

### 1: Richard Davis: Being LDS does not limit one's political persuasions | Deseret News

*Latter-Day Political Views is a formal study of the effect of religion and culture on the political worldviews of practicing Mormons from different races and nationalities.*

What set the young journalist apart was his faith. Since then, the year-old has become a political journalist for The Atlantic. He has published a book, "The Wilderness," and regularly offers political opinions and analysis on various television news programs. Given his unique perspective in the national media and activity as a young Latter-day Saint husband and father, the Deseret News recently asked Coppins to share some his views and observations as a millennial member. This interview has been edited for length and clarity. In your writing and media work, how do you maintain balance with a young family, your Latter-day Saint faith and your career? But to the extent that I can, I try to set aside certain days and certain times where I tune out politics, work, Slack, email, Twitter and all of that. On Saturdays, for example, I really try to make that family time. My kids have gotten used to scolding me when I take my phone out on Saturday. Whenever they call me on it, I immediately say, "OK, fine," and I try to make that family time. Obviously, I try to batch as much of my calling and church life into Sunday. How many kids do you have? Three kids — a 5-year-old, a 3-year-old and now a 5-month-old. How has being a father changed your approach to life? After our most recent child was born, I took several weeks off for paternity leave. Our company offers a really generous amount of time off for parents. I found that backing away from work, from the news cycle, did give me a certain perspective. I remember once watching the news. I had some kind of political news on and my oldest daughter Ellie is watching. My work as a political journalist is inherently adversarial. I write these long profiles of political leaders. But I think being a father has made me a little softer, at least in terms of trying to approach even that with a certain amount of generosity and kindness. One of the things in writing and researching the church and talking to people is you realize how much diversity there is within the church. There are core principles, obviously, that are embedded in this faith and in this church, but I find you can apply those principles to any number of political ideologies, any number of interests and hobbies and belief systems. I think there are a lot of areas of common ground and a lot of things that both groups and communities can learn from each other. What do millennials view as the strength of the church? These are people who are going to a church every Sunday and holding lay minister callings. More and more in our society, those networks are falling apart. What does the average church member need to know or understand about millennials? Look at these new trends and attitudes. You hear that a lot. You can find this worry and anxiety in every generation. Now apply it to the church. The people around my age or a little younger are serious about their faith, their principles and ideals. What are misconceptions because of "wrong branding" of millennials? When I worked at BuzzFeed, we were very much seen for a while as the news outlet website that embodied the millennial culture. I caught all kinds of flack all the time for being part of the corruption of a generation or whatever. I always thought that was silly. They are especially open-minded, tolerant and really value things like inclusion. So I think that some of the hand-wringing is a bit much. What have you observed generally about millennials and their political views? I think younger Latter-day Saints are increasingly disillusioned with partisan politics. I think that they are very motivated by causes that they believe in, by certain issues. But both political parties in this most recent presidential election for example, nominated two of the most unpopular presidential nominees in history. The campaign was one of the most brutal and ugly in history. I think what you see is a lot of young Latter-day Saints who grew up conservative and probably for the most part have center-right political leanings. Again, this is generalistic. There is an argument for that, but I understand. How has that interaction impacted your career and life?

## 2: Political Neutrality

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The practice started with Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, secretly taking on additional wives and was practiced publicly after his death. The Book of Mormon published contains a passage that favorably describes the American Revolution. The Governor of Missouri, Lilburn Boggs, in attempt to resolve the Mormon War, had issued an executive order on October 27, 1838, known as the "Extermination Order". It authorized troops to use force against Mormons to "exterminate or drive [them] from the state". The Judiciary Committee did nothing to help the Mormons, lacking the political willpower to launch an investigation into the Mormon War. After his experience with Van Buren and finding no support from any of the other presidential candidates, Smith decided to run as an independent in the election for President of the United States. Young petitioned President Polk for federal assistance for their westward migration. Army during the war with Mexico. The Mormons hoped for statehood so that they would have the ability to elect their own leaders, and hopefully avoid the persecution which they had so recently escaped. Because of their previous experiences, the Latter-day Saints were convinced that self-governance was the only safeguard to their religious freedom, and they worried about the possible introduction of "unsympathetic carpetbag appointees" if Deseret were relegated to territorial status. However, Congress instead incorporated "Deseret" into the greatly reduced but still enormous Utah Territory as part of the Compromise of 1850. The compromise struck a delicate balance on the issue of slavery. The Mormons had introduced slavery to the area upon their arrival. Bernhisel, a Mormon representative in Washington, D. He urged the president that "the people of Utah cannot but consider it their right, as American citizens to be governed by men of their own choice, entitled to their confidence, and united with them in opinion and feeling. But, Fillmore also gave a number of territorial appointments to non-Mormons. The relationship between the non-Mormon federal officials and the Mormons was frequently contentious. Not long after their appointment, the federal officials, fearing for their safety, abandoned their positions, which were left unfilled for several years. President James Buchanan sent U. These events were known as the Utah War. The tragic Mountain Meadows Massacre occurred in the context of these events. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln was relieved to receive a telegraphed reassurance from Brigham Young that the Utah territory had no intent to secede from the United States. He told a Mormon messenger, "You go back and tell Brigham Young that if he will let me alone I will let him alone. However, as part of his decision to leave the Mormons alone, Lincoln choose not to enforce the law. The passage of the Poland Act in paved the way for the first prosecutions under the Morrill act from 12 years earlier. George Reynolds was selected as a defendant for a test case before the Supreme Court. The unanimous decision from the court was to uphold the anti-polygamy laws and Reynolds sentence of two years in prison. In 1862, Congress passed the Edmunds Act, which made polygamy a felony. A key aspect of the Edmunds Act was that it was no longer necessary to prove a bigamous marriage took place to get a conviction, cohabitation was enough. More than 1, Mormon men were imprisoned under the terms of the act. In 1862, Congress enacted the Edmunds-Tucker Act. The act disincorporated the church and seized its assets. The anti-polygamy laws were challenged in court but two Supreme Court rulings Davis v. United States upheld the right of the government to prohibit polygamous marriages and to seize the property of the LDS Church. A few months after losing its case before the Supreme Court, church president Wilford Woodruff stated that the church had ended the contracting of new polygamous marriages, reversing the long-standing practice of evading or ignoring anti-polygamy laws. Woodruff said that this announcement was the result of a revelation from Jesus Christ. The text of the revelation is known as the Manifesto. Campaigning against polygamy had been a focus of the Liberal Party. With that issue resolved and with the entrance of the major national parties into the state, the Liberal Party disbanded in 1860. Another effect of the Manifesto was to weaken any enthusiasm in congress for the passage of more anti-polygamy legislation. This opened up the door for the Utah Territory to be recognized as a state. The anti-Mormon Liberal Party existed at the same time but won few elections. Church

leaders realized that one obstacle to achieving statehood was that its population did not participate in either of the two major national political parties. The Republican Party had opposed statehood for Utah. Because of this, the majority of Mormons in Utah leaned Democrat. However, church leaders did not want to see the entire body of the church turn Democrat leading to a continuation of the status-quo where there was one political party supported by the church and another party opposed to it. Cannon was sent by the First Presidency of the Church to instruct party leaders to make sure that Church members were split between the Republicans and Democrats. In some instances, local bishops stood in front of their congregations and instructed everyone seated on one side of the building to join one party and those families on the other side should join the other party. Roberts became the first church member to be elected to Congress. Due to Roberts being a polygamist, he was refused a seat in the Congress. Smoot was an apostle in the LDS Church. His election was controversial due to fears over his allegiance to the church. A hearing was held to determine if Smoot should be allowed a seat in the Senate; the hearing lasted four years, called witnesses and generated 3, pages of testimony. Church president Joseph F. Smith was one of the people subpoenaed to testify in the Smoot hearings. During the administration of Heber J. Grant , an effort was made to remove from church literature, sermons, and ceremonies any suggestion that Latter-day Saints should seek vengeance on the citizens or government of the United States for past persecutions of the church and its members, and in particular for the assassinations of church founder Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum. This policy became known as the Good Neighbor policy. Grant, a Democrat, was opposed to the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt FDR and caused a front-page editorial to be written to that effect in the church-owned Deseret News. Grant shared the view of J. Reuben Clark and David O. McKay that the New Deal was socialism, something they all despised. Grant, seeing the majority of the church members supporting FDR, regarded this as "one of the most serious conditions that has confronted me since I became President of the Church. McKay , a Republican who became president of the church in , was able to establish friendly relationships with President Dwight D. Johnson invited McKay to visit him in the White House. McKay rarely used his position in the church to speak out on political issues. One instance in which he did was to instruct Mormon congressmen that they should support the right-to-work legislation that was before congress at the time. During the election , George W. Romney was also the first Mormon to stage a credible run for the presidency. During the administration of Spencer W. Kimball , the church spoke out in opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment. In , church president Gordon B. In , the church was involved in promoting California Proposition 8 , which amended the California constitution to prohibit same-sex marriages. When Mitt Romney , son of former presidential candidate George Romney, ran for President of the United States in , it was the first year that a member of the LDS Church received the nomination from one of the two major American parties. Latter-day Saints church members lean towards the Republican Party. As a result, Utah , a state with a majority LDS population, is also one of the most heavily Republican states in the country.

### 3: Latter Day Saint political history - Wikipedia

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Given Romney has served as a clergyman, still holding the office of High Priest in the LDS church to date, he just may find that he answers to a higher power. One can turn to history of political action taken by the LDS church to perhaps predict what may happen. The leaders once routinely used churches and missionaries to carry out political agendas. Church leader approval required for holding political office. At the April General Conference of the church, LDS apostle Moses Thatcher was dropped from the Quorum of the Twelve in consequence of his not being "in harmony" with the other leaders of the church in regards to a proposed policy called "The Political Rule of the Church" and commonly referred to as "the political Manifesto. However, once Utah entered the union, they had to establish wings of the prevailing parties—the Democrats and Republicans. Some of the era have said that it was more by assignment than by encouragement. Grant visited Germany and urged the members to remain in country, get along, and not cause trouble. Grant had also evacuated all non-German Mormon missionaries within a year. Local LDS branch president Arthur Zander was a fervent member of the Nazi Party, even to the extent of affixing notices to the church door stating "Jews not welcome" beginning in . He was also posthumously ordained an elder, was rebaptized on 7 January, and endowed on 8 June with information on temple sheets stating "All the temple work was done for him. LDS on civil rights and race issues From its founding in to , a decade after the civil rights movement and assassination of Martin Luther King, the LDS church refused to allow male members of African descent to hold priesthood authority. Even more, the LDS church refused to marry a couple if either or both the man and woman were black. In the 19th century and first half of the 20th century leaders routinely spoke out against interracial marriages, even declaring: This will always be so" Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses In NAACP leadership tried to arrange meetings with church leadership, but the church refused to meet with them. Eldon Tanner explained, "We have decided to remain silent" Glen W. Why it took so long for the change is unclear. But somehow that had a ripple effect within Mormondom that sent a shockwave of fear to the highest level, that if this were to pass—it threatened, or was perceived to threaten, the very core of the way Mormonism is structured as a patriarchal society One wonders how Ann Romney would interpret these commands and attributions. Hesitant members were simply and subtly reminded of their "temple covenants" which they understood as reference to the Law of Consecration, to obey, to sacrifice, and to consecrate whatever the church demanded of them. In , the California Fair Political Practices Commission fined the LDS church for failing to follow campaign disclosure policies during the last two weeks leading up to the election. Some of the more noted or recent include: Sonia Johnson, advocate of ERA was excommunicated in Michael Quinn, former BYU historian who wrote several controversial tomes on Mormon authority, was excommunicated in Paul Toscano, attorney and author writing about hierarchical authoritarianism of the corporate LDS Church was excommunicated in Margaret Toscano, a classics professor at the University of Utah writing about the role of women in Mormonism was excommunicated in Andrew Callahan, advocate of gay rights and opposition to Proposition 8 was hauled into LDS procedure for excommunication in Needless to say, Congress ignored his petition and the government went on. Purportedly, Smith also made a prediction about the government further in the future, as told by later prophet and family descendent Joseph F. The one that would save the nation has been dubbed as the White Horse. As much as many Mormons may want Romney to be the White Horse, there is a missing nail in his shoe that could throw the whole race. Mitt Romney refuses to disclose financial information buried in his tax returns because, according to Ann Romney: Not only does it keep the wording, mimed actions and penalties for revealing its temple ceremonies secret, it has also refused to disclose its financial information—charitable and corporate—since before the s. Why would exalted prophets refuse to disclose business profits? Hiding financials is a lesson Mitt may have learned early in life as a young Mormon. The church does not participate in politics unless there is a moral question at issue, in which case the church will often speak out. It has censored and held court for members with outspoken political

ideology not aligned to its agenda. It has even, further in its past, curtailed the political careers of those that dare run without its approval. One never knows what may occur when the White House is filled by a White Horse contender. In the second half of the 20th century, increasing numbers of LDS members have emerged as political, financial, and cultural leaders. Prophet Ezra Taft Benson was previously secretary of agriculture in the Eisenhower administration. The Marriott family became prominent in the hotel arena.

### 4: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and politics in the United States - Wikipedia

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I think most would probably answer the title applies to someone who is a baptized member and adheres to the doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. However, some add more "agreement with political conservatism. How can someone be an active member of the church and be a Democrat? Where did this kind of thinking come from? One source, I believe, is a misunderstanding on the part of a few members about who does and does not express church doctrine. Some individuals have presumed to articulate church doctrine when they really are expressing their own political views. They have stated, or implied, that liberals or Democrats cannot be good members of the church and that acceptance of certain political views such as highly limited government, the absence of government social services, and minimal taxes, are also characteristic of a faithful Latter-day Saint. Sometimes they have used the pulpit or church classes to announce, and therefore, legitimate, such views. Besides, at BYU, there exists a wide array of views. No individual faculty member could possibly represent that spectrum of views. Latter-day Saints today generally are astute enough to recognize that and respect the fact that university faculty are individuals with disparate views, even if they work at BYU. The pages of this newspaper have included opposing opinions by both more liberal and more conservative BYU professors. Indeed, it is clear that neither does. The second, and related, explanation is the assumption on the part of some members that there is not political diversity in the church. Yet, a recent Pew Research Center survey found that 30 percent of Mormons in the United States considered themselves moderate or liberal. That may mean, for example, that nearly 1 of 3 church members in sacrament meeting, high priests group meeting, or Sunday School class is not a political conservative. According to the survey, 25 percent of Mormons hold a favorable view of President Obama. Again, that may mean that 1-in-4 people may be offended by that off-hand critical remark of the president that is sometimes expressed in meetings and classes by members who assume everyone agrees with their views. Of course, if the survey was expanded to Mormons outside the United States, the numbers would likely be radically different. Many church members in Europe or Latin America are strong supporters of socialist parties and candidates. But that is the point: Nor should we assume Latter-day Saints think alike. What does it mean to be a Latter-day Saint? I believe it means being a baptized member of the church and believing church doctrine. It does not mean having to follow the personal political opinions of any church leader or thinking about politics the same way as anyone else in the church. Richard Davis is a professor of political science at Brigham Young University.

### 5: Mormons' Political Views Vary

*Political Neutrality. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is neutral when it comes to party politics. Members are encouraged to participate in the election process, back the candidates of their choice, and vote according to their conscience.*

In order that there may be no misunderstanding by bishops, stake presidents, and others regarding members of the Church participating in nonchurch meetings to study and become informed on the Constitution of the United States, Communism, etc. Church members are at perfect liberty to act according to their own consciences in the matter of safeguarding our way of life. They are, of course, encouraged to honor the highest standards of the gospel and to work to preserve their own freedoms. They are free to participate in nonchurch meetings that are held to warn people of the threat of Communism or any other theory or principle that will deprive us of our free agency or individual liberties vouchsafed by the Constitution of the United States. The Church, out of respect for the rights of all its members to have their political views and loyalties, must maintain the strictest possible neutrality. The Church does not yield any of its devotion to or convictions about safeguarding the American principles and the establishments of government under federal and state constitutions and the civil rights of men safeguarded by these. The position of this Church on the subject of Communism has never changed. In this connection, we are continually being asked to give our opinion concerning various patriotic groups or individuals who are fighting Communism and speaking up for freedom. Our immediate concern, however, is not with parties, groups, or persons, but with principles. We therefore commend and encourage every person and every group who is sincerely seeking to study Constitutional principles and awaken a sleeping and apathetic people to the alarming conditions that are rapidly advancing about us. We wish all of our citizens throughout the land were participating in some type of organized self-education in order that they could better appreciate what is happening and know what they can do about it. Supporting the FBI, the police, the congressional committees investigating Communism, and various organizations that are attempting to awaken the people through educational means is a policy we warmly endorse for all our people. Communism is militantly atheistic and is committed to the destruction of faith wherever it may be found. The Russian Commissar of Education wrote: Even the best of them must be considered our worst enemies. Christian love is an obstacle to the development of the revolution. What we want is hate. Only then shall we conquer the universe. Communism debases the individual and makes him the enslaved tool of the state, to which he must look for sustenance and religion. No member of this Church can be true to his faith, nor can any American be loyal to his trust, while lending aid, encouragement, or sympathy to any of these false philosophies; for if he does, they will prove snares to his feet. Communism is fundamentally socialism. We will never win our fight against communism by making concessions to socialism. Communism and socialism, closely related, must be defeated on principle.

### 6: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship

*Early in its history, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church) had a series of negative encounters with the United States federal government. www.enganchecubano.com led to decades of mistrust, armed conflict and the eventual disincorporation of the church by an act of the U.S. Congress.*

In dozens of interviews conducted by BYU journalism students in partnership with HuffPost, Utah college students reported feeling estranged from the two-party system and reluctant to talk politics for fear of ostracization by their peers. Reporters asked them a series of wide-ranging questions about their political leanings, how their religious beliefs influenced their political views, how they use social media for news, and their thoughts on the two-party system. While the findings are not scientific, the anecdotes followed a pattern. Many millennials said they were motivated by individual candidates and causes, rather than political parties. Very few offered praise for the president. Most identified as moderate, and said they were more liberal than their parents. They distrusted both traditional news and social media, and said they felt it caused polarization. What follows is an anecdotal look at our findings. Today, about 46 percent of Utah voters are registered Republicans; only 11 percent identify as Democrats. The overwhelming majority of voters in Utah are Mormons, who traditionally skew Republican due to their conservative beliefs in favor of self-reliance and religious freedom and against abortion and gay marriage. Despite this, Trump struggled with Mormon voters during his campaign. Evan McMullin, a Mormon who ran for president as an independent, won 21 percent of the vote. She surveyed four generations of Mormons as research for her forthcoming book, *The Next Mormons*. Her research suggests Mormon millennials are identifying as Republican in lower numbers than any generation before them. Courtesy Laura Melonakos, 23, an accounting major at BYU, said she and her peers were more willing to consider each issue individually, instead of picking a party and accepting its positions without question. In the wake of the Las Vegas mass shooting, for example, she was researching gun laws to see where she stands. Many students told HuffPost they believed they were more open-minded than their parents. Gay rights have become a flashpoint issue for millennial Mormons, she said. Other students said they deviated from the traditional Republican stance on issues like immigration, which they attributed to serving LDS missions in foreign countries or in cities with large immigrant populations. Lucy Breen, a year-old film theory student at UVU, said she believes many people tend to just go along with what the church says. How news and social media inform political opinion Most students said they distrusted both traditional news and social media. Others said they hold back their political opinions on social media for fear their peers or online trolls would attack them. Some millennials interviewed were nervous to discuss their opinions when they heard they could be published. Many students expressed doubt Utah would become less conservative over time, despite the moderating influence of millennials. Still, he noted, if they continue to be unsatisfied with the current system, they could be open to other options.

### 7: Religion in America: U.S. Religious Data, Demographics and Statistics | Pew Research Center

*This is a chronological listing of significant events surrounding Latter Day Saints seeking or winning political office. It refers primarily to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church), but also some members of other Latter Day Saint movement religions, such as Community of Christ, formerly the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS).*

### 8: The LDS Church Believes in Political Neutrality

*The political and topical relevance of Oaks' remarks stood out from a day of teachings by Latter-day Saint leaders that otherwise focused on procedural changes to the faith's weekly worship.*

### 9: Latter-day Conservative | LDS Liberty & Freedom Quotes, Articles, Videos

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