

CLAREMONT MORMON STUDIES

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2011 ◆ ISSUE NO. 5

A Bright Future

BY Patrick Mason

Howard W. Hunter Chair of Mormon Studies

It has been a pleasure and privilege to begin my tenure as Howard W. Hunter Chair of Mormon Studies. Taking the position previously held by Richard Bushman is a distinct honor. All of us who have associated with Professor Bushman know that he is irreplaceable. Over the course of his career, and especially during his three years at Claremont, Richard has been nothing less than the best ambassador for Mormon studies on the planet. His unique gifts were only amplified by the additional contributions of Claudia Bushman, who similarly left an indelible impact on the Claremont community.

Fortunately, my work as the Hunter Chair is not a solo engagement. I am blessed with a dedicated LDS Council, led enthusiastically by Steve Bradford, who recently took over for Randy Huff after he was called to be President of the Los Angeles Temple. Steve is joined by a number of capable and energetic council members who have rolled up their sleeves and really gone to work in recent months. Their work cultivating relationships with our many generous donors is truly what has

made this entire endeavor possible.

We also enjoy a terrifically supportive institutional home in the School of Religion, as well as the broader university. President Debbie Freund and Dean Tammi Schneider have been the very pictures of warmth and collegiality in welcoming me to the faculty. Under the sponsorship of LDS Church Public

Affairs, in early November President Freund and Dean Schneider took a two-day trip to Utah for meetings with a number of LDS ecclesiastical, academic, and humanitarian leaders.

As Debbie said, they were “dined but not wined,” and both reported not only being treated exceptionally well but also coming back having learned much about Mormonism and the LDS Church’s various worldwide endeavors.

Last, but certainly not least, we owe the success of Mormon Studies at Claremont to a terrifically bright and hardworking cadre of students. My most gratifying experiences in recent months have been in the classroom and in my other interactions with our students. Now in its fourth year, the Mormon Studies

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IN THIS ISSUE

Mormons in the Marketplace Conference

PAGE 2

With an Eye to the Future

PAGE 3

Recent Events

PAGE 4

Terryl Givens visits CGU

PAGE 4

program has already produced students with M.A. degrees, as well as a number well on their way to their Ph.D.’s. The vitality of the program is directly related to the number and quality of students we have, thus making fundraising for student fellowships our top priority. We need to be competitive with the other top religion programs in the country in terms of the financial assistance we can offer current and prospective students, who represent the next generation of Mormon Studies scholars.

What do I envision for the future

[see **Future**, 3]

CMSSA BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Laying Up in Treasure: Mormons in the Marketplace

The CMSSA biennial conference will be held April 13–14, 2012. Given the recent global economic recession, high unemployment rates, and strident political debates on issues such as deficits, taxation, and economic growth, concerns about money are high on public and personal agendas. From monasticism to communitarianism to prosperity theology, religion has been an important variable in cultural attitudes and ideologies toward participation in the marketplace. Brigham Young, for instance, instructed nineteenth-century Utah Mormons

to produce their own food and goods, and not to trade with “gentiles,” and various towns experimented with the United Order. This separation did not last, however, and throughout the twentieth century, Mormons followed a path of economic integration. With such an example in mind, this conference seeks to explore how Mormons have theorized about and used the goods of this world personally, socially, and theologically across time and in various settings.

A few of the papers to be delivered include:

The Economics of Zion

- Jason M. Brown, “The Beehive and the Steel Mill: The Value of Work in Mormon Spiritual Life”
- Jacob Rennaker, “‘There’s Gold in them Thar Mountains’: Deseret Coins, Religious Iconography, and a Theology of Economy”
- Brandon Dabling, “Mormons and Mammon: Hugh Nibley and the Principle of Divine Economy”
- Blair Van Dyke, “Reconsidering Consecration: Distinctive Practices in Nineteenth through Twenty-first Century Mormonism”

Gender and Economics in Mormonism

- Rachael R. Steineckert, “Gender, Economics, and Mormon Theology”

- Elizabeth Mott, “Mormon Women and the Great Depression”
- Tamara Wallace Ramirez, “Labor, Beauty, and Sustainable Community: Needlecraft among Latter-day Saint Women”

Corporate Leadership Models

- R. Scott Holley, “Mormons at Harvard Business School”
- Daymon Mickel Smith, “The LDS Church Office Building’s Corporate Culture”

Social Justice and Egalitarianism

- Christopher T. Henrichsen, “Social Justice Texts in the Book of Mormon: A Mormon Rawlsian Exegesis of Jacob 2 and Mosiah 4”
- Thomas G. Evans, “Between Nations, Kindreds, Tongues, and People: Mormonism in the Borderlands”
- Rachel Hunt, “A Mormon Critique of Growing Income Inequality in the United States”

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Future, *continued from page 1*

of Mormon Studies at Claremont? In part, more of the same. The Women's Oral History Project, begun by Claudia Bushman and now in the capable hands of Lisa Clayton, has already gathered the stories of over 120 women and will continue to document this rich—and essential—aspect of the Mormon experience. Our hope is to not just continue but expand this one-of-a-kind project. The Claremont Mormon Studies Student Association, led this year by Liz Mott, provides both social and intellectual engagement for interested students, both LDS and non-LDS. They have already made the basic plans for what proves to be an outstanding conference in the spring, aptly themed “Laying up Treasure: Mormons in the Marketplace.” I continue to offer one Mormon Studies graduate course every semester, as well as anchoring the school's program in North American Religions. Recent events, in particular the Republican presidential campaign, have provided ample opportunities

for me to engage the media, including National Public Radio, the Huffington Post, and the Washington Post. And the list could go on.

But we should not be content to rest on our laurels. We have before us the singular opportunity of taking the field of Mormon studies to the next level. Without neglecting the essential early decades of the Mormon experience, we need to push forward into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It's sometimes easy to forget that the 121 years since Wilford Woodruff's Manifesto constitutes over two-thirds of Mormon history! Furthermore, we often hear about the LDS Church as a global church, or Mormonism as the next world religious tradition. We must do a better job at engaging international Mormonism, both historical and contemporary, particularly the experiences of “ordinary” people in the pews who are negotiating their religious identities in ways that may well look different than the American scene. Fortunately, we could not

be better situated geographically, given southern California's strong connections to both Latin America and Asia. We need to work even harder at building bridges of conversation between the more traditional historical approach to Mormon studies and newer methods and approaches, notably religious studies, comparative religion, theology, biblical studies, gender studies, philosophy, and ethics, all of which we are well positioned to do here at Claremont. And, as always, we need to do a better job of situating Mormonism within broader theories, concepts, and historical narratives.

There remain challenges—particularly the twin tasks of fundraising and recruiting more students—but I am energized by the possibilities ahead. It is not often that one gets the opportunity of helping build a new venture that has the potential of making real impact and change, but that is the position we find ourselves in. There is work enough to do, but I for one am excited about what the years ahead will bring. ♦

With an Eye to the Future

The Claremont Community of Scholars in the Golden Age of Mormon Studies

BY Elizabeth J. Mott and Bryan Cottle
President and Vice President, Claremont Mormon Studies Student Association

At the May symposium that was held in the Springville Museum of Art in honor of Richard Bushman's 80th birthday, the guest of honor and our first CGU Mormon Studies chair said that he sees all papers and books as “acts of friend-

ship.” While historians are often accused of only writing for each other rather than the general public, he said, there is a unique camaraderie that develops among them. “In writing for each other, we are saying ‘Let's be friends,’” he reflected.

Additionally, he called this present moment a “Golden Age” of Mormon Studies because increasing numbers of people want to be part of this conversation, a conversation that is based on “independent inquiry.”

Just as support from the Mormon Scholars Foundation allowed for the flourishing of the Summer Seminar at BYU, the LDS Council has provided for our very own endowed chair of Mormon Studies at CGU—to which we are pleased to welcome Patrick Mason. So the burgeoning

[see **Eye to the Future**, 5]

Recent and Upcoming Events

NOVEMBER 10, 2011

Terryl Givens “Trailing Clouds of Glory: Poetry, Theology, and the Preexistence of the Soul”



DECEMBER 8, 2011

Patrick Mason “‘A Bible! A Bible! We Have a Bible’: Mormonism’s Selective Love Affair with the King James Bible”

This year Claremont Graduate University is privileged to be the first stop of a national exhibit celebrating the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible, entitled “Manifold Greatness: The Creation and Afterlife of the King James Bible.” The first portion of the exhibit showcases material from the Claremont Colleges’ own special collections including items significant to Mormon Studies. Highlighting the exhibit is a first edition King James Bible from 1611, a first edition Book of Mormon from 1830, and a first edition Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible from 1867. The exhibit will run until January 6th and the Claremont exhibit will run through the end of January. Both are located at the Honnold/Mudd Library, 800 N. Dartmouth Ave. in Claremont.

Patrick Mason, the Howard W. Hunter Chair of Mormon Studies, gave this lecture for the exhibit on the King James Bible and Mormonism. Visit www.cgu.edu/manifold for more information.



FEBRUARY 24, 2012

Religions in Conversation Conference: Navigating the Sacred and Profane in American Popular Culture

In recent years academics have paid increasing attention to the dynamic between religion and popular culture. This development is not surprising given the salience of religion in public consciousness and discourse, especially in the United States: from the Broadway musical *The Book of Mormon* and commercialized forms of Kabbalah to the *Left Behind* book series and Bill Maher’s *Religulous*, the topic is clearly relevant, not to mention marketable. This conference will address this relationship between religion and popular culture. Admission is free.



MARCH 22, 2012

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich Lecture

Dr. Ulrich will deliver a Mormon Studies lecture on a topic to be announced. The topic may relate to her book in progress entitled, “*A House Full of Females*”: *Faith and Kinship in Nineteenth-Century Mormon Diaries*, which will be published by Alfred A. Knopf.



APRIL 13–14, 2012

Mormons in the Marketplace Conference

See our more detailed article on page 2 for more information about this conference.

Prof. Givens visits CGU

BY Jacob Rennaker

Terryl Givens has been a busy man. In the thick of his academic responsibilities as a professor at the University of Richmond and between instructional presenta-

tions on Mormonism to news staff at CNN, Givens made time for a number of speaking engagements in the Claremont area from November 10–12. First meeting with

Claremont Mormon Studies Student Association members, he discussed his thought-provoking article on LDS conceptualizations of atonement from the forthcoming *The*

[see **Givens**, 6]

Eye to the Future, *continued from page 3*

field of Mormon Studies encompasses an ever-widening sphere, as we are witnessing a demand by Mormons, university faculty members, and sponsors for an independent kind of Mormon Studies in the Academy.

This is going to be a year of writing. Our goal for CMSSA this year is to pave the path for ourselves as developing scholars to rise to the challenge before us: to master the research skills and scholarship that will enable us to independently inquire, to rigorously and self-reflexively study primary texts and data, to accurately represent them in our narratives, and to insightfully compare Mormon stories in their social contexts to those of neighboring religious and cultural traditions.

Claudia Bushman has always said that we have to write, to plug away at it, to produce articles and essays that won't be seen by professors'

eyes only. And we certainly have places to be heard: our new *Claremont Journal of Mormon Studies* is eager for submissions, and CMSSA will be hosting a conference in April

2012 about Mormons in the marketplace (see page 2). Also, Mormon women and scholars are awaiting publications on the Claremont Mormon Women's Oral History Project.

To take advantage of these publishing opportunities, and to be worth the generous investments of the LDS Council, we have designated our weekly CMSSA lunch meetings as research and writing forums.

We have already discussed essays by Elizabeth Mott, Patrick Mason, Elisa Pulido, and Terryl Givens. We are maintaining an informal, lively atmosphere, but also using this time to help each other overcome our writing and publishing fears. Our purpose is not to multiply meetings and work. We know everyone is busy. These lunch discussions are simply intended to help us set some achievable benchmarks in the writing process and to entice us to submit our work to conferences and journals by showing it is both possible and rewarding.

David Golding, our Web developer and desktop publisher extraordinaire, says this about trying to get submissions for the *Claremont Journal of Mormon Studies*: "One of the major hurdles across the board for grad students and young professors is the writing aspect, and

by this I mean the macro-writing, not micro-level. All too often folks just don't produce, they dilly-dally and put off projects. There are plenty of good, publishable ideas.

This has been the most common response as I've approached potential contributors to the Journal: 'Oh, I just haven't tightened it up yet to be worthy of publication.' Folks have trepidation putting their name next to something that will linger for a long time, especially when career prospects matter so much. So our challenges as a journal involve writers' confidence and production more

than the problem of a lack of talent or originality."

We agree with David. Hopefully, CMSSA lunch meetings can help with this challenge. So let us know if you would like to volunteer to lead a discussion about an excellent article, or present on one of your own works in progress, or on one of your own successful conference or publishing experiences. The rest of the time will be unstructured, and people are free to come and go as they please. So mark your calendars for Thursdays during the Spring semester at 12:30 at Hagelbarger's.

We will continue to host brown bag lunches with guest speakers. Thanks to Patrick Mason, Morris Thurston, Russ Frandsen, and the Miller Eccles Study Group, Terryl Givens visited the CGU School of Religion on Thursday, November 10.

As you can see, Thursdays have been Mormon Studies days at CGU this fall. In addition to the CMSSA lunch, the Mormon Women's Oral History Project meetings also met on Thursdays. Patrick Mason's course, "Approaches to Mormonism," then immediately followed in the same venue.

We really are part of something extraordinary here in Claremont. It is a great deal of work, but it's the work that makes the success and the camaraderie so worthwhile. Richard Bushman saw his 80th birthday symposium as a celebration of "invisible bonds." We are confident that in the decades ahead, we, who received our start here in Claremont, will enjoy many more such celebrations. ♦

"Our goal for CMSSA this year is to pave the path for ourselves as developing scholars to rise to the challenge before us."

Givens, *continued from page 4*

Oxford Handbook of Mormonism to Mormonism, which he is co-editing with Philip Barlow. Following this rich discussion, he attended Patrick Mason's "Approaches to Mormonism" seminar, where he discussed the methodological approach in his book *By the Hand of Mormon* and commented on the current trends in Mormon Studies.

Shortly thereafter, he delivered a lecture at CGU's Albrecht Auditorium entitled "Trailing Clouds of Glory: Poetry, Theology, and the Preexistence of the Soul," building upon some of the themes he presented in his recent book *When Souls Had Wings:*

Pre-Mortal Existence in Western Thought (Oxford University Press, 2010). In particular, he addressed the various ontological questions that the idea of pre-existence answered, and demonstrated how this potent idea persisted in both intellectual and religious circles.

The very next morning, Givens was interviewed on the intersection of religion, politics, and the public sphere for a podcast produced by the John Adams Center for the Study of Faith, Philosophy, and Public Affairs. During this interview, he addressed topics such as the relationship between the pre-existence, agency, and political philosophy, just-war theory in Mormon thought, and Parley P. Pratt's approaches to anti-Mormon publications (the entire interview is available through

the John Adams Center's website at www.johnadamscenter.com).

Givens ended his far-too-brief visit by delivering presentations at two Miller-Eccles events. Dovetailing on the release of his most recent book *Parley P. Pratt: The Apostle Paul of Mormonism* (co-authored with Matthew Grow, published by Oxford University Press), he titled his presentation "Parley P. Pratt and the Unveiling of Mormonism." After outlining the long and ambivalent history of Mormonism's public perception, Givens illustrated how Parley P. Pratt responded to public attacks on Mormonism and its

doctrines. Far from a conciliatory character, Pratt fought fire with napalm. In responding to claims of "outlandish" religious beliefs, Pratt did not simply acknowledge those beliefs; he embraced them and supplemented them with

additional distinctive beliefs that had been left unmentioned by detractors. Givens demonstrated the merit of such a bold approach to public doctrinal questions, and discussed how that might play into the present discussion of Mormonism in the media.

As always, Terryl Givens left a number of provocative questions for those who are both faithful and thoughtful. His visit demonstrated that Mormon Studies continues to be a vibrant and relevant field of inquiry, one whose impact will only increase in the coming years. ♦

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A joint publication of the

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MORMON STUDIES

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