the Society would soon receive, “the keys of the kingdom... that they may be able to detect every thing false-as well as to the Elders.”⁷⁵

⁷³ Ulrich, 81-82.

⁷⁴ Madsen, 191-92 & 200-1.

⁷⁵ Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* (Salt Lake City, UT: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2011), 27-28, 31, & 40; Ulrich, 86.

Given the secret involvement of Mormon leaders in the practice of plural marriage and, therefore, the fact that the Relief Society was not chasing rumors, but actual indiscretions, the zeal with which the women took to their new enforcement roles eventually turned their Society into a meddlesome problem for the prophet and his advisors.

Following the martyrdom of Joseph Smith and the succession crisis it precipitated, Emma Smith and her Relief Society became a vocal critic of Brigham Young — whose authority over the Quorum of the Twelve allowed him to seize control of the church — and the doctrine of plural marriage he avidly practiced. This contention led to the dissolution of the Society on March 9, 1845 and the relegation of Emma Smith to the sidelines of church governance. Young's opposition to female group meetings, in general, during this period was especially pronounced. Instructing the male leaders of the church, Young forcefully denounced any such organizing, telling the men,

“When I want Sisters or the Wives of the members of this church to get up Relief Society I will summon them to my aid, but until that time let them stay at home & if you see Females huddling together veto the concern and if they say Joseph started it tell them it is a damned lie for I know he never encouraged it,” and eventually going so far as to say, *“What are relief societies for? To relieve us of our best men — They relieved us of Joseph and Hyrum — that is what they will lead too — I don’t [want] the advice or counsel of any woman — they would lead us down to hell.”*⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Jill M. Derr, et al., eds, *The First Fifty Years of Relief Society: Key Documents in Latter-day Saint Women's History* (Salt Lake City, UT: Church Historian's Press, 2016), 171.

Though placed on a temporary hiatus until the church's settlement in Utah, the Relief Society of Nauvoo, for a time, offered the women of Mormondom purpose and authority that — like the Order of the Eastern Star does for its members — allowed these women to duplicate the experiences of ministry and church governance experienced by their fathers, husbands, and brothers in the priesthood. As was made clear in the efforts to provide for the temple fund, the women of Nauvoo were anxious to go beyond what was asked of them and to magnify, as much as possible, their opportunities to contribute to building the Kingdom of God on the Earth. Some women even took their ordinations from Joseph Smith to be that of priesthood power to heal the sick and bless those in need, though that would be an item of hot contention. In a study of the journals of Wilford Woodruff, Laurel Ulrich finds references to accounts in which Woodruff's wife, Phoebe, "healed him by the laying on of hands," the authority having been given to her by the prophet Joseph Smith. When approached regarding complaints that the women of the Relief Society, "were overstepping their authority by laying on of hands to heal the sick," Smith reaffirmed the right and authority of the women to do so stating, "if the sisters should have faith to heal the sick, let all hold their tongues, and let every thing roll on." Carol Madsen further asserts that, "unlike the sacred rituals of other religious groups, the temple ordinances, the most sacred of Mormonism's religious rites, required women's participation to receive the ordinances for themselves and to act as officiators and as proxies for others."⁷⁷ The involvement and authority of the women within the Relief Society and within the rituals of temple worship was astonishing to many and downright horrifying to some. Contemporaries commented on the Mormon "prophetesses," as well as on the power they seemed to wield and were shocked by the forceful support of Mormon women for their leaders and for the system of plural marriage —

⁷⁷ Madsen, 21.

when finally made public — when, the world was convinced, they were the victims of a cruel and barbaric system.⁷⁸ The leadership and initiative of Mormon women, as a result, seemed extremely paradoxical in a system of marriage intended, in the view of some, to check the expansion of the very same women’s domestic influence. The Relief Society provided a forum in which the women of Nauvoo were able to pursue their ambitions and contribute to the growth of God’s kingdom on the Earth, while being organized under, “the order of the priesthood,” with a dependence on and separation from the church hierarchy staffed by men and headed by a prophetic patriarch, sheltering them from the impending millennial storm.

Attraction: Conclusions

Despite the chaotic nature of the nineteenth century, epitomized by the horrors and bloodshed of the American Civil War, anti-Masonry, and the martyrdom of the first prophet, Mormonism and Masonry emerged from the middle decades of the century, on all fronts, ahead. The people of Nauvoo met on the fifth of October 1845, “in the midst of trials, tribulations, poverty, and worldly obstacles, solemnized, in some instances, by death,” for the first time inside their new temple.⁷⁹ The sacrifices made and the persecutions suffered were etched in stone and the endowment rituals developed by Joseph Smith would be conferred upon thousands of departing saints in the months to come before their respective wagon trains set out across the plains to the Salt Lake Valley. Similarly, the Freemasons of the State of New York, despite having the epicenter of the anti-Masonic excitement within their jurisdiction, having sent their

⁷⁸ Jennie A. Froiseth, ed, *The Women of Mormonism or the Story of Polygamy: As Told by the Victims Themselves* (Detroit, MI: C.G.G. Paine, 1882), 5, 25, 101-2, 139-48, 301, & 368; Edward W. Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (New York: Tullidge & Crandall, 1877), 292-300; Madsen, 130-33; Ulrich, xi-xxv & 378; Wyl, 272-74.

⁷⁹ N. B. Lundwall, ed, *Temples of the Most High* (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft Publishing, 1993), 42-52.

brothers off to fight in support of abolitionism, and having suffered a schism of Grand Lodges, met on the third of June 1875 to dedicate the massive new home of the prevailing of the two Grand Lodges, named Masonic Hall on Twenty-Third Street in New York City. Lynn Dumenil indicates that monuments like the temples of Mormonism and Masonry serve as symbols of constancy and strength, while providing a sense of importance and distinction to those members able to access and participate in the rituals of the temple.⁸⁰ These shared factors of societal appeal displayed by both Mormonism and Masonry go beyond those explored in depth above and outweigh the divisive similarities of symbols or ritual focused on by Mormon and Masonic ‘scholars’ in the past. Unfortunately, both organizations not only attract members in similar ways, but also prompt censure and contempt in like fashion.

⁸⁰ Herbert T. Singer and Ossian Lang, *New York Freemasonry: A Bicentennial History* (New York: Grand Lodge of New York, 1981), 69-99 & 104-7; Dumenil, 18-19.

Chapter II

Repulsion: Standing as a Chosen People Apart

Repulsion: An Introduction

The nineteenth century in America was a time dedicated, among other things, to unifying a sense of Americanism through the excision of “subversive,” elements seen as threats by alarmist writers and agitators. As would reappear a century later, persecution of un-American activities, creeds, or peoples was a driving force pervading every aspect of nineteenth-century America that left Masons, Mormons, Catholics, Jews, and many other ethnic and religious minorities with a high price to pay for living a life apart. David Brion Davis postulated in 1960 that a solidification of the American republic in international affairs at the close of the War of 1812 led to decreasing fears of foreign invasion or interference and prompted nineteenth-century Americans to increasingly find enemies within, placing his focus on the movements attacking Mormonism, Masonry, and Catholicism. In these terms, persecutions of Mormonism and Masonry fit within the nineteenth-century framework of internal conflict in the United States that ultimately resulted in civil war. Unlike European conceptions of subversive activities, Davis continues, American fears of conspiracy clung — and still cling — to unseen, silent attacks on and the systematic erosion of ideals or a way of life, rather than the subversion of the established order in the form of dynasty or church. Any apparent contradiction, therefore, with the founding documents, figures, or perceived tenets of the United States — to include claims of the nation’s dedication to Protestantism — could then be grounds for reformative action or forcible removal. In a broad view, Davis asserts, Mormonism and Masonry were viewed as groups of corrupted, though not inherently evil, individual dupes blinded by persuasive ideologies and reduced to mere components of a machine-like institution engaged in treasonous or grossly immoral

conduct piloted by unscrupulous, shadowy leaders intent on subverting the American social order — control over the American social order, similarly, being tied by writers espousing the ideals of American exceptionalism to the determination of the fate and destiny of mankind. In each case, as well, subversive leaders were claimed to have bands of enforcers that would threaten any apostate capable of freeing themselves with extralegal kidnapping, torture, or execution should they do any more than shrink away in silence.⁸¹ Though with varying consistency and dates of introduction, alarmist writings pushed claims of oaths being administered to Masons, — this, of course, was an easy claim to make given that Masons openly acknowledge the mere existence of their oaths and obligations and were unable to fully refute their allegedly-treasonous content without compromising the order's secrecy — Catholics, and Mormons that directly enlisted them in conspiratorial shadow militias obligating them to the service of the Illuminati, pope, or prophet, respectively, to undermine American values and democratic Protestantism.⁸² John Corrigan and Lynn S. Neal further demonstrate in their 2010 work, *Religious Intolerance in America: A Documentary History*, that portrayals of both Mormonism and Catholicism — conflated by superpatriot organizations with Freemasonry and other secret societies as threats to Americanism and Protestantism — in the nineteenth century focused on an independent group identity, bloc voting or lockstep with the goals of the church or Grand Lodge, and infiltration of government offices to protect and enforce their respective

⁸¹ David B. Davis, 205-12.

⁸² John Corrigan and Lynn S. Neal, eds, *Religious Intolerance in America: A Documentary History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 71; George M. Pachtler, *The Secret Warfare of Freemasonry against Church and State* (London: Burns, Oates, & Company, 1875); John Robison, *Proofs of a Conspiracy against All the Religions and Governments of Europe Carried On in the Secret Meetings of Free Masons, Illuminati, and Reading Societies* (London: Cadell, Davies, and Creech, 1798); Wyl, 7, 44-50, 113, 123, 139-40, & 165-92.

interests.⁸³ The violent reactions to the apparent miscarriage of justice surrounding the disappearance of William Morgan and the claims of Mormon violations of the separation of church and state in Nauvoo clearly demonstrate all three factors given by Corrigan and Neal and typify the charged religious and political atmospheres of nineteenth-century America.

A further examination of the fundamental aspects of both Mormonism — especially in its temple worship and pursuit of autonomous governance — alongside Freemasonry will easily indicate that both organizations can be viewed as fitting within frameworks of superpatriot fears, per Davis' argument that, “the distinguishing mark of Masonic, Catholic, and Mormon conspiracies was a secrecy that cloaked the members' unconditional loyalty to an autonomous body,” and, therefore, similarly prompted popular outcry from nineteenth-century Americans driven by nationalist views and alarmist literature.⁸⁴ Attacks on Masonry in this time period hinged on the oaths of secrecy or obligations its members are required to take upon themselves, thereby — it was claimed — severing their allegiances to their governments and the general public in favor of their own select order.⁸⁵ Certainly driven by the understanding that the Mormon elite at Nauvoo were Freemasons and later by the endowment ceremonies performed within the sanctity and secrecy of the temple, attacks on Mormonism in the latter half of the nineteenth century similarly focused on alleged oaths of secrecy and, more suited to alarmist literature, obligations to avenge the deaths of Joseph and Hyrum Smith — claimed to be directed against the government of the United States that failed to act in the face of popular persecution,

⁸³ Corrigan and Neal, 49-98.

⁸⁴ David B. Davis, 212.

⁸⁵ John Levington, *Key to Masonry and Kindred Secret Combinations* (Dayton, OH: United Brethren Publishing House, 1871); David MacDill, et al, *Secret Societies: A Discussion of Their Character and Claims* (Cincinnati, OH: Western Tract and Book Society, 1867); David B. Davis, 205-8 & 210-16; Ivins, 81-86, 97-98; Pachtler.

resulting in the deaths of both Smith brothers, among others — with many placing Mormonism within the same box as the more-readily identified secret societies of the day. Arthur Pruess, for instance, includes Mormonism in his *Dictionary of Secret and Other Societies*, stating that exposes published in leading newspapers by long-time Mormons whose upright and trustworthy characters could be vouched for by some moral authority or another, in this case “a baptist minister,” revealed that Mormonism was not purely a religious institution, but also a secret society akin to Masonry.⁸⁶ In essence, while the respective barbs of the Masons and the Mormons directed at one another pivot on similarities of ceremony and iconography, the similarities focused on by men like Pruess find their importance on the centrality of secrecy, tribalism, and undue influence.

Though the nature of the institution, itself, makes it clear to the observer that Freemasonry holds its secrecy as a central tenet, it may be less apparent that Mormonism also developed a need for confidentiality amongst its members after the introduction of temple rites. Both organizations describe their respective needs for secrecy as being products of the sacred knowledge they confer upon their members, instructing the initiated that the same cannot be discussed outside of the sanctity of the lodge or temple. In practice, these obligations of secrecy also functioned to abate rumor or embarrassment. Masonry’s leaders and members, especially, often emphasized the need for background investigations and balloting to prevent men who may tarnish the institution’s reputation from being admitted. Mormonism, too, saw exhortations of

⁸⁶ Henry G. McMillan, ed, *The Inside of Mormonism: A Judicial Examination of the Endowment Oaths Administered in All Mormon Temples by the United States District Court for the Third District of Utah, to Determine Whether Membership in the Mormon Church is Consistent with Citizenship in the United States* (Salt Lake City: Utah Americans, 1903); T.B.H. Stenhouse, *The Tyranny of Mormonism or, An Englishwoman in Utah: An Autobiography* (London: Sampson Lowe, Marston, and Company, 1880), 189-201; Preuss, 279-82; Wyl, 266-72.

confidentiality and rumor control in the final months of its tenure in Kirtland and into its stay in Nauvoo as the secret doctrine of plural marriage was systematically revealed to its leadership. This insistence on veiling doctrine and preventing negative press, in the evaluation made by David B. Davis, played directly into the hands of critics shared by both Mormonism and Masonry. As a result, Mormonism and Masonry both perpetuated an already-existing view that they were groups apart from their neighbors and were, therefore, anti-unitarian. The result in each case being persecution and violence, often at the slightest provocation.

“The Secret of Masonry Is to Keep a Secret”

Throughout the Nauvoo Era, Joseph Smith displayed an increasing level of uncertainty in his ability to trust even his closest advisors and began to seek out methods of testing or guaranteeing their loyalty. In this regard, it also appears that Smith’s definition of trustworthiness became increasingly synonymous with, specifically, one’s ability and willingness to keep a secret. This concern over the loyalty of his membership likely grew out of the unrest and ultimate dissension of many saints in Ohio and Missouri who were displeased with Smith’s leadership and some even expressing their belief that he was a fallen prophet.⁸⁷ With the power struggles of the Ohio and Missouri years as the backdrop and the main body of the church migrating to Illinois, Smith sought to close ranks as best he could. In Nauvoo, Smith would begin seeking out saints, he believed, could be entrusted with the secrets of plural marriage and

⁸⁷ Joseph Smith, Jr., *Journal of March-September 1838*, ebook, 28-29 & 29n54, Joseph Smith Papers, accessed May 8, 2020, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-march-september-1838/1>; Joseph Smith, Jr., *Journal of 10 March 1843-14 July 1843*, ebook, 26 & 26n71, Joseph Smith Papers, accessed May 8, 2020, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1842-june-1844-book-2-10-march-1843-14-july-1843/1>; Joseph Smith, Jr., *Journal of 15 July 1843-29 February 1844*, ebook, 4, 4n5, 54-55, 54n99 & n100, 134, 222, 222n433, 224, 224n436, & 232n457, Joseph Smith Papers accessed May 8, 2020, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1842-june-1844-book-3-15-july-1843-29-february-1844/1>.

tested them by revealing the doctrine under strict assurances of confidentiality — and met failure with forceful public denials and, if necessary, excommunication. In order to test his followers *en masse*, Smith saw to the establishment of the several Mormon Masonic lodges in Illinois and Iowa for his male members and the Nauvoo Relief Society for his female members; both of these organizations, members of Nauvoo's Mormon leadership indicate, were intended to evaluate the ability of church members to keep church secrets and to prepare them for the veiled sanctity of temple worship in the years to come, writing in his journal that, "the secret of Masonry is to keep a secret."⁸⁸

The many appendant bodies of Freemasonry, described in the previous chapter, were a major drawing factor for the fraternity, according to Lynn Dumenil, as they gave Masons a vast network of opportunities for advancement, the gathering of more and more knowledge, and, finally, opportunities to have additional secrets confided to the member, furthering and magnifying a Mason's duty to protect the confidential knowledge given him by the order. Mormonism, too, saw this pattern in Nauvoo as Joseph Smith experimented with spurious orders with varying purposes and levels of secrecy. Benjamin E. Park observes that Smith's tendency for creating successive new organizations was, "a way to govern an expanding faith community." It can also be observed, however, that these organizations seemed to hold the prophet's interest and trust for short periods of time before being replaced. One such organization was the prophet's so-called Quorum of the Anointed, an androgynous organization in which a man and his wife — Emma Smith's level of knowledge regarding plural marriage and when, exactly, she became aware of the same is an issue of some speculation among historians of the Nauvoo Era, but it is likely telling that Emma insisted that only legally-married spouses be

⁸⁸ Joseph Smith, *Journal of 15 July 1843-29 February 1844*, 134.

permitted to take part in the Quorum's activities — were able to join one another in secret ritual where they would anoint each other as kings and queens of the afterlife. Some of Joseph Smith's advisors commented that, "Emma had turned quite friendly and kind," since her anointing as a queen alongside her husband. Emma's implied lack of kindness before this anointing was attributed to her shock and frustration with the doctrine of plural marriage and her husband's acquisition of additional covert wives without her knowledge or consent. A condition placed on membership in the Quorum was the acceptance or, at least, the toleration of polygamy. Despite this, certain church leaders, like William and Jane Law. William Law was a member of the first presidency and, heretofore, a loyal defender and confidant of the prophet.

The Laws' eventual rejection of polygamy opened an irreparable rift between themselves and the Smiths, set off a flurry of public opposition to the doctrine, and culminated in the establishment of a dissident newspaper, the *Nauvoo Expositor*, by the Laws and some of their high-profile allies in the church who refused to sanction plural marriages of others, much less partake in it themselves. This breach of secrecy would be a pivotal moment for the Mormon residence in Illinois. It was, after all, on charges related to the destruction of the newspaper's printing office — Joseph Smith, as mayor, demanded that his apostles and relatives on the city council, along with a single non-Mormon councilor, declare the Expositor a nuisance and, with that granted, ordered the Nauvoo police and a contingent of supporting soldiers from the Nauvoo Legion to destroy the press — that Joseph and Hyrum Smith were arrested, taken to, and tried in Carthage. Finally, it would be in the upper rooms of Carthage Jail that the Smith prophets — perhaps understanding that his death may be imminent, Joseph Smith dictated a revelation that his brother Hyrum was to be considered a prophet, seer, and revelator; Hyrum's death alongside Joseph negated this attempt to specify his successor and ignited the leadership crisis among his

followers after the martyrdom — would be killed by a group of insubordinate militiamen aiming to ensure that “Joe Smith” would not be permitted the opportunity to avoid conviction and walk free again. This failure to secure the loyalty of Smith’s top advisors and their silence regarding plural marriage is telling when compared with other arms of the church and Nauvoo social circles that did maintain the secrecy of plural marriage during the Illinois years.

With the fullness of the endowment ritual and its requirement of absolute confidentiality in mind, Joseph Smith took advantage of requests made by the women of Nauvoo to organize a benevolent society to assist in the erection of the temple and provided them with an opportunity to also prepare themselves for the temple. The resulting Relief Society developed into far more than the organizing women had expected as it was charged to snuff out rumors and, in so doing, establish and maintain as great a degree of secrecy among the saints as possible. The minutes of the Nauvoo Relief Society indicate that during a meeting of the Society — held two weeks after the establishment of the Nauvoo Lodge — on March 31, 1842, “...Pres[ident] E[mma] Smith, said she had an Article to read which would test the ability of the members in keeping secrets; as it was for the benefit of the Society, and that alone.” The document in question was a letter written to the membership of the Relief Society by the leadership of the church in relation to rumored sexual indiscretions occurring in Nauvoo stating, “We have been informed that some unprincipled men, whose names we will not mention at present, have been guilty of such crimes. We do not mention their names, not knowing but what there may be some among you who are not sufficiently skill’d in Masonry as to keep a secret... Let this Epistle be had as a private matter in your Society, and then we shall learn whether you are good Masons.”⁸⁹ Women like

⁸⁹ Eliza R. Snow, *Minutes of the Nauvoo Female Relief Society*, 23 & 85-88, in *The First Fifty Years of Relief Society: Key Documents in Latter-day Saint Women’s History*.

Eliza R. Snow, the Society's secretary, certainly proved themselves to be, so far as Joseph Smith was concerned, Masons of the highest caliber, having been initiated into the "holy order of plural marriage," through sealing to Smith, while also appending their names to statements and letters refuting the existence of a polygamous "secret wife system," claims of which had been published extensively in Illinois and the greater United States by apostates like John C. Bennett by late 1842. Under the leadership of the Lord's "elect woman," Emma Smith, the Society succeeded in its duties to seek out sexual wrongdoing and proved its members to be as good of Masons as their male counterparts.

That the rank-and-file women of Nauvoo would so thoroughly out-perform men like John Bennett as "Masons," is of particular interest given the prophet's concerns of loyalty and trustworthiness among the members of his flock. As the Mormons just began to settle in Nauvoo and their population was ravaged by disease festering in the swamp on which they were building their new community, it was John Bennett, as Quartermaster General of the Illinois State Militia, that provided the saints with medicine and instruction on draining the swamp. Making himself known to the prophet as a Mason — though neglecting to inform anyone that he had, in fact, been expelled from his home lodge in Ohio for sexual promiscuity and having abandoned a wife and child — with the trust of the state resting upon him, as well, Bennett was readily received by the residents of Nauvoo and their leaders. Bennett quickly rose to prominence in the Mormon community, serving as the first mayor of Nauvoo, chancellor of the University of Nauvoo, and, most telling, was installed as an assistant president of the church while Sidney Rigdon — the prophet's relationship with whom was strained and deteriorating — was unable to serve. PGM Mervin B. Hogan said of Bennett, "His tenure of this elevated pinnacle was to prove extremely shortlived and his decline or fall was to be every bit as precipitate as his phenomenal rise,"

resulting from the very same issues of sexual indiscretion that necessitated Bennett's expulsion from his first lodge.⁹⁰ Even though Bennett was, clearly, not a "good Mason," in secrecy or in personal character, his swift acceptance among the Mormon leadership and his intimate involvement in the establishment of the Nauvoo Lodge is telling. Joseph Smith seems to have been readily recognitive of the presumable trustworthiness of Masons — likely influenced, to some degree, by his Mason brother, Hyrum — with Elizabeth Ann Whitney stating, "Joseph had the most implicit confidence in my husband's uprightness and integrity of character; he knew him capable of keeping a secret, and was not afraid to confide in him, as he had been a Free Mason for many years." Sister Whitney's status as a Mason's wife also translated to additional trust placed on her from the prophet, as well, who requested the hand of the Whitneys' seventeen-year-old daughter in plural marriage. Unlike most proposals for plural marriage with Smith, both mother and father were made aware and, "She was the first woman ever given in plural marriage by or with the consent of both parents. Of course these things had to be kept an inviolate secret."⁹¹ If an entire family's trustworthiness could be ascertained and guaranteed with the father's membership in Freemasonry, the swift installment of and mass inductions into the fraternity among the Mormons at a critical juncture for both polygamy and temple worship is of little surprise.

Whether resulting from the prophet's intense interest in and enjoyment of Freemasonry, opportunities for individual distinction, access to church leaders, or, with all honesty, the general lack of opportunities for sociability on the American frontier, the lodges at Nauvoo and other Mormon settlements in the area became immensely popular and even brought Mormon and non-

⁹⁰ Mervin B. Hogan, *The Involvement of John Cook Bennett with Mormonism and Freemasonry at Nauvoo* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, College of Engineering, 1983), 2-12.

⁹¹ Madsen, 201-2.

Mormon together as brothers within those lodges, in some cases. That the Grand Master of Illinois would suggest the necessity of splitting Nauvoo Lodge into six or more individual lodges if granted a charter is certainly telling of this popularity and impressive growth. The fact that this growth continued — and may have even intensified — after the dispensation given to Nauvoo was revoked and a charter denied is even more telling, as those joining would undoubtedly become aware that their privileges as Master Masons would be non-existent outside of Nauvoo and its sister communities. In the end, the induction of almost all Mormon men into a Masonic lodge — including W.W. Phelps, a noted editor of an anti-Masonic periodical before joining the Mormon Church — is most likely resultant from the preaching of Mormon leaders that advancement through the Masonic lodge was an important preparatory step for the temple. Certain Masonic writers have taken these statements as implications of the similarities of the rituals and tokens of Masonry that would be built upon in the temple. It is just as likely, however, that these statements reflect a similar purpose in Masonry as Mormon women found in the Relief Society, an evaluation of one's ability to keep secrets related to ritual, rather than learning the basics of the ritual, itself.

The secrecy arguably adopted by Mormonism from Masonry, while necessary for containing the explosive new doctrine of polygamy and the sacred teachings of temple worship, was not well received by many onlookers in the United States, as Davis indicates. This fact is, perhaps, the most demonstrative indicator that Joseph Smith's apparent conflation of trustworthiness or uprightness with one's ability to keep secrets was not shared among his contemporaries outside of the Mormon or Masonic communities. It was, after all, from the secrecy of the Masonic fraternity that most of its problems in nineteenth-century American stemmed. This, of course, would be a reference to the appearance of retaliation against William

Morgan for violating the order's dedication to secrecy when he published his expose in 1826. Although the secrets of Masonry had been revealed repeatedly before the Morgan scandal and, even more so, following it, Masons maintained their strict views on secrecy regarding their doctrines and their activities.

The degree work of the order, particularly, represents a jealously protected secret, though exposes had been published throughout Europe and the United States making known the structure, contents, and modes of identification. Nonetheless, the verbatim contents of the degrees' individual catechisms are still, to the present, provided to initiates in ciphered booklets and recited only behind the closed doors of the lodge room. These catechisms, typically, are learned by new initiates in secret and are then tested in the contents of one degree before being advanced to the next. While these tests are often administered one-on-one between an initiate and an assigned mentor, some Grand Lodges require their constituent lodges to pass a certain number of initiates each year by a recitation in front of the general lodge membership in ritual form. This is not always the case, as all rules have their exceptions. Joseph Smith, for example, was made a Master Mason, "at sight," by the Grand Master of Illinois without this testing, and other members of Nauvoo Lodge were raised within three days of acceptance into the lodge, making it unlikely that they were all fully proficient in the contents of each degree in its entirety, much less its application in ritual. As Mervin B. Hogan has observed, however, this was not necessarily an irregularity for the time. Michael A. Halleran presents examples of soldiers being initiated into a military lodge and being raised in successive weeks — this because it was permitted for a new Mason to advance to one new degree per meeting and these lodges met every week, while Nauvoo Lodge met every day for a period of time — with others also progressing at similar rates in civilian lodges even after the war. Nonetheless, the contents of the

various Masonic degrees are, first and foremost, works of literature and prose presenting the basic allegories and symbols that frame Freemasonry's moral and spiritual system, the proper application of which are points of pride for ritualists. Regardless of one's ability to find the contents of these degrees, in their entirety, in various published source material, the sanctity and secrecy of these works are still maintained by Masonry's adherents.

The secrecy of Masonry's various works, degrees, and rites has been a matter of frustration — some might even consider it a matter of conflict — in relation to the spouse or family of a Mason. As it has been shown, female family members are permitted to join auxiliary organizations in most jurisdictions — even male family members too young to join the fraternity have access to the Order of DeMolay, their own auxiliary — but the mysteries of Freemasonry are, in their entirety, still withheld. While it can't be said all Masons withhold their knowledge of Masonry from their spouse, official access is never granted. This separation of the spouse and family of a Mason from the bulk of Masonry's teachings and rituals is, arguably, most pronounced at the death of the Mason. One of the major draws, it has been argued, for Freemasonry — particularly in a society and culture that places great stock in evaluating one's success or impact in life by the outpouring of love or respect at the time of one's death and, specifically, the attendance of one's funeral — are the funeral rites and honors offered to all Master Masons in good standing. If a Mason were to die away from his home lodge or at great distance from his family, Masonic lodges have been known to fund the transportation of a brother Mason's remains to his intended place of interment. Halleran demonstrates the matter in detail as Masons on the line were called upon to bury their brothers or pay for them to be returned home, sometimes necessitating the ceasing of hostilities for a time. The expectation that the lodge would attend *en masse* also guaranteed a respectable number of mourners to

accompany one's family to the burial ground. The item of contention being that the family of a Mason is, necessarily, excluded from half of the funeral rites observed by most lodges, as they occur within the lodge room under the Master Mason degree. The contents of these ceremonies, like degree work, are not intended to reach the uninitiated — many of the booklets produced by the various Grand Lodges containing the instructions for these rituals are often marked, “this book must be returned to the lodge,” or “return to the secretary or marshal,” as they are not given to the ownership of any individual Mason but meant only for the use of the constituent lodge in the performance of these rites. Though one might still find access unofficially, it is, likely, of little comfort to a grieving spouse, mother, or daughter who would hope to witness the farewells bade to the departed by their brother Masons.⁹² This exclusion of a member's family, enforced at almost every level, from involvement in the core teachings of the fraternity is, perhaps, the clearest example of Masons living a secret life apart from their fellow citizens.

Secrecy, — and, at least relatively, in the case of Masonry — universal doctrine, and ritual have been identified by scholars like Lynn Dumenil as important factors in the kind of ritualistic shared experiences that unify and tie Masons — or other groups, as it applies — together. With the adoption of the endowment ritual — practiced in only five temples and the Endowment House by the end of the century and, in these few temples, under the strict observation and guidance of the central hierarchy of the church — Mormons, too, would add shared experience in universal, secret ritual to their already-independent culture. While common

⁹² Grand Lodge of Utah, *Masonic Funeral Service: For the Use of the Constituent Lodges within the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Utah* (Salt Lake City: Grand Lodge of Utah); Grand Lodge of Washington, *Funeral Service: Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Washington* (Seattle: Grand Lodge of Washington, 1930); Meridian Lodge, *By-Laws: Funeral Service* (Chatfield, MN: News-Democrat Press, 1923); Grand Lodge of Maine, *A Guide for Masters and Wardens* (Holden: Grand Lodge of Maine, 1962), 30-34.

ground these experiences help solidify are unifying within the respective communities that share in them, the opposite can be true of the rest of a population. As a group like that of the Mormons or the Masons progressively viewed themselves as a distinct people apart from — or, depending on one's perception, above — the rest of society, so too did the rest of society view these groups as separate from the whole. The tribalism seen in Mormonism and Masonry, therefore, inevitably created dualities in communities and, thereafter, accusations of each being anti-unitarian. In a time dominated by nativist and Protestant conformism and epitomized by the splintering of the nation and by brother facing brother in open combat, what might be argued is a natural response to such conflict — seeking comfort and stability with one's own — was, in turn, viewed as antithetical to the nature of democratic governance and the American social order. For the purposes of this section, an evaluation of tribalism as a tendency — or perceived tendency, in certain cases — of a distinct culture or community to protect its members, right or wrong, best demonstrates the shared tribalistic reputation of Mormonism and Masonry in nineteenth-century America.

“Daniteism Is to Stand by Each Other”

The Illinois years were rife with examples of Mormon tribalism, especially seen by outsiders in the ordinances and judicial functions of Nauvoo. Non-Mormons in the communities surrounding Nauvoo were shocked by what they viewed as gross oversteps by the city's leadership and, “many people began to believe in good earnest that the Mormons were about to set up a government for themselves in defiance of the laws of the State.” These views may seem overly dramatic to some in retrospect, but for law enforcement officials seeking an arrest in Nauvoo, the defiance of “the laws of the State,” on the part of the Mormons was a matter of

fact.⁹³ While a general distrust of political and legal systems in which so much prejudice had been displayed so recently against the Mormons is certainly understandable, the saints' actions in secreting away their leadership from repeated arrest warrants, summons, and collections frustrated their neighbors, undercut their allies, and alienated their creditors. Though warrants were issued in Missouri and extradition agreed to in Illinois for Joseph Smith and his associates on numerous occasions, bands of hecklers and buttressed legal safeguards made Nauvoo virtually impregnable to foreign officers of the law for several years. The same was made possible by the charter granted to the Mormons by fawning legislators and sustainable only through the political unity of the Mormons at Nauvoo.⁹⁴ The unity of Nauvoo was also described in economic terms by Mormon critics as a "Oneness" that required a certain number of Mormons to join themselves together with a single appointed trustee. By doing so, it was claimed, the Mormons were able to prevent any seizure of property to settle debts, because they would always be able to prove that the land, livestock, etc. in question was owned by another individual. However accurate these claims may or may not be, they demonstrate a fear of Mormon unity in Illinois.⁹⁵ This unity among the people of the city was — in an affirmation to their critics — guaranteed, to a degree, by an order of enforcers calling themselves "Danites," whose mission it was to protect the church from external aggression and internal dissension, all from the shadows. Whether resultant from the influence of enforcers or from the relative prosperity in Nauvoo achieved by Mormon leadership for its members, dissension was infrequent and of little concern for the first several years on the Mormon sojourn in the City of Joseph. With an overwhelming

⁹³ Thomas Ford, *A History of Illinois from Its Commencement as a State in 1818 to 1846* (Chicago: S.C. Griggs and Company, 1854), 267-68, 320, & 324-25.

⁹⁴ Ford, *A History of Illinois*, 263-65.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 405-6.

margin of political sustainment among their ever-multiplying population, Mormon leaders were capable of maintaining the civic and, thereby, judicial control within Nauvoo under which its inhabitants were, for a time, untouchable without express consent of the city's leadership.

The primary juridical function utilized by the Mormon leadership of Nauvoo to protect against arrest or prosecution was that of *habeas corpus*, a writ of which can be sued for from or independently issued by a judicial officer to order a law enforcement entity to produce an individual under its charge before the court for a variety of reasons.⁹⁶ In Nauvoo, the implicit purpose of the writ was to allow the sovereign — at least so far as its constituency was concerned — municipal court to examine and, almost certainly, reject the validity of the warrant under which the detainee in question was taken into custody. The execution of this presumed — and extensively challenged in hindsight though, due to the extravagant value of the Mormon vote, not contemporarily as it was, in fact, encouraged “by some of the best lawyers in the State,” as they campaigned in the city — authority most apparent to observers of the judicial transactions of the city was the frequent discharge of Joseph Smith from the steady stream of warrants issued for his extradition to Missouri on charges as severe as treason and attempted murder or as flimsy and laughable as disturbing the peace.⁹⁷ In his report to the state senate on “the disturbances in Hancock [C]ounty,” Governor Thomas Ford indicated that, regarding the municipal court, the language of Nauvoo's charter,

“confers on that court power to issue writs of habeas corpus in all cases of imprisonment arising under the ordinances of the city; a provision manifestly

⁹⁶ Charles E. Chadman, *A Concise Legal Dictionary* (Chicago: American Correspondence School of Law, 1909), 190; Henry C. Black, *A Dictionary of Law: Definitions of the Terms and Phrases of American and English Jurisprudence, Ancient and Modern* (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing, 1891), 554-55.

⁹⁷ Ford, *A History of Illinois*, 325.

relating to such imprisonment as might be the consequence of violations of the city ordinances. But the common council passed an ordinance conferring upon the court, jurisdiction to issue the writ in all cases of arrest and imprisonment in the city, by whatsoever authority the same might be made.”⁹⁸

So far as Nauvoo’s city council — composed, almost in its entirety, by the prophet, his brother, and an assortment of apostles — was concerned, the jurisdiction granted to the municipal court by the city’s charter over arrests under city ordinance could, quite easily and reasonably, be extended so far as was codified in the city ordinances.⁹⁹ In effect, whether it be a federal marshal or city constable, no officer of the law could successfully apprehend a resident of Nauvoo without the full consent of its Mormon leadership.

Not all legal complications faced by Joseph Smith and his advisors, however, involved an arrest and, therefore, did not require the intervention of the court in the manner described above; in such cases, more unconventional defenses were instituted to prevent Mormon leaders, but most often Smith, from being served by an agent of the courts by an agent of the courts or from hearing any demand made by an agent of his or the church’s creditors and maintaining said leaders’ deniability. To accomplish this, bands of hecklers — without official office or title in church, civil, or militia governance — would endeavor to embarrass, harass, and intimidate — though, it must be lauded, without any true, physical violence on their part — any such agents in order to compel them to leave the city before any promissory notes could be secured or judicial orders delivered. While writers of the day credited the genius of Joseph Smith with having invented them, it is unclear if these practices were unique to the Illinois years or if they had been

⁹⁸ Thomas Ford, *Message of the Governor of the State of Illinois in Relation to the Disturbances in Hancock County, December, 21, 1844* (Springfield, IL: Walters & Weber, 1844), 4.

⁹⁹ Ford, *A History of Illinois*, 270 & 325.

resorted to in Ohio and Missouri, as well. They were, however, frequent enough in their application to prompt the fear and frustration of contemporaries. One R.W. McKinney, identifying himself as a resident of Hancock County, gave his own account of one such heckler gang he names as the “whittling deacons,” to John H. Beadle who thereafter published it as stating,

“The Mormons prided themselves on their genius in devising modes of annoyance by which a suspicious stranger could be driven away without resort to violence... [Whittling deacons] were... stationed around the streets and corners, armed with pieces of pine board and sharp dirk-knives, always ready for instant service... They would surround [strangers] with pine sticks and dirk-knives, and whistling gravely, keep up a continual whittling, the shavings flying into the face and over the person of the [stranger], and the sharp knives being flourished dangerously close to his ears. If timid and nervous he retreated soon; but if he faced the music, the whittling was more energetic, the whistling louder and shriller, the knives approached closer and flashed more brightly, till his retreat was a necessity.”

If being “whittled out,” was ineffective in deterring strange disturbers of the peace, it was said, their case would then be referred, “to a higher tribunal, the ‘Danite Band,’” the existence of which is well-documented in both Missouri and Illinois, but their actual involvement in matters like those described above is unclear in a cursory evaluation.¹⁰⁰ What is clear, however, is that the Danites wielded significant, if unspoken, influence over the minds of Hancock County’s populace and even received official authority as their fellow Mormons settled in Nauvoo.

¹⁰⁰ John H. Beadle, *Life in Utah Or, The Mysteries and Crimes of Mormonism* (Philadelphia: National Publishing Company, 1870), 75-77.

After fleeing the economic disaster and violent persecutions of Kirtland, Ohio, many saints had settled in Jackson and Clay counties in Missouri but were not there long before being driven again from their homes to new settlements in Caldwell and Daviess counties of the same state. With no end to anti-Mormon mobs in sight, the leaders of the church sent out a notice, just prior to the election of August 1838, for all men of eighteen years or more in Daviess County to collect themselves together to hold a conference. At this meeting, John D. Lee informs us, the brethren of the church, “were organized into a military body, according to the law of the priesthood, and called ‘the Host of Israel.’” These men were either granted varying ranks and commands in a commission from God or enlisted in companies of ten men, each, in subordinate roles to those chosen as the captains of Israel. This astonishing organization of a holy army on the American frontier, however, was not the only striking development of the conference. Another organization, dubbed the “Danites,” was formed as, according to Lee’s “confession,” an order of covert operatives and vigilantes, administered under oaths of obligation and secrecy, identified by one another with secret tokens and signs, and clothed with the sanction of God to do whatever had to be done to defend the church, even if the threat came from within. Lee was, himself, one of these Danites who served as such in Missouri, Illinois, and Utah until he was “abandoned,” by Brigham Young and the rest of the Mormons. Although Lee claims to know of many men killed by Danites during the Nauvoo Era on the order of Joseph Smith, he gives no examples and his writings regarding his or other Danites’ involvement in Illinois are slim.¹⁰¹ While Danite action in the express capacity of being a Danite seems less evident in Nauvoo, Danites were not, by any means, less involved in the enforcement of the church than they had

¹⁰¹ John D. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled; Or The Life and Confessions of the Late Mormon Bishop, John D. Lee* (St. Louis, MO: Bryan, Brand, and Company, 1877), 57-60.

been previously. With the control of the city council firmly in the hands of the Quorum of the Twelve and the First Presidency, the ordinances and laws of Nauvoo reflected the interests of the church and, when made mayor, Joseph Smith commissioned many Danites into the city's police force — John D. Lee, for example, serving as a police sergeant. The application of their Danite oaths was alleged in rumors that Smith had ordered the police to do away with the “Brutus” among them, said to be one of his counselors, William Law. Resulting from Law's rejection of plural marriage, his relationship with Smith and the church soured, culminating in the destruction of the *Nauvoo Expositor*, of which he was a proprietor, and alleged attempts to set fire to his home and business, each involving the Nauvoo police. When the city council determined to investigate these allegations, Bishop Daniel Cairns was sworn as a witness and testified that, among other things, “Daniteism is to stand by each other[,] that is all I know about Daniteism.”¹⁰² A more apt definition of secretive Mormon tribalism among the Danites could not be asked for.

Despite the best efforts of the prophet, his advisors, the Relief Society, Nauvoo Lodge, and the entirety of the city's civic government, the secrecy that had, to a extent, veiled the doctrine of plural marriage began to fade in the latter months of 1843 and into early 1844. Men like John C. Bennett were being identified in rumors as having used this doctrine to justify promiscuity and convince female members of the church of the permissible nature of free love and investigations undertaken by the Relief Society and the High Council determined the rumors were true. Others, like William Law and his brother, were informed of the doctrine as they were among the leaders of the church and members of the Quorum of the Anointed. While the doctrine was readily accepted by some — Brigham Young would prove to be especially fond of

¹⁰² Dinger, 199-308.

the “secret wife system” — the Laws and their allies were not prepared to take part in the practice. The Laws established a paper with the singular purpose of unveiling and opposing Mormon polygamy, the *Nauvoo Expositor*, and were forced to abandon their homes and lives in the city when their press was unceremoniously destroyed after the publication of the *Expositor*’s first issue. The tribalism exhibited by Smith’s loyal church leaders to close ranks and edge out those who fell out of favor was clear in their willingness to allegedly torch buildings and destroy businesses but was also apparent in their abilities to procure witnesses and affidavits of their innocence, no matter the charge. Their actions and the charges brought by the Laws against Joseph Smith, the city council, and the Nauvoo police force, however, apparently went one step too far and would prove to be the undoing of Mormon stability in Illinois.

Though William Law was able to flee Nauvoo with his life, — in sharp contrast to the ultimate fate of William Morgan — the destruction of the *Nauvoo Expositor* provides an interesting tie to Morgan’s story and the anti-Masonic excitement that had gripped the nation later caused by his strange disappearance. Despite the idealized sanctity of the freedom of the press in the United States and the force with which Nauvoo was condemned for its perceived infraction on the same, the destruction of printing offices and the threatening of authors during the nineteenth century was anything but uncommon. The Mormons had the Missouri publishing office and press for their first newspaper, the Evening and Morning Star, razed by a mob in 1833. Thomas Ford indicates that abolitionists in his home state of Illinois had their printing press at Alton seized and destroyed by a mob in 1837 for printing opinions that were, according to Ford, “odious to the people.”¹⁰³ So too was William Morgan targeted in 1826 for his desire to print a Masonic expose and William Law in 1844 for broadcasting the existence of plural marriage in

¹⁰³ Ford, *A History of Illinois*, 250-51.

Nauvoo. The mobs that destroyed the presses of the Mormons, abolitionists, and Law's dissenters, however, seem to have taken a different shape than did Morgan's oppressors; each taking and burning their targeted presses in very public displays of aggression, while Morgan disappeared in relative silence.

If a mob was not involved in the silencing of Morgan, there would be a mob in response and the aftermath of the scandal was persecution to a degree and extent unseen by American Masons to that time and from that time since. For Masonry, like the Mormons after them, this persecution led to striking levels of comradery and tribalism in its membership in the decades following the fall of the Anti-Masonic Party and the recovery of American Masonry in the 1840s. Michael Halleran indicates that, during the American Civil War, "the yearning for the strong association and support of the Order remained undimmed — and in fact may have been intensified by the stressful conditions of battle and the attendant absence of normal societal bonds."¹⁰⁴ This tribalism was displayed in the efforts of Union and rebel soldiers and officers preventing or rectifying looting of lodges, eased punishment and aided escape for prisoners of war, and medical intervention for injured enemy combatants.

The uniform hierarchy of blue lodge Masonry includes the use of certain "jewels" as badges of office for the various members of each lodge's leadership. Though uniformity is sought as to the design of each lodge's jewels, the materials used, craftsmanship apparent, and monetary value assigned to these badges ranged wildly from lodge to lodge. New military lodges in the Civil War, for instance, often had jewels hastily made from scrap metal found throughout their camps or the rubble of destroyed buildings or towns by military gun-or-blacksmiths. For the more influential and long-standing lodges, however, money and time were less important factors,

¹⁰⁴ Ford, *A History of Illinois*, 360; Halleran, 139.

allowing them to save the funds necessary to commission the creation of incredible badges painstakingly made from precious metals, inlaid with gems, by artisans well-regarded for their skills in design and craft.¹⁰⁵ As such, these jewels were easy targets for looters — soldier or civilian — heading into abandoned towns ravaged by recent battles. Regardless of the influence of a given lodge, the part-time and recreational nature of Freemasonry left America's lodges unprotected when not in session. This issue was compounded by Masonry's male-centric nature, when many of a given lodge's members were away serving in the armed forces — and therefore unable to assist in securing the lodge — and with the rule of law significantly hindered by the same. The great pains taken by American Masons on both sides of the civil conflict to protect the furnishings of the lodge were demonstrated in cases like that of the rebel defense of Ponchatoula, Louisiana. The rebel commander, Colonel H.H. Miller reported to his superiors that he temporarily suspended hostilities around Ponchatoula and met under a flag of truce with one Colonel Smith of the 165th New York who, among other things, sought to return the jewels and regalia of a local lodge that had been stolen. Miller graciously accepted the Masonic property into his safe keeping and conflicts, thereafter, resumed around the town. In the aftermath of Sherman's March to the Sea, one anonymous writer identified as L.F.J. describes a meeting at her Georgia home during which federal officers deposited the jewels and regalia of her local lodge, found to have been stolen by Union soldiers, into her care to be hidden and returned to the lodge at the close of the war.¹⁰⁶ Halleran clearly demonstrates and evaluates many other similar examples in which the jewels of blue lodges were found to have been stolen and subsequently secured and returned by soldier Masons to their rightful owners. Similarly, Halleran finds several

¹⁰⁵ Halleran, 71.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 64, 70-72.

examples in which Union or rebel commanders stationed guards to protect the lodges of occupied towns or in which they halted a march outside of a conquered town in order to have Mason soldiers search and secure the vestments of a lodge before any looting could begin. In any case, Halleran seeks to display to the reader the distinct bond existent between Masons on either side of the war. The odds that a Mason rescuing the jewels of a lodge would have known the members of that lodge would be astronomical, but the bond was still strong enough to incite a Union Mason to act in favor of a rebel Mason or vice versa. Beyond the official jewels and regalia of plundered lodges, however, Halleran also provides examples of personal Masonic jewelry working in favor of individual Masons throughout the war, as well.

As a means of easy identification between Masons, members serving in the Confederate and Union armies made their affiliation with the order known with embellished pins, rings, and watch fobs or by carrying a diploma certifying one's membership. Wearing or carrying such accoutrements were the difference between life and death for some Masons injured and rescued on the battlefield by fellow Masons. Similarly, Halleran provides reference to an editorial in the *Masonic Review* from 1865 in which the author details finding the body of a rebel soldier with his Masonic diploma spread beside him on the ground, the implication of which would be that a Mason discovering the diploma would speed the injured soldier to a hospital or, if deceased, the discovering Mason would safeguard the deceased's belongings and see that he receives a proper burial. Possession of these means of identification had a benefit for the Mason holding the same, as well as a benefit to whatever artisan was able to supply them in the turbulent economy of the war. Before either the protections extended to prisoners of war by near-universally observed treaty or the ability to construct expansive detainment facilities, those Union or rebel soldiers taken into the custody of their enemies were most often placed in improvised prison camps with,

usually, lacking shelter, bedding, medicine, food, or heat in the winter. Some prisoners relied on their ability to purchase comforts monetarily. Halleran indicates that some such prisoners would make a living by fabricating and selling Masonic jewelry from soup bones or other scavenged materials, later purchased by their prison's guards or by the residents of nearby towns. Captain James N. Bosang of the 4th Virginia Infantry, for instance, was imprisoned at Fort Delaware and, "developed a thriving trade in making jewelry from gutta-percha buttons and resoling shoes." Similarly, Colonel Thomas E. Barker of the 12th New Hampshire wrote that he, "became quite skilled in the manufacture, from the bones of our rations, of rings, charms, Masonic emblems, etc., which were eagerly sought for and purchased by many visitors who were allowed, on certain days of each week, to see us."¹⁰⁷ In some cases, these prisoner Masons were not only given opportunities to improve their situations through industry but were also provided with many necessities without need for manufacturing trinkets to trade or spending their own funds acquiring the extra food, clothes, or bedding needed to survive their stays in prison camps. In these cases, Masons were said to receive whatever they needed from fraternal brothers guarding or administering the prisons in which they were held.

The benefits received with the bonds of fellowship in Freemasonry before and following the Civil War often came in the form of monetary aid, but the nature of war made aid in other forms equally, if not more, important for a brother Mason's survival. Efforts made by Masons to assist their brothers fighting for the other side constituted a delicate issue given the illegality of providing aid or comfort to an enemy. The possibility that their actions could be used as justification for a charge of treason makes the significance of fraternal aid provided by Masons on an opposing side during the Civil War that much more noteworthy. In any case, an implicit

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 120-21.

confidence would be demonstrated to keep the interaction secret. This trust was also displayed in inverse actions, however. Colonel Mason W. Tyler writes of reports received from the field that, “the enemy’s picketts have several times recently called to our men, requesting that some one who was a Mason come out to meet one of their number, with a view of their ascertaining, in what they conceive to be a reliable way, what disposition is made of men deserting to our lines.”¹⁰⁸ In the same fashion in which Confederate commanders sought to gain intelligence regarding their deserting soldiers from the “reliable” source they saw as Union Freemasons, so too were many Mason soldiers trusting of their fraternal brothers on the opposing side when providing them with assistance. In prison camps, this aid was often made in gifts of food, medicine, clothing, or bedding such as in the case of one Lieutenant Hyde chronicled by S.M. Dufur. Dufur writes that,

“he was a Free Mason, and from a piece of bone I had made him a small scarf pin representing the order — the square and compass... I borrowed from him the scarf pin, and going to the gate, I handed it out to a rebel sergeant whom I had seen wearing the same symbol, I said: ‘The man who wears this is lying in a critical condition and I wish you would kindly call upon him.’ He bowed assent, and... the next morning he walked hurriedly into the Lieutenant’s tent, threw down a parcel, and walked out. It contained one pair of drawers, one shirt, a pair of feeting, some medicine and food.”

¹⁰⁸ Mason Whiting Tyler, *Recollections of the Civil War: With Many Original Diary Entries and Letters Written from the Seat of War, and with Annotated References*, ed. William S. Tyler (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1912), 321.

While the aid was well-appreciated, Dufur writes that, “aid came too late,” and Lieutenant Hyde passed.¹⁰⁹ Homer B. Sprague writes of his interaction with a prison guard and fellow Mason during his time in a Confederate prison, “‘as a Mason,’ said he, ‘I’ll feed you; share the last crumb with you; but as a Confederate soldier I’ll fight you till the last drop of blood and the last ditch.’”¹¹⁰ Oftentimes, also, the aid given to Masons was more intangible, such as an opportunity that may not have been available to non-Mason prisoners. Lieutenant A.O. Abbott detailed his experience arriving at Edgefield jail, stating, “the jailor was a [M]ason; and on my certifying to the same fact, we were taken to the basement, where an old negro had kindling a fire, and there we were permitted to dry our rags before being locked up.”¹¹¹ With the necessity that aid given from a Yankee to a rebel and vice versa be kept secret, as well as the inherently secretive nature of Freemasonry, the ability of Masons to acquire the provisions they needed seemed mysterious in its own rite to non-Masons. John R. King writes of another prisoner during his time in a northern prison stating,

“one fellow whom we called Shocky seemed to have a mysterious influence over the Yankees. He was always well dressed and apparently loyal to the South, but it was always a mystery to us how he could go over the wall at a certain place at anytime he desired and always be respected by the guards. We thought it possible that some free masonry was connected with it.”

¹⁰⁹ S.M. Dufur, *Over the Dead Line: Tracked by Blood-Hounds* (Burlington, VT: Free Press Association, 1902), 98-99.

¹¹⁰ Homer B. Sprague, *Lights and Shadows in Confederate Prisons: A Personal Experience, 1864-5* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1915), 38.

¹¹¹ A.O. Abbott, *Prison Life in the South: At Richmond, Macon, Savannah, Charleston, Columbia, Charlotte, Raleigh, Goldsborough, and Andersonville, During the Years 1864 and 1865* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1865), 291-92.

Though a definitive confirmation of “Shocky’s” affiliation with Freemasonry is not given, the practice of favoring a prisoner for his Masonic ties was clearly so common that prisoners, as King demonstrates, would readily assume Masonic involvement if it appeared one man was given any manner of extra care over his fellow prisoners.¹¹² In each case, a Mason making his affiliation known was provided with some semblance of comfort, be it food, clothes, or a fire, that, in some cases, likely staved off death.

It is in narratives of fallen Masons being rescued in the heat or immediate aftermath of battle that Halleran found the most romanticized accounts of Masonry in the Civil War. The introductory account chosen by Halleran for his study of Freemasonry’s effects in the Civil War is that of Brigadier General Lewis A. Armistead of the Confederate Army at the Battle of Gettysburg. Halleran establishes through first-hand accounts and official documentation that Armistead was, beyond a doubt, an active Freemason. With no lingering question on that front, Halleran follows Armistead’s progression in the maneuver now dubbed “Pickett’s Charge” and Armistead’s fatal wounding during the battle. With seemingly contradictory accounts of Armistead’s wounding and evacuation to the rear by Union soldiers, many popular facets of the tale, as circulated by romanticizing Masons, must be false. Nonetheless, it appears that Armistead did, in fact, make Masonic appeals upon his discovery and was transported to a federal Army hospital, his personal effects being handed off in the process to one Union Captain Henry Bingham, a Mason, who ensured their safekeeping. Halleran admits that the burden of proof for this account cannot be conclusively met, but many other similar examples are thoroughly corroborated and appear to be true.¹¹³

¹¹² John R. King, *My Experience in the Confederate Army and in Northern Prisons: Written from Memory* (Clarksburg, WV: United Daughters of Confederacy, 1917), 49.

¹¹³ Halleran, 8-30.

“Know and Publish That We Have All Power”

Tribalism in both Mormonism and Masonry served as a cause for complaints of undue influence heaped on both organizations in the nineteenth century. Illinois Governor Thomas Ford identified undue influence in his *History of Illinois* as causes for the mobs that eventually ran the Mormons out of his state. Ford suggests that if Mormons had settled in settlements throughout what then would be considered the “American West” or, at least, throughout Illinois, many of the concerns he viewed as agitating anti-Mormon sentiments would have been negated. Instead, Ford charges, the Mormons embraced a fortress mentality, gathering new converts together in one portion of the country, establishing a massive city under apparently theo-autocratic rule with militant enforcement, and, thereby, offsetting the influence of other communities or peoples in Illinois.¹¹⁴ Masons, too, were viewed as holding a disproportionate amount of political power epitomized in claims that Masonic control over law enforcement and the courts prevented those responsible for the suspected death of William Morgan from being brought to justice, not unlike the views of the Mormons regarding the trials of those men involved in the murders of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. With the relative prominence of each movement, both Mormonism and Masonry were viewed as powers to be reckoned with, but also as groups of people separated from the whole whose control over civil functions seemed to make violent overthrow the only viable means of mitigating their influence. As a result in each case, Americans largely viewed Mormonism almost solely in the light of its goals to achieve autonomy or, in the meantime, to gather political power into one locale to undercut the influence of other voters. Similarly, Masonry was viewed as an organization devoted to the promotion of its members in economy

¹¹⁴ Ford, *A History of Illinois*, xv, 232, 249-69, 313-21; 329-31; 336; 348; 352, 358-64, 369, 403, 409-11, 413-14, & 481.

and politics that left non-Masons to scrape some semblance of a living from whatever remained. With secrecy — compounding apparent exclusivity — and tribalism as a base, both Mormonism and Masonry appeared to hold an undue level of influence over their respective communities in political favoritism and the enforcement of the law — or lack thereof.

From his control over the purportedly sovereign municipal court to his ultimate plans to run for the presidency, added to by lobbying the federal government to establish a new territory and convert theocratic Nauvoo into a provisional, independent city-state, Joseph Smith's ambitions and — to an even greater degree — his successes troubled and incensed the non-Mormons of Illinois. Smith's reach and that of his city's government seemed to ever exceed their bounds, but somehow never their grasp. With each newly-usurped authority came calls to revoke Nauvoo's charter and rein in the theocratic government running amok in Hancock County. Each attempt to do so either never made it to the floor or was narrowly avoided by vote in the legislature. These attempts were accompanied by flurries of fiery speeches, imploring letters, and mass-signed petitions supporting their charter and government on the part of Nauvoo.¹¹⁵ The transactions of the city council and accounts of public speeches made by church leaders on the subject make clear that the Mormons considered their charter a license for autonomous governance only beholden to state officials in a technical sense, so long as the laws of Nauvoo did not infringe upon the tenets of either the state or federal constitutions. In a public address given on June 20, 1843, Joseph Smith reaffirmed to the Saints following an attempted arrest that, "relative to our City charter, courts, right of Habeas Corpus, etc., I wish you to know and publish that we have all power; and if any man from this time forth says anything to the contrary, cast it

¹¹⁵ Ford, *A History of Illinois*, 396.

into his teeth.”¹¹⁶ Whether or not the church — through its hold on the civil government in Nauvoo — truly held the authority professed by its leadership aside, outlandish discourse in the city council chambers and audacious city ordinances demonstrated to the Mormons’ neighbors in Illinois that this “peculiar people” determined to establish a theocracy on the American frontier was not content to merely hold the quasi-democratic power of a bloc vote, but insisted upon ever-greater authority in pursuit of complete autonomy. The result would be unbridled religious oppression in the form of overt war in Illinois and the forced expulsion of the Mormons from the borders of the United States.

Any proper examination of undue influence among the Mormons — whether it be in Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, or Utah — would be incomplete without first establishing a central tenet of the Mormon faith imperative for the coming of Christ’s millennial reign on the Earth — the literal gathering of Israel. With significant mention in the Bible, as well as the Book of Mormon, and later in revelations given to the successive line of Mormon prophets, the gathering of Israel is a primary duty of the Mormon priesthood. Gathering first involves collecting the peoples of the Earth, spiritually, to the Mormon gospel through proselytizing missions and, later, the establishment of the temporal kingdom of God with a literal, physical gathering of the faithful.¹¹⁷ Mormon doctrine holds that Independence, Missouri is the preordained site for this event, but the church was unable to remain in Missouri amidst fierce opposition. This aside, Joseph Smith directed his followers to gather at the headquarters of the church, first in Ohio, then Missouri, and, for Smith, lastly in Illinois. It was resultant from this policy that the population of Nauvoo

¹¹⁶ Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, *Discourses by Brigham Young, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, His Two Counselors, and Others* (Liverpool: F.D. Richards, 1855), 163-64.

¹¹⁷ Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 25, *Discourses by President John Taylor, His Counselors, the Twelve Apostles, and Others* (Liverpool: John Henry Smith, 1884), 13-22.

skyrocketed at the rate and to the extent that it did. Already having demonstrated — through the persecutions of Ohio and Missouri or the costs and challenges of momentous international migration — their obedience to the directions of the prophet, this burgeoning population vested significant, concentrated democratic influence in the hands of ecclesiastical leadership that was, arguably, unprecedented in the United States. As such, the gathering doctrine of the Mormon Church was not the antidote of strength and stability against mob violence for which church leaders had logically expected, but, instead, intensified sectarian fears and accelerated the heavy hand of non-Mormon vigilantism and xenophobia. The collective influence of the Mormons, as a people, was the root problem seen by their neighbors in Illinois; the influence of the church over the political inclinations of its members was similarly problematic; but a popular view of Joseph Smith as, essentially, the church incarnate created for non-Mormons a singular figure, demonized by alarmist organs of the press, and apparently capable of shifting public policy with the force of 16,000 Mormons in and around Nauvoo by 1845. This influence manifested itself in control over the democratic process, militancy, and the rejection of Mormon Masons in the Grand Lodge of Illinois. It should also be noted that each case of undue influence evaluated here is rooted in the growth and concentration of individual powerholders in the Mormon capital from inherently male institutions: male voters, male soldiers, and male Masons.

The arrival and growth of the Mormon sect in Illinois is equated by Governor Thomas Ford with an earlier rise in that state of, “horse-thieves and counterfeiterers,” who “were so numerous, and so well combined together in many counties, as to set the laws at defiance.” This concept of laws being “set at defiance” is common in Ford’s *History of Illinois*, where he identifies a trend — perhaps not even intentionally — of democratic governance being hijacked by groups of closely-knit, unsavory people intent on protecting their own, right or wrong. “Many

of the sheriffs, justices of the peace, and constables, were of their number,” Ford continues, “and even some of the judges of the county courts; and they had numerous friends to aid them and sympathize with them.” As a result, the agents charged with enforcing the law owed allegiance to the offending parties, making any attempts at securing a warrant or effectively making an arrest nigh impossible. If this were overcome and, “any of them were arrested,” Ford concludes, “they never lacked witnesses to prove themselves innocent.”¹¹⁸ This same rise in population and the control over certain political offices made Nauvoo not only the second-largest city in Illinois, but also a lynchpin of the state’s democratic process. More specifically, the uncanny rise of the Mormon population in Illinois between 1839 and 1846 made Nauvoo a necessary campaign stop for those seeking state offices or certain of those representing Illinois in the Congress of the United States. In these visits, Ford indicates, many of Illinois’ leading men dedicated days on end to courting the prophet and assuring the Mormons that their methods of governance were both proper and justified. It is observed that, despite visits from both the Whig and Democratic parties, the Mormon vote had, with relative consistency, gone to Whig candidates in the races preceding that of 1842. In the gubernatorial race of that year, however, any Whig hopes of securing the Mormon vote seemed dashed by a public statement released on the part of Joseph Smith exhorting his people to vote for Adam W. Snyder, the Democratic candidate.¹¹⁹ This is striking when considered that Mormon views on slavery indicated a liberal-leaning stance that would more closely align with the Whigs than with the Democrats. Such a conclusive departure from the Mormons’ normal policy preferences at the direction of their prophet confirmed the fears of many in Illinois. This willingness to submit to the political whims of church leadership,

¹¹⁸ Ford, *A History of Illinois*, 232-33.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 267-70 & 277-78.

alongside the many Mormon attempts to ‘put the laws at defiance,’ made the Mormons unpopular among their neighbors. When the “horse-thieves and counterfeiters,” or other unpopular peoples of Illinois succeeded in playing the system, as the Mormons had, in the decades prior to the arrival of the saints in that state, a “Regulator” movement rose to handle the obnoxious “organized banditti,” by extra-legal means with powder and bayonet. Ford indicates that local and state officials unofficially sanctioned the actions of the regulators, at times, as they were unable to remove the alleged criminals by normal, legal avenues of administering justice. These regulators came together at night, primarily, and gave their posse a military structure, even going so far as to elect officers. The successes enjoyed by regulator companies depended on the tactical advantages given by superior organization, equipment, and tactics.¹²⁰ If the regulators were to be considered the state’s last line of defense against an unlawful — or, at least, unlawful in the eyes of non-Mormons in the state — usurpation of the democratic process, Mormon efforts to establish, organize, equip, and drill a massive militia would necessarily be received with alarm and dismay by the other peoples of Illinois.

One of the most controversial facets of the Nauvoo charter was that of the Nauvoo Legion. Though the majority of the Mormons who had gathered in Missouri had fled to Illinois by the time of the charter’s passing, the conflict dubbed the “Mormon War” of Missouri was still, to a degree, ongoing at the time Nauvoo’s incorporation was approved. This being the case, the Missouri militancy of the Mormon faith, its Host of Israel, and covert Danites remained fresh on the public mind. At its peak, the Nauvoo Legion constituted an estimated 2,660 men split between two cohorts overseen by Brigadier Generals, all under the command of a Lieutenant General — an office in the Illinois Militia created expressly for the command of the Nauvoo

¹²⁰ Ibid., 233-34.

Legion and a rank in the United States Army said to have only been held by George Washington prior to Joseph Smith's commission.¹²¹ The lofty ranks of the Legion's top commanders certainly presented cause for alarm to outside observers who now witnessed an ecclesiastical leader raised — in both his rank and the size of his immediate command — above any other officer in the United States Armed Forces; it was in the numbers of the Legion's rank-and-file, however, that the true power and, thereby, perceived danger of the Mormon militia was to be found by neighboring non-Mormons. Before the Utah War of 1857 — a conflict also dubbed “Buchanan's Blunder” for its ultimate failure and the “Contractors' War” for its massive expense — the standing, federal army of the United States had never surpassed 18,000 regular soldiers in peacetime, nation-wide, and never greater than 5,000 gathered and drilled together in one locale. The Nauvoo Legion, in contrast, placed over 2,500 well-equipped men under the immediate command of the prophet and within the immediate vicinity of his city.¹²² Among the “wonders and enormities,” of Nauvoo seen in attempts made by the Nauvoo City Council to extend the jurisdiction and authority of their city charter is found in a memorial forwarded to the Congress of the United States which would, among other provisions, require, “U.S. Troops to obey the orders of the Mayor in case of insurrection.” Similarly, the memorial in question, if adopted by the Congress, would grant the powers of a territorial governor to said mayor, — an office then held by Lieutenant General Joseph Smith, Jr. — including the right to call federal troops into the city to, “repel the invasion of mobs, keep the public peace, and protect the innocent from the unhallowed ravages of banditti.”¹²³ Public concern over the military might of Nauvoo was

¹²¹ Richard E. Bennett, *The Nauvoo Legion in Illinois*, 95-110; Ford, *A History of Illinois*, 264-66, & 268.

¹²² Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1967), 179-96; Ford, *A History of Illinois*, 264-66.

¹²³ Ford, *A History of Illinois*, 267 & 269; Dinger, 198n77.

evident in the press, as well as in Ford's *History of Illinois*. The authors of the seminal work on the Mormon Militia, *The Nauvoo Legion in Illinois*, cite the *Warsaw Signal* in July of 1844 as having reported that the "Mormons say they have 4,000 well-drilled troops," and a reporter of the *Alton Telegraph and Democratic Review* as having expressed his confidence that Joseph Smith, "by his mere nod, could command the attendance of 4000 armed men at a day's notice."¹²⁴ Non-Mormon fears regarding the Nauvoo Legion also extended to the type and quality of arms at the disposal of the Mormons — almost certainly rooted in fears that a quasi-official, hastily-gathered band of regulators would be hard pressed to defeat a well-equipped, drilled militia, like the Legion. Thomas Ford writes that official records of the Illinois Militia indicated that, "The Legion had been furnished with three pieces of cannon and about two hundred and fifty stand of small arms," which, due to common fears of another Mormon war in Illinois, "popular rumor increased to the number of thirty pieces of cannon and five or six thousand stand of muskets." Concerns regarding these arms grew to such an extent that Ford, evidently, felt compelled to demand their return after the arrest of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, stating that non-Mormons in Hancock County and its immediate vicinity feared state arms, "would soon be wielded for the conquest of the country; and for their subjection to Mormon domination." Fears of Mormon domination drove all alarmist accounts of the Nauvoo Legion's strength, discipline, and arms, but also translated into many other facets of life in Illinois, including Freemasonry.

All accounts given by Masonic scholars of the Mormons' Masonic involvement in Illinois focus on certain alleged "irregularities." Without exception, these irregularities, it can be argued, were directly related to the number of Masons admitted and raised by the Mormons and

¹²⁴ Richard E. Bennett, *The Nauvoo Legion in Illinois*, 99.

the short period of time in which the same was accomplished. Due to allegations of these improprieties, the records of Nauvoo Lodge were requisitioned by a committee of the Grand Lodge of Illinois for inspection. The subsequent Mormon refusal to hand over their documentation served as a powerful justification for the Grand Lodge's revocation of the Mormon lodges' dispensations — and, in the case of Rising Sun? Lodge, the revocation of its charter — and the declaration of all Mormon lodges — which refused the Grand Lodge's demands that they cease their meetings and work after said revocations — as clandestine. The importance of these allegations rests on the largely democratic nature of a Grand Lodge, in which delegations from constituent lodges represent their members and exercise a single vote for their respective lodges on matters of business presented before that body. Given the ritualistic requirements that members participate in degree ceremonies and given the intimate nature of the ceremonies themselves, American Freemasonry has, throughout its existence, sought to limit the number of members in any one blue lodge. It is for this reason that one might find, for example, five Masonic Halls in a major city and, within each Masonic Hall, five individual blue lodges made up of 30 to 40 members. For the typical blue lodge established in a major city, closer relations with its neighboring lodges would not, necessarily, translate into ideological ties that would conflict with the greater body of the Grand Lodge. A separation of Illinois Mormons into eight or more individual lodges would, however, create a significant voting bloc within the Grand Lodge that would have been opposed by many other Illinois Masons not of that faith. Issues of doctrine aside, it was a fear of undue Mormon influence in the Grand Lodge that prompted much of the initial opposition to the establishment of lodges at Nauvoo and the resulting investigations — and subsequent obstruction and contempt to said investigations, on

the part of Mormon lodges — served as the most viable, legalistic reasoning for Mormon expulsion in Illinois and exclusion in Utah.

Despite their fears of Mormon bloc domination in the democratic functions of civil government and the Grand Lodge, Freemasons, also, were viewed as having a disproportionate level of influence — to a greater degree in the early decades of the nineteenth century than would be the case later — for the segment of the population represented in its membership. David B. Davis identifies fears of Illuminati puppet-masters controlling the public institutions of Freemasonry and its thinly veiled ceremonies as a front to direct secret agendas from the shadows. Through this mechanism, supposedly, the leaders of the United States and Europe were chosen and groomed by unseen power brokers. The Masonic affiliations of many leading men in Western politics and culture, such as Peter the Great, Emperor of Russia, Benjamin Franklin, Oscar Wilde, and Ludwig van Beethoven, would seem to affirm these conspiratorial beliefs. Clinging to the prominent symbology, as well as the architectural and geometric doctrines of Freemasonry, some have also sought validation for conspiracies of pervasive Masonic influence in the designs of the public architecture of Western nations, the symbols adorning currency, or even rhythmic patterns in music. These purported Masonic influences in Western political structures, public architecture, the arts, and symbol try do not, necessarily, represent direct influences of the unique teachings of Masonry or the universality of its thoughtfully applied symbols, but rather denotes their reception among prominent Western leaders. As such, although Freemasonry, like Mormonism, would rise dramatically in membership by the end of the nineteenth century in the United States, the excessive influence wielded by the organization was, for lack of a better metaphor, seen in terms of the quality, rather than the quantity of its membership. In these terms, Masons would be appointed and elected to positions of greater and

greater authority, not by bloc vote, but through the collective influence of prominent Masons in the market, arts, or government. Finally, this progressive influence of the Masonic community could, theoretically, then be harnessed by any given Mason to secure contracts, make fortunes, win elections, pass legislation, silence enemies, or acquit friends. With so broad a field to draw from, a more manageable review of Masonry's influence will be made within Mormon Nauvoo; specifically, Mormon desires to use Masonic influence for protection, as political currency, or as a means of enforcement or punishment can be found extensively during the Nauvoo Era.

The miscarriage of justice in the case of William Morgan's disappearance has been cited repeatedly herein to demonstrate all three aspects of repulsion — secrecy, tribalism, and undue influence — discussed in this study and the example readily lends itself to further highlighting the intersection of these three characteristics in relation to Masonry. In order to provide additional content to the discussion surrounding the protection and acquittal of American Masons from legal concerns, however, the example of Joseph Smith can, remarkably, also be utilized. As a result of Masonic allegations that Mormon temple worship incorporates Masonic ceremony, symbolism, and teachings, church leaders have consistently sought to explain why Joseph Smith would not only join, but also promote the fraternity to the members of the priesthood when the Book of Mormon seems to make clear God's aversion to oath-bound, secret societies. These inquiries become particularly important when examined with later admonitions from church leaders in Utah against joining such organizations and stipulations that Masons and members of other related societies be disbarred from ecclesiastical leadership. The significant answer for this study given by some in the church's leadership — to include both President Anthony Ivins and church historian E. Cecil McGavin — is that Joseph Smith, having suffered trials and persecutions most Americans can now scarcely imagine before the settling of the church in

Illinois, sought from Freemasonry the friendship and acceptance of non-Mormons and, in particular, the political protection believed to be extended to Masons by their fraternal brothers of higher standing.¹²⁵

In one such case, a writ for the arrest of Joseph Smith was issued on June 21, 1843, who was subsequently taken into custody by Sheriff Joseph H. Reynolds of Jackson County, Missouri, under that authority on June 23 before being transported to Dixon, Illinois. Upon learning of the arrest, one of the prophet's close allies, Stephen Markham — Market Master of Nauvoo and a colonel in the Nauvoo Legion — enlisted the assistance of two local attorneys to assist him in securing a writ of *Habeas Corpus*. At this time, Markham also informed Lucien Strang, “the owner of the stage,” utilized by Sheriff Reynolds, “that the Sheriff intended to drag [Smith] away immediately to Missouri & prevent his taking out a writ of Habeas Corpus.” Strang, in turn, “made this known to the Masons of Dixon,” who “gave the Sheriff to understand that they should not take [Smith] away without giving him a fair trial.” Though both good citizenship and Masonic conduct would compel it, the fact that the “Masons of Dixon,” stepped forward to defend the prophet, given the already-visible tensions between the Mormons and their gentile neighbors, is significant.¹²⁶ Having been successful in securing the assistance of non-Mormon Masons at this juncture, it is possible that this experience instilled some expectation of further protection — which, if authorities like Ivins and McGavin are to be believed was Smith's singular drive for seeking membership in a Masonic lodge — in the mind of the prophet.

That Joseph Smith, also, is quoted as having called for aid, “as a widow's son,” at the time of his murder is certainly telling as to his views of Freemasonry as a means of influencing

¹²⁵ Ivins, 178-79; McGavin, 8-14.

¹²⁶ Joseph Smith, *Journal of 10 March 1843-14 July 1843*, 266 & 266n522.

the actions of others. If knowledge of the life-saving effects of Freemasonry in the Civil War to come — as detailed by Michael A. Halleran — had been available to the Smiths, an expectation that Masons in a hostile mob would lower their weapons in response to the Masonic cry of distress would not be unreasonable, by any means. The anger in Illinois and the deep roots of the anti-Mormon sentiments around Nauvoo, however, seem to have been so powerful as to blind the Masons in the crowd with passion far greater than that felt fighting for either the Union or the Confederacy two decades later; a call that, by oath, would be universally recognized and honored by the brothers of the fraternity fell on deaf ears, demonstrated by not only the balls fired on Smith in his fall from the second-story window of Carthage Jail when he uttered the call, but also those fired after his body had been dragged and slumped against a wall a short distance away. It should be noted — purely to demonstrate the impossibility of making an accurate comparison between the necessity of assisting Masons in good standing on the battlefields of the Civil War and doing the same for expelled Masons, like those of Nauvoo — that Smith was not a regular Mason, as recognized within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Illinois and, as such, would not, technically, be entitled to the protection of any Mason whose membership fell under its authority. This is not to say, of course, that human decency should not have prompted one of the “mobocrats” in question to halt the proceedings before blood could be spilt. Beyond the political, legal, or physical protections that the brothers Smiths desired but, ultimately, did not receive from their Masonic affiliation, it is also possible that Joseph sought after accolades similar to those he so enjoyed from his civil offices in Nauvoo and his prestigious command over the Nauvoo Legion. It is, lastly, also possible that Smith saw positively in Freemasonry what agitators negatively feared most — a pool of collective influence capable of propelling him to ever-higher office and, possibly, even to the nation’s highest office.

Although Thomas Ford decries Smith's disastrous bid for the presidency as having only compounded the appearance of excessive Mormon influence in Illinois that, arguably, led to his death and although observers have largely dismissed the prophet's chances of winning a national election, Smith and his newly-assembled Council of Fifty — a spurious order of the church primarily founded to handle Smith's political campaigning and, eventually, the heady tasks of world governance — seem to have believed their influence would allow them to succeed. Part of this confidence may have been derived from the prophet's Masonic affiliation and that of his principal advisors. American Freemasonry did, after all, claim as members a small majority of the eleven men who served as president before the Mormon expulsion from Illinois in 1846. With illustrious names and heritages like those of presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, and James K. Polk attached to Freemasonry by that time, some small credit may be given to the fraternity's influence in the election of presidents. Though Smith never did have an opportunity to wield the influences of Freemasonry and Mormonism to secure residence in the White House, Freemasonry was used with the Mormons for political ends. Masonic scholars studying the interactions of Mormonism and Masonry have consistently remarked on the risks taken by the second Grand Master of the second Grand Lodge of Illinois, PGM Abraham Jonas, who, contrary to the recommendations and wishes of Bodily Lodge of Quincy, issued a dispensation to the Mormons and set them to work in 1842, making the prophet a Master Mason at sight, and largely defending the Mormon lodges for the remainder of his term as Grand Master. Jonas' actions, as far as can be surmised, were in service of his ambition to run for public office in Illinois, necessitating his acquisition of the Mormon vote and, thus, prompting him to risk his neck appealing to the prophet.

Though perhaps not to the same degree in each case, PGM Abraham Jonas with the Grand Lodge of Illinois, Illinois Governor Thomas Carlin with the Illinois Militia, and Prophet Joseph Smith with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints all suffered a painful embarrassment in May of 1842 when it was discovered that John Cook Bennett — by all appearances a model citizen of Illinois, previously — was actually a twice-disgraced former Mason from Ohio who abandoned a wife and child travelling to Illinois, where he subsequently used his new-found religious authority to seduce Mormon women. Having granted to Bennett in 1839, a short time after his arrival in Illinois, a commission under the rank of Brigadier General of Dragoons, later installed to the office of State Quartermaster General, and, within two years, promoted to the rank of Major General, the state government and militia not only lost face for having conferred on Bennett such lofty posts, but also bore the unhappy distinction of being the vessel by which Bennett fraudulently convinced both the Mormons and Masons in Illinois of his trustworthiness. It was amidst recommendations and lobbying on the part of Bennett that the Grand Lodge of Illinois, specifically its Grand Master, was convinced to establish a lodge in Nauvoo. Finally, presented to the prophet as both a Mason and a high-ranking general officer of the state militia, Joseph Smith readily accepted Bennett as an addition to the highest echelon of the Mormon power structure. Upon Bennett's discovery, Grand Master Jonas demanded of Nauvoo Lodge a thorough, all-inclusive, and unerring investigation into the matter, a "public" hearing before the lodge, and whatever Masonic punishment the lodge deemed necessary. Bennett had, by this time, confessed to the prophet and resigned his position as mayor of Nauvoo, but this did not satisfy all injured parties. Grand Master Jonas' earnest pursuit of a very public shaming of Bennett in the form of what might be argued was a redundant investigation following the accused's confession, PGM Mervin B. Hogan argues, demonstrates not only the

personal stakes in the matter for Jonas after the ready welcome of Bennett and the greater institution of Mormon Masonry under his leadership, but also that of the Grand Lodge, as a whole, in the wake of the Morgan Scandal a mere 20 years ago. The telling aspect of Bennett's story, in this context, is that the primary public trial pursued by the Mormons — though he was required to tender a confession and resignation to the City Council — was a Masonic trial before Mormon Masons with Bennett's Masonic affiliation on the line — though it had been learned previously that he was not a Mason in good standing when he entered the Grand Lodge of Illinois and, therefore, lacked recognition as a regular Mason to begin with.¹²⁷

This was a common occurrence in Nauvoo as, for a time, most aspects of Mormon priesthood and Masonic life seemed to lack much distinction one from the other. As a result, potential punishments for wrongdoing faced by many, though not all, priesthood holders now not only included being disfellowshipped from the church, but also being expelled from a Mormon lodge and, thereby, forfeiting all Masonic benefits and recognition outside of the church, as well. For insurance, the Nauvoo City Council minutes indicate that William Law, then second counselor in the First Presidency, had been visited by a Nauvoo policeman who had heard of a plot to, “put [Law] out of the way in 3 months,” stating that this task was sworn on certain members of the police force by the mayor, Joseph Smith, “according to Masonic degradation,” to be carried out in secret, as Smith considered Law to be his personal “Brutus.” Smith writes in his journal that charges were preferred against Dr. Robert D. Foster — a justice of the peace and surgeon general of the Nauvoo Legion — for, “abusing the Marshall Henry G. Sherwood & abusive language towards... Samuel H. Smith.” After Foster offered a confession before the assembled lodge and, evidently, Joseph Smith speaking at length in Foster's defense, he was

¹²⁷ Hogan, *John Cook Bennett*, 2-23.

granted forgiveness — though he would later be excommunicated.¹²⁸ Other cases tried on charges of “unmasonic” or “gross unmasonic conduct” appear throughout the lodge’s minute book and the journals of the prophet, including those brought against, again, Robert D. Foster, as well as William and Wilson Law for their hand in publishing the *Nauvoo Expositor*.¹²⁹ These examples demonstrate that charges could be brought against a Mason in Nauvoo for lying, using profanity, or speaking derogatorily about a fellow Master Mason. In effect, a priesthood holder could be brought before the lodge for most any slight and, with the prophet opposing the accused, conviction would be a near certainty. Through Freemasonry, therefore, Mormon leaders wielded new powers of enforcement and influence over their members.

Repulsion: Conclusions

While Mormonism and Freemasonry share many characteristics that could be spun either positively or negatively in each case, depending on one’s perspective, the factors that prompted repulsion, violence, and, at times, fatal opposition to both movements are easily identified and too numerous to be explored at length here. With the secrecy of Mormonism and Masonry as a foundation, added to by the tribalistic or herd mentality evident in each, and capped by fears — whether they be based in reality or products of alarmist fiction — of excessive or undue influence, Mormonism and Masonry share far more in common than symbols, grips, oaths, or terminology. As John Corrigan and Lynn S. Neal, alongside David B. Davis, demonstrate, Mormonism and Masonry fit within a broader class of socio-religious minorities that suffered

¹²⁸ Joseph Smith, Jr., *Journal of December 1841-December 1842*, ebook, 123-24, Joseph Smith Papers, accessed May 8, 2020, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1841-december-1842/1>.

¹²⁹ Joseph Smith, Jr., *Journal of 1 March-22 June 1844*, ebook, 105 & 105n262, Joseph Smith Papers, accessed May 8, 2020, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1842-june-1844-book-4-1-march-22-june-1844/1>.

extensively at the hands of nineteenth-century nativist agitators and writers. The attempts made throughout the century to define and consolidate ideas of Americanism, particularly during the sectarian crises that culminated in the American Civil War, instead further divided the many peoples of the United States in a paradox of unity-seekers spearheading excision, enforcing segregation, and, ultimately, insulating minorities found to sit outside of the “acceptable” realm of the American social order. This trend, overarching many others, defines the status quo of social evolution in nineteenth-century America.

Chapter III

The Masculine Status Quo: *The Contrast* of Mormonism and Masonry

Mainstream Masculinity: An Introduction

In the nation's desperate search for a unifying definition of Americanism, no one organization nor any one sect was capable of consistently fitting within the framework that was to be "American." This national identity crisis was born out of twin American experiments in democracy and capitalism; unique and progressive tenets of the new nation that challenged the individual American's conception of who, in fact, he or she was. In his seminal work on the United States in the antebellum period, *What Hath God Wrought*, Daniel W. Howe observes that, following Andrew Jackson's spectacular victory over the British at New Orleans in January of 1815, "the past had been defeated," meaning that the future, then, had arrived. This leap forward was a necessary step in the evolution of the United States on the world stage, "but where did America's future lie?" This question not only overarches a century of incredible advances, but also underlies the uncertainty that fueled an unprecedented era of domestic contentions, distrust, and violence in the United States. "Though Americans agreed in rejecting the traditional class privilege exemplified by the British army and Europe, in general," debates over the future of agriculture, industry, or technology raged on, feeding into divisive debates over the place of different political, social, economic, or religious beliefs in the greater vision of a unified American identity among its many constituent peoples that was so fiercely sought after by Americans of the day and, arguably, is still sought after in the present. "To those great questions," Howe concludes, "the rival political parties of the coming decades, Democrats and Whigs, offered sharply divergent answers." Howe's evaluation of the Antebellum Era

demonstrates that, at their core, the sectarian crises of the period were products of a new, uncertain future fast eroding what had been the traditional American social order.¹³⁰

As the United States transitioned from the solidification of the American republic in the years following the War of 1812 to the destabilizing partisan conflicts of the 1840s and 1850s, the change and evolution propelling the nation towards civil war only accelerated. James McPherson, in his seminal work on the Civil War Era, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, describes “growth” as the hallmark of American society and, according to McPherson, “never was that more true than in the first half of the nineteenth century.” This label of “growth” can be and has been applied to abstract political evolution or social progress, but what McPherson describes, initially, is a literal, physical expansion exemplified by, “an unparalleled rate of growth... in three dimensions: population, territory, and economy,” from which came evolution. “Regarded as ‘progress’ by most Americans,” McPherson explains, “this unrestrained growth had negative as well as positive consequences.” The steady pace of national expansion encouraged westward migration — displacing native peoples; the swift rise of the American market economy and the exodus of laborers to the American West encouraged immigration — sparking conflicts with ethnic or religious minorities; population growth expanded economic demand and prompted innovations of industry that introduced cheap products of mass-production — decimating the economic production of women and displacing skilled artisans.¹³¹ As each of these examples of social improvement formed and progressed, the basic unit in the system — the American — was also caught in flux.

¹³⁰ Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1, 4-7, & 15-18.

¹³¹ James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 6-13.

The American Man

With church offices, callings, and administration firmly in the hands of the patriarchal priesthood and with free-born men, exclusively, receiving the enlightenment of Freemasonry's mysteries, both Mormonism and Masonry represent — at least in terms of their nineteenth-century social structures and power dynamics — inherently-male institutions. As such, the basic unit for this study is not simply the individual American, then, but rather the American male, specifically. With manhood as an additional lens, another layer to the American identity crisis of the nineteenth century becomes clear. In his seminal work, *Manhood in America*, Michael Kimmel explores shifting conceptions of masculinity in the United States as they occurred, in context, explaining that,

“Putting manhood in historical context presents it differently, as a constantly changing collection of meanings that we construct through our relationships with ourselves, with each other, and with our world. Manhood is neither static nor timeless. Manhood is not the manifestation of an inner essence; it’s socially constructed. Manhood does not bubble up to consciousness from our biological constitution; it is created in our culture. In fact, the search for a transcendent, timeless definition of manhood is itself a sociological phenomenon—we tend to search for the timeless and eternal during moments of crisis.”

In these terms, the search for transcendent Americanism can be seen, clear and underscored, alongside the search for transcendent manhood, both precipitated by concurrent political, economic, and religious crises with the shift of gender relations overarching. Dana D. Nelson argues in her 1998 work, *National Manhood*, that,

*“from privileged merchants to farmers, shifts of authority, affiliation, and capital in the early nation seem to have reconfigured men’s experience of and intensified their interest in manliness. Fears over masculine identity as experienced in the family, and about masculine rivalry foregrounded in the market transition became more urgent as these were attached to questions of national stability.”*¹³²

This rivalry mentioned by Nelson certainly applied between individual men as success in the market economy pitted man and man against one another and where in conceptions of capitalist manhood necessitated that, to some extent, one man become victor over the other; however, rivalry was also apparent between varying types of manhood that competed for first position and, thereby, defining a unifying American manhood. In the nineteenth century, this transcendent manhood cited by Kimmel and intimated by Nelson was caught in a contest between three archetypes, two old and one new.¹³³

In order to easily lay out his three identified archetypes of American masculinity, Kimmel opens his study with the example of *The Contrast*, “a five-act comedy by Royall Tyler,” produced in 1787, which “posed the most challenging question before the newly independent nation: What kind of nation were we going to be?” Merging conceptions of Americanism and manhood, the playwright presents his audience with the three archetypes of American masculinity: the genteel patriarch, the heroic artisan, and the self-made man. The patriarch and the artisan, Kimmel explains, represent two archetypes of colonial and European manhood existent before independence. The self-made man, in contrast, was new and rising fast. The conflict amongst the three archetypes and, ultimately, the self-made man’s victory over the other

¹³² Dana D. Nelson, *National Manhood: Capitalist Citizenship and the Imagined Fraternity of White Men* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 37.

¹³³ Kimmel, 5 & 16-17.

two mirrors the developments of American democracy and egalitarianism, capitalism, and fraternalism as it entered and navigated the nineteenth century.¹³⁴ The looming question for the American male was whether to cling to the manhood of the patriarch and the artisan or make the leap to the prevailing masculinity of the self-made man. The ultimate success of this new archetype of the idyllic American man notwithstanding, his rise and the fall of his counterparts were by no means immediate, consistent, or permanent. Similarly, the rise of an entrepreneurial masculinity did not mean that the artisan or the patriarch disappeared. These competing classes of masculinity were the horses to the gambling of competing classes of Americans, each intent on proving the superiority of his chosen or natural archetype. How Mormonism and Masonry would interact with and find prevalence among each would determine their place in the status quo in the nineteenth century and, thereby, their embracement or banishment by the broader court of American public opinion and its definitions of “Americanism.”

The Patriarch - “Thomas Jefferson at Monticello”

“To the Genteel Patriarch, manhood meant property ownership and a benevolent patriarchal authority at home, including the moral instruction of his sons. A Christian gentleman, the Genteel Patriarch embodied love, kindness, duty, and compassion, exhibited through philanthropic work, church activities, and deep involvement with his family.”¹³⁵

The American patriarch represented an idealized masculinity prevalent in the colonies and early republic by the emerging nation’s imperial forefathers. The archetype’s decline

¹³⁴ Ibid., 13-42.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 16.

throughout the nineteenth century was largely due to its foreign origins. “It was, of course, an ideal inherited from Europe,” Kimmel explains, rooted in the classist social order of England and other preeminent imperialist powers and imitated by their colonial citizenry. The idyllic patriarchy was espoused by men like Washington and was dedicated to the same lifestyle and ideals promoted as the archetype of the Jeffersonian yeoman farmer. As such, the American patriarch maintained his independence through self-sufficiency and subsistence farming, reliant on his land ownership to maintain and control his family. Church activities and education, according to Kimmel, encompass much of the patriarch’s leisure time, but his presence in the home is consistent and his involvement with his family enriching. Domestic, settled, and — above all — pious, the American patriarch, fundamentally, clashed with the capitalist necessities of mobility and worldliness

That the idealized patriarch was in decline by the mid-nineteenth century demonstrates its absence from the American status quo of masculinity. It would be in moral portrayals of the benevolent patriarch, however, that Mormonism would perpetuate the archetype into the twentieth century. Mormon men of Nauvoo presided over their households and placed considerations of the church and gospel above all others. By moving his family to the swampy home of the Church on the Mississippi, the Mormon patriarch had, already, demonstrated the primacy of his faith. This singular fact places the Mormon father in contrast to the mainstream sensibilities of the period. While religion was certainly a regular facet of public life during the Antebellum Period, the increasing secularization of American life had rendered faith observance limited to, largely, church attendance on the sabbath and nothing more. Those who continued to incorporate religion into work, school, politics, leisure, or, to a lesser extent, home life —

Catholics, Jews, and, yes, Mormons — were viewed alongside their respective religious sects with apprehension and suspicion by many Americans, including Masons.

Though Freemasonry involves religious overtones, biblical content, and spiritual ceremony, the fraternity makes clear that it is not a religion. Lynn Dumenil identifies Masonry's quasi-religious nature and deist application as having been primary attractors for many nineteenth-century American men, given the rise of pluralism in American society. In some cases, even, Freemasons will attend church together each sabbath, rotating services each week and meeting at the lodge before and after, giving religious services an added element of sociability and insulation from any one doctrine or congregation. Dumenil, also, identifies Masonic desires to escape from the home in sharp contrast to the idealistic benevolence of the patriarchal archetype and his constant involvement in domestic affairs. In both cases, these aspects of Freemasonry appear to appease mainstream sensibilities of the period, while Mormonism's idyllic patriarchalism appears to be excessively theocratic and domestic.

The Artisan - "Paul Revere, Standing Proudly at His Forge"

*"Independent, virtuous, and honest, the Heroic Artisan is stiffly formal in his manners with women, stalwart and loyal to his male comrades. On the family farm or in his urban crafts shop, he is an honest toiler, unafraid of hard work, proud of his craftsmanship and self-reliance."*¹³⁶

Perhaps best identified by his sense of economic skill and craftsmanship, chivalric but detached relations with the opposite sex, and fraternal loyalty, the artisan was, in the world of *The Contrast*, the most accurate representation of Americanism to the playwright, while the self-

¹³⁶ Ibid., 16.

made man was, ironically, a minor side character. Nonetheless, the mercantile realm in which the artisan practices his craft and earns his keep is like the entrepreneurial spirit of the self-made man, though his establishment in a skilled trade or craft anchors and distinguishes him from the mobility of the true capitalist. Exemplifying the virtues of Jeffersonian liberty and heralding his firm belief in self-governance, the artisan was praised as the “yeoman of the city.” The strict manners of the artisan with the fairer sex and, one can assume, insistence upon the separation of spheres is indicative, perhaps, of the artisan’s place in between the discarded patriarch and the mainstream entrepreneur. Finally, the artisan’s care for his craft and his fraternal spirit — such a man that might be expected to maintain membership in a guild, Odd-Fellowship, or Freemasonry — was certainly a mainstream sensibility for the latter half of the nineteenth century, entering the “golden years of fraternalism.”

Of the three available archetypes, it would be with the artisan that the economic experiments of the Mormons, arguably, fit best. With a focus on communal, economic security in which the displaced skilled craftsman could be supported by the excess earnings of his fellow saints, the United Order of Enoch, as the Mormon economic system was known, represented a tight-knit fraternal affiliation between participating church members with monetary benefits. In terms of the relationship of the sexes, Nauvoo Mormonism stepped beyond the mainstream or even “acceptable” bounds of the public and private spheres. Having ordained the women of the Relief Society, who gladly used their ordinations in a manner like that of the priesthood, Joseph Smith disrupted the gender status quo and even invited the ridicule of his own followers. The insistence of his wife that the female auxiliary be called a “relief” society, rather than a “benevolent” society also stands out. Emma Smith’s reasoning for this naming convention was that benevolent societies existed throughout the United States, but she intended to make the

Relief Society into something wholly unique. Certainly, the inquisitorial powers wielded by the women of the Relief Society, also, disrupted the traditional order and alarmed many observers. After the martyrdom of the prophet, one of those who was alarmed by the female authority of the Relief Society, Brigham Young, put an end to their influence by dissolving the organization after seizing control of the church. The over correction of Brigham Young in banning all female meetings, however, could also be viewed as a disruption in the other extreme. Evident in the intense Masonic interest of Nauvoo, the nature of the Mormon priesthood, and the use of the term “fraternity” to describe the church, the early church could certainly be viewed as having a mainstream tendency towards fraternalism.

The brothers of the Craft would, by mere name alone, almost certainly identify with the archetype of the artisan. His focus on craftsmanship and fraternal bonds could very likely be direct references to Freemasonry or Odd-Fellowship in the United States. Considering that the reference may be to a guild, rather than a secret society, the Masonic imperatives of brotherly love and charitable giving would lend themselves well to the economic outlook of a skilled laborer in the nineteenth century. The strict manners and relations of the artisan with the opposite sex seem to align well with the sharply delineated and subordinate nature of female Masonic auxiliaries — if permitted at all — and the separation of male and female leisurely activities and sociability. In this regard, Masonic gender relations align almost perfectly with the permissible forms of female involvement in moral instruction and advocacy outside the home, particularly in the requirement that female chapters be overseen by a male patron. As a fraternal secret society, it need not be observed that Freemasonry espouses fraternalism, but Masonry’s distinction as the oldest and most common fraternal order throughout the golden age of fraternalism is notable in its sovereign right to dictate what “mainstream” fraternalism is in the United States. Though the

artisan failed as the transcendent manhood in America, its personification in Freemasonry places it on the middle ground of the three archetypes.

The Entrepreneur - “Franklin Cared a Great Deal about Money”

“In the growing commercial and, soon, industrial society of the newly independent America, the Self-Made Man seemed to be born at the same time as his country. A man on the go, he was, as one lawyer put it in 1838, ‘made for action, and the bustling scenes of moving life, and not the poetry or romance of existence.’ Mobile, competitive, aggressive in business, the Self-Made Man was also temperamentally restless, chronically insecure, and desperate to achieve a solid grounding for a masculine identity.”

Kimmel argues that with the domination of the American economy by the capitalist market came the domination of American manhood by the self-made man. As such, the manhood of this entrepreneur grew to incorporate the far vaster collection of idyllic traits necessary to represent the American nation and its dedication to pluralism. The image of the self-made man, Kimmel explains, was not uniquely American, — this same archetype was referred to as “*nouveaux riches*,” the newly wealthy, in France — however, “in America, the land of immigrants and democratic ideals, the land without hereditary titles, they were present from the start, and they came to dominate much sooner.” With the entrepreneur’s economic system came other incumbent philosophies; egalitarianism, for example, provided all an “equal opportunity to either succeed or fail,” at once propelling one man to fabulous wealth and relegating his neighbor to destitute squalor; individualism, further, praised a man’s successes and freed him of responsibility to those who failed, inflating the masculinity of the victors by deflating that of the

losers. The necessity of risk and monetary success in the market was not only required for the entrepreneur's continued economic prosperity but was the single-most imperative support for his carefully constructed masculinity.¹³⁷

Early Mormonism and its experiments in the United Order of Enoch, the church's communalistic society — the mission of which was the redistribution of wealth and protections against the volatility of the capitalist market, — most clearly put early Mormonism in dissonance with the entrepreneurial masculinity of the Self-Made Man. This inherent conflict exhibited in Mormon economic communitarianism could have several possible origins or influences. Of course, to the Mormon theologian, these origins are divine and to the Mormon historian, these origins are anciently inspired. Ephraim E. Ericksen, however, writes that the United Order rose out of “a time when there was considerable interest taken in communistic enterprises,” suggesting that Sidney Rigdon influenced its establishment. Rigdon, Ericksen explains, “undoubtedly became interested in Robert Owen's communistic system through the famous debates carried on between his friend, [Alexander] Campbell, and Owen in 1829.” During the Nauvoo years and, more importantly, “the early years when the ideals and institutions of Mormonism were taking shape, Rigdon was intimately associated with Joseph Smith, standing in authority next to him for a number of years. It is very probable, therefore, that Rigdon carried over into Mormonism Owen's communistic doctrine so generally discussed at that time,” Ericksen concludes. Hence, it was from other communal utopias that Smith obtained his desire to apply socialist policies to his new religious kingdom.¹³⁸ Political scientist Joseph A. Geddes agrees, “that Joseph Smith was informed concerning current socialistic and communistic

¹³⁷ Kimmel, 17-18 & 44-45.

¹³⁸ Ephraim E. Ericksen, *The Psychological and Ethical Aspects of Mormon Group Life* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1922), 17.

experiments, there can be no doubt,” stating that Owen, along with Shakers throughout New York and Separatists in Ohio, “attracted the attention of the nation and imbued with fire and spirit plans for reform,” and, with Ericksen, suggests that Smith was so thoroughly influenced by these movements through his association with Sidney Rigdon.¹³⁹ The success of other communalistic utopian experiments of the day almost certainly influenced the prophet’s ultimate decision in the Mormons’ economic policies, but the spark that caused Smith to search out a new economic order could very well have been his experiences with the harsh, unforgiving nature of the capitalist system.

Joseph Smith’s interests in providing means of cooperative economic protections for his saints could be resultant from his economically troubled past. After opening a general store following his wedding in 1802, the prophet’s father, Joseph Smith, Sr., set out to export crystalized ginseng, readily found growing wild in his home state of Vermont, which was massively valued in China. In order to profit most from his foreign venture, Richard L. Bushman explains, Smith cut out the middlemen by contracting a ship and crew himself and, as a result, “assumed the whole burden of risk.” In the end, Smith was cheated by the agent he hired to make the sale overseas, was owed \$2,000 in uncollectable debts for his store’s inventory and owed his suppliers \$1,800 for those same goods. The result was a fall into tenant farming and poverty for the Smith family and constant moves between farms from 1803 to 1816.¹⁴⁰ Agricultural failures followed, according to the prophet’s mother, Lucy Smith. “The first year our crops failed... The crops the second year were as the year before—a perfect failure... The next year an untimely frost destroyed the crops.” These conditions were serious enough for the family decide it would

¹³⁹ Joseph A. Geddes, “The United Order Among the Mormons (Missouri Phase)” (PhD diss. Columbia University, 1922), 19-21.

¹⁴⁰ Bushman, 29-31.

be necessary to move again to Palmyra, New York in 1816 and for neighbors to offer the Smiths a collective monetary gift to assist them. This act of charity was, “utterly refused,” Lucy continues, because “the idea of receiving assistance in such a way as this was indeed very repulsive to my feelings and I rejected their offer.”¹⁴¹ The elder Joseph Smith’s endeavors in the mercantile economy seem to indicate an aspiration toward to the entrepreneurial masculine ideal and would, to an extent, explain the offense taken by his household to offers of charity made as a result of their shortfalls. In his documentary history, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, D. Michael Quinn details a collection of folk magic charms retained and preserved by the descendants of Hyrum Smith and used by the various members of the Smith family before the establishment of the church. One such item, a juniper talisman apparently worn by Joseph Smith, Sr. around this time in the Smiths’ tale, was meant to treat his tendency to, “melancholy,” or, as Mormon psychiatrist C. Jess Groesbeck postulated, “a clinical depression that hampered his ability to function.” This depression would surely have been exacerbated by the family’s economic struggles and, as provider of the household, would have been both cause and effect of the same.¹⁴² Nelson writes that American men of this period, “described male economic failure as evidence of effeminacy,” thereby Smith’s economic shortcomings and agricultural failures would have translated into a prolonged period of emasculation and new or worsened depression, necessitating the charms.¹⁴³ Having witnessed his father’s struggles in trade, the loss of the family farm, and, specifically, the emotional troubles resulting from these events, Joseph Smith Jr. would have known firsthand the difficulty of securing one’s manhood with commercial

¹⁴¹ Lucy Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother* (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft Publishing, 1958), 59-61.

¹⁴² D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City, UT: Signature Books, 1998), 108 & 111.

¹⁴³ Nelson, 37.

success and the chronic economic instability of the landless. It is, then, of little surprise that the prophet would strive, through his church, to provide economic safeguards to himself, his family, and his followers and, then, seek a new and more stable masculinity epitomized by land ownership and pious religious fervor, the divine patriarch.

Freemasonry, according to Masonic writer Robert G. Davis, did not entirely embrace the new entrepreneurial masculine order. Davis claims that the fraternity sought to reinvent the artisan, setting aside the self-made man, but his evaluation leans on the ritual's rhetorical praise for the craftsman, exhibited in ritual and the assertion that European artisans were able to combine work with leisure, as American Masons did in their tavern meetings of the eighteenth century.¹⁴⁴ Additional evaluation in the nineteenth century, on the other hand, suggests that Masonry, in fact, sought to embrace the commercial ideals of the day and offered its members the opportunities to pursue the mainstream masculinity of the capitalist market with fraternal support structures of their own. The possibility of receiving financial aid from one's fellow Masons should one be cheated as Joseph Smith Sr. was or should their crops fail as his did, of course, is an important factor in this regard. However, trade within the fraternity presented opportunities to preemptively secure business with trustworthy partners, closed off from non-Mason competition outside the lodge room and jurisprudential avenues of enforcing agreements out of court. Lynn Dumenil explains that, given the concerns of some Masons that men were joining the order purely for mercenary gain, some Grand Lodges eventually found it necessary to ban the printing of Masonic symbols on business cards or the fixture of the same symbols to one's place of business.¹⁴⁵ These efforts, while, perhaps, discouraging to marketing activities within the

¹⁴⁴ Robert G. Davis, 18-21.

¹⁴⁵ Dumenil, 22.

fraternity, were not a critique on the conceptions of entrepreneurial masculinity, itself. At the commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of Benjamin Franklin's birth, held by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania in 1906, PGM Edgar A. Tennis addressed the Grand Lodge, stating,

*"Franklin cared a great deal about money... the qualities which Franklin possessed, the business shrewdness and foresight, the executive ability and the combination in him of industry, economy, and endless patience, would make him a multi-millionaire to-day... It should be borne in mind that it was while he was actively and labouriously engaged in a pursuit he loved, that of making money, that he found time to perform those many acts of wise citizenship which form the substantial foundation of his later career as a statesman... All his qualities were made valuable by his practical sense He was interested in nothing unless he saw in it some use... This practical nature makes Franklin a typical American."*¹⁴⁶

Praising one of the most famous American Masons, PGM Tennis makes it clear in no uncertain terms that Freemasonry in America not only embraced the market, but actively praised the virtues of the capitalist as being typically American.

Mainstream Masculinity: Conclusions

The Contrast, as interpreted by Michael Kimmel, presents the student of American masculinity with three competing archetypes of manhood that could, at any given time in the nineteenth century, be found in the far-flung regions of the new republic. Each was, in his own,

¹⁴⁶ Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, ...*Celebration of the Bi-Centenary of the Birth of Right Worshipful Past Grand Master Brother Benjamin Franklin...* (Philadelphia: Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, 1906), 37-38.

native community, superior to the others. Or, at least, this was how he was idolized by his spouse and children and idealized by his friends, his neighbors, and, undoubtedly, himself. In their own rites, the patriarchs of the southern plantation, the artisans of the urban workshop, and the entrepreneurs of the coastal ware and customs houses, each, in fairness, conferred commendable virtues and raised respectable, leading men for the republic; only one would weather the progression of nineteenth-century American life from abolitionism to emancipation, agriculture to industry, and subsistence to capitalism ahead of the others.

Though each archetype has endured to some degree, in each case, it was from the archetype of the self-made man, conjoined with American fraternalism and a need for a concrete view of nationhood and Americanism that the national manhood of the era rose. Most importantly, however, is the accessibility of this “unifying” manhood, in service of which so many groups and individuals — especially, though only a few, men of racial and ethnic minorities and “subversive” religions and institutions like Catholicism, Judaism, Mormonism, and, to a lesser extent, Masonry — have been stigmatized, excluded, or attacked. Dana Nelson writes that the consensus reached on a national manhood in the nineteenth century was inherently “white” in its intended membership and continues to be defended by some white men who, at the same time, disown it. Nelson argues that, despite differences in religion, occupations, original nationality, or class, white citizenship forms an “imaginary fraternity,” that, for a time, kept men and women of racial minorities and white women in second-class citizenship outside of the nation’s voting, unified, masculine identity. This national manhood, “was *not* a ‘unified’ identity,” Nelson continues, it “was an impossible identity — impossible in the sense that it is an always-agonistic position, making it difficult for any human to fit into a full sense of compatibility with its ideal construction.” Nonetheless, Nelson claims that the white men who

espouse the collective ideal of national manhood, this supposedly unified Americanism applying among all men, “often disidentify from that ideal-under-attack, claiming that its image does not apply to them personally; they never accrued such benefits from it.”¹⁴⁷

In effect, the national identity that was forged throughout the nineteenth century was an ideal to be jealously defended by some and aggressively forced on all, while ultimately applying to none. So many seemingly contradictory conditions would leave Mormons and Masons, like all others, able to check some boxes, thereby attracting members and earning praise, while missing others, thereby repulsing neighbors and inviting contention. These contradictions rise out of an apparent necessity that the black-and-white condition of being American or not also be built of dichotomic states of being. A newly independent nation had equated old-world aristocracy with the effeminate and new-world republicanism with the masculine; effeminacy with weakness and masculinity with strength; weakness with subversion and strength with patriotism. As a result, national, white manhood in its idealized democratic strength and evangelical Protestantism would then become the national identity by which the American would either live, die, or leave. For Mormonism, an inability to live by this final stipulation — or, at least, to convince their neighbors that they could — would lead them, God’s chosen people, out of the American mainstream and into the desert. For Masons, success in appealing to the sensibilities of the white middle class allowed them to — after narrowly avoiding complete ruin from the disastrous Morgan scandal — remain and rise to prominence once again in mainstream American social circles.

Championing the archetypal divine patriarch — ruler-absolute within the home and pious theologian without — heralded from revivalist stumps and millennialist pulpits, the Mormon

¹⁴⁷ Nelson, 38.

framework of manhood clung to the traditional and the genteel in such a way that would have been branded as weak, European, or, therefore, unAmerican. While Nauvoo's martial display of companies upon battalions upon brigades of horse, foot, and artillery, sabers and bayonets gleaming, in drill and parade on each holiday could hardly be portrayed as weak; and while the quasi-communal, ecclesiastical economies of Kirtland and Utah could hardly be underscored as models of traditionalism or the European, aristocratic ideals; Mormonism could, for these reasons and many others, be listed among the "unamerican." The result, of course, was continued persecution and violence until the saints settled in seclusion and relative safety beyond the plains. There, the divine patriarch — if he so desired — would receive ample titled land, wives and progeny, and religious distinction in the establishment of his own genteel house in the Kingdom of God and, thereby, solidify his distinctive, Mormon masculinity that, while evolved, remains a central facet of the faith's priesthood culture to this day.

While Masonry — like its Mormon brother — was also held in contempt for many apparent infractions on and departures from the acceptable bounds of nineteenth-century Americanism, the results enjoyed by the adherents to the fraternity's masculinity were far more pleasant and desirable. With women's influence over the home rising and men's employment away from the stead becoming more common, — creditable, in Kimmel's work, to the archetypal entrepreneur — the self-made man's desire to escape from the now-sovereign domain of his domestic tyrant led him to the door of the lodge, where sociability and prestige were provided regularly in ritual and leisure. Outside of the official business or activities of the lodge, trade between Masonic entrepreneurs hedged bets against the volatility of the market and the artisan's ideals of mutual aid and solidarity added some semblance of economic security to the frailty of capitalist life. As a result, the Masonic Hall would become a social and cultural hub for

America's towns; Masonic regalia, a familiar sight at funerals and parades; and Masons-at-large, well-known and well-respected pillars of their respective communities. In short, Masonry had emerged from darkness into its golden age.

Conclusion

Dismantling Old Partisanship and Building New Narratives

The Nature of Mormon-Masonic Narratives

Views of both Mormonism and Masonry have been shaped largely by each movement's members and each movement's critics. Partisan histories of these two movements created a dissonant broad view of their respective stories, each avoiding uncomfortable details that could be viewed as damaging to their community. The volume of work, at least by Mormons for Mormons and Masons for Masons, is astonishing. Libraries can and have, after all, been filled with Mormon histories, written by Mormon chroniclers, published under Mormon imprints. So too are Masonic histories, written by Masonic scholars, and published under Masonic imprints equally plentiful. Primary source material from which to draw is extensive and remarkably accessible, as the keeping of detailed records is required of both Mormons and Masons by revelation and ancient teaching, respectively. This ritualization of recording, saving, compiling, and archiving exhaustive records similarly ritualized the evaluation and publication of historical works on the church and the fraternity by long-time Mormons and Masons, again, respectively. The result in each case — though Mormon history has taken massive strides into academic history — is an overwhelming body of partisan works that can, though not by virtue of any intention on the part of these armchair historians, drown out the academic.

Of course, many significant organizations, peoples, and topics otherwise ripe for study were, prior to the rise of social history, ignored as simply not being worth the trouble. Dorothy Lipson writes in her 1977 work, *Freemasonry in Federalist Connecticut*, that secret societies, like Freemasonry, are often neglected and quotes one sociologist, Lionel Tiger, stating, “social scientists ‘come from intellectual communities where the overt is the good and where unabashed

ritual, magic, changelessly deep loyalties are suspiciously close to mental ill health,”” If becoming a Freemason, Lipson continues, “were really a symptom of mental ill health, it would have warned of a disease of epidemic proportion.”¹⁴⁸ In 1984, Lynn Dumenil’s *Freemasonry and American Culture*, one of the seminal works of the field, identifies a sustained lack of academic interest seven years later.¹⁴⁹ Steven Bullock’s *Revolutionary Brotherhood*, a similarly seminal work, was published more recently in 1996. Some twelve years after Dumenil, Bullock writes that, “despite [Freemasonry’s] prominent place, scholars have found little reason to wait outside the lodge room,” because “the fraternity has seemed too obscure, too unusual to hold much interest.”¹⁵⁰ In 2014, Michael Homer published his work, *Joseph’s Temples*, in which he references — despite the passage of thirty years — near nonexistent academic acknowledgement of Freemasonry in the broader historiography of American history. Interest in the broader collection of fraternal organizations — beyond, of course, their respective memberships — remains sparse today.

Mormon history, on the other hand, has experienced a boom in academic interest since 1950, according to Roland W. Walker and his fellow authors in their 2001 bibliographical work, *Mormon History*. Though early Mormon history, the authors inform us, was, “highly partisan,” as Mormon writers approached their work with, “the settled conviction,” that their firm belief generated. Not surprising, the authors continue, “non-Mormon writers disagreed.” Since that time, academics have surged into the field, publishing not only historical works, but works devoted to social sciences like sociology and psychology and others such as geography and economics. Similarly, Walker’s cohort explains, academic imprints entered the field. Brigham

¹⁴⁸ Lipson, 3-5.

¹⁴⁹ Dumenil, xi-xv.

¹⁵⁰ Bullock, 2.

Young University Press and that of the University of Utah were anticipatable, but the entry of the University of Illinois, the authors claim, was relatively surprising. Finally, Mormon history published by Mormon imprints and written by Mormon writers have undertaken the painstaking methodologies of the academic writer, as well. The authors acknowledge that the field, “still lacks scholarly biographies,” and has yet to fully address what could be called the Mormon diaspora or Mormon history beyond Utah, Nauvoo, Missouri, Kirtland, or upstate New York, all locations of the church’s migrating headquarters.¹⁵¹ There is, however, another lacking aspect of Mormon history that was, ironically, also neglected by *Mormon History*.

As early Mormon history was and as Masonic history continues to be today, the study of Mormonism and Masonry, together, has remained — almost without exception — unacademic. Beyond the fact that the studies — before Homers — were written by Mormons for the benefit of Mormonism or Masons for the benefit of the Masonic community, the works were fiercely antagonistic and the writers, spiteful and distrusting to the opposing side and its beliefs. Mervin B. Hogan, though a Mason, sought to view the relationship of the two people in a fair light, with consideration given to the beliefs and virtues of the opposite — For Hogan, the term “opposing” will be avoided — party and its people. Michael W. Homer brought the debate into the academic realm with the first truly scholarly monograph published under an academic imprint. With this leap forward, we are compelled to ask of the history of Mormonism and Masonry, applied by Walker to purely Mormon history: “What lies ahead?”¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Ronald W. Walker, et al., *Mormon History* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 1-5, 61-62, & 91-96.

¹⁵² Walker, 95.

Conclusions: The Goal of Mormon-Masonic History

This study has sought to demonstrate that the common ground between Mormonism and Masonry is far greater than a few shared symbols, similar ceremony, or claims of ancient connections to divine origins. So too is it greater than the maleness of both priesthood and fraternity; greater than dramatic change and conceptions of strength and stability; greater than their demonstrations of evolving masculinity and Americanism. These pieces of the puzzle help us see the greater picture, to be sure, but Mormonism and Masonry, in their own ways, represent mankind's continual search for the transcendent and eternal. Mormon doctrine tells a young man he needs only live by gospel principles and increase his knowledge of both the temporal and the spiritual to secure his manhood and, at the millennium, even become a god, himself. Masonic teachings tell the initiate, adept, master, or 33° Mason, too, that through brotherly love, moral uprightness, belief in Deity, and the continual pursuit of knowledge, one can reach true enlightenment. Taken together and earnestly applied, the tenets of Mormonism and Masonry would almost certainly raise a man of inexhaustible charity, intellect, drive, and perseverance, determined to better his community as he has himself. So why, then, dedicate such time and effort deriding one for exhibiting the characteristics we value in the other? The future of Mormon-Masonic history is not to conclusively establish who was right before whom; nor is it to prove at whose fault the “Illinois Episode,” as Hogan termed it, developed into the Mormon-Masonic rift that exists — despite some semblances of conciliation and quieting — to the present day. The future lies in the academic and objective evaluation of Mormon and Masonic interactions with the greater fabric of Utah, Illinois, American, and — complemented by the international nature of both organizations — global life, society, and evolution. That is the goal of this study. That is the goal of Mormon-Masonic history.

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Appendix A

Glossary of Key Terms

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| Aristarchy | A government of the most capable or worthy candidates, installed not by democratic process, but by evaluation of their virtues. |
| Catafalque | A raised and decorated wooden framework on which someone's remains or a coffin is placed for a funeral or when laying in state at a state or national capital. |
| Council of Fifty | Also referred to as "the Kingdom of God" or "the Kingdom." This organization was meant to form a shadow government that would inherit control when the secular governments of the world inevitably failed. |
| Court Martial | A body composed of all commissioned and non-commissioned officers of the Nauvoo Legion. Court Martial nominates and elects officers. Presided over by Lt. Gen. and Maj. Gen. acts as secretary, per Nauvoo ordinance. |
| The Craft | Used to refer to Masonry in its entirety. |
| Degrees | Refers to Masonic offices conferred successively. Blue lodges confer the first three. The Scottish and York Rites each confer up to a 32nd degree and an honorary 33rd degree for Masons who have distinguished themselves. |
| Deism | A spiritual system denoting belief in a higher being that does not actively intervene in the natural developments of the universe. Utilized in Freemasonry to provide neutral moral instruction with spiritual overtones. |
| First Presidency | The highest body in the Mormon Church composed of the prophet and two counselors. The First Presidency in Nauvoo included the prophet, assistant presidents, and various counselors. It was dissolved from 1844 to 1847. |
| Gentile | A biblical term to describe those who do not belong to God's chosen church or people. Used by Mormons to describe non-Mormons |
| Hiram Abiff | The principal martyr of Freemasonry who was killed when he refused to reveal the master's word of Solomon's temple, said to be the name of Deity. |
| Jack Mormons | A derogatory term applied to non-Mormons who, in appearance or reality, defended the policies, objectives, or interests of the Saints in Illinois. Now largely used by Mormons to describe inactive members of the church. |
| Keys, Masonic | Passwords given with each degree conferred. Symbol denoting access to knowledge or enlightenment. |
| Keys, Mormon | Refers to varying levels of spiritual authority given to members of the Mormon priesthood which allow them to perform their duties and preside over the church. |
| Lodge, Blue or Local | Refers to the basic organizational unit of Freemasonry. A blue lodge can be found in most every community and confers the main three Masonic degrees — Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason. |
| Lodge, Grand | Grand Lodges have been established over each state and territory of the United States, as well as the District of Columbia. They oversee and regulate the constituent blue lodges in their respective jurisdictions. |
| Masonry, Adoptive | Refers to Masonic lodges briefly permitted by European Freemasonry during the eighteenth century that allowed women to be "adopted," into the mysteries of Masonry. These lodges were later |

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| | declared clandestine. |
| Masonry, Blue-lodge | Refers to the first and main three degrees of Freemasonry conferred by a local or “blue” lodge — Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason. |
| Masonry, Clandestine | Refers to Masons, lodges, or organizations that have been cut off from regular Masonry. This could result from altering the teachings of Freemasonry, as was the allegation made in support of Mormon exclusion. |
| Masonry, Operative | Refers to lodges or guilds of brick and stone masons from which speculative Masonry most likely evolved. |
| Masonry, Regular | Refers to Masons, lodges, or organizations that are generally recognized by Masonic authorities as conforming to accepted practices and teachings. Note that recognition can vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. |
| Masonry, Speculative | Refers to the Freemasonry that evolved from operative masonry. Defined as being a system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols or a moral system applied to the sciences of architecture and geometry. |
| Mormon Exclusion | Refers to a rule in Utah Freemasonry from the founding of its first lodge in 1865 until the policy’s repeal in 1984 that barred Mormons from becoming Masons in that state. This was unofficial, at first, but was later codified. |
| Nauvoo Era | Refers to the period of time (1839-1846) during which the Mormon Church was headquartered in Nauvoo, Illinois. |
| Nauvoo Legion | The militia incorporated under the city charter of Nauvoo. It quickly became one of the largest city militias in the nation and included infantry, cavalry, dragoons, artillery, medical staff, a band, and a contingent of bodyguards for the prophet. |
| Priesthood | Refers to the male membership of the church. Also refers to the divine authority and power held in the forms of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods. |
| Priesthood, Aaronic | The lower of the two Mormon priesthoods. Refers to both a level of spiritual power and authority, as well as a collection of offices that utilize this priesthood, such as those of Deacon, Teacher, and Priest. |
| Priesthood Calling | Refers to a position a priesthood holder may be “called,” to fill. This can include acting as the president of a quorum, performing a proselytizing mission, or even merely instructing a class on Sundays. These are temporary, unlike priesthood offices. |
| Priesthood, Melchizedek | The higher of the two Mormon Priesthoods. Refers to both a level of spiritual power and authority, as well as a collection of offices that utilize this priesthood, such as those of Elder, High Priest, and the Seventies. |
| Priesthood Office | Refers to offices such as Deacon, Teacher, Priest, or Bishop in the Aaronic Priesthood or Elder, High Priest, Patriarch, or Apostle for the Melchizedek Priesthood. Each office confers new keys, authorities, and duties. These are permanent, unlike priesthood callings. |
| Priesthood Ordinances | Saving rituals performed in the temple, such as baptisms for the dead, sealings, or the endowment, using keys progressively received and given by Joseph Smith. |
| Priesthood Ordination | The act of bestowing authority in the form of the two priesthoods, offices, callings, or keys. Briefly conferred authority on women in Nauvoo, as well. |
| Quorum of the Twelve | The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles is the second highest body in the Mormon Church. Its members hold all of the keys available on the Earth and appoint each succeeding prophet, usually from their own membership. |

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| Quorums of the Seventies | The several Quorums of the Seventies are each composed of seventy travelling church officers, typically tasked with proselytizing duties. |
| Relief Society | The primary, female-only auxiliary of the church formed under the direction of Joseph Smith in 1842. It was dissolved between 1844 and 1854 by Brigham Young. |
| Rite, Scottish | One of the two main appendant bodies under which auxiliary Masonic orders are organized and the older of the two. |
| Rite, York | One of the two main appendant bodies under which auxiliary Masonic orders are organized. Sometimes referred to as the “American Rite.” |