BROTHER BELL'S AUDIENCE TYPES:
FORMS OF ADDRESS AMONG LATTER-DAY SAINT YOUNG ADULTS

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In communities where potentially every member has a title (doctors, teachers, or other workplaces), it has been shown that title + last name (TLN) is typically used for older or unfamiliar addressees while first name (FN) is directed towards those who are younger or familiar (Brown & Gilman 1960). While many studies have analyzed address forms between individuals with varying status or age differences (Brown & Ford 1961; Ervin-Tripp 1971; Wood & Ryan 1991; Dickey 1997), interactions between equals remain relatively unstudied. Latter-day Saints (Mormons) are of particular interest since they commonly use address forms for other members and call each other *Brother* or *Sister* followed by a surname (Fogg 1990). This study therefore analyzes factors that determine address forms between equals in a Latter-day Saint congregation in Athens, Georgia.

Data was collected by a survey administered to Latter-day Saints, ages 20–36, who all attend the same congregation. Participants were asked to indicate what name they would use for each of 41 other members of their congregation, given four situations based off of Bell's (1984) Audience Design. Participants then indicated how well they know the person on a scale of 1 to 5. In total, 5146 forms of address and 1270 relationship data points were collected from 32 individuals.

Not surprisingly, familiarity is the strongest factor in predicting whether TLN or FN is used. However, this data suggests that the form of address used between equals is determined by a number of other variables as well. For example, when the person is present but not specifically addressed (such as in a small committee meeting), men use TLN much more than women, even if they know the other person well. Conversely, independently of how well they know each other, women use more FN with other women than men did with men, particularly in direct address. One unexpected finding was that age difference was *not* a strong predictor of what form was used: older participants referred to unfamiliar younger people by TLN instead of FN.

The findings of this study suggest that religious traditions influence linguistic choices among those with a shared belief. Additionally, though Murray (2002) reports that TLN has been slowly declining for the past century or so, communities can diverge from the general American trend by continuing a productive system of address forms.

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