Playing with the Sacred: LDS Children's Games for Boredom and Entertainment

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On any Sunday throughout the United States Mormon (or Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, referred to hereafter as LDS) children in formal church meetings usually associated with somber devotion play games not out of a spirit of rebellion but with the social sanction, even encouragement, of the Church. Although game playing in church is not unique to LDS culture, Mormons associate the games with their distinctive worship settings. Often outside of their awareness, but possibly explaining the use of the play frame within the larger context of the church service, the containment of social paradoxes within the games sanctioned by the local group can serve to undermine the sacredness of faith and devotion in LDS youth. This paper will analyze the paradoxes of play enacted within the sacred setting of LDS Sacrament meetings, and use theories of "play framing" developed by Gregory Bateson and elaborated by Erving Goffman, Jay Mechling, and Simon Bronner to interpret the messages about Mormon cultural belief embedded within games performed in church.

A primary setting for game playing is during the Sacrament meeting, typically the first hour of a three hour block that constitutes the weekly congregational meeting of the LDS church. It is a time where members of the church partake of the emblematic blood and body Jesus Christ. Part of the meeting ritual is the Sacrament prayer where members will take upon themselves the name of Christ, and recommit themselves to keeping his commandments and the covenant they made at baptism.[1] During the service, members are introspective, evaluating their lives and over the previous week and preparing for the week to come. Because of its sacred nature of personal worship many participants understand that this is the most intimate and personal ritual performed during the Sunday meeting. The remainder of the meeting consists of the singing of hymns and listening to talks given by members of the congregation. It is a time when the outside world can be excluded, and the inner commitment and desire of each member can be laid bare and open as a form of worship. The Sacrament meeting where the games are played is considered the main service on Sunday. Church members (both young and old) have the understanding that while the service is occurring, children and youth are to remain quiet and in the immediate area of the pew. This is out of respect for others in the service that are concentrating on the talks and singing the hymns typical of a sacrament service.

An observer, however, might be surprised to find that it is common for children to occupy themselves with a variety of games during this reverent observance. These games range from simple tic-tac-toe and thumb wrestling, to a specific form of Bingo that uses either common uttered phrases or individuals as squares to be crossed of en route to winning. The simplest form of the question that this paper will try to address is: Why play games during such a sacred time? One answer to that question is a simple one. The games are meant to keep kids occupied and the

games themselves have grown since the church placed emphasis upon collective family worship in the post-WWII baby boom. In their seminal work, *Saints of Sage and Saddle* (1959), Austin and Alta Fife noted that children were not encouraged to attend sacrament meetings, because church leaders wanted a more reverent worship service. In the 1960s this attitude began to soften. The toleration of children was altered completely in the early 1980s when the church moved to its current once-a-week three hour block opposed to what the Fife's observed where the various meetings and organizations of the church meet during the week as well as Sunday.[2]

The physical setting and demographic makeup of a typical individual congregation are also relevant. They typical Sacrament room is about 50' wide and about 80' long. The usual attendance is around 150 individuals ranging in age from new born to late eighties. There are single adults, families with different aged children, and older couples in the congregation. Members of the LDS church vary in class, race, region and background. It is not uncommon for wards (local units) and stakes (comprised of eight to fourteen wards) across the United States to have these distinctions apparent through simple observation. In one pew you could find a member from Puerto Rico, Mexico, Canada or California. In another pew you could have a surgeon, a prison guard, or a stay at home mom. Typical lines of separation and distinction such as race, class, or ethnicity do not exclude games from being played by all the children within the ward, stake, or region. Because of this, the extrapolation of this analysis can be applied broadly to the church in the United States.[3] Although as I will also discuss it does have some overlap into the rest of the non-LDS culture, but mostly its interpretations pertain to members of the LDS church.

The physical setting is also relevant. The room where the games are played is called the Chapel. The games are played in a padded wooden pew measuring 8′ long, 20″ wide, and a height of 22″ at the seat of the pew, and 34′ at the height of the back of the pew.[4] All the pews face forward towards a raised platform and pulpit. The layout of the room is important because it reinforces the idea that there should exist community among the members, both old and young and that the focus of the congregation should be unified. The physical layout also suggests that the chapel and the Sacrament service that takes place there encourage a formal and encouraged location for silence, individual contemplation, and communication that at times can be at odds with the children's games. This emphasis further accentuates the questions raised about letting children play games.

The collecting of through fieldwork, I tried to step outside my role as a life-long member of the LDS church, and become an ethnographer that was capable of analyzing the symbolic communication within the frameworks of play. I emphasized this outside observer role to examine the common games that so often are taken for granted as just part of the LDS culture.

Methodologically I approached these games from the standpoint of seeing them as part of an ethnographic analysis. By personal observation, interviewing others, and by securing documents from folk archives, I was able to create a large pool of games from which to make comparisons and draw conclusions. After acquiring a large sample of games certain patterns emerged. Aside from inventorying

and trying to classify my findings, I wanted to situate the games within the broader LDS culture. These games were only played during Sacrament meeting and not at other times because of different activates that require more focused participation from the children and youth. The classifications assigned to the different categories are ones that I constructed, and make the classifications more universally understood by a non-LDS reader. A LDS member would not label or even categorize these games in this way aside from calling them "games," "church games," or "Sacrament games."

The first was that the games themselves could be divided into three categories. The first was "quiet" games, so labeled because they make no noise when played and thus are not distracting to nearby worshipers. These games are intended to be silent in their nature, with the hope among other things is that they will not be a distraction to other members around the child. For the child these quiet games also have a purpose in that they teach and train the child how they should act but also how they can find success in their worship.

Figure 1. Mormon children playing quiet games. Photograph by Jared S. Rife.

The second was games for fun.[5] In his work on Mormon recreation theory, Rex A. Skidmore claimed that fun and happiness is the attitude that most LDS members feel towards their church.[6] Although broad in its definition this large group of games is intended for the player's amusement and to separate and insulate them

from the service around them. Unlike the quiet games, this category can distract others by participants with noise, but are still relatively quiet. These games are also the ones most likely to involve other children, who may also be in on the humor, jokes, and other forms of social capital shared among children. The amusement can come from the player's personal sense of humor, or at the expense of others.

The third and final category of games is that of games for learning. Within the LDS culture exists a strong emphasis placed on all types of learning.[7] The emphasis on acquiring knowledge both temporal and spiritual. Also a drive to receive postsecondary education either in the form of technical training or college degree.[8] With this strong emphasis, games that require learning, creativity, or other commonly held beliefs about intelligence and knowledge are tolerated as they serve a larger goal of learning as a lifetime pursuit.

Another level of analysis that can further shed understanding on the games played is a connection of play framing to age. There are three divisions: Children, Youth, and Teenage. The category of children encompasses the ages of 6 months to eight years. LDS theology teaches that children are incapable of sin[9] until they reach the age of eight, or the age of accountability. Once a child turns eight they can be baptized and become full fledged members of the church. The type of games most played by this demographic is quiet games. The second category of age is that of youth and is from age eight to fourteen. After baptism at eight, a child will continue to be considered a child until they graduate from the Primary, the organization in the church is responsible for teaching children in the remaining two hours of the Sunday worship block. At the age of 12, children leave Primary. The boys enter the Young Men's program, and the girls enter the Young Women's program. This age group will still play quiet games, but there is more of an emphasis placed upon learning and instructional games. After the initial two years of participation in the Young Men and Young Women's programs at the age of fourteen they move into the third and final category of being teenagers. These moves also correspond with the graduation from a Junior High School to a Senior High School where the child can now consider themselves closer to adulthood. Here they have (or so leaders hope) circumnavigated the early years of teenage awkwardness and are progressing toward adulthood. This final stage may end around eighteen or nineteen when the teenager either leaves for college or for males in the LDS church leave to serve a mission two year full time mission. Although instances where these games continue on into college their frequency decreases. In this final age group is where most of the games that involve humor are located, although there are still games of learning, it is assumed that by this stage most participants have a grasp on basic beliefs. These three categories allow the division of games and their application to be better understood and dissected within the social expectations of LDS culture.

Identification and Annotation of Evidence

Although the games display variation, overall the same types of games are played in different parts of the country. Using the categories outlined above, the children's games come in the form of three different types. The first is Quiet Books. Quiet

books come in all shapes and sizes, but their purpose is the same: they keep children quiet through tactile interaction. Quiet books are usually handmade, often of felt-like cloth, and each page has an activity that spurs the young participant to action. On one page there could be the face of a young girl, with blond hair made from yarn. The directions on the page would tell the reader to braid the young girl's hair. Another page could have a coat with a zipper that can be zipped up and down. The pages also contain buttons, clasps, or other modules that require the use and energy of hands. Some pages have LDS content. Sometimes the page could ask the young reader to interact with Jesus, or another scriptural character. One example located had been used for over thirty years by one family that has been passed down from one generation to the next. This quiet book included an oxen drawn pioneer wagon, Lehi (a prophet from the Book of Mormon) holding an artifact and space for the child to place letters on the page, as well as a Mormon match game where children would put together two halves of easily recognizable people or items found in the Sacrament meeting itself. Other times it could be to give service or aid to a fictional charter in need of accomplishing a specific task.[10]

The second general activity was Felt Dolls. These can be homemade or commercially produced. The church I observed and others I have visited have high-wear thread count material on pews, and therefore the backs of the pews make excellent felt boards for these types of games. Generally these felt dolls are directed towards young girls, but boys often will play with them too. There are several different types of dolls. Some are from famous nursery rhymes and folk tales like the three little pigs, or Hansel and Gretel. Other examples are scenes of land animals in the jungle, forest, or underwater. Also more traditional dolls that require clothing to be placed upon them. One set contained girls from European countries and the traditional folk dress was provided for their attire. There exist LDS versions of felt dolls that will use dressing up of small children in a variety of outfits. Another variation found with felt dolls is homemade and commercially produced scriptural scenes, where children are encouraged to pretend play and act out scenes from the lives of prophets, wars, and other sacred moments found in the LDS canon.

Imagination games require the use of toys. Perhaps a small car, action figure, or even LDS figurines are used. Usually the use of the imagination does not allow for group or multiple participant games to occur but there are occasions when two children from different pews will play together using their imagination. They might recreate something from a television show or movie. Other times they might recreate a scriptural science from the Bible or Book of Mormon, and sometimes it is merely as simple as two cars chasing each other on an imagined road. Usually the stipulation by the parent placed upon this collective play is that it needs to be done out of the line of sight of those around the children. That means it either has to happen in the space under the pews or it is not able to happen at all. This is perhaps the broadest and non-LDS centered game because it allows children to play outside LDS centered games. Their acceptance in Sacrament meeting lends credence to the theory about tolerance for the sacred when small children under the age of eight, that are seen as incapable of sinning, are involved.

The next category of games is that of youth games. These games are more learning centered, and unlike the children's games which intend to occupy and keep the participant quiet and isolated, these games involve others. The first one that is very popular and is not particular to LDS culture is the dot game. Two people play the game and it is played by first making dots, in neat lines and columns on a blank piece of paper. Then whichever of the two is gong first has the chance to connect two of the dots with a straight line. It is then the other youth's turn to connect two dots with a straight line. The players will alternate turns, until all four sides form a box. The player who forms the box then claims the box by placing their initial or initials in the box and is awarded an extra turn. The back-and-forth nature of the game, with its demand for forethought and stratagem, illustrate a competitive spirit not observed by the youth's younger counterparts.

The next group of games played by youth is puzzles. Puzzles generally as a genre are not unique to LDS culture, but the types of puzzles that the youth are playing are different. These puzzles are usually of scriptural heroes or particular moments of devotion found in the cannon of scripture. There are two types of puzzles. The first is one is more traditional. It requires that the youth print out and cut up a puzzle. The second is more unusual. It is not uncommon for members of a ward to bring iPhones, iPads, and nooks and use them during the three hour church block. This use of technology is aided by most ward buildings having Wi-Fi, and these buildings have similar passcodes. The LDS church has invested a lot of time and energy in making many of their services available via the internet. The Church has made accessible scriptures, talks, lesson manuals, directories, and most importantly for this discussion, puzzles that can be played by small children. These puzzles are much like the paper ones that can be printed and cut out, but do not require the effort to craft them. I will discuss more about the value of both of these formats later in the paper.

The final game that many youth play is that of Hymnal chase. The LDS church has a strong emphasis on singing, music, and performance. It most evident in the formation of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, that formed and has been performing ever since 1847, a month after the first wave of pioneers entered the Salt Lake Valley. In fact songs are viewed as a form of prayer in the Doctrine & Covenants.[11] With a special connection between prayer and adoration, , one might expect the hymnal to also be treated with care. Yet games played with the hymnal. The one game played by this age group is called Hymnal Hunt. This is where using the meter number associated with a hymn would, like a treasure map, would be circled and would lead to the page of another hymn. On this page the meter would be circled and that would lead to another page until the ultimate message was found. For example on page 181, the meter of 76 would be circled. The searcher would then turn to page 76 where the meter of 79 would be circled and so forth. One such message found was a question to the searcher if they wanted to watch TV later that afternoon at five.[12] Other such messages like "Hello," "How are you?", and "I'm hungry/starving" have also been recorded.

The last category of teenage games contains the most variation, and exhibits the most subversion of sacredness. The first game is that of Testimony Bingo.

The first Sunday of each month, Sacrament Meeting is reserved for the bearing of the congregation's testimony. A testimony is the public profession of one's beliefs about various subjects of LDS doctrine and lived experiences. Although these openly shared testimonies can often diverge from their intended purpose and become a travelogue or the bearer's gratitude for roommates or many other such declarations not related to the original purpose. Because of the consistent performance of the testimonies within the culture, there can also be phrases that are used again and again. With these variations in mind, teenagers will divide a traditional bingo playing board with either the phrases that are often muttered, individuals that consistently bear their testimonies each month or common themes like travelogues onto the spaces to try to get Bingo. This game can be played with other siblings or friends that are nearby.[13] Often times these Bingo boards can be derisive especially if a certain individual continually bears their testimony each month in an almost rote-memory fashion.[14]

The use of parody for hymns and hymnals is also popular with the teenage group. The parodies often involve sexual and scatological humor. One good example is by taking hymn titles and adding the phrase "under the bed" or "in the toilet" or even "in the bathtub."[15] Some hymns and phrases work better than others. But often it can be the hymns that are the some of the most often sung and have historical significance that are mocked. One example of *The Spirit of God Like A Fire is Burning, Upon the Cross*, or even the Christmas favorite *O Little Town of Bethlehem*. All of these songs have humor in adding the phrases like "under the bed" or "in the toilet" or even "in the bathtub."

Another game that can be played with hymns is using the mood markings to act out the singing of the song.[16] Thus trying to sing a song and act out a hymn "resolutely," "tenderly," or "vigorously" becomes a performance for those around the singer. This open mocking of the hymn is especially evident to those immediately surrounding the singer, but also to the chorister who is leading the music at the front of the congregation. Due to the apparent irreverence and subversive qualities of these games, it could be assumed they would not be tolerated. Yet they are often played quietly by participants so as not to draw attention to themselves.

Another popular game involves two teenagers writing words on friend's backs, siblings, or a significant other.[17] As Sacrament can feel boring to participants they will lean forward with their elbows on their knees as they sit in the pew. The friend, sibling, or significant other will write out messages or words one letter at a time as they try to convey a message to the recipient. Part of the fun lies in guessing what is written, and the other part can be especially if the two individuals are dating. The LDS church strongly encourages youth not to date until the age of sixteen and these games are played by those who are sixteen and older.[18] Because of this delayed social interaction with the opposite sex, small physical interactions like touching someone's back and expressing messages of care and affection are significantly potent. Another way that messages can often be shared with a friend, sibling or significant other is by using words found in the Scriptures to send a message.[19]

Figure 2. More quiet games. Photograph by Jared S. Rife.

There is a long history of annotation when it comes to quiet games. George Draper's book *School, Church, and Home Games* (1923) explores the philosophy that work is the highest form of play, and that children express their imaginations through play leads to their exploring and perfecting of their future professions. This book is a collection of games for beginners to intermediate children, of both sexes, and in the settings of school, church and the outdoors.[20]

Jess Bancroft's work, *Games for the Playground, Home, School and Gymnasium* (1922) is an early folklore collection drawing from archival records as well as ethnographic field reports. The intention of the collection is to be used as an aid for parents, teachers, and recreational leaders to have a variety of games that can be played in diverse places of home, camp, and school. In particular a large listing of quiet games that are both educational and fun and provide an early framework for classifying and categorizing quiet games.[21]

Lastly, George Ripley's *Games for Boys* (1920) was another early collection of games that can be played in any setting. The purpose of the book was to give wholesome games that invigorated the mind and body, and were not just for the expression of violence pride. Because Mr. Ripley worked professionally for the Boy Scouts many of the games mirror the core values found within that organization. His categorization provided a framework to base games that I observed, especially the ones for small children whose goal was to have them be enlightening to the mind.[22]

Analysis and Interpretation

Evaluating the body of these games there arise paradoxes that both affirm and subvert gospel principles of the LDS church. On a basic level the church has always had a strong emphasis on "Perfecting the Saints" or in other words in helping members to reach their potential both in this life and in the life to come. Part of that perfection comes through the gaining of knowledge or intelligence. With the expectation that members of the church are taking part in daily scripture study, attending Sunday School and other service oriented organizations, being active in politics at both the community, state, and national levels, members of the church view themselves as well reasoned and well informed. This emphasis begins at an early age when the expectation is that children take an active part in church, school, music, sports as well as family activities held each week in the home where gospel lessons are shared. This weekly meeting, called Family Home Evening, and its intention is to bring families closer together. But its structure is through the teaching of a lesson, singing of songs, service and an activity where each assignment is rotated among family members no matter the age. With this strong emphasis on children participating in a full and perfecting life, the added dimension of having a sense of humor provides an interesting contrast.

A factor in the use of play is the association of church leaders with humor. Joseph Smith was known for his willingness to play games, tell stories, and jokes with others. Prominent leader J. Golden Kimball was known for his colorful language will sharing sermons, but his crass language was excused because of its humorous nature.[23] The previous and current leaders of the church, Gordon B. Hinckley, and Thomas S. Monson respectively were admired for their playful use of jokes. It is also customary when members of the congregation give talks in Sacrament Meeting to start their discourse with a joke. With such a strong emphasis on humor, the games children play are seen as participating in honored and cherished form of LDS expression. In some ways this provides an excuse for some of the more subversive games; in others it allows for games to flourish because "its just something we do for fun."

It should also be noted that all of these games, whether played by small children or teenagers are tolerated only if they are quiet and do not disturb the worshiping of others around them. If any of these games became loud or distracting, the child or teenager would be pressured to leave by parents, guardians, or other adults in close proximity. The usual punishment involves asking the offender to wait outside in a foyer, which every chapel has, and sit on couches until after Sacrament service is over. This may not sound like much of a punishment, but it can be a harsh sentence. To accommodate those who cannot be quiet or reverent during sacrament service, church buildings are equipped with in-house speakers that are placed in several rooms throughout the building. This allows for communications from the pulpit to be broadcast to other rooms, a mothers lounge, and the foyer. Once an irreverent child or teenager is removed to the foyer they still listen to what is being shared in the chapel but do not have friends or games to interact with.

The seeming paradox of the seriousness of cultivating perfection and at the same time indulging in the unruliness of humor feeds into another paradox of LDS culture: that of the scriptural stories of the Iron Rod and the Liahona from The Book of Mormon. The Iron Rod was viewed in a visionary dream by the prophet Lehi. The Iron Rod, which is interpreted as the scriptures or the word of God, leads to the Tree of Life, which is interpreted as the Love of God or the gospel. The Iron Rod is firm and immovable and those who grasp it know in what direction they are headed. On the other hand the Liahona another example provided by the Book of Mormon prophet Lehi, was a compass-like ball of fascinating design. After Lehi had left Jersulem to journey to the America's or as he and his family were told the "Promised Land" the Liahona was given to them to be a guide. The Liahona worked according to the faith and diligence Lehi and his family displayed towards the keeping to the commandments and statues given them by God. It led them on a circuitous journey through the Sinai Peninsula, over the oceans and eventually to the Promised Land. Upon arriving in there, Lehi and his family were able to flourish and prosper. The story teaches current members of the church that if they lead a god fearing life they can be lead through trials and tribulations. This form of sojourn provides for personal guidance that might differ from one member to the next. This seeming paradox of knowing the answer to life's difficulties versus seeking and searching for it is also evident in the ways that children play their games. On one hand they are expected to know how to act or learn how to act through play, especially during a sacred service like Sacrament Meeting. On the other hand children are given the latitude to play games that often mock other members of the church or make light of sacred rituals.[24]

Another interpretation of these games comes from the common phrase of "being in the world, but not of the world."[25] LDS members feel a certain hesitation about how their belief system often openly conflicts with their peers outside the church. Ideas about marriage, homosexuality, and drug use are some of the more recent ideas that in main LDS theology that have conflicted with broader societal views. Due to this conflict, members are encouraged to take part in as many "normal" non-LDS activities as possible to give non-LDS a more personal and human touch on a widely misunderstood religion. Thus a high percentage of LDS members actively serve, volunteer, and work openly in their respective communities. This is part of the reason that games enter into a sacred space of Sacrament but by the use of the church frame the message of "this is play (or profane)" is altered to "this is Mormon." By entering the "world" to take part in it, the reverse is also true. The "world" is able to enter into an individual's life, and this is manifest in the way that children play games during Sacrament. This is also manifest in the strong correlation of children that use their parents (or in some cases their own) electronic devices when playing puzzles and other games that the church provides on their website. By playing these games they literally bringing the world (or in this case the World Wide Web) into their lives and their sacred spaces.[26]

The final point of this frame analysis is how church games treat the contexts of sacredness and reverence in an enactment of play. With the slow progression of children's games that instruct and teach to the eventual teenage games that

openly mock and criticize others the question must be asked how this influences the progression of membership in the church. In my opinion these games create a divide, an obstacle that teenagers must face. How do they respond to the paradox of playing games when those around them are trying to have meaningful communion with their deity? They must make a decision about whether to remain observant during the the sacred and reverent parts of the sacrament, and by extension they decide whether the sacred and reverent aspects of their religion are something to be taken seriously or are a game. It is no wonder that at the age of eighteen, internal church statistics show that the teenage years are the critical period when individuals decide to either fall away from the church or continue to be lifelong members.[27] The games that these children are playing are a huge part of that decision.

Conclusion

Games played by the children, youth, and teenagers of the LDS church celebrate the good and the bad of LDS culture. Individuals are expected to be smart, funny, and interactive with the LDS and non-LDS community. But this leeway leads, for some, to the eventual dismissal of LDS teachings and membership in the church. This paradox of frames reinforcing prized character traits as well as religious knowledge versus the criticism of religious expression during sacrament helps to address the anxiety and uncertainty of the LDS faith for concerned youth. At the same time these frames create a space where the paradox can be contested.[28] Further questioning should be done on other games that are played during three hour blocks, or during other activities that occur during the other days of the weeks. These activities played in Sacrament Meeting are part of (excuse the pun) the game changer if whether or not membership will be a lifelong activity or only one of their youth.

NOTES

1. See Doctrine in Doctrine in Covenants 20:77, 79, http://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/20.75-84?lang=eng for a copy of the prayers that are read as well as the particular wording.

2. Fife, Austin and Alta. *Saints of Safe and Saddle*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956, 3.

3. Many of these games have been personally observed, as well as recorded all over the United States including Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Texas, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Oregon, Washington, and of course Utah.

4. Due to the regulations of the LDS church, pictures are not allowed in the chapel or during worship services. The pictures included in the report are either taken from the internet or from the personal collection of the collector that were taken in his home.

5. During the academic year, 1935-36, Elder John A Widtsoe delivered a series of lectures at the University of Southern California in a class on Mormonism.

An excerpt from the published copy reads as follows: "The aim of the Church, organized for the human good, is to make men happy. It could not be otherwise, it usefulness to a man is the function of religion. This doctrine has been delivered in sacred literature."

6. Skidmore, Rex A. *Mormon Recreation in History and Practice: A Study of Social Change*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1941, 89.

7. See Doctrine and Covenants 88:79, http://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/88.79-80?lang=eng, for the direct command to learn about things both spiritual and temporal.

8. Brigham Young University, a LDS owned and operated University, where nearly 96% of the student population is LDS recently noted that it was number one in grads from a high-research doctoral institution (a category that includes BYU) who earned PhDs in the last five years studied. BYU was 5th for all 264 doctoral institutions in a general category. Although we cannot draw conclusions about the entire LDS church through this statistic, the importance of education and the acquiring of knowledge is evident.

9. See Moroni 8:8, http://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/moro/8.8?lang=eng, which claims that children are incapable of sin until the age of 8.

10. See photos in Appendix 1.

11. See Doctrine and Covenants 25:12, https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/25.12?lang=eng for this correlation.

12. This item was submitted by an anonymous individual to the William Wilson Folk Archives at Brigham Young University, September 14, 1980.

13. There are numerous examples of this occurring. Four types are recorded by Jenna Allen Holt, David Joel Becksted, Christina M. Cuthbert, and Jennifer Holly Slemp all at the Wilson Folk Archives in section 5.1.2.1.

14. There are also several examples found online where the practice of families sharing with other families and the familiarity of the game is clearly understood. For example, "Testimony Bingo," http://emp.byui.edu/marrottr/testimonyBingo.html and "Modern Mormon Men," http://www.modernmormonmen.com/2012/03/testimony-bingo.html.

15. Examples collected by Lorraine Anderson, Paul Abbot, Eric Nelson, Dell Blair, Linda Hansen, Joanna Gardner, and David Becksted can be found at the Wilson Folk Archives in section 5.1.1.2.

16. This example was relayed by Spencer Lincoln Green, March 16, 2012.

17. This game is widely observed in many meetings by the author, as well as shared by Spencer Green on March 16, 2012, as well as Rachel Rife on March 20, 2012.

18. See the pamphlet "For the Strength of Youth," https://www.lds.org/youth/for-the-strength-of-youth/dating?lang=eng for this explanation.

19. This example was relayed by Spencer Lincoln Green, March 16, 2012.

20. Draper, George O. 1923. *School, Church, and Home Games*. New York: Association Press, vi-vii and 44-54.

21. Bancroft, Jessie H. 1922. *Games for the Playground, Home, School and Gymnasium*. New York: MacMillan, 2-24 and 211-242.

22. Ripley, George S. 1920. *Games for Boys*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 39-43.

23. See Eric A. Eliason's book *The J. Golden Kimball Stories*, University of Illinois Press, 2007, 186.

24. Terryl L. Givens *People of Paradox : A History of Mormon Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 3-18.

25. See a recent address given by Elder L. Tom Perry of the Council of the twelve entitled "In the World," http://www.lds.org/ensign/1988/05/in-the-world?lang=eng

26. See "Games and Activities" on LDS website http://www.lds.org/friend/online-activities/activities?lang=eng.

27. See "Mormons in the United States 1990-2008: Socio-demographic Trends and Regional Differences" Rick Phillips and Ryan T. Cragun. Also available at http://commons.trincoll.edu/aris/files/2011/12/Mormons2008.pdf

28. Bronner, Simon J. Framing Folklore: An Introduction. Western Folklore (California Folklore Soc., Long Beach) (69:3/4) Summer/Fall 2010, 275-297.

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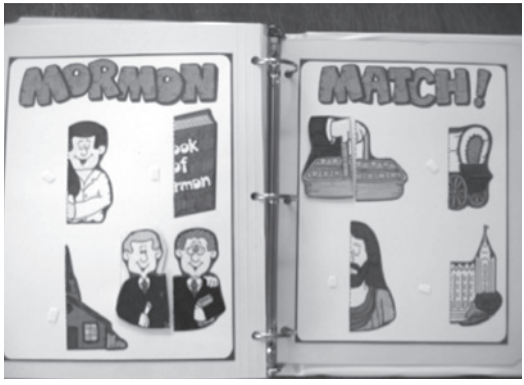
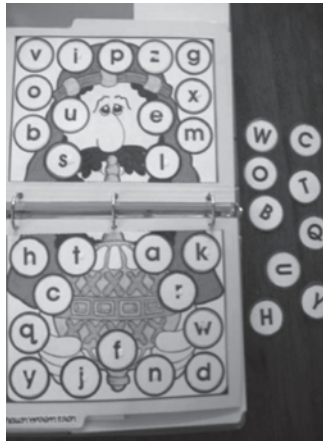
Appendix A

A Pioneer Picture from a quiet book



Mormon Match Game from a quiet book



Lehi's Liahona Letters from a quiet book