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## Using Women's Voices in Teaching History and Doctrine

Author(s): Jennifer Reeder

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Lee Greene Richards, *Emma Hale Smith*, © Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

Historian Catherine A. Brekus noted that early women “have been virtually forgotten by modern-day historians.”  
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# Using Women’s Voices in Teaching History and Doctrine

JENNIFER REEDER

Jennifer Reeder ([jreeder@ldschurch.org](mailto:jreeder@ldschurch.org)) is a nineteenth-century women’s history specialist at the LDS Church History Department.

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In early July 1830, shortly following her baptism, Emma Smith received a revelation through her husband, Joseph Smith, about her position and responsibilities in the new Church of Christ.<sup>1</sup> In the revelation (now known as section 25 of the Doctrine and Covenants), the Lord described Emma as an “elect lady” and charged her to “expound scriptures and exhort the church according as it shall be given thee by my spirit.”<sup>2</sup> The responsibilities were weighty: the 1828 American Webster dictionary defines *exhort* as “to encourage, to embolden, to cheer, to advise, to excite or to give strength, spirit, or courage.” Likewise, *expound* means “to explain, to lay open the meaning, to clear out of obscurity, to interpret.”<sup>3</sup> The revelation contained specific counsel for Emma, but at the conclusion the charge to teach and preach applied to a more general audience: “this is my voice unto all.”<sup>4</sup>

Seven years later, in 1837, Sarah Sturtevant Leavitt became one who exhorted truth. She was baptized in Kirtland, Ohio. She and her husband settled in Mayfield, ten miles from Kirtland. There, she later recorded, “I wanted very much to get the good will of my neighbors,” for she yearned to *expound*—to clear out of obscurity and to explain the truth of the gospel. Leavitt visited

local taverns, or inns, speaking earnestly to anyone who would listen. “I had some[thing] of more importance that was shut up like fire in my bones,” she wrote. At a visit to a sick neighbor, where a large group had gathered, Leavitt desired to *exhort*—to give strength and courage. She remembered, “The Lord gave me great liberty of speech.”<sup>5</sup> Her exact words, unfortunately, were not recorded verbatim, demonstrating the need to find women’s voices and insert them into Church history.

### Recovering Women’s Voices

One challenge in recovering women’s voices is that women frequently lacked a location to speak and then an opportunity for their words to be recorded. Leavitt joined the Nauvoo Relief Society on 4 August 1842, but beyond her membership, there is no record of her in discussions or donations.<sup>6</sup> Emma Smith, however, as “presidentess,” directed the benevolent activity and spiritual discussion of the society, as encouraged by Joseph Smith at its organizational founding on 17 March 1842.<sup>7</sup> The all-female organization provided a location for Emma to speak comfortably; historical records in the twelve years since the 1830 revelation indicate that she was a viable public figure, though no records exist of her public oration.<sup>8</sup> In the Relief Society, Emma directed membership-recruitment efforts, encouraged unity, and instructed women on compassion and care for the poor.<sup>9</sup>

Another challenge in accessing women’s words is their fear of public speaking. Even Eliza R. Snow initially expressed anxiety over her new Relief Society leadership assignment from Brigham Young: “He said, ‘I **want you to instruct the sisters.**’ Altho’ my heart went ‘**pit a pat**’ for the time being, I did not, and **could not** then form an adequate estimate of the work before me.”<sup>10</sup> Mary Isabella Horne, president of the Salt Lake City Fourteenth Ward Relief Society, also received an assignment from Brigham Young to organize a Retrenchment Association; she, too, expressed doubt over her public speaking ability.<sup>11</sup> Emmeline B. Wells described Horne’s early trepidation: Horne “was so very timid that she could not vote in the members of the society, without being supported by leaning on other sisters. To see her now stand up in the congregation of the Saints, and hear the words of instruction which flow from her lips, one could scarcely credit that she was ever so afraid of her own voice.”<sup>12</sup> Zina D. H. Young expressed similar concern when she visited the Lehi Relief Society in 1869: “I am not accustomed to public speaking.” After fifteen years of speaking experience, Young became the third Relief Society

General President. She confidently exhorted the “phalanx of [Relief Society] women to stand and lead out.”<sup>13</sup> Emily S. Richards remembered how Snow helped her to learn to speak in public: “The first time [she] asked me to speak in meeting, I could not, and she said, ‘Never mind, but when you are asked to speak again, try and have something to say,’ and I did.”<sup>14</sup> Each of these women overcame her fears and contributed to the development of Mormon discourse, many times surrounded by the comfortable company of the local Relief Societies.

Latter-day Saint women participated in historic events and testified of the Restoration, as evidenced in countless letters, diaries, and reminiscences contained in archival repositories or family collections spread throughout the world. But their voices were often restricted to family and unused pages of history. The Relief Society became a springboard for women to speak publicly and to insert themselves into what became an institutional recorded history via organizational minute books—over a thousand of them—now housed in the LDS Church History Library. Even with these records, women often remain peripheral or even absent from the institutional history. Historian Catherine A. Brekus noted that early women “have been virtually forgotten by modern-day historians.” They became invisible and their voices “difficult to hear.”<sup>15</sup> An informal survey conducted by Brittany Chapman Nash, an employee of the LDS Church History Department, indicates that many Latter-day Saints today can name only a handful of nineteenth-century Mormon women: Emma Smith, Lucy Mack Smith, Eliza R. Snow, or “the woman who blessed her oxen”—Mary Fielding Smith.<sup>16</sup>

And yet records of their words, ideas, and opinions exist. The *Woman's Exponent* (1872–1914), a women's newspaper, is an invaluable source of Church history, as women reflected in the paper on their personal and collective histories of the Restoration. Brigham Young charged Emmeline B. Wells, second editor of the *Exponent* and leader of the paper's production for nearly forty years, to publish “the record of [women's] work and a portion of Church history;” he also added “and I give you a mission to write brief sketches of the lives of the leading women of Zion, and publish them.”<sup>17</sup> Others followed Wells's lead: Edward Tullidge compiled *Women of Mormondom* in 1877, and Augusta Joyce Crocheron edited *Representative Women of Deseret* in 1884.<sup>18</sup> While these sources can be found online, they are out of print and are not well known today. Very few of these women's stories appear in current official



Church publications or curriculum, complicating teachers' ability to include them in lessons without undertaking significant extra research.

Several new documentary publications over the past decade concentrate on women's words: *Women of Faith in the Latter Days*, edited by Richard E. Turley Jr. and Brittany L. Chapman [Nash]; *The First Fifty Years of Relief Society: Key Documents in Latter-day Saint Women's History*, edited by Jill Mulvay Derr, Carol Cornwall Madsen, Kate Holbrook, and Matthew Grow; and *The Witness of Women: Firsthand Experiences and Testimonies of the Restoration*, by Janiece Johnson and Jennifer Reeder. They provide access to biographical accounts, Relief Society documents produced by both men and women, and women's accounts arranged topically, describing events of the Restoration. Most recently, Jennifer Reeder and Kate Holbrook have edited a collection of women's talks with the Church Historian's Press: *At the Pulpit: 185 Years of Discourses by Latter-day Saint Women*, which will be translated into Spanish and Portuguese and added to the Gospel Library app in February 2018. This article will focus on this most recent publication, with ideas of how *At the Pulpit* and other historical works can integrate women's voices and experiences into the classroom.

### **At the Pulpit: The Voice, Visibility, and Value of Women's Voices**

The concept for the book *At the Pulpit* originated with a discussion between Derr and Holbrook. They concurred that the twenty-six-volume *Journal of Discourses*, with its richness in theological and historical detail, deserved an equal companion, a female *Journal of Discourses*.<sup>19</sup> Because of their work on *First Fifty Years*, Derr and Holbrook knew that women's talks existed but that early records were difficult to access, forgotten in old minute books and obscure newspapers. My first assignment at the Church History Department was to edit such a woman's volume with Holbrook. We determined that a main purpose of *At the Pulpit* was to provide access to a collection of women's spoken words, making them usable for teaching, speaking, leading, and scholarly research.

Holbrook and I resolved that an additional primary purpose of *At the Pulpit* was to recognize the voice, visibility, and value of women, both for women featured in the book and for women and men reading it. Each discourse includes a brief introduction that provides insight into the biographical, historical, theological, and cultural context. For example, Jane Neyman's discourse about charity is a short excerpt from the Beaver Relief

Society minute book, “encouraging all to be forbearing and forgiving, refraining as much as possible from scrutinizing the conduct of our neighbors.”<sup>20</sup> While this is a significant yet typical Relief Society topic, additional value comes from Neyman’s personal experience, as told in the introduction to her discourse. As a destitute single mother in Nauvoo, she received desperately needed charitable assistance but was denied membership in the Nauvoo Relief Society due to gossip about her family. Two of her daughters had been accused of sexual immorality at a time when rumors of polygamy and unauthorized use of Joseph Smith’s consent to practice plural marriage filtered through the town. Despite the negative reaction, Neyman remained faithful, and years later became the first Relief Society president in Beaver, Utah, where she encouraged sisters to seek for charity, “which covereth a multitude of sins,” a value she certainly learned from personal experience.<sup>21</sup>

Additional biographical information is also valuable for Leone O. Jacobs’s discourse. The introduction details that she served in Palestine and Syria in the late 1930s with her husband, Joseph Jacobs, who was called to be a mission president there. Leone was in her thirties with two children and had recently undergone major surgery. She jumped into what must have been difficult conditions by fellowshipping members, learning Turkish, hosting events, preparing meals for missionaries and guests, supporting Relief Society and youth activities, and playing the organ for meetings. Upon their return in 1939, when England declared war on Germany, she served in her stake Relief Society presidency, and after the war, she was called to the Relief Society general board. She spoke about personal improvement at a Relief Society general conference in 1949: “One of the most glorious principles of life is that we can always rise above present level,” that “the course of our lives can be rerouted” by “preparing our hearts.”<sup>22</sup> Her own life certainly had been rerouted, and she handled it with grace.<sup>23</sup> *At the Pulpit*, then, provides informative context and value to the voices of these women. These personal experiences attached to gospel teachings aim to illustrate how today men and women, boys and girls can find value in their own life experiences and make doctrinal applications.

*At the Pulpit* makes visible both known and unknown women. Of course, as would be expected, there are talks by Lucy Mack Smith, Emma Smith, Eliza R. Snow, Belle Spafford, Sheri Dew, and Chieko N. Okazaki. There are also talks by women not commonly known. E. G. Jones lectured to the Salt Lake City Eleventh Ward Young Ladies in 1882, and her discourse was picked up by the *Woman’s Exponent*. Jones left virtually no record of herself

other than a masterful treatise on prayer.<sup>24</sup> Careful scrutiny of the Salt Lake City 1880 census revealed an Ellenor Georgina Jones in the eleventh ward, which led to examination of other census records from Ohio to California. Genealogical information culled from each census showed that Jones, born in 1832 in Nashville, came from a mixed-race family at the height of slavery and hostility toward free blacks. And yet at a time of high racial prejudice, ward and temple records in Utah show that not only did Jones receive her own endowment and performed the work for her family members, but her son was ordained to the priesthood. To find her death date and location required extra attention; a family history missionary found her death certificate, which indicated that she had spent ten days in Redding, California, suffering from a stroke, and passed away in 1922. No headstone exists, yet her discourse on prayer reveals a very thoughtful, educated, spiritually aware woman who had learned how to utilize prayer to strengthen her relationship with God and who was highly capable of teaching others that concept.<sup>25</sup>

A twentieth-century example of a lesser-known speaker in *At the Pulpit* is Lalene H. Hart, an expert in home economics with degrees from Brigham Young College in Logan, Utah, and Simmons College in Boston, which later guided her work with the Relief Society Social Services. At age thirty, she married a widower with ten children. She served with her mission president husband in Canada from 1927 to 1930, where she presided over the Relief Society in the mission. She spoke at a 1933 Relief Society general conference on the topic of responsibilities of service and assignment. “Let us sense seriously the responsibility that rests upon us to rise and shine and show the way to a doubting, waiting, skeptical world that there is a God in heaven, that Jesus Christ lives, and that he is interested in the welfare of his children.”<sup>26</sup>

Because of the availability of resources, the addresses in this book are heavily weighted toward discourses given in Utah, and the selections in this book do not adequately represent non-American voices, or even non-Utahan voices. Nevertheless, the voices of international women appear in the book as early as 1861, when British actress and Latter-day Saint Elicia A. Grist published an “Address to the Sisters of the Church” in the *Millennial Star*, a British LDS newspaper. The Grist family moved around England and Ireland, and she wrote to the women scattered around the British Isles before the first British Relief Society was organized in 1873.<sup>27</sup> Mary B. Ferguson was born in Scotland but spoke at the Spanish Fork Young Ladies’ Mutual Improvement





Three women of Mormondom: Eliza R. Snow, Emmeline B Wells, Elizabeth Ann Whitney.

Association.<sup>28</sup> Annie D. Noble and Emma N. Goddard, who both spoke in MIA conferences, emigrated from England.<sup>29</sup>

The latter part of *At the Pulpit* expands the voices of international women. Lucrecia Suárez de Juárez, a stake Relief Society president in Mexico City, spoke at a Mexico and Central America Area Conference in 1972.<sup>30</sup> Jutta B. Busche, from Germany, spoke to the Brigham Young University (BYU) Women's Conference in 1990, describing the distinction between cultural Utah Mormonism and doctrine.<sup>31</sup> Irina Kratzer, a doctor from Russia, spoke at the BYU Women's Conference in 2000 about her conversion and transition from a Communist country to the United States.<sup>32</sup> South African Judy Brummer shared her story at a 2012 fireside. She grew up on her family ranch,

learning the Xhosa language from her local playmates. After college, she met the sister missionaries, was baptized, then served a mission, utilizing her knowledge of the Xhosa language by translating for missionaries and Church leaders and translating selections of the Book of Mormon for them.<sup>33</sup> The book concludes with a talk by Gladys N. Sitati, from Kenya, also speaking at BYU Women's Conference, in 2016.<sup>34</sup> Such global voices of women expand the visibility and voice of women and recognize an international Church.

### Change over Time

An unrecognized value of *At the Pulpit* is its demonstration of change over time. Initially, women spoke in a format comfortable to them at the time. Elizabeth Ann Whitney's talk, for example, is a song she sang by the gift of tongues in the partially constructed Kirtland Temple.<sup>35</sup> Emma Smith's words are taken from various discussions she led in the Nauvoo Relief Society.<sup>36</sup> Eliza R. Snow spoke extemporaneously to the Retrenchment Association in the Fourteenth Ward Assembly Hall in 1872, covering such topics as adversity, divine influence, Zion, and the importance of education.<sup>37</sup> Members of early Relief Societies most often spoke through discussion, but regular meetings gave rise to impromptu speeches, which in turn gave way to increasingly formal and political discourses, as evident in the latter part of *At the Pulpit*. Several finely polished sermons come from events such as BYU Women's Conference, CES firesides, regional and area conferences, and general conferences. These later discourses are more focused and much longer than earlier talks.

Another reason for the increased length and focus is the change in technology. The earliest talks in the book, by Lucy Mack Smith and Elizabeth Ann Whitney, come from their own reminiscences.<sup>38</sup> Secretaries took notes for Relief Society minute books, and the quality of the records was different for each individual secretary; often secretaries recorded word for word the messages of male visitors, such as bishops and other Church leaders, while simply summarizing women's words. It all depended on the secretary and the preservation of the minute book. As women began writing out their own talks, and with the advent of technology to record talks with more detail and precision, the average length of recorded discourses increased over time. The early talks were found in newspapers, manuscripts, or minute books, while many of the later talks came from published sources. Modern technology improved the expansion of women's discourse.

## Document Selection

*At the Pulpit* contains fifty-four women's discourses from 1831 to 2016. We wanted to show how LDS women have spoken publicly from the very beginning of the Church's organization by selecting a couple of talks from each decade, demonstrating the range of time in which women discoursed. As such, we expanded the definition of discourse to allow for the various types of public speaking during the early years of the Church. Women speaking and preaching in church at this time in American history was a contentious issue; many denominations at the time held that women should be "silent" in church.<sup>39</sup> Yet women did speak. The early nineteenth-century Second Great Awakening encouraged ideals of equality and democracy within religious organizations. Lucy Mack Smith, Elizabeth Ann Whitney, and Sarah Sturtevant Leavitt came from this generation, and the modes by which they spoke reflected contemporary religious expression, including evangelical revivalism and charismatic speaking in tongues. In Utah, all-female organizations such as the Female Institute of Health, Relief Society, retrenchment organizations, Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association (YLMIA), and Primary created locations where women held meetings with discussions and testimonies that were recorded in minute books. As these organizations centralized and began holding annual and biannual conferences with more institutionalized speaking, women delivered talks and sermons. Discourses included in *At the Pulpit* encompass many types of public utterance, including sermons, speeches, prayers, meeting discussions, songs, recipes, and stories.

Locating discourses delivered in such varied venues over 185 years required careful excavation, especially back into the nineteenth century. With over one thousand Relief Society hard-copy minute books, plus records on microfilm, held at the Church History Library, a team of volunteers, interns, and editors searched carefully to find potential discourses. We also worked through issues of the *Millennial Star*, *Woman's Exponent*, *Young Woman's Journal*, and *Relief Society Magazine*. In contrast, the volume of twentieth-century talks made the decision process difficult in an entirely different way. Searches through published reports of general conference and Relief Society conference, as well as the mass content found on the internet, required a very definite focus.

The overarching criterion for selection was to find engaging talks focusing on doctrinal themes. There are some talks that share distinctly historical experiences with solid gospel responses. Drusilla D. Hendricks shared the

difficult decision to allow her son to march with the Mormon Battalion at a time when she needed his help to cross the plains. She used personal experience to highlight the powerful doctrine of sacrifice.<sup>40</sup> We searched for talks that readers would immediately want to share because of the powerful doctrine in them. Elsie Talmage Brandley's 1934 talk, "The Religious Crisis of Today," is one of those; Brandley explored issues of spiritual doubt and questioning, many of which are debated today.<sup>41</sup>

### **Integration of Women's Voices in the Classroom**

*At the Pulpit* recovers lost voices of Latter-day Saint women, demonstrating their voice, visibility, and value. It is a book to be used—in scholarly research, in the classroom, in lessons, in personal study, and literally at the pulpit. The book may be a recovery of women's voices or a compensatory women's history, which is sorely needed, but it is evidence that women must be integrated into both Mormon history and Mormon doctrine. Historian Brekus suggested the difficulty not only of finding women's voices but of using them appropriately: "Integrating these women into history involves more than merely pasting them into previous grand narratives of political events. . . . We must learn to ask new questions and create new paradigms. . . . It requires us to rethink our assumptions about the effects of cultural, political, economic, and religious change."<sup>42</sup> Below are several suggestions for how to specifically use *At the Pulpit* in the classroom.

The easiest, most visible way to integrate women's voices in the classroom is to make the book visible and available to students. Add selections to your syllabus; encourage seminary students to use the talks for class devotionals. Most importantly, women's voices should be integrated rather than separated. While there may be some value in teaching Doctrine and Covenants 25 as a woman's section, or having a distinct lesson on women and the Relief Society, compartmentalization of women separates them from full participation and sends a signal to both female and male students about women's place in the Church. The content of lessons insinuates religious and cultural ideology, and the integration of women into the teachings of both doctrine and history can contribute to a powerful generation of Latter-day Saints—both men and women—who recognize the voice, visibility, and value of all people.

## Doctrine

*At the Pulpit* provides insightful doctrine that should be integrated into classes, lessons, and talks. Francine R. Bennion delivered a truly powerful discourse at the 1986 BYU Women's Conference: "A Latter-day Saint Theology of Suffering." This discourse is perhaps the most developed theological sermon in the collection, delving into scripture, personal experience, principle, and practice to grapple with universal questions of suffering through an LDS lens. While at times abstract, and certainly the longest in the book, this talk provides true inspiration, pushing the reader to think more deeply about theodicy.<sup>43</sup> Ardeth G. Kapp taught the difference between doctrine and tradition "in coming to know our Savior and the saving principles through the gospel of Jesus Christ," and Linda K. Burton spoke to the Utah South Area Conference in 2015 about the doctrine of the Sabbath.<sup>44</sup>

Several talks teach specific doctrine and could be inserted in a variety of ways to bolster doctrinal topics taught by men in the scriptures or by general priesthood leaders. On the subject of prayer, Ellenor G. Jones taught that it "is the key that will unlock the statehouse of knowledge." Using scripture, she testified that "through prayer, our faith is strengthened and our powers of comprehension are quickened, and we receive power to discern good from evil." Jones demonstrated that "prayer overcomes darkness and disappointment."<sup>45</sup> In 1901, Ann M. Cannon presented a short but powerful testimony of prayer: "I know that prayer can lift the greatest burdens and rest the weary. Nothing else can give such perfect relief. Even the falling of a tear is a prayer."<sup>46</sup> Virginia H. Pearce also addressed prayer in her 2011 BYU Women's Conference talk. Using scripture and some very real stories from family and friends, she exhorted the audience to utilize prayer as "a long and personal conversation" by which we can join our own wills with "the will of the Father [and] become one and the same."<sup>47</sup> These women's talks complement talks by men.

Some of the most powerful discourses describe the process of seeking and receiving personal revelation, particularly with individual conversion. Returned missionary Rachel H. Leatham spoke in an overflow general conference session in 1908 about the importance of gaining her own testimony rather than relying on her parents' beliefs and teachings. "We are the future responsible people of Zion."<sup>48</sup> Annie D. Noble, president of the Ogden Fifth Ward YLMIA, spoke at the MIA annual conference in 1916, sharing how she came to know that "Joseph Smith was a true prophet of the Lord" as she



walked one evening to an LDS cottage meeting in Nottingham, England.<sup>49</sup> Irina Kratzer, a Russian physician, told about using the Book of Mormon and Church magazines to brush up her English skills. Drawn to the idea that God and Jesus Christ did in fact exist, despite Communist teachings, the seeds of Kratzer's conversion were planted.<sup>50</sup> These are universal issues that many people—youth and adults—face today. These women's experiences qualify the individual conversion process as viable and valuable, while providing insight into a general pattern of conversion.

Another valuable doctrinal topic is that of personal purpose and life mission. The concept of individual worth and value is sprinkled through nearly every talk. Elicia Grist said, "We each have a mission to perform, if we were only to consider what responsibility there is devolving upon us in every act we perform."<sup>51</sup> Additionally, a few women spoke specifically to this topic. In 1879, Mary Ann Freeze taught the Salt Lake City Eleventh Ward MIA, "My young brothers and sisters, we were all sent here on the earth for a purpose, and we all have a mission to perform. It is the duty of each of us to understand that mission."<sup>52</sup> Sheri Dew charged women at the 2001 BYU Women's Conference to recognize their "noble and great" identities. Using scripture and prophetic teaching about both men and women being foreordained to certain assignments, she encouraged her audience, "As we come to understand the same thing, we will feel a greater sense of mission and more confidence living as a woman of God in a world that doesn't necessarily celebrate women of God."<sup>53</sup>

One value of integrating women's voices and experiences with specific doctrinal topics is that women can often illustrate an application of principles taught by priesthood leaders, adding their own understandings and additional insight as they "liken all scriptures unto [themselves]."<sup>54</sup> Drusilla Hendricks is a perfect example of how one can exercise his or her testimony and understanding of the gospel in a difficult situation. She knew the principle of Abrahamic sacrifice; she also understood the principle of revelation while she desperately prayed for an immediate answer.<sup>55</sup> In 1996, Chieko N. Okazaki spoke in general conference about unity amid diversity, testifying of how she learned to build on a firm foundation despite racial discrimination.<sup>56</sup> The application of gospel principles in and of itself is valuable, teaching students how to make their own application through the examples of these women. These women's words indicate how people apply scriptures and doctrine and use theology through practical, personal experience.

## History

*At the Pulpit* can and should be used in the teaching of Church history, especially in the Foundations of the Restoration course taught at CES schools and Church institutes. Women participated in nearly every event of the Restoration, and including their voices provides a second witness along with an additional perspective. Lucy Mack Smith, Elicia Grist, and Annie Noble described the spirit of various waves of gathering the house of Israel through missionary work.<sup>57</sup> For historical information on women and spiritual gifts in the early days of the Church, refer to Elizabeth Ann Whitney or the 19 April 1842 Nauvoo Relief Society minutes.<sup>58</sup> Mary Isabella Horne spoke to the Salt Lake City Seventeenth Ward in 1868, recalling her experience with crickets and seagulls.<sup>59</sup> Emma Goddard applied the universal gospel principle of neighborly love during World War I at an MIA conference in 1918.<sup>60</sup> Another teaching option is this: when covering a specific prophet, include women from that time period. As Young Women General President in 1981, Elaine A. Cannon began her address by giving credit to “President Kimball and the Brethren.”<sup>61</sup>

In conclusion, *At the Pulpit* empowers both women and men to understand authority and the charge to expound truth and exhort the Church. In 1869, Eliza R. Snow taught the Salt Lake City Seventeenth Ward Relief Society, “We have been instructed that each one of us in our organizations is endowed with the germs of every faculty requisite to constitute a god or goddess.”<sup>62</sup> In the April 2014 general conference, Elder Dallin H. Oaks clearly taught that women participate in the Church with authority based on their callings from priesthood leaders.<sup>63</sup> This authority becomes very clear in women’s words in *At the Pulpit*, and they are words for both men and women. In a 1993 CES fireside, Elaine Jack spoke of this spiritual authority for young adults: “To ‘choose life’ is only possible when we understand that we have the power to do it.” She encouraged the audience to “get a life” and “to build on the good bedrock of your own experiences and testimony.”<sup>64</sup> Jack achieved the same charge given to Emma Smith, to expound the Church and exhort the truth. President Russell M. Nelson echoed this charge in 2015, 185 years after Emma first received it: “My dear sisters, whatever your calling, whatever your circumstances, we need your impressions, your insights, and your inspiration. We need you to speak up and speak out.”<sup>65</sup> All voices are needed. **RE**

## Appendix: Selected Sources of Documentary Editions of Women's Voices (in Chronological Order of Publication)

*Woman's Exponent* (1872–1914). Founded, written, published, and distributed by women. Published initially bimonthly and later monthly under the editorship of Lula Green Richards, followed by Emmeline B. Wells. Available online at lib.byu.edu.

*Women of Mormondom* (1877). Edward Tullidge. Tullidge collected autobiographical writings of Mormon women, filling in gaps when the women he wrote about had already passed away. He inserted women's experiences and their own words into a larger celebratory book, inserting his own hagiographic explanations. Out of print, but available online at archive.org.

*Representative Women of Deseret* (1884). Augusta Joyce Crocheron. Crocheron gathered biographies and autobiographies of twenty leading Mormon women, some accounts written in the women's own words, some published in the *Woman's Exponent*, and others written by friends. Out of print, but available online at archive.org.

*Women's Voices: An Untold History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900* (1982). Kenneth W. Godfrey, Audrey M. Godfrey, and Jill Mulvay Derr. Selections of women's words arranged chronologically. Out of print.

*In Their Own Words: Women and the Story of Nauvoo* (1994). Carol Cornwall Madsen. Madsen organized women's experiences by genre, including diaries, letters, and reminiscences, and provides an in-depth examination of women in Nauvoo.

Life Writings of Frontier Women series (1998–2012). Each volume contains personal writings, biographical material, and scholarly annotations of individual women, including Mabel Finlayson Allred, Patience Loader Archer, Effie Marquess Carmack, Caroline Barnes Crosby, Margaret E. P. Gordon, Mary Lois Walker Morris, Louisa Barnes Pratt, Mary Haskin Parker Richards, Patty Sessions, Eliza R. Snow, Fanny Stenhouse, Helen Mar Whitney, and Helen and Avery Woodruff.

*"Give It All Up and Follow Your Lord": Mormon Female Religiosity, 1831–1843* (2008). Janiece Johnson. Johnson records nineteen letters of early LDS women, culled from archival repositories all over the United States. Correspondence reveals women's spiritual knowledge—bearing witness of the restored gospel—and their sacrifice.

*Women of Faith in the Latter Days* (2011–present). Edited by Richard E. Turley Jr. and Brittany A. Chapman [Nash]. Proposed 7 volumes; 3 completed.

This series aims to enhance awareness of women through inspirational vignettes, most of them containing their personal writings. Each volume contains approximately fifty chapters with a brief biography and personal writings. The volumes are written by a variety of authors.

*The First Fifty Years of Relief Society: Key Documents in Latter-day Saint Women's History* (2016). Edited by Jill Mulvay Derr, Carol Cornwall Madsen, Kate Holbrook, and Matthew J. Grow. This collection of original documents begins with the 1830 revelation given to Emma Smith and includes the complete and unabridged minutes of the Nauvoo Relief Society. The majority of the book builds on the foundation of the women's organization and includes minutes, speeches, correspondence, and newspaper articles by both men and women. Available online at <https://www.churchhistorianspress.org>.

*The Witness of Women: Firsthand Experiences and Testimonies from the Restoration* (2016). Edited by Janiece Johnson and Jennifer Reeder. This book presents short first-person experiences of women connected to the Restoration, organized by topic, and includes brief biographical information of each woman.

*At the Pulpit: 185 Years of Discourses by Latter-day Saint Women* (2017). Edited by Jennifer Reeder and Kate Holbrook. This collection of women's talks covers 1831 through 2016, with a few speeches from each decade. Speeches are given by a wide variety of women, using a wide variety of sources and arranged chronologically. Available online at <https://www.churchhistorianspress.org>.

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## Notes

1. Emma Smith was baptized on 28 June 1830 by Oliver Cowdery in Colesville, New York. Joseph Smith, *History, 1838–1856*, vol. A-1, 30, 43, Church History Library (CHL).

2. Revelation, July 1830 (Doctrine and Covenants 25). Joseph Smith officially organized the Church of Christ on 6 April 1830. Emma Smith was baptized a few months later at the end of June in Colesville, New York. Neighborhood chaos disrupted the services, and Joseph spent several days in custody and court. Upon their return to their home in Harmony, Pennsylvania, Joseph penned these instructions to Emma. See Jill Mulvay Derr, Carol Cornwall Madsen, Kate Holbrook, and Matthew J. Grow, eds., *The First Fifty Years of Relief Society: Key Documents in Latter-day Saint Women's History* (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2016), 17–21; and Matthew J. Grow, "Thou Art an Elect Lady: D&C 24, 25, 26, 27," *Revelations in Context*, 9 January 2013, [history.lds.org/article/doctrine-and-covenants-emma-smith?lang=eng](http://history.lds.org/article/doctrine-and-covenants-emma-smith?lang=eng).

3. *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, ed. Noah Webster (New York: S. Converse, 1828).

4. See Revelation, July 1830; Doctrine and Covenants 25.
5. Sarah S. Leavitt, autobiography (1875), 10, 15. Juanita Leone Leavitt Pulsipher Brooks Papers, 1928–1981, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City; see also Sarah Sturtevant Leavitt, “History of Sarah Studevant Leavitt,” ed. Juanita Leavitt Pulsipher [Brooks] (typescript, 1919), 8, 12, CHL; Jeremiah 20:9; and 1 Corinthians 14:15. See Janiece Johnson and Jennifer Reeder, *The Witness of Women: Firsthand Experiences and Testimonies from the Restoration* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2016), 76–77.
6. Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, 4 August 1842, 77, CHL; see Derr et al., *First Fifty Years*, 91.
7. In the first meeting of the organization, Joseph Smith read aloud the 1830 revelation directed to Emma Smith explaining that “she was ordained at the time the revelation was given to expound the scriptures to all; and to teach the female part of [the] community.” He further stated that “not she alone, but others, may attain to the same blessings.” Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, 17 March 1842, 8, in Derr et al., *First Fifty Years*, 32.
8. Emma Smith worked as a scribe while Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon. She helped prepare early missionaries for their service, and she gathered with women in New York to pray on behalf of the Prophet. Mark L. Staker, “‘A Comfort unto My Servant, Joseph’: Emma Hale Smith (1804–1879),” in *Women of Faith in the Latter Days*, ed. Richard E. Turley and Brittany A. Chapman [Nash], vol. 1, 1775–1820 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2011), 353–56. See John S. Reed, “Some of the Remarks of John S. Reed, Esq., as Delivered before the State Convention,” *Times and Seasons* 5, no. 11 (1 June 1844): 551.
9. See Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, CHL. For a selection of Emma Smith’s teachings in the Nauvoo Relief Society, see Jennifer Reeder and Kate Holbrook, eds., *At the Pulpit: 185 Years of Discourses by Latter-day Saint Women* (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2017), 11–14.
10. Eliza R. Snow, “Sketch of My Life,” 13 April 1883, in Derr et al., *First Fifty Years*, 268; emphasis in the original.
11. For information on the Retrenchment Association, see Carol Cornwall Madsen, “Retrenchment Association,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism: The History, Scripture, Doctrine, and Procedure of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 3:1223–25.
12. [Emmeline B. Wells], “A Representative Woman,” *Woman’s Exponent* 11, no. 8 (15 September 1882): 59.
13. Lehi Ward, Utah Stake, Relief Society Minutes and Records, vol. 1, 1868–1879, 27 October 1869, 30, CHL; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 48; Zina D. H. Young, discourse, 6 April 1889, in “First General Conference of the Relief Society,” *Woman’s Exponent* 17, no. 22 (15 April 1889): 173; Derr et al., *First Fifty Years*, 569.
14. Emily S. Richards, in “General Conference Relief Society,” *Woman’s Exponent* 30, no. 7 (December 1901): 54; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, xxii–xxiii.
15. Catherine A. Brekus, *Strangers and Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America, 1740–1845* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 3–8, 10.
16. Brittany Chapman [Nash] (presentation, Mormon Women’s History Symposium, Utah Valley University, 2014).
17. Emmeline B. Wells, “The Jubilee Celebration,” *Woman’s Exponent* 20, no. 17 (15 March 1892): 132.



18. Edward W. Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (New York: Tullidge and Crandall, 1877); Augusta Joyce Crocheron, *Representative Women of Deseret, a Book of Biographical Sketches to Accompany the Picture Bearing the Same Title* (Salt Lake City: J. C. Graham, 1884).
19. R. Scott Lloyd, "New Book Highlights 185 Years of Women's Discourses in the Church," *Church News*, 1 March 2017.
20. Neyman goes on to enumerate about charity, "Remembering always that we are human and must therefore err." Beaver First Ward Relief Society, Beaver Stake, Relief Society Minutes, vol. 1, 1868–1878, 4 November 1869, 25–26, CHL.
21. Beaver First Ward Relief Society Minutes, 4 November 1869; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 49–50.
22. Leone O. Jacobs, "Prepare Thy Heart," in Relief Society Annual Conference Proceedings, 1945–1975, 29 September 1949, CHL.
23. Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 145–48.
24. E. G. Jones, "The Power of Prayer," *Improvement Star* 1, no. 4, manuscript newspaper, Eleventh Ward YLMIA, reprinted in *Woman's Exponent* 10, no. 17 (1 February 1882): 134–35; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 75–77.
25. Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 75–77.
26. Lalene H. Hart, "Sensing Responsibility of Office," in "Officers' Meeting," *Relief Society Magazine* 20, no. 5 (May 1933): 271–72; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 131–33.
27. Elicia Grist, "Address to the Sisters of the Church," *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* 23, no. 18 (4 May 1861): 277–78; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 33–36.
28. Mary Ferguson, "Essay on Faith: Read at a Meeting of the Y.L.A.," *Woman's Exponent* 8, no. 9 (1 October 1879): 70–71; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 65–68.
29. Annie D. Noble, in "Fast Meeting," *Young Woman's Journal* 27, no. 10 (October 1916): 626–27; Emma Goddard, "Thou Shalt Love Thy Neighbor," 9 June 1918, in "Addresses at the June Conference: 'We Stand for Service to God and Country,'" *Young Woman's Journal* 29, no. 8 (August 1918): 434–37; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 111–20.
30. Lucrecia Suárez de Juárez, in "Sister Lucrecia Suarez de Juarez," in *Official Report of the First Mexico and Central American Area General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Press, 1973), 82–84; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 176–81.
31. Jutta Baum Busche, "The Unknown Treasure," in *Women and the Power Within: To See Life Steadily and See It Whole*, ed. Dawn Hall Anderson and Marie Cornwall (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1991), 21–28; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 233–39.
32. Irina Kratzer, "Decisions and Miracles: And Now I See," in *Arise and Shine Forth: Talks from the 2000 Women's Conference* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 2001), 102–7; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 259–64.
33. Judy Brummer, "Our Father in Heaven Has a Mission for Us" (fireside address, 28 April 2012, Salt Lake City, edited transcript of audio recording, CHL); Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 309–22.
34. Gladys N. Sitati, "Resolving Conflicts Using Gospel Principles" (BYU Women's Conference address, 27 April 2016, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, typescript, CHL); Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 331–42.

35. Elizabeth Ann Whitney, "Adam-on-di-Ahman," in "A Leaf from an Autobiography," *Woman's Exponent* 7, no. 11 (1 November 1878): 83; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 7-9.
36. Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, 17 March 1842-16 March 1844, 8-[126], in Derr et al., *First Fifty Years*, 32-130; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 11-14.
37. Senior and Junior Cooperative Retrenchment Association Minutes, Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, loose-leaf, 1871-1874, 11 October 1872, Forty-Second Meeting, [2-3], CHL; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 55-59.
38. Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1844-1845, book 11, p. [12]-book 12, p. [2], CHL; Whitney, "Adam-on-di-Ahman"; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 3-9.
39. See 1 Timothy 2:11-12; and Ann Braude, "Women's History Is American History," in *Retelling U.S. Religious History*, ed. Thomas A. Tweed (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 87-107.
40. Smithfield Branch, Cache Stake, Relief Society Minutes, vol. 1, 1868-1878, 7 August 1871, 98-99, CHL; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 51-54.
41. Elsie Talmage Brandley, "The Religious Crisis of Today," *Improvement Era* 37, no. 8 (August 1934): 467-68; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 134-43.
42. Brekus, *Strangers and Pilgrims*, 3-8, 10.
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46. Ann M. Cannon, "Prayer," in "General M.I.A. Conference," *Young Woman's Journal* 12, no. 8 (August 1901): 366; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 93-95.
47. Virginia H. Pearce, "Prayer: A Small and Simple Thing" (BYU Women's Conference address, 28 April 2011, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT), [womensconference.byu.edu/sites/womensconference.ce.byu.edu/files/virginia\\_pearce.pdf](http://womensconference.byu.edu/sites/womensconference.ce.byu.edu/files/virginia_pearce.pdf); Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 283-94.
48. Rachel H. Leatham, in "Outdoor Meeting," in *Seventy-Eighth Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1908), 81-82; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 102-5.
49. Annie D. Noble, in "Fast Meeting," *Young Woman's Journal* 27, no. 10 (October 1916): 626-27; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 111-13.
50. Kratzer, "Decisions and Miracles"; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 259-64.
51. Grist, "Address to the Sisters of the Church"; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 33-36.
52. Mary A. Freeze, "Our Mission: Read before the Conjoint Meeting of the M. I. Associations of the 11th Ward, S.L. City, Jan. 1879," *Woman's Exponent* 7, no. 20 (15 March 1879): 209; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 61-63.

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54. 1 Nephi 19:23.
55. Smithfield Branch, Relief Society Minutes, 7 August 1871, 98–99; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 51–54.
56. Chieko N. Okazaki, "Baskets and Bottles," *Ensign*, May 1996, 12–13; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 253–58.
57. Lucy Mack Smith, History; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 3–5; Grist, "Address to the Sisters of the Church"; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 33–36; Noble, "Fast Meeting"; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 111–13.
58. Whitney, "Adam-ondi-Ahman"; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 3–9; Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, 19 April 1842, [30–33]; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 15–19.
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60. Emma Goddard, "Thou Shalt Love Thy Neighbor," in "Addresses at the June Conference: 'We Stand for Service to God and Country,'" *Young Woman's Journal* 29, no. 8 (August 1918): 434–37; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 115–20.
61. Elaine A. Cannon, "Season of Awakening," *New Era*, July 1981, 9–12; Reeder and Holbrook, *At the Pulpit*, 204–11.
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65. Russell M. Nelson, "A Plea to My Sisters," *Ensign*, November 2015, 97.