

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Personal preparedness and self-reliance have been themes of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints since its early days as an organized religion. These themes are still strong and vibrant today and one of their key aspects is the practice of food storage. Personal and familial preparation for problems that may be encountered in the course of life are an integral part of the discourse around food storage, as well as the need to be obedient to the admonitions of their church leaders. Though most informants involved in this study would agree that obedience is a key aspect behind their keeping of

a storage, there is great variation in their commitment and interpretation of the “Word” as they see it pertaining to their own families. Other key themes that emerged from the data were that a food storage offers peace of mind and security, and that it will be needed to help others as well as their own families. These themes and others are what comprise the Unofficial Word of food storage.

This thesis specifically presents research on the differences between the Official and Unofficial Word as they pertain to the practice of food storage by members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As the practice of food storage among members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has not been previously studied anthropologically, this thesis will attempt to show how an overarching hierarchy, such as religion, can so deeply affect the way people view, think about, and practice common tasks such as food choice, food consumption, and food preservation.

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Food Storage Practices Within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day
Saints: An Ethnographic Comparison of Discourses

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I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

Amanda Valora, Author

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents, William and Julie Valora, who have taught me all I will ever really need to know about life and love. Here's to our forever family.

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Food Storage Practices Within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints : An Ethnographic Comparison of Discourses

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

I can remember as a young girl being afraid to go in my grandparents' basement; there was something about the quiet cold that scared me. My grandparents had a large storage of food in a spacious room in the basement, and my grandmother liked to send me down to get things for her while she was cooking. I would creep down the stairs, flipping on every light switch I could find and then run to the storage room and quickly find what she wanted so that I could get back upstairs as quickly as possible. I never spent the time to actually look around myself at all the food and goods stored in that large room, or thought about what it meant that my grandparents had such a large storage of food in their basement until I was much older and much less afraid of the basement.

I used to spend entire weeks at a time at my grandparents' home during the summer break from school and, on occasion, I would help my grandmother in the kitchen, or help pick raspberries from her rows of bushes in the morning. They grew a great variety of fruits and vegetables on a large plot, about 50 feet by 30 feet, in their backyard; all of us grandkids would use

the rows of tall cornstalks as hiding places when we played hide-and-seek in the early twilight and into the night, being very careful to step between the rows of potatoes, onions, carrots, lettuces, and other vegetables on our way to the corn stalks so as not to get in trouble for walking through the garden. We didn't understand completely the importance that the garden held for our grandparents then, but as we've grown older we have learned that there was much more to their garden than just food.

My grandmother has bottled the same recipe of salsa ever since I can remember and I was usually the one grandchild that would encourage her, often annoyingly I'm sure, to make new batches each fall. I have helped her bottle the salsa on occasion, and it is an all day process. The majority of the ingredients (tomatoes, onions, peppers, etc.) came straight from their garden and were, more often than not, bursting with ripeness and the need to be used. My grandmother hates wasting any of her vegetables and brings boxes of tomatoes from her garden every summer to my family in the city, but she (with the exception of one aunt) is usually the only one that makes salsa or bothers to preserve the produce from her garden. She often chastises her children and grandchildren for not preserving more foods on their own.

Having grown up with grandparents that fit so neatly into the Mormon¹ discourse of food storage and self-reliance, one would think that my own mother would have socialized me into the same discursive community; however, my mother never learned to enjoy the practice of gardening and canning. I grew up in a house with a small storage room in the basement that was only partially utilized for food, the other half containing boxes of Christmas decorations, old photo albums, and a spattering of other odd objects. I remember there being a garden in the backyard when I was younger but, as the years went by, the space partitioned off for the garden became smaller and smaller, giving way to a sand box, then grass, until it was only 10 feet by 20 feet and half of the space was taken up by a shed where my parents store their yard work tools. It sat unused until two summers ago when I decided to try my hand at gardening and canning foods.

I had grown up watching my grandmother bottle fruits and make jams or salsas, and we always enjoyed eating them when we went to visit. I had always wanted to have raspberries in the backyard to pick in the mornings, and carrots and other tubers to have throughout the winter just like my grandmother. Two summers ago I decided that I wanted to learn how to do the same things, but my desire to learn this art that seemed to have skipped a

¹ The term “Mormon” is a popular nickname for members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

generation came from more than a desire to eat good food and feel nostalgic. I remember wondering why our storage room in the basement was so sparse in terms of food and why my mother didn't can things like my grandmother did. I knew that we had been told by our church leaders on many occasions that we were supposed to have more food in the basement in case hard times should come and we needed food. I didn't know what that meant at the time, but I knew we had been told to have a food storage and that ours seemed to be lacking.

It was a bit of a difficult transition for my mother as I asked for her help, but she pulled out the canning tools she had stored away from her younger years for me to use, explaining that she used to can things when she was newly married but it just wasn't something she enjoyed. She even helped me plant and care for the small garden in our backyard plot. I asked my grandmother questions about gardening and got recipes from her for making jams. And all the while I was working in the garden and canning my own foods I felt as though I was involved in an even bigger project of building up a food storage in my parent's home. I was becoming a part of both the official and unofficial discourses about food storage within the Church and being involved in it alleviated a lot of anxiety I had previously held because of the small amount of storage in our own home.

After conducting a brief pilot study on food storage among LDS women in a small eastern Oregon town, I decided to pursue further the practice and discourse of food storage within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In order to do this, I decided to return home to my family who lived in Utah and utilize the networks I had created over the years of growing up in a very strong community of religious LDS families. Utah is a unique place to study the Church discourse (of just about anything) because there is such a dense population of church members who attend meetings and services together on a weekly basis, creating very strong connections with each other on both secular and spiritual levels. However, it has been said on many occasions that the Church is the same no matter where you go and, because of this, one feels right at home in new congregations. It can also be said that the Church is the same no matter where you are because the doctrine and behavior have been so thoroughly defined and perpetuated; the culture of Mormonism is one that can be found the world over because of this codification of behavioral norms and beliefs. It makes for a comforting setting for believers no matter where they are.

Sacrament meetings² are one of the main places in which discourses are perpetuated. As I sat in one particular meeting during my pilot study in a local ward³, I was pleased with the obvious discussion about food storage; it was the perfect example of the official word being disseminated to lay members and interpreted by them all at the same time. The opening hymn sung by the congregation spoke of self-sufficiency and personal preparation. We sang, “Today, today, work with a will; today, today, your duties fulfill. Today, today, work while you may; prepare for tomorrow by working today.”⁴ One of the speakers discussed food storage and personal preparation in his talk as well; he spoke of a new program that the home teachers⁵ of the stake

² Sabbath day meetings last for three hours, which is split into three different blocks of meetings. The first meeting hour is called Sacrament meeting and the sacrament is administered during this hour. The second meeting hour is Sunday school, where men and women meet together; the third meeting hour is split, where men meet for Elders’ Quorum and women for Relief Society.

³ The Church is organized into regional groups called stakes, wards, and branches. A stake is the largest of these regional groups, and it is broken down into the next level of wards and branches. Each level of these regional groups has its own Priesthood (the men’s organization within the Church) and Relief Society (the women’s organization within the Church) leadership, and both the Priesthood and Relief Society organizations have activities at stake and ward levels.

⁴ This hymn comes from the Hymn Book of the Church and is entitled “Today, While the Sun Shines.”

⁵ Home Teaching is a worldwide Church program designed to ensure that each family in the local church is being watched over and cared for by the Priesthood of the Church. Men within the congregation are paired up and assigned 2 or 3 families (sometimes more) that they are to visit and care for if needs arise that cannot be met by the family. They are to visit each family at

would be implementing soon. He explained that the home teachers would be given a card containing questions they were to ask the families they visit; these questions were concerned with their spiritual and temporal well being. One question the men were to ask the families was if they had a home food storage; they were also to encourage each family to be more self reliant and to build a home food storage if they didn't already have one. These admonitions are completely in line with much of what the official discourse on food storage teaches.

Another example of the discourse about food storage occurred in my own ward of young single adults in Corvallis, Oregon where I was attending school. I was sitting in the back of the chapel listening to the talks⁶ being given and was very surprised when food storage and gardening were brought up by two different speakers in the same meeting. The first speaker shared her experiences of keeping a garden as a young girl with her mother and grandmother, and the joy she gained from it, as well as a love for hard work (which is a highly favored quality among church members). She quoted a now deceased president of the Church, Spencer W. Kimball, who said that

least once a month to offer spiritual guidance as well as any additional help that may be needed.

⁶ Sacrament meetings consist of hymns sung by the congregation and talks, or short sermons, given by members of the congregation that have been asked beforehand by the leadership of the ward to present certain religious topics to the congregation, such as faith, fasting, prayer, etc.

there was joy in keeping a garden and raising animals. She related this information to the church discourse on self-reliance and said that, despite our status as college students, we can be involved in things like small scale gardening by, for example, learning to care for herbs and building up the knowledge we might need to care for a garden later in life when it is a more plausible reality.

The second speaker talked about being prepared physically for things that may happen in the everyday course of our lives. He suggested that even as students living in apartments, we need to be prepared for life's hardships that may come our way. He stated that water was perhaps the most important resource to store and that we should find space in our apartments for a small storage of both water and food. He also stated that we need to prepare economically by saving money and staying out of debt because "current economic times are rough and won't get better anytime soon." The surprising thing about the students perpetuating the discourse is that the circumstances in which students live is not particularly conducive to keeping a food storage or to saving up money, and yet these single young adults are still entrenched in the discourse and both suggest that you can never be too young to worry about these things. This shows clearly just how pervasive the Official word of food storage is among church members, both young and old.

In an attempt to ground in theory the data found during the ethnographic process, this thesis will begin with a literature overview of religion, gender, and food as they apply to the topic of this thesis. Following the literature review, an explanation of the methodologies and methods used during research will be presented. Next, the thesis will turn to the topic of food storage within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, beginning with a brief history of food storage and an explanation of what the Official Word of food storage is and where it comes from, followed by the presentation of the Unofficial Word which is derived from the data gathered during fieldwork. Following the presentation of the Official and Unofficial Words will be a discussion of their relationship to one another. And finally, in conclusion, I will show how a religion like The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can affect the way people view, think about, and practice everyday, a mundane affair of life such as storing food.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Classical anthropologists from the early days of the discipline seem to have been more concerned with studying the Other in small scale communities rather than large, complex cultures, which this study is focused on. Classical ethnographies done on small scale communities attempted to explain as many aspects of life as possible, essentially creating a snapshot of that community in time. Religion, gender, and food are all examples of topics that were once very important to those ethnographies concerned with telling the complete story of a culture at a particular time in history. Now we see scholarship being done on topics with much more detail on the topic specifically, rather than on how the topic fits into the culture at large. This particular thesis is a good example of how an interest in the topics of food and religion can lead a researcher to ask questions about those topics within a particular culture, where there might not otherwise have been an interest. In an attempt to ground this thesis in work that has already been done within the three topics of religion, gender, and food some key works on those three topics will be presented. In addition, linguistics, capital, discourse, and official word will also be discussed.

RELIGION, GENDER, AND FOOD

Religion can be simply defined as “ideas and practices that postulate reality beyond that which is immediately available to the senses” (Lavenda 2007; p. 52). Saler (1987) suggests that a common current understanding of religion is that it is made up of “certain sorts of ‘beliefs’ and of routinized behaviors associated with those beliefs” (p. 395). Saler goes much further, however, in attempting to understand the definition of religion by conducting a semiotic history of the Latin term *Religio* from which religion is derived. He suggests that the meaning of *religio* can be traced back to Cicero whose use of language suggest meanings such as “to tie together” and “to gather together”. Later Roman usage of the term was associated with public behavior and socially recognized obligations. In many European languages, *religio* suggested “piety, a life lived in accordance with suppositions about God’s will and ordinances, absorption in spiritual concern, cultic observances, and so on” (1987; p. 398). Finally, Saler (1987) suggests that our contemporary understanding of religion has been formed by historical movements such as the Reformation and the Enlightenment.

Religion has always played a key role in anthropological studies and scholarship, with a focus on religions that were somehow disconnected from the western world. Early anthropologists interested in religion hypothesized

that by studying the “simple” religions of the world we would be better able to someday understand the more “complex” religions of our western cultures (Emile Durkheim 1912; William Howells 1948). People have argued, however, that anthropologists’ avoidance of western religions was simply because of a fear of studying themselves (Cannell 2006).

In response to this, Christianity has now become a rather popular topic of scholarship within anthropology. An example of this new found popularity is a book of essays collected by Fenella Cannell about Christianity among different groups around the world (2006). It is important here to note that the Mormon religion defines itself as being Christian because of its beliefs in Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world and in God as a omniscient, heavenly being who is the Father of us all, thus making anthropology of Christianity more than applicable to a discussion on the culture of Mormonism.

One example of a religious ethnography on Mormonism is *The Mormon Culture of Salvation* by Douglas Davies (2000). Davies gives an in-depth analysis of the culture of Mormonism, showing in particular how beliefs in an afterlife centered around exaltation⁷ affects different aspects of Mormon life, such as ritual, family life, religious life, and even the history of the Church. Davies only very briefly mentions food storage in his ethnography when he

⁷ Church doctrine teaches that, upon resurrection, worth individuals will be exalted, or granted eternal life and live forever in the presence of their God.

says, “The fact that a store of food is maintained in each household is itself symbolic of the domestic arena as a place of refuge and security” (146). Despite his fleeting commentary on food storage (which could possibly be attributed to the fact that he’s a male researcher and writer), the practice when viewed as a ritual of religious life fits nicely into his discussion on Mormonism and its culture of salvation.

One particular religious theorist that is useful in this case of studying the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church) is Max Weber. Though the LDS Church is not a Protestant religion, many of its characteristics are similar as it is considered an offshoot of American Protestant religions from early 19th century America, making it feasible to apply Weber’s sociology of Protestantism to the culture and practices of the LDS Church. Weber’s theory about how religion and its ideals affect economic practices is particularly applicable in this case.

Much like 19th century Calvinists, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believe that working hard and being successful in all aspects of life is what should be strived for, that the investment of money is more important than the spending of it on what some might call frivolous expenses. Also, though the members of the LDS Church are striving together towards salvation and exaltation as a united body, they also have the notion

that each person is responsible for their own salvation and that they must take action through “enduring to the end” by various means to ensure that salvation. We can see here then, that the ideals of the Church Welfare program in terms of self-sufficiency and personal welfare (both economically and materially) are similar to those that Weber observed among Protestants of 19th century Europe (Weber 2002).

Durkheim’s ideas of collective representation and of the individual as presented in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1915) can also be applied to what is being seen within the LDS Church food storage program and the way individuals within the Church are talking about and practicing food storage. Durkheim argues that in order to truly understand religion, a study of the simplest societies and their simple religions is where one must turn. Though the LDS Church is far from a simple religion as Durkheim would classify them, his collective representation can help us better understand what we are seeing among Church members. He writes,

...religion is something eminently social.
 Religious representations are collective
 representations which express collective realities;
 the rites are a manner of acting which takes rise
 in the midst of the assembled groups and which
 are destined to excite, maintain or recreate
 certain mental states in these groups. So if the
 categories are of religious origin, they ought to
 participate in this nature common to all religious

facts; they too should be social affairs and the product of collective thought.

The acts of preserving and storing food can be viewed as rites which occur in social environments and serve to perpetuate the common discourse about food storage.

Gender plays a key role in the work of this thesis as the vast majority of informants interviewed were women. It became apparent quite early in the process of fieldwork that the practice of keeping a food storage was a very gendered practice. Men were rarely in charge, and when asked about food storage in the presence of their wives, they deferred to their wives to explain or discuss the topic; if their wives weren't present they still suggested I talk to her instead. Because this topic is so gendered, an understanding of gender in the division of labor, and specifically some work on feminism and food, will be an important key in understanding what we see among members of the Church as they are involved in the practice of keeping a food storage.

Anthropology in all its subfields has always been interested in the sexual division of labor, or the designation of particular tasks to males or females. One example of this is the distinction of man as a hunter and woman as a gatherer; present-day hunter-gatherer societies are studied in an attempt to understand this relationship. In the vast majority of these societies, sexual division of labor is demarcated in exactly the way suggested above: men hunt

and women gather. Sherry Ortner (1974), in *Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?* pulls this concept into a theoretical understanding of the subordination of women in both social and economic situations in every type of society, both simple and complex. In this article she attempts to show how and why the subordination of women is universal. She suggests that because women and their bodies are more often associated with nature, and because men (and culture) are seen as being in control of nature, that men are placed in social roles that are considered to be of higher status, thus subjugating women to men (or nature to culture). Though these ideas have been questioned and critiqued, I think they can still add to the present discussion.

There has been an immense amount of scholarship on gender and feminism both inside and outside of anthropology; however, instead of focusing on the vast literature available on feminism in general, I will focus instead on a few examples of how gender studies and feminism relate to religion and food in particular, as this links more closely to the practice of keeping a food storage within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as studied in this ethnographic work.

Anne M. Clifford, in *Feminist Theology* (2009), introduces the topic of feminism within religion in general, and within Christianity in particular. Clifford offers a very informative view of feminism within the Bible as well as

feminist perspectives of God and women in the Catholic Church. She goes on to suggest that women of color interact with religion and feminism in very different ways than white women, showing how cultural differences and understandings of the world can change the way women relate to God and the religious teachings of their church and the Bible. Clifford's insights add nuances to the topic of food storage when applied to the LDS practice by showing that there is a lot more to food storage than just stocking up on cans of beans. As LDS women interact with their religion and its teachings about food and food storage, they are also interacting with a history of food from early days of the Church as well as from the Bible and other religious books considered canon by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Clifford (2009) also discusses the important concept of patriarchy (a system that legitimates and enforces relations of dominance within a society where women and children are placed within a status of inferiority) within religion, showing that women have been placed in inferior positions by their religions in many different ways throughout history. Like other religious traditions, women in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have historically played a particularly minor role in leadership positions, showing evidence of patriarchy within the LDS religion.

Another influential book on feminism and, in particular, its relationship to food is *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist Vegetarian Critical Theory* (2010) by Carol J. Adams. In this book, Adams pulls apart the masculinity associated with the way we eat and shows how women and meat have become objectified and sexualized in often quite gruesome ways. This book is a call to action for men and women to think about and to take control over how and what they eat. As LDS women are largely in charge of the process of building and maintaining a food storage, they are pulled into this discourse of men's desires and expectations of what kinds of food will be on the kitchen table when they get home from work. Because women have to work within the constraints of the patriarchal systems in which they live, the foods they choose to store and cook are often admittedly foods that their husbands and children will eat instead of foods that they like and would enjoy cooking/preparing for their families. Women often take the back seat to men in food choices though they are the hands that do the most work with the food.

In contrast, in *Voices in the Kitchen: Views of Food and the World from Working-Class Mexican and Mexican American Women*, Meredith E. Abarca (2006) shows how the work of women in the kitchen has been recaptured by the Mexican and Mexican-American women she interviewed as an expressive

and joyful task, not one simply imposed on them by the patriarchal societies in which they live. She suggests that as women have reclaimed their space in the kitchen as a way to express themselves, they have risen above some of the patriarchal chains that their mothers and grandmothers were bound by.

Much like the Mexican and Mexican-American women in Abarca's study, the women in this study also seem to have claimed their space in the realm of food purchasing, storage, and preparation as a way to express themselves and their beliefs.

Food scholarship has grown into what some might call a very sexy topic over the last decade, becoming quite trendy not only within anthropology, but also in popular media and popular culture. Food has been used as a lens to understand many different aspects of life. Food as a focus for these different issues offers an extremely unique view because it plays such an important role in our everyday lives. Food can be used as an avenue to study just about anything because without food, we simply would not be. For example, economics can be studied by focusing on food products or food systems, social relationship and power can be explained by understanding food choices and preferences, and so on. Some examples of food scholarship include topics such as poverty (Weismantel 1998), obesity, systems (Nestle 2007; Fischer & Benson 2006; Shiva, 2000), identity (Wilk 2008; Counihan

2004; Nabhan 2008; Sokolov 1991), power (Mintz 1985; Wittman et al. 2010), gender relationships (Julier & Lindenfeld 2005; Holden 2008; Parasecoli 2008; DeVault 2008), and, like this study, religion (Douglas 1972; Harris 2008).

Food and religion seem to have always had a relationship with one another, as there are religious rituals and practices involving food in all of the major religions of the world. Anthropologists have been writing about this relationship for quite some time as well. For instance, there are many examples of food related practices within religious settings that are viewed and treated differently than they otherwise would be in non-religious settings; these examples can be compared to and related to the practice within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints of keeping a food storage. I will briefly discuss three examples that shed some light on how religion can turn a mundane practice into a religious one of both symbolism and functionality, as well as how the work of women within the home and kitchen serves to produce and reproduce religious communities.

The first example is that of Mary Douglas from her work, *Deciphering a Meal* (1972), in which she shows how religious dogmas shape the practices of members of the Jewish faith in regards to their eating habits. In this article, Douglas breaks down the Jewish food rules, showing “the multiple

dimensions of thought and activity of the Hebrews concerned” (p. 70). By describing the dietary rules in detail and relating them to the Israelites of the Bible, Douglas shows the key role that symbolism played in Jewish food prohibitions during the Biblical days of the Israelites and how these rules served to set the religious community apart from those around it. For example, Douglas draws a symbolic link between the sacrificial altar of Biblical Israel and the family dinner table because only animals fit to be sacrificed on the altar are fit to be served at the table, creating a symbolic purity in both the animals being eaten and those who eat the animals. She also writes, “It is particularly interesting that these rules have remained the same over centuries” (p. 71). Though a discussion of gender is not part of Douglas’ breakdown of Jewish food prohibitions, it is safe to assume that women are doing the work of passing on, or reproducing, the Jewish food rules in the kitchen and, thus, reproducing families that are part of the Jewish religious community.

In response to Douglas, Marvin Harris (2008) writes about the functionality of the Jewish religious food taboos, making the argument that the rules were created and maintained out of function alone. Harris’s argument centers around the idea that cattle, sheep, and goats were considered edible purely because they’re the kind of animals that thrive in the

environmental conditions in which the Jewish food prohibitions were born and because competition between humans and these animals for agricultural goods to be consumed was irrelevant because humans cannot eat the tough, fibrous grasses that the ruminants consumed. In contrast, pigs, which are considered the most efficient converters of plant food into flesh, are prohibited animals. Harris explains this prohibition in the same way he does the divinely inspired classification of ruminants as edible, claiming that it is because pigs were not well adapted to the climate and because they would be competition for resources as they eat the same food as humans. For Harris, the rules have a simple, extremely functional explanation.

The third example of how religious views change perceptions of practice and how women and their work produce and reproduce religious communities is presented by Marjo Buitelaar. In *Fasting and Feasting in Morocco*, (2007) he writes of Ramadan and the fasting practices that occur during the month of Ramadan. He discusses three different aspects (*umma*, *tahara*, and *ajr*) of the Moroccan Muslim world-view that make fasting in Ramadan an experience set apart from fasting practices that may occur during other times of the year and specifies ways in which women work within Ramadan to make it “an exercise in unification...linking Muslims everywhere in the world in a joint action...the fast unifies the Islamic

Community” (pp. 179-180). One particular example of this unification is in the consumption of a particular soup, *hrira*, that is eaten to break the fast everywhere in Morocco. Buitelaar writes, “The fact that everywhere people break the fast by eating the same soup affirms the notion that Moroccans are one people” (p. 177). He shows here that the Moroccan Muslim community is being reproduced during the fasting month of Ramadan.

Women seem to play the larger role of reproducing the Muslim community by their work in the home and the kitchen. Buitelaar (2007) writes that, in preparation for the fasting month, women dedicate themselves to cleaning the house, and during Ramadan, women have the responsibility of feeding the family after sunset. These meals are often excessive in nature as families indulge themselves after fasting from sunrise to sundown. He also points out that women restore traditional cooking methods (such as using a wood burning stove in place of gas, or a *tajin* in place of a pressure cooker) to prepare the food that they will serve their families. Buitelaar makes a particularly interesting distinction between activities involving men and women during Ramadan when he explains that men can be seen in the streets jogging during the last hour before sunset, “demonstrating their excellent condition by accomplishing such performances on an empty stomach” (p. 177), whereas, in contrast, women are in the homes setting the tables for the

coming meal, a meal which includes the soup they have spent the day making with traditional cooking methods. The role of women in this particular collective religious rite is more manifest than others, but their role is still played out in the home and kitchen.

LINGUISTICS, CAPITAL, DISCOURSE, AND THE OFFICIAL WORD

The concept of speech community as explained by Marcyliena Morgan is key for understanding the differences seen in the Official and Unofficial discourses about Mormon food storage practices. Morgan explains that studying the speech community

is central to the understanding of human language and meaning-making because it is the product of prolonged interaction among those who operate within shared belief and value systems regarding their own culture, society, and history as well as their communication with others...it is within the speech community that identity, ideology, and agency are actualized in society (Morgan, 2006; p. 3).

The Official discourse of the Church is very simple to find as it is available on the internet, in Church publications, and in the words of the leaders, and the language used is straightforward. Despite the clearness of the Official discourse, individuals in the speech community traffic in alternative ways of speaking about food storage. Morgan (2006) writes,

The speech community is recognizable by the circulation of discourse and repetition of activity

and beliefs and values about these topics, which are constantly discussed, evaluated, corroborated, mediated, and reconstituted by its members...though these values are agreed upon, that does not necessarily mean that there is complete consensus about the implementation of these principles. Rather, what is at stake is knowledge of the symbolic, market, and exchange value of varieties and styles within and across speech communities.

When church members use the same terminology as the leaders in discussions about food storage (or, the Official discourse), it displays their knowledge of admonitions from their leaders; their ability to use this language indexes them as good, faithful members of the church even if they choose to put the discourse into practice differently than as laid out by the leaders. It is also important to notice that the individuals are so easily able to move from one discursive footing to the other in their discussions about food storage (Goffman 1979). With the framework of the speech community as one of the foundational theoretical methodologies of the study, we can move forward in attempts to understand what is seen in the practice of food storage.

Capital, as defined by Bourdieu, can also add insights to the discussion of food storage, showing how and why members so uniformly fit into the Official discourse of the Church's stance on food storage. According to Bourdieu, individuals are not only defined by their membership in a certain

class or society, but by the capital they build up through their social relationships within that society. Bourdieu suggests that economic capital is acquired through the ownership of physical objects (Bourdieu 1986). Within the Church, economic capital can be acquired through the extent to which one keeps a food storage. Cultural capital, in comparison, can be made up of knowledge, skills, and education, all of which are embodied forms of capital built up over time through socialization within the smaller unit of the family or the larger unit of culture. Cultural capital for Church members can be acquired by building a knowledge base about keeping a food storage or relationships based on food storage. Finally, social capital is the build-up of resources based on networks of influence, support, or knowledge; these networks involve group memberships, relationships, and connections (Bourdieu, 1984). Social capital is seen in food storage by the building of relationships and the sharing of knowledge about food storage and the Official word of food storage between Church members.

Cultural capital can be compared to and associated with Foucault's concept of discourse. For Foucault (1972), a discourse is a powerful system of thoughts that serves to construct and maintain both subjects and the worlds in which those subjects speak. This discourse is made up of things such as ideas, attitudes, beliefs, and actions. When tying this idea of discourse

into the acquisition of cultural capital, we see that simply by being a part of the discourse, people can build up cultural capital and use it to their advantage within the discourse because this is real power that they are building up according to the truths of the religion in which they live. In other words, the concept of capital defined by Bourdieu serves to reinforce the concept of discourse defined by Foucault. Foucault's discourse constructs truth, validates power, as well as maintains the power relationship it has constructed. In terms of food storage, the discourse constructed has become a truth to the people involved as well as maintains the power structure of the Church because the discourse flows in a unilateral direction, from the (male) leaders of the Church to the members (female) involved in keeping a food storage. It is through the experiences had in the family and in church that they have learned the physical practices as well as the necessary knowledge to go with this discourse.

Bakhtin's ideas about Official Word are also somewhat similar to Foucault's concept of discourse. In *Rabelais and His World* (1984), Bakhtin explores the previous work of Rabelais called *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, using it to analyze the social relationship of official and unofficial languages during the late Renaissance when Rabelais wrote this particular work. Bakhtin uses the *carnival* to discuss these ideas of the official and unofficial

life and language, showing how *carnival* was temporary change from the official world of stability and closure to one of instability and openness. Elliot (1999) says of the unofficial language, "*Rabelais and his World* describes an elaborate aesthetics of medieval peasant culture, referred to alternately as 'the people', 'the gold', 'the second world', 'the unofficial world', and 'popular festive culture', defined against the 'official world' of civil and religious authority" (p. 130). In comparison, the official life was compared to "authoritative discourse" and "monologic discourse", which Elliot (1999) says are part of a "one-sided word that claims absolute truth" (p. 133). Here, Bakhtin is explaining how drastically different the official and unofficial words were in Rabelais' world; however, as will be shown, the Official and Unofficial Words of food storage, in contrast to Rabelais', are extremely similar. Though the Official and Unofficial Word of Rabelais' world is one of difference, they are important concepts to understand for this work as well. Bourdieu, Foucault, and Bakhtin all provide different, but compatible theories that can be applied to the Official Word of food storage and its associated discourse, as will be shown in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGIES AND METHODS

METHODOLOGIES

The first methodological framework I have explored in undertaking this research is that of the anthropologist as both an insider and an outsider since I am both an anthropologist and a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Anthropology as a field and a practice has been founded on the distinction between self and other throughout its history. Lila Abu-Lughod (2006) explains that anthropology has been built “on the historically constructed divide between West and non-West” (p. 467). The West and non-West (the self and the other) can also be characterized as the insider and outsider. Ergun and Erdemir (2010) write, “Researchers are said to have insider or semi-insider status by nature of their indigenous, native, or bicultural status, whereas being an outsider is often equated with being a stranger or foreigner” (p. 17). In traditional or classical anthropology, the anthropologist as insider and the associated limitations or difficulties that are necessarily a part of being an insider and an anthropologist outsider, were rarely a problem because anthropologists were known for going to far flung locations where most, if not all, of what they saw and experienced was new to them. Abu-Lughod (2006) goes on to write, “The problem with studying

one's own society is alleged to be the problem of gaining enough distance" (p. 468).

As an anthropologist who is both an insider to the Mormon culture (as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) and an outsider (as the ethnographer studying the culture of the Mormon practice of food storage) I have unique insights into the culture and practices of the people as well as the unique challenge of stepping away from my own cultural understandings. Both of these positionalities have their pros and cons in conducting ethnographic research, which requires one to approach research with a critical eye and a questioning mind. I hope that in being as explicit as possible with my own self-reflexivity that I can bring a critical lens to the discussion while still being able to provide a more intimate understanding of the topics presented.

Critical discourse analysis is the main methodological framework used for analyzing and interpreting the data gathered through ethnographic methods (to be discussed in the methods section) during the fieldwork portion of this study. Critical discourse analysis, as explained by McIntyre et al, is an intensive qualitative methodology that involves "four major processes: (1) reviewing the data multiple times, while noting features of interest; (2) locating discourses by exploring the kind of picture painted by

the text; (3) examining what is done or achieved through the particular utterances; and (4) exploring what we can say about the positions of those who use various discourses “(McIntyre et al, 2009). Multiple readings and intimate knowledge of the data collected are important in discovering and analyzing different themes or discourses that may be hidden within the data. Through these processes, critical discourse analysis strives to uncover the discourses people use when communicating with one another, making it very applicable to this particular project. The difficulty with using the methodology of critical discourse analysis goes back to the ability (or possible inability) to subjectively analyze and interpret the data as a researcher with both an insider and outsider point of view. By attempting to remove my biases and preconceived notions, but by also taking advantage of my unique understanding of the practice of food storage, I hope to be able to offer a full and nuanced understanding of the phenomena related to food storage that I discover.

METHODS

As critical discourse analysis plays a key role in the methodology of this study, semi-structured interviews were the method used for gathering the majority of the discursive data. In these interviews I asked my informants to tell me about their personal food storages. I asked what they stored, where

they got it from, how often they used their food storage, and how they organized it. I also asked if they grew and maintained their own gardens and what preservation techniques (if any) they used and how much of their food storage came from preserving the produce from their gardens. A discussion about the differences between their food storage and the food storage of the home they grew up in was also a large part of the interviews. I then asked why they kept a food storage, why they thought they were asked by Church leaders to keep one, and how having a food storage has affected their life. These interviews lasted from 10 minutes to 65 minutes, though they averaged about 40 minutes in length; each interview was recorded with a voice recorder while some additional notes of thoughts or impressions were written in a small notebook during the course of the interview.

A total number of 36 people were interviewed in a total number of 27 interviews; ten of the 27 interviews were conducted by questioning two informants at the same time in what I will call paired interviews. Four of these paired interviews were husband and wife couples, two were mother daughter pairs, one was a pair of friends in their mid 20's, and another was two men who worked together in a bishopric⁸ of a local ward. The age of people interviewed ranged from their mid 20s to mid 70s and the economic

⁸ Each ward is led by three men (the Bishop and his first and second counselors) who make up what is called the Bishopric.

situation of the informants ranged from working class to upper-middle class. The vast majority of my informants were women, as 6 of the 36 people interviewed were men. Two women were interviewed as key informants; one woman owned and ran a food storage store located in northern Utah County, and another woman had written a very popular cookbook with recipes that were based on using nothing but food storage (she has also toured the country extensively, promoting her cookbook and talking to people about the practice of food storage).

Many of my informants were previous acquaintances of mine, while some were very good friends. Other were recruited based on snowball sampling, as those I interviewed suggested I interview other women that they knew. I even had some volunteer themselves; for example, I interviewed a woman from a book club I joined for the few months of the summer because she wanted to tell me about her food storage. I gave my informants the option to have their names replaced by a pseudonym in the final work of this project; a number of informants chose this option and, as such, some of the names used have been changed according to the informants' desires. After the interviewing phase of the research, each interview was transcribed and analyzed multiple times through reading and coding according to the methodology of critical discourse analysis. During the analysis phase, themes

were derived from the qualitative data in the interviews and then compared to the analysis of the Official Word as it is disseminated to the members of the church.

Analyzing Church documents and speeches about food storage and researching the history of the discourse of food storage as well as the history of the Church Welfare program was an important part of this study, as going beyond my own personal understanding of the discourse on food storage was an integral part in my being able to write objectively about what I was seeing, hearing, and learning. I was able to contact the man considered to be the head historian of the Welfare Program (he is also a general authority⁹), Glenn L. Rudd, and received many electronic documents from him, both historical and contemporary, that were analyzed in this process. I was unfortunately unable to personally interview Glenn L. Rudd or any of the other presiding leaders of the church during the span of my fieldwork. I was initially disappointed by my inability to personally talk to the general leadership of the Church, but after reflecting on this as I considered it to be a limitation, it was impressed upon me that the Official Word is disseminated to lay

⁹ A General Authority of the Church is a man in a leadership position who serves under the direction of the President of the Church, and can be called to serve in any area of the world. These men are part of the general administration of the Church, which is the highest level of administration, followed by area and local administrations.

members of the Church through official means such as General Conference¹⁰, letters sent out to the stake and ward levels of the Church, in the Church magazines, and so on. It made sense to me then, that analyzing these documents was the logical way to come to an understanding of the Official Word as it is understood by lay church members and that it wasn't necessary for me to talk to any of the presiding leadership.

Finally, participant observation was also utilized in many ways to gain an understanding of the discourse of food storage. I attended meetings of the Relief Society in which we had discussions about food, cooking, and health. Informal conversations with people before and after church services, as well as in everyday contact, informed my thoughts about food storage practices. Sacrament meetings and other church services (such as Sunday school) were important places for observing both the Official and Unofficial discourses of food storage. I toured the headquarters of the Church's Welfare program in Salt Lake City, which is known as Welfare Square; much of the discourse of the food storage program began with Welfare Square. Ideas of food storage and self-sufficiency are easy to see on this one city block owned by the Church; for example, there is a gigantic grain elevator on the block that holds

¹⁰ Each April and October there is a church-wide biannual meeting, known as General Conference, in which the Church leaders address the members on a variety of topics.

more than 300,000 bushels of wheat (there are also three other such grain elevators owned by the Church along the I-15 corridor in Utah), and a milk processing plant where cheeses are made and milk is bottled. I also visited the cannery in my area to observe the workings of the Church cannery system and to volunteer in the canning process; the day I arrived they were canning peaches. Finally, I went to multiple food storage stores located in Utah County to observe what kind of products they sold and what kind of people seemed to be frequenting their locations. While visiting these stores, I purchased a half dozen cookbooks to use while analyzing textually the different ways that people live out the discourse of food storage; popular online food storage companies were also analyzed in an attempt to understand the unofficial discourse.

SITE SELECTION

Utah County, much of which is Utah Valley, has just over 516,000 residents (Utah County Online, 2011) and is home to two large universities, Brigham Young University (which is a private university run by the Church) and Utah Valley University (from which I received my bachelor's degree). It is located geographically just about 50 miles south of the state's capital of Salt Lake City where the headquarters of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are located. As of 2004, about 62% of Utah residents identified as

Mormon, though the percentage of church-going members is closer to 40%. These numbers show that Utah cannot be considered an overwhelmingly Mormon state per se, as many people in the nation think it is; however, there are areas of the state that are highly saturated with members of the Church. Utah valley is a good example of this. These areas of high concentration can be breeding grounds for the unique culture of Mormonism, making it a perfect place to study the unofficial word that is practiced by lay members of the Church. Utah Valley is commonly called “The Bubble” because it is uniquely isolated from other religious or cultural influences. The location of Brigham Young University in Utah Valley also has an effect on the cultural environment of the valley, as it is where college aged members of the Church from all over the United States and the world converge to learn both spiritual and secular knowledge. Upon completion of a degree, they then go back out to the rest of the world with the Mormon culture they learned at BYU and thus help to perpetuate the discourses of the Church, which includes the discourse of food storage.

CHAPTER 4: THE HISTORY AND THE OFFICIAL WORD OF FOOD STORAGE

In order to understand the themes that will be discussed in Chapter 5, where they come from, and why the informants all so uniformly speak of them, an understanding of the history of food storage within the Church as well as the Church discourse of food storage today must first be explained.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF FOOD STORAGE

Although the current welfare plan as practiced by the Church wasn't officially established until 1936, the importance of being self-reliant and helping your fellow-men has been a part of the Church since its humble beginnings in 1830 (Rudd, 1995). For example, there are stories of pioneers crossing the plains and sowing seeds along the trail for those who were to follow the next year; this also shows how Church members are taught through the welfare program and its discourse to think of and provide for others. It should also be pointed out that the westward migration of the Church to the difficult region of the Rockies where seasons are distinct and harsh, required the early church members to involve themselves in the practices of storing food for times when food would, quite literally, be unavailable. These early members then passed on these practices to the following generations.

Arguably, the most important aspects of the welfare program are the

practices of paying tithing and fast-offerings¹¹ which have helped the poor and needy gain access to goods and foods at bishop's storehouses throughout Church history. These practices are still followed today, providing care for the poor and needy all over the world. But the purposes of the welfare system reach beyond just helping others; leaders of the Church also teach that through living the principles of the welfare program, members can learn how to have self-reliance as a way of life. Self-reliance involves five key points: education, health, employment, *family home production and storage*, and spiritual strength. Note that as part of these five aspects of living a self-reliant life, we see family home production and storage.

The beginning of the food storage program of the Church is integrally connected to the beginning of the welfare system (Rudd 1995). In the LDS magazine, *Ensign*, we read, "The production and processing of food to feed the hungry has been a cornerstone of the welfare plan since it was first

¹¹ Church members are asked to pay to the Church a tithing of ten percent on all their monetary increase, or monthly income. This money is sent directly to Church headquarters and not used directly by members or leaders of local wards. They are also asked to donate fast offerings which are monetary donations given by families once a month. Members are asked to fast from two meals on the first Sunday of every month, and then to donate the money that they would have spent on those two meals to their bishop who uses those funds to help members of the ward in need. This money most often goes towards helping families cover bills they need paid. Any money gathered on the ward level but not used by bishops gets passed along to the stake, which also helps people through the same process. If the funds are not used by the stake, they continue to be passed further up the chain.

introduced. What began as scattered gardens and work projects located throughout Utah became a vast network of over 1,000 farms and food-production projects run by the stakes and wards of the Church” (*Ensign*, 2011). A timeline of the welfare system, which includes many historical aspects of food storage, can also be found at the Church’s website, lds.org. A few of the early, most notable, food related events are as follows: in 1937 bishops’ storehouses throughout the state were organized into the first central storehouse; in 1938 the property where Welfare Square is now located was purchased, and later (in 1940) a grain elevator would be built that holds more than 300,000 bushels of wheat; in 1939 a root cellar was built on Welfare Square, being the first structure to be built on the square, and construction of a cannery was also begun; and finally, in 1941 a milk processing plant was constructed on Welfare Square. All these efforts began in response to the Great Depression of the 30s, beginning with local leaders concentrated in and around Salt Lake (a rural area of America during a time when food was scarce) who initiated programs of support for their particular congregations, which were the initial steps leading up to the organization of the welfare program (Rudd, 1995).

In more recent times, a new bakery, cannery, and milk processing facility have also been built on Welfare Square, which has become the center

of food production and distribution for the Church and houses the central Bishop's Storehouse of the Church. Goods at bishops' storehouses are put under the administration of local bishops who preside in service over their specific congregations, hence the name bishops' storehouse. Members who are in any type of crisis explain the extent of their needs to their bishop who can give them access, through paperwork, to the goods (foods, clothes, hygiene items, etc) available at the storehouse. It was during these years when the growing importance of food production and storage for member and humanitarian needs shifted to focus specifically on personal/familial food storage that it became a fundamental part of the Church's discourse on self-reliance; during the 70s and 80s this discourse really took off and it has been perpetuated since (Rudd, 1995).

OFFICIAL WORD OF FOOD STORAGE

The Church website has a multitude of information and related links on self-reliance, as well as a site set aside specifically to teach the basic concepts behind self-reliance. The page contains a short film that tells the story of a one of the leaders who, as a young married man, was walking down the street with his wife when he saw a dress in a store window that he suggested they buy for her. She tried the dress on, but returned it to the clerk saying that their funds wouldn't cover the dress so they need not spend

money on it. Above the film there is a quote that says, “Self-reliance is a simple concept that encourages each of us to take responsibility for our own needs—physical, emotional, spiritual, social, and economic.” Julie B. Beck, the president of the Church’s organization for women (the Relief Society) also has a quote on the page that explains how self-reliance can be achieved: “We become self-reliant through obtaining sufficient knowledge, education, and literacy; by managing money and resources wisely, being spiritually strong, preparing for emergencies and eventualities; and by having physical health and social and emotional well-being.” Food storage is a sub-field of this self-reliance discourse and could be placed under “preparing for emergencies and eventualities”. This can be seen through a very bright picture (one of only two pictures on the page) on the right side of the main page on self-reliance; the photo contains two women bottling peaches. The women are wearing aprons and large smiles, obviously enjoying the work of living a self-reliant life by preparing their own food storage.

There is another site called Provident Living that has a page which focuses on family home storage. It contains a message from the First Presidency¹² in the center of the page that comes from a pamphlet distributed

¹² The First Presidency of the Church is made up of the Prophet and President of the Church, and his two counselors. They are the head of the church and are responsible for both the spiritual and physical needs of the members.

by the church in 2007 entitled, “All is Safely Gathered In: Family Home Storage”. It states:

Our Heavenly Father created this beautiful earth, with all its abundance, for our benefit and use. His purpose is to provide for our needs as we walk in faith and obedience. He has lovingly commanded us to “prepare every needful thing” (see D&C 109:8)¹³ so that, should adversity come, we can care for ourselves and our neighbors and support bishops as they care for others.

We encourage members world-wide to prepare for adversity in life by having a basic supply of food and water and some money in savings.

We ask that you be wise as you store food and water and build your savings. Do not go to extremes; it is not prudent, for example, to go into debt to establish your food storage all at once. With careful planning, you can, over time, establish a home storage supply and a financial reserve.

This quote, as well as the associated pamphlet, very succinctly shows the language usage of the Official discourse about food storage. Below this quote are four links to more information on specific aspects of food storage entitled “three-month supply”, “drinking water”, “financial reserve”, and “longer-term supply”. It also contains different links on the right side of the page for

¹³ The Church believes the Bible to be the word of God, but also believes in additional books that have been revealed to the leaders through God’s power in our day. The Doctrine and Covenants (D&C) is one such book and was written almost entirely by the first Prophet and President of the Church, Joseph Smith Jr., during the early 1800s.

information such as quotes and talks on home storage by the leaders of the Church or frequently asked questions, as well as a link to an order form for the Home Storage Center¹⁴ (also known in lay terms as the cannery).

The use of the internet in disseminating this information is a relatively new avenue utilized by the Church, but self-reliance sentiments and the ideology behind food storage, as has been discussed, have been a part of the church since its infancy. Ezra Taft Benson (a now deceased President of the Church who was also the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture during both terms of Eisenhower's presidency, from 1953 to 1961) in an October 1980 General Conference address, stated, "For over forty years, in a spirit of love, members of the Church have been counseled to be thrifty and self-reliant; to avoid debt; pay tithes and a generous fast offering; be industrious; and have sufficient food, clothing, and fuel on hand to last at least one year" (Benson, 1980). He goes on in the same address to talk more in depth about food storage, saying:

An almost forgotten means of economic self-reliance is the home production of food. We are too accustomed to going to stores and purchasing what we need. By producing some of our food we reduce, to a great extent, the impact of inflation on our money. More importantly, we learn how to produce our own food and involve all family

¹⁴ The Home Storage Center can be utilized by members and non-members alike to build a home food storage. As discussed previously, it offers foods such as beans, rice, sugar, wheat, dried fruits, potato flakes, spaghetti, flour, etc, that have been preserved in No. 10 cans, pouches, or in bulk.

members in a beneficial project...The Lord wants us to be independent and self-reliant because these days will be days of tribulation. He has warned and forewarned us of the eventuality.

Food storage is hailed by the leaders as a backup plan for church members to lean on in times of need. Keith B. McMullin, a general authority, states, “A cardinal principle of the gospel is to prepare for the day of scarcity. Work, industry, frugality are part of the royal order of life” (McMullin, 2007).

By preparing for these eventual disasters in life, members have been told that they will be blessed for their efforts to follow these admonitions from their leaders, that they will be saved in times of need, both spiritually and physically. McMullin, in the same address, says, “As we do our very best, we can be confident that ‘the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail.’¹⁵ We shall enjoy greater wisdom, security, peace of mind, and personal well-being. We shall be prepared, and because we are prepared, we ‘shall not fear’”¹⁶ (McMullin, 2007). These sentiments are also taught by Benson: “There are blessings in being close to the soil, in raising your own food even if it is only a garden in your yard and a fruit tree or two. Those families will be fortunate who, in the last days, have an adequate supply of food because of their foresight and ability to produce their own (Benson,

¹⁵ 1Kings 17:14.

¹⁶ From the Doctrine and Covenants; D&C 38:30.

1980).” One last example of this part of the discourse comes from another general authority, Vaughn J. Featherstone, who said, “We need have no fear if we are prepared...There is a God in heaven whom we have obeyed. Do you suppose he would abandon those who have kept his commandments? He said, ‘If ye are prepared, ye need not fear’”¹⁷ (Featherstone, 1976).

An even deeper aspect of this is how the practice of food storage can be linked to one’s personal faith and righteousness. In another General Conference address, McMullin (2005) introduces this idea. He says:

The Church and its members are commanded to be self-reliant and independent. Preparation begins with faith, which enables us to weather vicissitudes as they come...Faith in the Lord and His gospel conquers fear and begets spirituality...Faith, spirituality, and obedience produce a prepared and self-reliant people.

Marion G. Romney also presents this idea of faith being the basis of self-reliance by quoting a deceased President of the Church, David O. McKay. President McKay was making an observation in the October 1936 General Conference on the Church Welfare program that was introduced in the same year when he said:

The development of our spiritual nature should concern us most. Spirituality is the highest acquisition of the soul, the divine in man...Outwardly, every act seems to be directed

¹⁷ Again, from D&C 38:30.

toward the physical: re-making of dresses and suits of clothes, canning fruits and vegetables, storing foodstuffs, choosing of fertile fields for settlement—all seems strictly temporal, but permeating all these acts, inspiring and sanctifying them, is the element of spirituality (Romney, 1982).

The Church leaders also offer suggestions for how this discourse and its practices can be perpetuated among the members. In another General Conference address, Barbara B. Smith, then the General President of the Relief Society, states that women of the Relief Society should help one another make the goal to have home storage. She says, “First, help sisters assess their own progress in this assignment. Have their families met the goal? Are they moving toward the halfway mark? Perhaps some have just started, while others may not know where to begin” (Smith, 1976). Smith suggests that members evaluate one another in an effort to help them understand the importance of food storage. She later goes on to suggest more ways that women can further this discourse when she says:

We urge Relief Society leaders to work out ways in which women can help in Church welfare projects. Many could be active participants in the actual work of production projects and canneries. Others might do telephoning and scheduling. Babysitting might be provided to enable young mothers to work on projects or in canneries, or several young mothers could do babysitting for each other. Families might go together to work on a productions project, thus strengthening the

bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood among them. Women should encourage their families and arrange home activities and schedules so that the family will want to participate (Smith, 1976).

The Official discourse of the Church is very simple to find on the internet, in Church publications, and in the words of the leaders and the language used in these publications appears quite simple. Morgan, when discussing speech community, writes, "Speech community is central to the understanding of human language and meaning-making because it is the product of prolonged interaction among those who operate within shared belief and value systems regarding their own culture, society, and history as well as their communication with others (Morgan, 2006)." The concept of the Speech community will be important in relation to the themes of the Unofficial discourse presented in Chapter 5. When church members use the same terminology (the Official discourse) as the leaders in discussions about food storage, it displays their knowledge and even their faithfulness, as explained above, to admonitions from their leaders; their ability to use this language indexes them as good, faithful members of the Church. It is also important to notice that the individuals are so easily able to move from one discursive footing (Goffman, 1979) to the other in their discussions about food storage.

CHAPTER 5: The Unofficial Word – Food Storage in Practice

Because the Church has presented rather straight forward guidelines to follow in regards to keeping a food storage, it is very interesting to examine how each woman and each family talk about these guidelines and suggestions and how they put them to use in their lives. First, a discussion of the different types of storages kept by members as well as their different avenues for building and maintaining their food storage will be offered, followed by a brief discussion of the gendered aspects of food storage. Six themes also emerged from the content analysis of the transcribed data: food storage as a resource during possible disasters; obedience as the main reason for keeping a food storage; food storage as a principle of self-reliance/preparedness; food storage offering peace of mind and security; the ability to help others through food storage; and viewing a food storage as your own personal store in the basement. These will be discussed in the rest of the chapter.

Though these themes were unsolicited by the interviewer, their presence in the raw data was overwhelming, which would mark them as extremely important aspects of food storage as interpreted by those involved in the practice of keeping a food storage as has been suggested by their church leaders. Of the 27 interviews, 15 contained all 6 of the previously specified themes, while 9 interviews contained 5 of the 6 themes; only 3

interviews did not include the majority of the themes, as 2 of the interviews contained 3 themes and 1 interview contained 2 themes.

FOOD STORAGE AT HOME

Each interview began with the simple prompt for the informant to describe their food storage; when necessary, they were prompted further to explain what they stored, where they got their foods, how they stored their chosen foods, if they had a method of rotation, etc. These prompts elicited a great deal of information about the various storages each informant had. It became apparent very quickly that there were two distinct types of food storage kept by each woman; these were termed long-term storage and short-term storage. The women discussed these two different storages in the same context, explaining how they used each of them differently. There were also key aspects of both the long-term and the short-term storages, such as where the food came from, as well as whether it was canned at home or bought from a store. Sidney made an important distinction when he said, “Long-term is stuff that we probably wouldn’t eat unless there was a big disaster.” This distinction held true for practically all informants.

Though not all women specifically stated that they had two different parts to their food storage, most women did talk about their storage as though they had two types of food stored. Michelle states this specifically

when she says, “There’s kind of two parts of food storage. One part is all the dry canned stuff... The other half is all of the canning that I do that’s all my own produce that I grow or that I can scrounge off of somebody to can.”

Janette also explained the two different types of storage, though she didn’t specify them as being different like Michelle did: “We try to store all of the basics...so we have those... Then we have the stuff that we blow through all the time, like canned soups, and fruit and stuff like that.” I asked Janette how often she used things from her food storage and her reply also touched on the two different kinds of food storage; she said, “The canned foods? All the time. I’m all the time taking down stuff and bringing stuff up. But the wheat, we’ve stored wheat for years and years and years. And it’s perfectly great down there so I don’t rotate through my wheat.” Mike broke his food storage down even further when he said:

Our food storage basically is probably set up in three categories. Part of our food storage is things that we’ve canned and bottled, part of our storage is the long-term food storage like wheat and sugar and beans, things that have a very long shelf life. And then we have the storage which is canned perishables, things you buy at the store.

From these last two examples you can begin to see the importance that church members place on wheat. An example of this importance can be seen in LaRee’s response to my very first question of the interview when I asked

her to describe her food storage for me. She replied, "I have my wheat supply for a year for all of us." Wheat was the very first thing she had on her mind as we began our discussion about food storage.

Wheat was the most commonly cited aspect of the long-term storages kept by informants. It was even a source of storytelling among my informants. Two particular examples come from Gladys and Robbyn. Gladys explained that while she and her family lived in California there was a train that had stopped on the railroad and one of the boxcars "just dumped all the wheat and all the elder's quorum was out there to load it up and put all the little packets in these tin cans and everything." Her daughter said of this, "How many cans of wheat did we have in California that we moved up here and we ended up having to get rid of it because we didn't rotate it and use it? We moved all the wheat, we moved it all here and it was very, very heavy and then we couldn't use it because it was bad." Robbyn explained that they had inherited their current supply of wheat from a neighbor who had moved some years back and didn't want to transport the storage of wheat she had, saying that she'd had the wheat for 30 years, had moved multiple times, and no longer wanted to deal with it. Robbyn explained that her husband had been asked by the woman moving to take the buckets of wheat to the dump. Of this experience Robbyn said, "So my husband had it all in the back of the truck and

I said, 'Sweetie, instead of taking that to the dump, we have the room, let's just take it over to our house.' So we did and it was all sealed the really good ways with the packets in it, with the tight, tight buckets."

As LaRee showcased above, we can see that the placement of wheat within the dialogue of informants shows just how important it is in the discourse of food storage: it was most often the first thing informants claimed to have in their food storage, and because it was the first product to be discussed, the long-term part of food storages was also most often the first to be discussed. Rachel, when asked what kinds of foods she has in her food storage replied, "We have wheat and sugar and flour and rice, the big bulk things. Then we have some basics like canned fruit, canned tomato sauce, canned tuna, just everyday foods." Here you see Rachel explaining her long-term storage first, and beginning that explanation with the statement that she has wheat. When asked what she stored, May also described her long-term storage first, beginning the description with wheat: "I have wheat; I have red wheat and white wheat. I have rolled oats, I have rice, I have macaroni and spaghetti, I have beans, I have pinto beans and black beans and white beans... Those are all from the cannery... All of that is the dried, the number ten cans."

May brings up an important distinction when referencing the cannery¹⁸ and number ten cans. Depending on the preferences of the particular informant, the cannery would or would not be used for purchasing goods to be stored in their food storage. Michelle explained that the dried, canned goods she keeps in her long-term storage come almost exclusively from the Church cannery where she can go to can what she wants. When talking of her long-term food storage, Annette said, “Most of it’s in the number ten cans which I’ve gotten either from the cannery or canned myself... I’ve got quite a bit. I have anything from sugar and flour to kidney beans, refried beans, carrots, apples. Just all the necessities.” In contrast, when asked if she packaged any of her dried, bulk goods at the cannery, Rachel replied, “None of it’s from the cannery... Some of my wheat is in cans, but we didn’t go to the cannery to do it.” Other women explained that they didn’t like having goods canned in the number ten cans because they didn’t like opening such a large can and then not making their way through it before it went bad.

¹⁸ Church canneries are also known as home storage centers. Orders for canned goods can be placed at these home storage centers that are located throughout North America; they then make appointments to attend the center nearest to them and can the products that they have purchased. Home storage centers have for purchase products such as wheat, white rice, dry beans, and other basic food items, as well as the packaging supplies required. Cannery goods are even available for purchase online and can be shipped to many different countries throughout the world.

Women also said that they didn't really know what they would do with some of the things they had in their number ten cans and long-term food storage. Annette said of the goods in her number ten cans:

Now what am I going to do with it? I don't know. That's the question... We use the dried onions all the time... Other things I haven't even tried. I mean I use the flour, the sugar, but I've never taken down the carrots and tried to use them in anything... The question of the day is, when that day comes is, 'What am I going to prepare with it?'

For the women who didn't purchase the larger canned items from the cannery, it seemed that their reasons were mostly economical; they didn't want to waste what they had purchased because they couldn't use the amount in the large cans or they could find better deals on smaller canned goods at local grocery stores.

The other half of food storage was the short-term storage which is mostly made up of the smaller canned goods and products that had a much shorter shelf life than the dried products stored as long-term foods. These short-term products were either bought at local grocery stores or canned at home, usually from produce grown in home gardens, though women also purchased fresh produce at stores or from local growers specifically for canning. Though all informants didn't do their own canning, they did all purchase short-term goods from local grocery stores. For example, Rachel

explained that, though at one point she did preserve some of her own foods, her short-term storage now consisted almost completely of goods purchased from the store; when asked if she had canned any of her short-term goods, Rachel replied, "I just get it at the store."

Most of the women talked about buying goods from the store when they know products that they use will be on sale, or during large case-lot sales that happen at their local grocery stores a few times a year. Women even inform each other of good sales they are aware of. LaRee, who comes from a large family of sisters said of this helping each other: "We'll just watch and sometimes one of the sisters will say, 'Hey, cocoa is on sale down at Stevenson's in Ephraim, should we get some?' Or we'll call each other and say, 'Case-lots! This is a good case-lot!' So I'll buy case-lot stuff." Costco is also a popular place to buy products considered short-term. Amanda explained that she buys a lot of the pastas she stores from Costco. Macey's was another local grocery store where many informants said they purchase products on sale; Macey's is popular because they have yearly case-lot sales that women use to restock the things they are low on.

For informants who did claim to preserve at home, having a garden was an important part of their canning. The informants with the most extensive gardens also did the most canning. One example comes from

Sidney and LuAnn who spent most of our time together during the interview telling me about their garden and the things they like to can or preserve. These included, but weren't limited to, things like pickled beets, applesauce, grape juice, tomatoes, dried walnuts, many different fruits, salsa, and so on. They also store much of their produce from the garden to be used during the fall and into the winter and spring months. LuAnn explained that she keeps green tomatoes picked at the end of the season in her storeroom and uses them as they turn ripe. They also freeze much of the produce from their garden to be used throughout the year. Another similar example is Michelle, who has a very large garden and uses it as her main source of produce during the summer months. She also preserves much of what is grown in her garden, canning things like salsa, applesauce, tomatoes, and jams, as well as freezing a lot of what she gets from her garden. She also explained that she had just recently gotten into fermenting and was making her own fermented pickles for the first time. She even took me downstairs where she had the large jars of pickles fermenting, showing me how the jars were bubbling in the cool air of the basement and exclaiming excitedly that everything was so alive and healthy for you.

Even if informants didn't actually preserve any of their own produce, they still grew and maintained a garden during the summer and fall months.

Of the 36 people interviewed, only 4 women said they didn't grow a full-fledged garden, but they all explained that it was because they didn't have space for it in their current living situations and that if they could, they would grow a garden. Natalie's family had been planning a move since the winter months, so in consideration of the move, she chose not to plant a garden. Similarly, Kristin had recently been married and moved into a new apartment with her husband, but they hadn't arrived in time to plant a garden in the space that was available at her apartment. The other two who didn't have a garden were young, single women living in apartments where they didn't have access to space they could use for a garden. Gardens grown by my informants did differ somewhat in their contents and the way they were used by each informant, but the common theme was that they were considered to be important and that they were a very useful and economical source of food during the summer months.

Another option for families, particularly Utah families, are the multiple food storage companies operating in Utah. Though only a few women claimed to have actually purchased goods from these stores, they are still worth mentioning. Cherine, one of my informants who owns and runs her own food storage supply store, said that much of her customer base is from Utah, and that a large portion of her Utah customers are from Utah Valley in particular.

Despite the large food storage purchasing market in Utah, informants seemed to agree that the food storage companies and the goods they sold weren't as important as grocery stores or the cannery for stocking and maintaining their food storage. Jenny said, "A couple of times I've purchased at Emergency Essentials... I got butter and powdered egg, more unique things that I've gotten there." Annette also explained that she had recently hosted a food storage party¹⁹ where she was selling expensive dehydrated goods from an unspecified company and that nobody had attended. She said, "It was that expensive dehydrated stuff, where a can costs like \$35 to \$40. I sampled everything and then the next day I was kind of sick, so I'm like, 'I'm not really interested in spending that kind of money if it makes you sick.'" Other women spoke of attending similar parties and purchasing things they didn't normally buy and store. Ashley said that she had purchased some things from a relative who had thrown a party, but that it was mainly things she used only occasionally and, as such, didn't store it on a regular basis.

¹⁹ Food storage companies sell goods in a system similar to that of Avon or Scentsy; women join these companies as consultants who sell goods to people in their area interested in the product of the company. While visiting the store location of one such company, I was given a catalog with information about the company, its goods, as well as about how to become a consultant. I was informed that if I would like to attend a party or learn more about the program, I should contact another woman already working as a consultant. Upon explaining that I was shortly moving to Oregon, I was also informed that there are consultants in the Portland area.

Many women also explained that within their food storage they kept a large supply of more miscellaneous goods like shampoos, toilet paper, feminine supply products, toiletries, and so on. One woman explained that she even keeps fabric in her storage. Her daughter, who was also participating in the interview, quipped, "That way we can make togas when there's no more clothes." This storage of non-food items was not something that I had considered to be a part of food storage during the planning stages of my research but, when talking about food storage, many of my informants made a point to include these other items in their explanation of what they store. April even stated that her family had a small storage of gas that they cycled through as well as other emergency supplies.

FOOD STORAGE AND GENDER

As presented in the methods section, a total number of 36 people were interviewed in a total number of 27 interviews. Of the interviews conducted, 4 were in pairs of husband and wife couples, and 1 was an interview with 2 men who served together on a bishopric, making 6 of the 36 informants men. Of the 4 men interviewed with their wives, 2 seemed to be a very active part of the practice of keeping a food storage, whereas the other 2 men seemed to be a less active, or almost nonexistent, part of the practice. Because the vast majority of the informants were women, I asked specifically if their husband

helped with the food storage, and if so, how. Answers from informants varied, ranging from men who help with very little to men who are extremely involved, but the overall consensus seemed to be that food storage is an aspect of home life run by women. Men seemed to be aware of what women are doing with the food storage and many women claimed that their husbands are very supportive and encouraging, but involvement beyond that seemed to be quite limited. In contrast to this, the two men I interviewed with their wives that are extremely active parts of the process do far more than simply support and encourage their wives.

An example of one man who is relatively uninvolved is Natalie's husband. When asked if her husband was involved in the food storage she replied, "Not really. He'll help me put food away, but that's mostly it, it's mostly my thing." Like Natalie, many of the other woman also claimed that one way their husbands help is to carry food to the storeroom. Natalie went on further to explain other ways that her husband helps; she said, "He helped me when we set up our basement with a bunch of shelving and stuff like that... So yeah, he's supportive of it, but he didn't go figure out what we need to buy and all that kind of stuff because he doesn't really do the cooking." What is interesting about this comment is that though she's claiming to do the majority of the work involved and taking ownership for the food storage, she

still says “we” when talking about the goods that need to be purchased for the storage.

In an interview with his wife, Nathan shared himself that he isn’t an extremely active part of the food storage when he said, “I don’t really do that much. It’s mostly Jenny.” Megan also claimed that her husband isn’t an active part of the storage when she said, “I don’t really think he has an opinion either way. I’m sure if I asked him to help and participate, he would.” When asked if her husband was an active part of food storage April replied, “Oh, no. No. He gives me the money. But that’s almost an active part! He doesn’t do any of the shopping or stuff, be he’s totally fine with getting it all together... He’ll take the stuff downstairs. He’ll help me pour them in buckets and things like that.” In the same interview, Ashley said of her husband, “If he sees something in the paper that looks like a good deal he’ll say, ‘Is this a good price for this so you can stock up?’” From these examples we can see that women may not want to be viewed as keeping track of the food storage completely on their own. Though they are doing all the mental work of knowing what to store, how to store it, where to buy it, what to prepare with it, and so on, they still have a way of including their husbands in the practice as much as they can make room for him.

A number of women also claimed that their husbands are “supportive” and that their support is a large part of helping with the food storage. When asked if her husband helps, Lisa replied, “He does. He’s very supportive which really helps because it’s a financial outlay to store food, right?” It’s almost as though Lisa’s husband is being supportive simply through providing her the monetary means with which to build her food storage. This was visible in April’s statement as well, that her husband’s way of being supportive is in giving her the money. But for women who don’t work outside of the home, it’s easy to see why money could be considered an important aspect of men’s helping with the food storage.

Some women claimed that their husbands are more helpful, taking part in some of the other domestic aspects of the home and food storage beyond simply supporting it through monetary means. Robbyn said of her husband:

I think Craig is pretty helpful...if we’re doing a case lot sale or something, he’ll come with me and help carry everything. Then he’ll help me put stuff away. He gets more frustrated with our foods storage because he feels like he can’t find stuff. I always know where everything is. So now and then he’ll say, ‘Come help me put everything away so I know where it is.’ And he does most of our gardening and he does canning sometimes... He loves our canned food, he loves having it down there. He really helps with the eating. So I’d say he’s as involved with that part of our home

domestic life as he is with any part of it. So I'd say he's pretty involved with it.

Carolynn, Robbyn's mother, also said of Robbyn's husband, "But he likes to cook and things too, so he likes to help in that." We see here that Robbyn's husband goes beyond what other women claimed to be helpful about their husband's involvement with the food storage. Carolynn also explains that her husband has started to become more involved as he's had more time at home after retiring and as social standards have changed, making the roles played by men and women appear more equal. She says,

Her dad grew up where there was a real division to women's work. He was on a farm so the farm work the men were supposed to do...the women did the yard and the garden and all the home preserving and all that... Now he's gotten much more helpful as he's gotten older and is much more a part of things now. But he has more time to be; he didn't have much time before.

It's interesting to note that because he has had more time on his hands, Carolynn's husband has started to become more involved.

Similar to Robbyn's husband, Michelle's husband seems to play a somewhat more involved role for her as well. She said of her husband, "He likes that we have it and he's encouraging. And he does help sometimes if I'm really overwhelmed. If I've got just a ton of canning to do, he'll help me. And he helps organize it, cause he's a good organizer, but he lets me be the brain

person behind the food storage.” She also explained that her husband is very involved in their eating habits at home, as they had been making changes over the last few years towards eating more whole foods in things such as green smoothies; Michelle calls him “the green smoothie man.” Amanda also says that her husband is just as involved with the food storage as he is with other aspects of home life. She says, “He goes grocery shopping with me most of the time... When we do big grocery shopping, when we stock up, he always comes... So I think he’s aware of what we have... It’s something that we’ve talked about together.” It would seem as though Amanda’s husband is even an active part of the decision making process involved in food storage. Of course, many women also claimed that husbands and children influence the goods they purchased because they have to buy and store things that they know their family will eat; this can have a huge impact on the final decisions women make about their food storage.

In contrast to the men discussed above by their wives, two of the men I interviewed are extremely active players along with their wives in their food storage. Sidney and his wife discussed openly their different roles in the food storage during their interview. Much like the women who explained that their husbands help with the organizational aspects of their food storage, Sidney and LuAnn agreed that Sydney is the one who organizes their food

storage. LuAnn and Sidney similarly made the distinction, as did Carolynn, that upon Sidney's retirement he became much more involved in food storage because he had the time. Sidney is also very involved in gardening, at one point suggesting that they completely tear out the lawn in the backyard and convert it all to a garden. In relation to this, he explained that he also takes part in the preservation of many of the goods their garden produces. He even provided me with a copy of an extra cd that he had made of their food storage organizational plan which he had made for his Elder's Quorum earlier in the year, showing that not only is he involved in his own home, but that he is trying to get other men in his ward involved in their homes.

Comparably, Mike and Kathy exemplified how a husband and wife team could work together in the realm of food storage, the difference being that Mike seemed to have more control over what happened with the food storage than Sidney did. This control was also apparent in the interview with his wife, as Mike directed a majority of the conversation and was often the first to respond to my questions. Like Sidney, Mike more or less runs the garden, and is also involved in the preservation of the produce they grow in their garden.

FOOD STORAGE AS RESOURCE DURING DISASTERS

Food storage as a resource during possible disasters was the one emergent theme that was mentioned in every interview conducted. Because some of the interviews were conducted in pairs, this does not mean that each informant brought this theme up on their own, but instead, that it was present in each of the 27 interviews conducted (this distinction will be also be applicable to each of the following themes that emerged through the process of critical discourse analysis). Multiple types of disasters were cited as being reasons for keeping a food storage, for example, informants distinguished between large scale calamities such as earthquakes or tsunamis that would affect whole regions or nations, and little disasters that might affect just their homes. There was also a brief mention of food storage being for the “end of days”, the apocalypse, or the “second coming”²⁰.

When thinking of food storage within the larger context of America it can historically be viewed as a response to a doomsday philosophy held by those who keep food storage. Within the Church, this doomsday philosophy is often called Zionism or Millennialism; these terms come from the belief in the second coming of Christ who will return to redeem his people. For many

²⁰ Church members believe that Jesus Christ will one day return to the earth and usher in the final dispensation of the world; their term for this apocalypse of sorts is “the second coming”. This return of Christ is believed to be preceded by world-wide calamities and wars, culminating in Armageddon.

members, the practice of keeping a food storage has been predicated upon their belief that the end of the world is nigh and, as such, they need to be prepared to survive the upheaval that will occur during the second coming. Though this isn't the view of all members, I expected to find this discourse of millennialism to be a large part of the data I collected. I was surprised to find that only four women mentioned it, and only two of those four women discussed it in a context as being a reason why a food storage should be kept.

Megan, when asked why the prophets²¹ suggest that members keep a food storage, replied:

I just think about, they always say we're getting closer to the second coming and the world's going to go to heck and it really is... They have the intuition, you know, Heavenly Father is telling them that you need to prepare your saints²² because something is going to happen... But something will happen and we'll have to use it, so I understand that.

For her, the act of keeping a food storage does coincide with an end of days philosophy. Amanda also, when asked why the prophets ask members to

²¹ Members of the Church believe that they are led by prophets, as in the days of Abraham and Moses. These prophets are often referred to as seers because they are able to see the past from the future, giving them a knowledge of things to come. They are also believed to be able to talk to God, who will give them information that is beneficial to his Church and his saints.

²² Members of the Church often refer to themselves as saints.

keep a food storage, referred to the end of days as a reason to keep a food storage, saying:

I think, personally, that there's a couple reasons. I think you can think about the literal warning and preparations, kind of the last days sort of thing... There are financial problems in the world today, it's not just apocalypse type stuff, it's more like changes in the world that will affect your family.

Here, Amanda points out, as does Megan later in her interview, that smaller, everyday challenges are also a reason to keep a food storage.

Kristin, a recently married woman in her mid 20s, explained that her step-grandfather had given her a little food storage starter kit as a wedding gift. This starter kit contained number ten cans of rice and wheat, as well as a water filtration system. She explained to me that her grandfather had given her this starter kit as a gift because "he's a freak about the second coming." When I asked if he was a millennialist, her reply was, "Yes. He's the leader of them." She also explained that her step-grandfather told her to stay on her mission ²³ because it was "the safest place to be at the second coming." She said that he's so into it that any gift he gives is food storage. Though Kristin

²³ Every young man in the Church at the age of 19 is expected to serve a two-year proselyting mission for the Church, and women at the age or 21 can also serve mission, though it is not an expectation for them to do so. Older couples that have reared their families may also serve missions for the Church. These missions are paid for by the individual serving the mission unless circumstances call for aid in the payment of the mission.

didn't associate herself as being a millennialist, she talked about her step-grandfather's beliefs and actions with a lighthearted tone of voice. She obviously didn't think the second coming was the reason she was supposed to have a food storage.

Much like Kristin, Lisa mentioned an end of the world situation in a manner that suggested she didn't believe that was the reason to keep a food storage. She said, "I'm not one of, sometimes food storage people can be classified as doomsday type personalities, I'm not in that, I couldn't be farther from that type of personality." Instead, similar to Amanda's reply, she says that "there could be eventualities where we would need food storage", but that they are not "end of days" eventualities.

The theme of large catastrophes being a reason to keep a food storage was held by multiple informants. Large scale catastrophes were most often explained as being natural disasters. Because the area where most of my informants live is along the Wasatch Front where there is a major fault line, earthquakes were the most common form of natural disaster that informants brought up. Mike and Kathy related the experience of living in California and listening to the stories of people who had lived through the major earthquakes that hit Simi Valley. Mike said:

Some of the members of the ward were in the major earthquake that hit in Simi Valley . They

said all their neighbors thought they were crazy having all this food storage, but when the earthquakes hit there...they thought they were pretty smart having all this food storage because they shared with their neighbors. It was the only place they could get water.

Another earthquake that was referred to was the more recent earthquake that hit Japan and had been in the news for multiple weeks. Jordan, as she was explaining to me her reasons for keeping personal hygiene and medical supplies in her food storage, said:

I was talking to a lady yesterday, a member of the ward, about food storage...and she said, 'You know, how many months it's been since the Japan earthquake and some of those places still do not have electricity.' She said, 'If you have a flashlight with batteries, you might not have electricity before the batteries run out and there's nowhere to get batteries.' You know, in the worst scenario, what are you going to do? You have to think of all the angles.

Along these same lines, Nathan says, "If you had a major catastrophe it could happen where there's not food in the store...if you have an earthquake. It's happened in a lot of countries...if something like that happens, everybody rushes to the store and gets what they can and then there's nothing." And finally, Micah, a woman in her mid 20s, when asked why she planned on keeping a food storage in the future said, "Well, just for the fact that there are always natural disasters that happen..." These informants all bring up good

examples of the discourse behind large-scale disasters that have the potential to place people in positions where having a food storage might be very beneficial.

The most commonly cited disasters, however, were small familial problems that were a disaster to just one home. When discussing preparedness, Rebecca and Kristin talked of how having some food and water stored in the trunk of your car is an important thing to do in case of a small disaster you might have happen while traveling in your car. Rebecca explained that she had recently been in a car accident on the freeway with her sister and that they had used the bottled water her sister had in the trunk of her car. Of this experience she said:

We were glad to have the water when Jessica's car got totaled because it was a really hot day and we were just standing on the side of the road. It's weird, because you think, 'Oh, there's going to be a huge natural disaster come through and that's why I'm going to want it.' But it's not, it's like every day almost.

Amanda also said of these smaller situations, "In my marriage there have been times when we've relied on it more than others. Where I haven't gone grocery shopping for several weeks because of job situation or sometimes just other life situations, if you're really busy or things like that, it's nice to have in the house." Similarly, Lisa explained that in her own research on food storage

she has met many people who have used their food storage for different reasons. She said, "A husband that gets disabled, loss of work, sickness...people actually rely on their food storage for months at a time so they can pay electricity and they can pay medical bills or whatever, and it's been a real blessing and assurance in their lives." Natalie said, "I don't know that it's necessarily some huge catastrophe... Just seeing everyone where [they] don't have an income or something happens and you can't work or whatever, you are better prepared to take care of yourself."

In the previous three quotes, a common theme begins to emerge; many informants stated the loss of a job, or the recent economic downturn, as important reasons to keep a food storage. Stephanie said:

I think that anything, you know, with this recession that's happened and everyone losing their jobs, I think that is the reason for food storage, personally. I don't think it's for some big catastrophe that we're going to have...and we're all going to be without food. I think it's for these little catastrophes in each of our lives where we are prepared. So when several of our neighbors lost their jobs, they lived off their food storage and if they didn't have their food storage, then they, you know, it would have been harder... I think it's for our emergencies, our little personal emergencies, than for a big emergency. That's what I think."

It seemed that, more than the fear of an earthquake, people are afraid they will need to use their food storage because they may have to go through a

period of time where they won't have an income to rely on. May and Bill served in the cannery that provided for people in their area during the worst of the economic crisis; about this experience May said, "A lot of people there for a couple years were really worried about the world's situation and so they were canning to take care of their families." Bill then stated, "We had more canning done in two years then they had in the previous 15." Of the economic downturn, Michelle said:

I guess everybody always assumes that they've told us to do it, because something bad is going to happen...I think that it is good in the temporary hardship times, you know, you lose a job. I don't think that it's always necessary for the tornado or the earthquake or whatever. So just a temporary hardship. You lose a job, or somebody gets sick, or something like that, and you need to have three months worth of food, then you're not as reliant on others...

After analyzing what people said about their reasons for keeping a food storage, it appears as though their reasoning has shifted to a much more realistic view of the possibility that they might need to use it tomorrow, or next week, or next month, because of a small disaster felt only within the walls of their own homes.

OBEDIENCE AND BLESSING AS A REASON FOR KEEPING A FOOD STORAGE

Obedience as a reason for keeping a food storage was discussed in all but one of the interviews conducted. This may be due to an error on my part

as I failed to ask during the one interview in which the theme is not present the question, "Why do you keep a food storage?", to which most informants responded with obedience as their reason for keeping a food storage. Despite this possible error, it is very obvious that obedience is a crucial part of why church members keep a food storage. Obedience was talked about in many different ways, using different terms as well as talking about it somewhat extensively or very simply and matter-of-factly.

More often than not, as mentioned above, obedience entered the conversation after I asked informants why they keep a food storage and many of their responses were very short and to the point. Annette replied to my question with no hesitation, saying, "Because I've been told I should." I asked her who had told her and she said, "The leaders of my church. And I'm keeping faith that I will be provided for if something happens. If I have faith then we'll be fine." Again, LaRee replied without hesitation that she keeps a food storage "because the Church tells us to." Jenny also replied without hesitation when asked why she keeps a food storage, saying, "One: because we're told to." After explaining other reasons why she thinks having a food storage is important, Kathy simply said, "And besides, we were told to do it, so you do it." Using another way to say the same thing, Cherine stated, "It's a commandment so we do it." Judy also said, "It's a commandment and I'm

trying to keep the commandments.” Michelle replied, “Because we’re commanded to do it.” Gladys’s answer was, “We’ve been commanded to do it.”

Kristin spoke of her own obedience as well as her husband’s during her interview. In response to my question she answered, “First off, because we were commanded to.” I asked her later why her husband is so interested in food storage and she said, “Just because we’ve been told to do it. He’s very obedient.” After Kristin’s reply, Rebecca quipped, “You’re a perfect match,” suggesting that because they are both obedient to what they have been asked to do by their church leaders, they made a good couple. This speaking of others and their obedience also occurred when Robert said, “I do it because my wife’s told me I have to.” Bill said that he keeps a food storage because “the prophet has told us to.” Ashley replied with feeling, “Because the prophet said to keep food storage!” Janette used yet another term to illustrate this point when she said, “I wanted to comply with what we’ve been asked to do.” Rose said, “What we’re commanded to do, we should listen to.”

Ashley spoke of obedience in a different context when she explained that she had cans of rice go rancid and cans of honey bulge, after which she didn’t dare eat them so she threw them out. Of this experience she said, “At least I was obedient. It’s kind of a, ‘That’s the way it goes situation’. So maybe

it was just for the obedience at the time, you know.” And finally, Kelly explained obedience slightly further when she said:

Personally, I think it has more to do with obedience than anything else. Just because there are not very many people who really have to live off their food storage and there are people who are in disasters that lose all their food storage. So it's more a principle of 'are you obedient and willing to follow the prophet, or not?' That's my personal opinion.

Though most informants talked only briefly about the need to be obedient, to do what they had been told, to follow the prophet or commandments, some did expound on this idea of obedience. Cherine is one example of an informant who discussed obedience in more detail. She said:

My bottom line on this really is follow the brethren. I can't tell you how many people come in here and they're reading other books and they're reading somebody this and somebody that and they're reading other things; follow the brethren. They're reading these books to the point where they're following other people instead of following the brethren. To me that's just dangerous.... Just follow the brethren. And if they say, "store lots of wheat", store lots of wheat...My bottom line is follow the brethren and don't despair.

Cherine here uses the term brethren to refer to the prophet and other Church leaders who have asked Church members to keep a food storage. Because Cherine runs her own food storage company, she comes in contact with

people every day who are building and maintaining a food storage for different purposes, but she makes it quite clear that (even though her store is for her economic benefit) she believes wholeheartedly in being obedient and keeping the commandments, in doing what she's been told to do by her church leaders.

Another aspect of obedience that was cited by multiple informants was that without following what leaders have asked them to do, they wouldn't be able to claim the blessings²⁴ that would be theirs if they were obedient. In my one interview with two men, there was a very interesting dialogue about this idea of blessings from obedience. Robert talked first of the blessings that come from being obedient when he said, "I think one of the things that we've really come to a realization in this last couple of years, because we've used it so much, now we understand even more the great blessing that was ours because we had it." Cal then said of these blessing, "You depend on it and that's where the blessings come. You depend on it, you've been promised your many blessings if you do it, and you see them." After Cal's comment, Robert replied, "One of the things that I think, no matter if we're talking about

²⁴ Church members believe in a loving Heavenly Father who blesses them both temporally and spiritually for being obedient by keeping his commandments. In this particular situation, members believe that they may receive blessings for following the counsel of their leaders (who are viewed as spokesmen for their Heavenly Father) in keeping a food storage.

food storage or any kind of spiritual thing in our life, when we have the blessing of having a prophet of God be upon the earth and we don't listen to his counsel, then we're just dumb."

Much like Cal and Robert, April and Ashley had a similar dialogue about the blessings of being obedient. April said, "I just figure that the Lord will bless you if you do it. But you know, they say you can't call upon the heavens for help if you haven't done it." Ashley's response was, "Right, if you haven't been obedient." April then goes on to explain this idea of calling upon the heavens:

A woman in the general presidency²⁵ was talking in General Conference about how when she was sealed²⁶, President Hinckley²⁷ sealed them, and he said to them, "Always be worthy so that you can call upon Heavenly Father when you need immediate blessings and you can get those because you're doing things you're supposed to." And I think that's the main thing with food storage, or any other principle that we follow; if you're following that, you can have immediate

²⁵ The women's organization of the Church (known as the Relief Society) is organized into different levels of leadership. The general presidency is made up of three women who are assigned to speak for the entire body of the Relief Society. It is the largest women's organization in the world.

²⁶ Church members believe that marriage is an eternal bond, and that couples are married for "time and all eternity". They often refer to this eternal marriage of a man and a woman as their being sealed together.

²⁷ Gordon B. Hinckley is a former President of the Church who is now deceased. Presidents lead the Church from the time they become the President until they pass away. Presidents are also referred to as Prophets.

blessings and you can call upon the heavens for these things and get those blessings.

April makes it quite clear here that if members are keeping the commandments then they will be blessed. She takes this idea even further by explaining that these obedient members have the right to solicit their God for blessings they think they may need. And finally, Judy said, “I have a very strong testimony that when you do what the prophet asks you to do, that you...I shouldn’t say that you can expect to be blessed, but you will be blessed.” Like April and Ashley, Judy believes without a doubt that because she has followed the counsel of her church leaders she *will* be blessed.

FOOD STORAGE AS A PRINCIPLE OF SELF-RELIANCE/PREPAREDNESS

The next most important reason for keeping a food storage as stated by informants was the need to be self-reliant or prepared for whatever disasters might come their way; this theme also showed up in 26 of the 27 interviews. Some informants stated very simply that food storage is part of living a self-reliant life. Nathan said, “Have a food storage. Be prepared. You know, that preparedness and self-reliance message is pretty strong in the Church.” When asked why she thought food storage was so important, Kristin said, “Because we want to be self-reliant...” When asked why the leaders of the Church ask people to keep a food storage Jordan replied, “Self-reliance.

Take responsibility for yourself, your needs, and your... I guess that's what it is."

This theme of self-reliance and preparedness also tied in heavily with the theme of having a food storage for a resource during disasters in that many people talked about being self-reliant so that when a disaster did happen, you would be prepared. For example, Rebecca said, "I think if more people had food storage they'd be able to take care of themselves when disaster hit... So basically, we're preparing everybody." In response to my question of why she keeps a food storage, Amanda replied, "Just [to be] self-sufficient and trying to prepare for unexpected things in life... Me and my husband are the breadwinners in our household, so if something happened to my job or his, then I would want to be prepared... You just have to live an independent life and be self-sufficient, I think." This ties back into the little disasters that people believe they will encounter in their lives, and being prepared with a food storage will help them weather those storms.

Janette reiterated the need to be prepared for disasters, but also brought up another reason for having a food storage when she said, "[We have a food storage] to have a hedge against inflation. I know people who've relied on their food storage when a husband has lost a job... And to be resourceful ourselves. I think it engenders resourcefulness. Even if I'm not a

great canner, I know how to do it.” She suggests that food storage teaches lessons of resourcefulness to women who maintain a food storage. Jenny stated this as well: “I think also it teaches us a diligence, a discipline, of keeping within your budget and having your house in order.” Michelle also suggested its importance in preserving knowledge when she said, “I think it’s maybe keeping some very essential skills alive.” When discussing their food storage, many of the older women spoke of how their mothers taught them to can and preserve foods, as well as how to garden, suggesting that the practice of keeping a food storage was a way of preserving knowledge across the generations.

However, many informants lamented that these crucial skills were now being lost because of the cheap cost and convenience of store-bought foods as well as the now heavy time constraints on our days. Amanda said of this:

As members of the Church, we should be self-reliant. We should have those qualities that our parents and grandparents developed more so than the rest of mainstream society would have you do. And I think, you know, like canning food, or grinding wheat, or bread making, those are the types of things that a lot of people don’t do anymore.

Some of the women suggested, in contrast, that these practices and knowledge are beginning to make a resurgence among younger women of the

church who want to be more self-reliant. They commented that they knew many women my age, including me, were learning how to garden and can.

Finally, some informants explained how food storage and self-reliance fit into the larger Church Welfare Program and discourse of provident living.

Nathan explained the welfare program when he said:

The Welfare Program of the Church is a church-wide program and it includes everything, any temporal kind of needs that a member of our ward or stake needs. It might be bills they need help paying, it might be food on their table, shelter, might have needs to get better training, work training, or more education. So Welfare deals with all the temporal needs of our members and members are encouraged to be self-reliant so that they don't need welfare. But those that need it, the Church has this program in place to help them. So part of the doctrine of the Church when it comes to temporal preparedness is that members should be self-reliant. As part of being self-reliant, we teach and encourage members to have a food storage... Part of the Welfare Program is to teach those principles to the members through Priesthood, through Relief Society, through sacrament meeting, encourage members to develop food storage so that if they do run into a hard time they can rely on food storage... The food storage is significant because it goes to the heart of Welfare, where it's temporal preparedness. Members are taught, "Save up for a time of need, for a rainy day." So the food storage program is to help a family temporarily on hard times.

Here Nathan points out that there are many different aspects to the Welfare Program. Kristin also brought up another aspect of the Welfare Program and food storage when she said, "If you have the mind of food storage, then you're trying to stay out of debt because those kind of go together. And if you're listening about financially staying stable, that's following the prophet. They don't want us to be spending money like crazy." As Kristin points out here, staying out of debt is a major aspect of the Welfare Program and provident living. Similarly, many informants said that keeping a food storage actually helps them save money on food in the long run because they are only buying goods on sale, or sticking to buying the things that they know their family will eat and not wasting money on things that wouldn't be used.

Carolynn encompassed the above-mentioned sub-themes of food storage as a learning ground for self-reliant practices as well as it falling under the larger umbrella of the Welfare program when she said:

I think it is one of the easiest training grounds for provident living, for learning the things we need to learn... I think this is a doable, practical, measurable way to do that. Another thing we're supposed to do is to prepare ourselves, to improve ourselves, to progress, those aren't as easy to measure... So it's almost like the baby steps of what we need to do during our life on the earth and because it's measurable, we can actually feel like we're progressing and we've done this... And food storage is only a part of provident living, but it is a measurable part...

This idea of food storage being a training ground for other principles contained under the umbrella of the Welfare program is a good example of how this extremely physical practice can become so entwined with what members view as spiritual aspects of their faith as well. For Carolynn, learning and growing is not only important in this life but in life after death as well, because she views this knowledge and practice as being eternal²⁸.

FOOD STORAGE OFFERING PEACE OF MIND AND SECURITY

Peace of mind and security were also stated as reasons for keeping a food storage, with 23 out of the 27 interviews containing mention of the peace of mind and security, or the need not to worry or fear, that come from keeping a food storage. Kathy said, "Part of it is that you don't worry, you know that you have it. So it's less stressful because you know you have it." Michelle said, "It's just peace of mind, knowing I always have food down there." Judy said, "For my husband it's a security. He just really wants to know that there's food." Gladys stated, "I would be afraid if I didn't have food in my house, being a single mom for so many years." Natalie answered, "I think I feel more secure knowing that if we don't have income coming in, we can still feed our

²⁸ One of the major beliefs of the Church is that this earthly life is only a tiny part of our existence. The Church teaches that life is eternal, that we lived in a spiritual state with our Father in Heaven before coming to this earth to gain physical bodies, and that upon death we will return to that spiritual state.

family. You feel more secure I think.” For many of the women, this peace of mind and security come from knowing they can feed their families. Lisa stated explicitly that the main reason she started a food storage in the first place was because she wanted to be able to provide for her family and that she never wanted to have to watch her children go hungry, showcasing that the ability to take care of children was also an important reason for keeping a food storage.

Robert simply replied, “Peace of mind.” Cal’s wife, who was listening in on our conversation, said from the kitchen, “If you don’t have it, then you are nervous about it.” Some informants were more detailed in their responses about peace of mind. For example, Robynn explained, “My husband is in a volatile industry, so he’s lost his job several times, he’s been laid off, different things like that... I’ve never had to worry, ‘Ok, where’s our food coming from?’ I mean, it’s a great comfort to me.” Robynn also explained that she has an LDS sister-in-law whose husband has a fluctuating income, but that she has never had a very good food storage. Robynn said that her sister-in-law’s lack of food storage has caused her to worry because she doesn’t know if she will be able to buy groceries during any given week so that she can feed her family. Of this example, Robynn states, “I’ve never had that happen in my life.”

Similarly to Robynn, Ann talked about the peace of mind she has in comparison to people who don't have a food storage; she said:

I like to have something to fall back on if I need it... It gives me security definitely. And just hearing people talk about wishing that they had food storage it gives me peace of mind knowing that I do have it. Not that I have probably everything that I want, but I know that I've been working towards it. So I've got peace of mind.

Though most informants described their food storage as something that they use on a regular basis, rotating through things and restocking as necessary, you can see from these examples that they also view their food storage as something that may be necessary on a longer-term and more permanent basis should it be the only source of nourishment for their families, which ties back into the discussion on the two different types of food storage.

In contrast, Judy talked of the peace of mind that comes from never actually having to use your food storage in such a permanent way. She explained that members are counseled to keep a food storage for the possible disasters they might face, but that "if there's no hard times, count your blessings and just enjoy the peace that having that gives you." She suggests that because of the blessings that come from keeping a food storage, she feels peace of mind even if she never has to rely on her food storage as her only source of food. However, she does go on to describe her food storage like

many of the other informants, saying, “There’s just that peace of knowing that you’re doing what you can do, so if something does happen, you will be provided for. It will work out. So there’s a lot of peace of mind that comes from having that.”

Scriptural texts were also cited in informant’s explanations for keeping a food storage, particularly in relation to their safety and peace of mind. In my interview with Sidney and LuAnn, after being asked why they keep a food storage, Sidney made reference to a scripture in his response which explains that if you are prepared then you have no need to fear, saying, “Security. And, what is it? If you’re prepared you will not fear.” LuAnn corrected him slightly, saying, “If you are prepared you shall not fear.” LuAnn’s correction put the statement into more scriptural language. Jenny used this same reference when she said, “In the scriptures we’re always taught that if you’re prepared, you won’t need to fear.” Ann told of a preparedness fair held by her stake which she had attended, saying:

It’s important for peace of mind. The prophets are inspired and we need to listen to what they say... We had a big food storage preparedness fair in our stake and they gave a lot of information and they gave us a lot of quotes from the brethren that said things like, ‘It wasn’t raining when Noah built the ark.’ And, ‘Whatever the Lord has said always comes to pass.’

Sharing this peace of mind seems to be an important thing for members to do as well. Cherine also spoke of a food storage fair she helped organize, explaining that her purpose in organizing the event was to educate people and to help them see the importance of being prepared; she said multiple times that the last thing she wanted to do was scare people. She also pointed out that the event was very well attended because it happened to fall the week after hurricane Katrina had come ashore in the United States, suggesting that there were in fact quite a few people concerned, and maybe afraid, that they were not prepared enough.

THE ABILITY TO HELP OTHERS THROUGH FOOD STORAGE

Helping others was another key component of keeping a food storage. Of the 27 interviews, 20 contained reference to helping others, either through their own personal food storage or through other means, such as service in local canneries and bishops' storehouses (which will be explained in more detail in the following section as well). Some informants mentioned that their food storage is something they will share with family members if needed. May explained that she keeps her food storage in case something might happen while family is visiting and they need to have food. She also keeps a food storage so that her family can turn to her for aid in an emergency. LaRee explained that she stores food for her children who don't have room to store

it for themselves; she said, "When [my children] get their own homes I'm going to give them wheat and sugar because it's going to last forever and I don't need to store it for them, but while they're in their apartments I store it for them." Of helping family, Cal said, "It's not so naïve as to think that we're not going to have to help some of our own family...so you have to keep that in mind."

Moving beyond the borders of the family, many informants talked about the possible need to help neighbors and others within their communities through their food storage. Ashley spoke of a friend in California who is very into food storage and explained that part of her friend's philosophy behind keeping a food storage is that she stores enough for her neighbors too; Ashley said about this friend, "They just plan on it for the whole neighborhood." Annette said, "We have to be prepared because we're probably going to have to share with one another too." During Amanda's interview she asked herself, "Could I help people? Do I have enough to help others?" She continued that thought by saying, "I know that [my husband] and I think about that a lot and would like to be in a position to help other people." Though Kristin has just begun to build her food storage, she also spoke of taking care of the neighborhood in an interesting dialogue with Rebecca and me. Kristin began the dialogue by saying, "I know that I need a

supply of Jell-O.” I asked if her husband likes Jello-O and she said that the kids do. Rebecca and I were confused, as they don’t have children yet, so Rebecca asked if it was for her future children. Kristin responded, “The children in the neighborhood...I have to take care of the kids in the neighborhood.” Ann talked of how they had recently helped a neighbor, saying, “We have a neighbor who just got divorced and basically has lost everything. And I thought, ‘I’m so grateful that we’re in a position that we can help her somewhat,’ you know.”

Another example of helping neighbors comes from two different interviews with informants who live in the neighborhood. They both mentioned a table that gets set up in a local cul-de-sac during the summer months on Saturday mornings where people can take fresh produce from their gardens that they won’t be using and leave it for others to who are in need to simply pick up. Of this table, Mike said, “There were some people that came every week and I really honestly think that it was feeding them. It was a good way to help them.” Ethel mentioned having taken fresh produce from her garden to leave on the table, saying, “It’s better at least for me to grow it and to give it to people who will use it than to have more lawn.” She even said specifically that one of the reasons she grows a garden is because she knows there are families in her area that can use the produce that comes from it.

As we've seen before with the other themes, some informants also tied helping others into spiritual reasons for keeping a food storage. Jordan said, "Take care of yourself so that you have a ground base to be able to extend yourself to help others. It just ties into a lot of spiritual things as well." Kelly related a biblical story when talking about sharing her food storage with others when she said:

I don't want to get so attached to my food storage that if there was ever a disaster and people needed help, that I would be a hoarder of it. But you just never know if it came down to your children starving or helping your neighbor, what you'd do. I feel like it could be like the widow with the oil and the flour, where it never ran out. I feel like it would be that way if you really were giving with it.

The biblical story she refers to here is when the prophet Elijah asks a widow to feed him with the very last of her meal and oil that she had meant to use for the final meal that she would share with her son. The widow believed that they would eat this last meal and then die. However, the prophet Elijah assures her that, because of her faith, her cruse of oil and barrel of meal will never be found empty. Cherine shared this same biblical story, afterwards saying, "If we share the Lord is not going to punish us for sharing." Much like with obedience, Cherine suggests that if people share their food storage with others, they will be blessed by their god.

And finally, there is a great amount of service given by members of the church to others through the Welfare Program and the bishops' storehouses. I spoke to Nathan specifically about the bishops' storehouse because he had previously served as a bishop in the ward in which he lived. Nathan detailed the different types of service and help given, explaining that people give of their time to serve by going to help clean the cannery, as missionaries (as two informants, May and Bill did) in their local canneries, which supply the bishops' storehouses; they also help through serving in the bishops' storehouse by assisting people who come in to purchase food. For example, Kristin explained that she has volunteered her time to serve at the bishops' storehouse to help people who went in to have orders filled; she explained this service as "being able to help others". Of this help and the effect it has, Nathan said:

The bishops' storehouse is there because people volunteer their time. People go to the storehouse and they help prepare, make the foods, process the foods, sometimes that food comes from Church farms. The bishops' storehouse comes from thousands of volunteers who give their time and labor to make sure there is a storehouse. It wouldn't happen without the faith of the members.

Another way people give is through monetary aid donated to their bishop of their ward through fast offerings. Nathan said of fast offerings:

One of the big responsibilities of the bishop is to care for the poor and needy and they have fast offerings as resources to say to people, 'I can help you this month with a bill because I have funds that have been donated by good neighbors.' It's always an anonymous donation, you don't tell the recipient of the food order, or whatever, that's having a bill paid, 'Well, so and so paid this much money this month into the fast offering fund.' It's members that have faith that respond to the bishop or stake president or prophet and pay a generous fast offering.

Nathan draws this discussion of the bishops' storehouse back down to the individual and familial level when he says:

What we really believe is that the members of the church are the storehouse. It's their skills and resources and food storage. There might be a time when the bishops' storehouse runs out in a crisis or emergency and it's going to be the food storage of the members that's going to help maybe save lives of other members that don't have any. So that's something that we believe in, the principle that all the members are part of this program, they're part of the storehouse basically.

This idea that the members are the literal storehouse of the Church is brought up again when discussing the theme of members viewing their food storage as their own personal grocery stores.

VIEWING A FOOD STORAGE AS A PERSONAL STORE IN THE BASEMENT

And finally, reference to food storage as being equivalent to their own personal store in the basement was a theme in 20 of the 27 interviews. In

continuation of the previous discussion of the Bishops' storehouse, we now turn to food storage being referred to as a grocery store in reference to the bishops' storehouse. Nathan went on to explain that the storehouse was a place that he could send families in need of assistance to receive enough food to last them 2 weeks. These families go through a process of being visited by someone within the Relief Society presidency of their ward who assesses the families' needs and then the bishop helps each family in filling out the necessary order form that they take with them to the storehouse. Nathan explained the process when he said:

We'd sit down and make an order, and sign it and date it, and then they'd take it down to the storehouse and they would have people there to help them fill that order. You can order fruit, bread, pastas, rice, potatoes, fresh fruit and vegetables, meats, milk, dairy products. The storehouse is like a big store, it's like a Macey's²⁹.

Bishops' storehouses are usually located near a cannery and all of the goods that are processed in the canneries across North America end up in these bishops' storehouses. The most interesting thing about these canneries and storehouses, as well as the farms and orchards that supply them, is that they are run almost exclusively on work and time given freely by members of the

²⁹ Not to be confused with the department store, Macey's is a local grocery store that is close in proximity to many of my informants; this is one of the reasons it is cited as a good place to shop.

church. It must be pointed out as well that people who are not members of the Church are also known for giving of their time to work in the canneries.

Judy, who had served as the Relief Society president in her ward years before also described in pretty good detail the bishops' storehouse and the process of stocking the storehouse:

You can still see the storehouse too, but to go in there and to watch the things on TV where they talk about the Church having a vineyard. I don't know how many vineyards they have, but it's to produce raisins. It's to produce these grapes that they turn into raisins and the raisins are packaged and they're sent to the bishops' storehouses for use by the members and you think, "Wow, for the Church to have that much insight and to devote that much time and money and effort to do this kind of thing, you think wow!" It just blows me away. But to walk into the storehouse over there, it's just like a little miniature grocery store. You've got shelves of all the canned stuff, shelves of all the refrigerator and frozen things, or freezers of all that stuff, you've got a back area where there is sewing things and clothing and that kind of stuff, blankets and everything back there that you might need. All of your temporal needs are there at the storehouse.

So, much like the individual families of the Church are asked to keep a food storage, the Church itself has a food storage program alive and running. Ethel said of this, "The members are the bishops' storehouse." It makes sense to view it in this way, as so much of the work that is done to keep the storehouses running is given freely by members.

Many women specifically called their food storage their store. Kelly began her interview by explaining, before saying anything else, that her food storage is her store; she said, "My food storage is like a grocery store, so if I need something I go down there and get it, so anything that's non-perishable, that I use frequently, it's down in my food storage." Almost all of my informants made reference to their storage being in the basement.

Basements are standard in Utah homes because nights are generally cool, keeping the basement storerooms at comfortable temperatures even during the hottest days of summer that can be above one hundred degrees, making them great places to store large amounts of food. Kelly went on to say, "I really like having a store in my basement; not having to run to the store all the time. Even if I don't have enough to make what I wanted to make, I can go downstairs and figure out something else and not have to run to the store." This is a particularly interesting thing for Kelly to say, as there are three different grocery stores within at least a two-mile radius of her home.

Like Kelly, Stephanie said of her food storage: "I call it my little store." Annette said of her mother's food storage, "She has essentially a store in her basement of short-term, so you can go and find anything you need, but then there's also long-term stuff too." Annette explained that her mother's food storage is much larger and more diverse than her own, which may account for

her classifying her mother's food storage as a store instead of her own, even though she uses her own food storage exactly as she said her mother's could be used. And finally, Sidney said of his and LuAnn's food storage, "We call it our own grocery store."

Like Kelly, many other women explained that one reason they like having their food storage is because with it they don't have to make constant trips to the store. Judy said, "Even though the grocery stores are so close, it's just so nice to be able to go downstairs and get what you want and be able to cook a recipe. And I think, 'Oh I've got this and this and this, I can make this tonight; I don't have to go to the store.'" Judy is also within at least a two-mile radius of three grocery stores. Michelle said, "It's nice just to run downstairs and grab a can of tomatoes when I'm making soup. I don't always have to think constantly about going to the grocery store. I can make many, many meals off of what I have in my house. So I don't have to think about it." In contrast to Kelly and Judy, Michelle has about a five mile drive to the nearest grocery store, making her claim that running to the grocery store is a hassle more solid.

Natalie brought up another aspect to the problem of constantly running to the store when she said, "The more and more kids I have, the harder it is to just be able to run over to the grocery store when you run out of

something. So I like to be able to have everything down there. We call it our store; 'Go down to the store.'" Many of the women interviewed have families that are larger than the national average; Natalie is an example as she has four young children, which can definitely be a hindrance in making trips to the grocery store.

CHAPTER 6: Discussion and Conclusion

Now we turn to analyzing how the previously discussed themes found in Chapter 5, which can be classified as the Unofficial Word, fit into the Official Word of food storage as presented by the Church and discussed in Chapter 4. Five of the six themes derived from the data gathered during the ethnographic interviews were very explicit parts of the Official word of food storage as disseminated by the Church. Finally, in conclusion, a discussion of theory will be presented to show how religion can serve to confine people into a specific cultural discourse as well as reproduce the discourse; in this case, the discourse of food storage.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL DISCOURSES ON FOOD STORAGE

Beginning with the first theme derived from the data, food storage as a resource during disaster, we see that members of the Church turn to the Official discourse to explain why they think it important to have a food storage should some sort of disaster occur in their lives. As millennialism and Zionism have seemed to dwindled in importance, natural disasters and personal/familial disaster seem to have become the prevalent type of disaster referred to. The quote from the Church's pamphlet on food storage that was cited previously stated: "We encourage members world-wide to prepare for adversity in life by having a basic supply of food and water..." Also, as quoted

previously, Benson said, “...these days will be days of tribulation. [The Lord] has warned and forewarned us of the eventuality” (1980). Some informants even used the word “eventuality” when discussing the need to have food storage in the case of disasters. For example, Lisa said, “...there could be eventualities where we would need food storage...”

McMullin also pointed out that a main theme within the Church has been to “prepare for the day of scarcity” (2007). It is interesting to see that this quote by McMullin came from 2007, during the same time period when the Unofficial discourse on food storage was transitioning from a bent towards millennialism to the smaller scale “catastrophes” that might happen just within the walls of your own home. Amanda explained how having her own food storage has helped during these times of scarcity; the example she gave was when she and her husband had been between jobs. Similarly, Stephanie said that she thought food storage was for the little catastrophes in our personal lives.

Vaughn J. Featherstone mentions the second theme when he says, “We need have no fear if we are prepared...There is a God in heaven whom we have obeyed. Do you suppose he would abandon those who have kept his commandments? (1976)” Much like Featherstone suggests here, many informants said that they believed they would be blessed by having been

obedient. Cal said, "...you've been promised your many blessings if you [keep a food storage], and you see them." As discussed in Chapter 4, for some informants there was no need to expound on this idea of obedience, for them it was a simple matter of, as Annette said, "doing it because I've been told I should." Judy said, "It's a commandment and I'm trying to keep the commandments." For many members, a knowledge that they have done what their leaders have asked them to do gives them a sense of accomplishment in a very materially visible matter.

Food storage as a principle of self-reliance/preparedness is extremely visible within the larger Official discourse of the Church. As previously stated, the Church has a specific site that lays out in detail the basic concepts behind being prepared and self-reliant. Not only does the text on this site reference this theme, but so do the media and pictures present. Nathan even said, "...that preparedness and self-reliance message is pretty strong in the Church." As Nathan suggests, self-reliance and preparedness go far beyond the discourse of food storage within the Church, as they are also talked about in purely spiritual terms. Again, Benson said, "For over forty years, in a spirit of love, members of the Church have been counseled to be thrifty and self-reliant..." (1980). It is interesting to take into account the date of this address

as well, because just over 40 years before Benson's remark, during 1936, the welfare program of the Church was established.

Because food storage is a subtheme of the welfare program of the Church, it makes sense that it would be talked about in the same terms of self-reliance and preparedness that the other subthemes of the Welfare program are. For example, Nathan explained in detail how the food storage program fits into the larger picture of the Welfare program, and said, "As part of being self-reliant, we teach and encourage members to have a food storage..."

Amanda even suggested that members needed to be more self-reliant like those from the generations their parents and grandparents came from.

Having a food storage in following the principle that members need to be self-reliant and prepared leads right into the next theme that informants brought up. In the same 2007 address cited above, McMullin also discusses this theme; he says, "As we do our very best...we shall enjoy greater wisdom, security, peace of mind, and personal well-being. We shall be prepared, and because we are prepared, 'we shall not fear'" (2007). He brings up here that because members are self-reliant and have prepared themselves by having a food storage, there is no need to fear, that members can have peace of mind and a sense of security in knowing they have followed the admonitions or commandments of their leaders. Women said that they felt secure, that they

weren't afraid, nervous, or worried, that they had peace of mind, etc., because of their having followed the commandment to be self-reliant and prepared.

The ability to help others through food storage fits best into the larger picture of the Welfare program of the Church. By being prepared and self-reliant, members state that they will be able to reach out to others when they are in need. Members' food storages are essentially small bishop's storehouses that can be utilized by the larger Church should needs arise. This can also connect to Smith's suggestions that women help each other in their attempts to become self-reliant through keeping a food storage.

Finally, viewing a food storage as a personal store in the basement is the one emergent theme that does not fit neatly into the Official Word of food storage. This is the one area when women seemed to make food storage their own. It shows how women use their agency to move beyond the Official Word and make it work for them in their own personal lives. Because it does make life easier for them, through saving time and money as they claimed, having a food storage moves beyond the symbolic and spiritual realm of the Official Word to become part of their lives on a much more functional level. By turning their food storage into their personal store in the basement, they subvert the Official Word into a functional part of their everyday lives.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS AND CONCLUSION

The economic capital (as discussed by Bourdieu) of food storage has been commodified not only by the Church through canneries but, more importantly, by large businesses that produce goods specifically for the food storage market. As has been discussed, though Utah is definitely not a purely Mormon state, a good portion of the population are members, so these food storage companies have a large market base for their goods. When talking with Cherine who ran her own food storage company, she explained that she guessed approximately 90% of her customer base was located in Utah, though she did sell and ship both out of the state and out of the country. Some companies carry goods that, though not necessarily better in quality, are more expensive and only really available in bulk to the higher-class members of the Church. Of course, bulk is what food storage is all about. By purchasing and using these higher-class items (like those Annette was selling at her food storage party), members claim the specific economic capital of what might be called the Mormon bourgeoisie.

Food storage and its economic capital also tie local practices to global economic trends and markets. For example, as wheat prices have risen, members comment that they hold off on replenishing what wheat they have used from their personal stores until wheat prices return to what they see as

more reasonable costs. The rising prices of food have also been influential in the practice of growing and maintaining personal gardens, as well as preserving and storing homegrown goods. Many younger women with families are returning to "the old ways" of gardening and preserving in an attempt to save money and to feed their children healthier foods.

Michelle is a good example of one woman who is actively returning to "the old ways" by growing a large garden and preserving, in many different ways, the produce that she grows in her garden. This shift towards growing and preserving your own goods is also, as stated above, associated with food movements that have become large players on the national food scene in the last few years, such as Slow Food and local food. Again, Michelle is very connected to these movements, mentioning that she has done a good amount of reading about these movements and the ideas behind them. She has embraced the idea of local food, buying Asian pears from farmers near her home to can, and even buying a turkey for her family Thanksgiving celebration that was raised by a young girl involved in the local 4-H program.

In contrast to economic capital, cultural capital is the build up of knowledge associated with food storage as well as knowledge about the Official Word. Women who are visibly involved in the practice of food storage, like Michelle, can be seen as acting out their beliefs and

understanding of the Official Word, and those who are viewed as being better at it than others are heralded as being repositories of knowledge by their friends and acquaintances; these women can be characterized as having a large amount of cultural capital as evidence of their belief, faith, obedience, self-reliance, etc. Multiple women interviewed even mentioned others they knew of who "had a better food storage" than theirs or "knew more about food storage" than they did and, thus, would be a much better informant because of the knowledge, or cultural capital, they possessed.

This ties into social capital as well, or the relationships and networks forged between women on the basis of their similar practice of keeping a food storage, because as women make reference to others as being experts in food storage, they do so because they have built connections based on the sharing of information or knowledge (cultural capital) about food storage. For example, many informants had mentioned that I needed to interview LuAnn because she had taught them how to make grape juice, or applesauce, or because she had an amazing garden, etc. Often the creation of networks and relationships between women by the sharing of knowledge about gardening, preserving, and maintaining a food storage is facilitated by the Relief Society organization at ward and stake levels. The sharing of LuAnn's method for preparing and canning grape juice is one example; she was asked to head a

Relief Society activity in which she taught the women of the ward who attended how to prepare and can grape juice. My own mother attended the activity and couldn't stop talking about the grape juice for a week after.

Recall from the literature review the examples of Douglas and Harris and the difference between the symbolic and the functional reasons for Jewish food prohibitions that they address. Similarly, a distinction can be made between the symbolism and the function of food storage. Multiple women interviewed mentioned that they believed they needed a food storage, even if they never actually had to use it. The symbolism behind food storage and the belief that blessings from heaven would be "poured down on them" was important enough for women to feel the need to expend the financial resources necessary to obtain a food storage. Though most of the women did mention using their food storage, both on a regular basis as well as sporadically, they admitted to never having had the need to rely solely on their food storage; for these women, the symbolic natures of food storage were enough. An extreme example of this comes from a preliminary study done in a rural Oregon town where I interviewed 10 women about their food storages. One of my informants in this study explained that she had purchased a two year supply of food for herself and her husband from an online source that delivered the packaged food on a pallet to her door. She

said that she had used a few of the things from her supply, like the dried apple slices, but the pallet containing her food was actually in Utah, being stored in the home of one of her children. She explained that even though the food was in Utah and she was in Oregon, negating her ability to use it should the need arise, she believed she was being blessed because she had bought the food storage, because she had followed the admonitions of her leaders. For her, function played no role whatsoever in her reason for having a food storage.

In contrast, the functional aspect of food storage was also apparent in the way women talked about their food storage. This ties very neatly into the theme of having a food storage as a personal store in the basement. Women knew they could make a number of different meals from the food they had stored and mentioned that they definitely thought it saved them money because they bought goods when they were on sale and tended not to over-buy on goods that were superfluous. The shift from viewing food storage as necessary for the apocalypse, for the second coming, or for the end of the world, to a possible necessity of tomorrow is also an aspect of the functionality of food storage. Multiple informants mentioned having had to live on their food storage for periods of time, or having helped out others who needed food by giving them goods from their own food storage.

De Certeau and Giard (2008) write, “Food involves a primary need and pleasure, it constitutes an ‘immediate reality’ but ‘substances, techniques and customs all enter into a system of significant differences,’³⁰ a system that is coherent and illogical. Humans do not nourish themselves from natural nutrients, nor from pure dietary principles, but from *cultured* food-stuffs, chosen and prepared according to laws of compatibility and rules of propriety unique to each cultural area.” Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the men and women interviewed showed how their food practices were being shaped into “cultured food-stuffs” by the Official Word of food storage and self-reliance by the things they chose to store and by the way they talked about the importance of food storage. Wheat is a good example of a food item that became a “cultured” item through the Official Word. LuAnn spoke briefly of a next door neighbor who kept a very large store of wheat and expressed her surprise at this because the woman was not a member of the Church.

Wheat seemed to be the most symbolic of the items stored because many of the women mentioned how they stored it, but didn’t really like using it or didn’t know how to use it. The woman that Robbyn had inherited her wheat supply from is a good example of this; she had stored her large buckets

³⁰ Here they are quoting Roland Barthes in, “Pour une psychosociologie de l’alimentation contemporaine,”

of wheat for upwards of 20 years, moving them from home to home as they relocated over the years, and never using them. Rebecca, who didn't have a food storage at the time of our interview, mentioned wheat as being one of the things she planned to store in her future storage. I asked her what she wanted her food storage to look like and her response was, "Probably like my mother's. Have some flour and sugar and wheat." Rebecca is the perfect example of how women are reproducing Mormon families through the practice of food storage when she says she wants her storage to look like her mom's. She also mentions earlier in the interview that she wants a garden like her mom's and will probably cook and preserve the produce from her garden the same way her mother has over the years, showing how practices in the home that are run by women are helping to reproduce Mormon families.

Jewish and Muslim food practices and their associated taboos serve to set members of these religious communities apart from the rest of society, simply by what they eat and how they prepare their food; in contrast, the practice of storing food is not exclusive to the culture of Mormonism or The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. What is unique about their practice is the ways that members of the Church talk about keeping a food storage and the ways that they physically keep their food storages; the

emphasis members place on the spirituality, or the symbolism, of keeping a food storage is particularly unique. The Official Word of the Church has had a great influence on the way its members view and practice food storage, as has been shown by the data collected. As members, particularly women members, talk about food storage amongst themselves, they perpetuate and proliferate the Official Word of food storage that comes from the Church, ensuring that it will continue to thrive among the current and future members of the Church. This can be tied back to Foucault because as women uphold the Official Word, they are also upholding the discourse that supports the Official Word and confines them to a life of reproducing their religious community through their practices in the home and kitchen.

By supporting the Official Word and upholding the discourse, women are not only reproducing their religious community, they are also reproducing the patriarchal aspects of their religious community. The leadership organization of the Church is extremely hierarchical and, with the exception of the Relief Society, is devoid of women, suggesting a very patriarchal system of Church leadership. The examples of the Official Word make this quite obvious: there was only one woman quoted as talking about the Official Word and she was a member of the General Relief Society Presidency at the time. It's quite possible, thus, to suggest that men are

generally repositories and owners of the Official Word, whereas women are generally repositories and owners of the Unofficial Word. I say generally because of the two men I interviewed who were examples of being part of the Official Word as well as the Unofficial Word through their involvement with food storage in the home.

Nathan and Jenny were good examples of a man and woman as a married couple being characterized by the Official and Unofficial word. I had interviewed Nathan about what it was like to be a bishop and the things he was responsible for as bishop in relation to food storage. He spoke very matter-of-factly and in great detail about the Church guidelines of food storage during our interview. However, when his wife joined us and my questions shifted to practices in the home, he became somewhat withdrawn and even deferred to Jenny for answers to my questions, in a way showing deference to the Unofficial word. Going back to Bakhtin, we see here how the Official and Unofficial Words of food storage work together to uphold a discourse of compliance and obedience and that the Unofficial Word is the functional side of the Official; whereas, in Bakhtin's work, the Official and Unofficial words are working against each other in an attempt at resistance by turning an entire society on its head for a brief moment in time.

Jenny shows in the previous example that it is women who are involved in reproducing the Unofficial Word and the functional aspects of food storage and, thus, reproducing families within the Mormon discourse of the Official Word. Though Mormonism is patriarchal, families are reproduced in the home and in the kitchen; without the work of women in the home and in the kitchen, the Official Word would not be perpetuated; and because it is patriarchal, both the Official and Unofficial Word serve to perpetuate this patriarchy. By keeping women busy in the home and kitchen with the responsibility of reproducing the religious community through food storage, they are kept from being able to involve themselves in movements of feminism, further reproducing the patriarchy of the religious community. The distraction of food storage and the suggestion that faith and obedience will keep women and their families safe is a way that the discourse (in Foucault's sense) holds women within their roles in the home and kitchen.

The question must be asked then, of whether women were given this role by the male leaders as a way to involve them in the reproduction of the religious community, or if they inserted themselves into the Official Word and the reproduction process through practices in the home, such as food storage. It seems that the answer to this question is that both of these things are happening together. Women are being disciplined by the discourse and

Official Word, as well as disciplining themselves. A good examples of this comes from the short film clip referenced in the section on the Official Word of food storage. The clip tells the store of a young married couple passing a shop while walking down the street and seeing a beautiful dress in the window. The husband suggests that they purchase the dress, but the wife decides that they shouldn't buy the dress because they don't have the money for it. She is a perfect example of a woman disciplining herself within the discourse of the principles of self-reliance by being frugal and denying herself the dress.

It could also be suggested that women use self-reliance and preparedness as a way to control their husbands. It was her husband's suggestion that she buy the dress, and by disciplining herself by not buying the dress she was also disciplining her husband. The women I interviewed are, after all, using their husband's money to build their food storage, using the money in a way that they want to. Going back to the theme of women building a food storage as their personal store in their basement, it shows how women are living, breathing beings who live outside of the pages of the pamphlet sent out by the Church, they live outside of the webpages on the internet, and, because they are human beings, they are living out the Official Word in ways that make the best sense to them.

Finally, we return to my own mother and her lack of involving herself in the Unofficial Word of food storage. As a woman who works outside of the home she has neither the time nor the energy to devote herself to building a food storage like most of the women I interviewed. She has followed the Official Word in ways that make sense to her. She is aware of the Official Word and its guidelines, and she has the knowledge necessary to follow it because she learned it from her own mother like many of my informants, but she has used her agency to somewhat disassociate herself from the Official Word. In an interview she sat in on with my grandparents, she said about learning to can and preserve, “I didn’t want to learn.” When I made the comment that she doesn’t have a food storage she said, “I have a little!” She understands the symbolic side of food storage and wants to be seen as being involved at least a little bit, but is unwilling to completely involve herself in the functional side of it. She shows just how easily she’s able to jump from one discursive footing to the other, speaking about the Official Word and its symbolism, as well the Unofficial Word and its functionalism.

In this work, I have shown how a discourse can affect a mundane practice, such as storing food, and turn it into a spiritual practice that has both functional and symbolic meaning to the adherents of the faith. I have shown how the Official Word can support the discourse, but also how bearers of the

Unofficial Word can assert themselves as important players within the Unofficial Word, claiming their space and role as one of authority. In addition, the research has brought up questions that were unanswerable from my data set but that would be interesting as follow-up studies. In order to understand how Official Words, such as that of food storage, work within a large culture with many subcultures, it would be enlightening to continue research on a similar vein as this present research, but among church members in other parts of the world where storing food is neither practical or commonly practiced. Another interesting avenue to pursue would be how small religious groups associated with, but not recognized by, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints view the practice of food storage. Do they keep food storages? If they do, what are the parameters, do they also use the Official Word as disseminated by the Church? There are multiple directions one could now take this research, showing just how ripe Mormonism and food in general are for study.

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