With this issue, we are happy to announce the beginning of a Mormon Studies Initiative at the University of Utah. Our initiative builds on the growing national interest and effort in telling the Mormon “story.”

Meetings of the Mormon History Association have seen a sharp increase in panels offered and numbers attending. The University of Illinois Press, long the main sponsor of scholarly works on Mormon history and culture, has found new rivals among other publishing houses, particularly Oxford University Press.

Philanthropists have funded a chair at Claremont Graduate University and a Mormon Studies Program is building around it. Utah State University has endowed the Leonard J. Arrington Chair in Mormon History and Culture. Other universities are attempting to create similar positions.

The University of North Carolina, Harvard University and the University of Utah have offered classes titled “Mormonism and the American Experience.”

In cyberspace, things “Mormon” draw tens of thousands of viewers, bloggers, and chatters.

With this our inaugural issue, the Tanner Humanities Center will act as a clearinghouse for information about Mormon Studies at the University of Utah. We will feature news about speakers and events. Information about scholarships and research opportunities will also be available. By highlighting research activities on campus, we hope to enhance the exchange of ideas between scholars of Mormon Studies in the United States and around the world.

Please join us in this exciting new endeavor, in this new “Mormon Moment!”

Upcoming Events

Dr. Gregory A. Prince, pathologist, businessman, philanthropist, and historian, will lecture on March 8, 2012 on “Science and Religion: This Time It’s Mormonism not Darwinism?” at the Tanner Humanities Center.

Max Mueller, Eccles Mormon Studies Fellow, will deliver his Work-in-Progress lecture at the Tanner Humanities Center on Tuesday, March 27, 2012 at 12:00 pm. More information about Max’s project is available on page 2 of the newsletter.

Mormon Studies on the Move

Dr. Richard Bushman on “Mormonism and the Public Good”

On Tuesday, September 27, 2011, Dr. Bushman delivered the David P. Gardner lecture to a standing-room only audience. The lecture addressed the lack of civility in contemporary politics and what Mormonism might contribute to the resolution of fundamental disagreements regarding what constitutes the public good.

Dr. Bushman’s full lecture is available in the “Media Library” at www.thc.utah.edu.

“The Presidential Campaign of Romney and Huntsman: The Mormon Moment or the Mormon Question Revisited?”

Authors Newell G. Bringham, Ph.D. and Craig L. Foster spoke at a Hinckley Institute forum looking at the two Mormon Republican presidential candidates. (September 27, 2011)

Journalist Chris Lehmann on RadioWest discusses Mormon Economics and the GOP

Chris Lehmann joined host Doug Fabrizio to discuss his recent article in Harper’s Magazine and explain why when it comes to the economy “We are all Mormons now.” (September 27, 2011) www.kuer.org

“Can Mormons be White in America?”

Bob Goldberg, Tanner Center Director and Professor of History, addressed members of he Alta Club on November 8, 2011. He approached this challenging and important subject by examining how “outsider” religious and ethnic minorities lay claim to full participation in society through collaboration and how resistance to collaboration may put such groups at risk for denial of privilege.

If you would like a copy of Dr. Goldberg’s paper, please email rachel.marston@thc.utah.edu.
Eccles Mormon Studies Fellowship

Max Mueller is the 2011-2012 Eccles Mormon Studies Fellow at the Tanner Humanities Center. Max is a doctoral candidate at Harvard University. His research project, titled “Beyond the Priesthood: Race and Gender in the History of African American Mormons” examines the experiences of early black Mormon pioneers—most notably Jane Manning James—in light of the evolving racial and gender politics in Utah from the arrival of the first pioneers to Salt Lake in 1847 through Utah statehood in 1896.

Kate Holbrook (2010-2011, Eccles Mormon Studies Fellow), Bob Goldberg (Director), and Max Mueller (2011-2012, Eccles Mormon Studies Fellow)

Applause, Applause

The dissertation of John Ben Haws (Ph.D., History, U of Utah 2010), The Meaning of “Mormon” in the American Mind: Shaping Public Perceptions of Latter-day Saints, 1968-2008, is forthcoming from Oxford University Press. Dr. Haws accepted a position as an Assistant Professor of Religious Education at Brigham Young University, where he began teaching this fall.


In September 2011, Kate Holbrook, Ph.D. candidate at Boston University and the first recipient of the Eccles Mormon Studies Fellowship, accepted a position as Specialist in Women’s History in the History Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

U Graduate Students Explore Mormonism in Current Dissertation Projects

Alan Morell, The Creation of Mormon Identity in the 19th Century

Derek Sainsbury, The Electioneer Missionaries of 1844 and their emergence as a Mormon Elite

Tom Rugh, Landscape and Art in the Utah Mormon Experience

Melissa Ferguson, The Word of Wisdom and Mormon Foodways

Debra J. Marsh, The Carthage Mob and Jacksonian Era Mob Violence

University of Utah Press Juanita Brooks Prize

$10,000 Bienniel Book Publication Prize to be awarded for the best monograph submitted to the Press in the subject area of Mormon Studies. Bob Goldberg, Director of the Tanner Center, sits on the Brooks Prize panel. Visit www.uofupress.com for more information.

“Come, help the good work move along”

As of November 2011, the Tanner Humanities Center is over half-way to its goal of $400,000 to endow a Ph.D. fellowship in Mormon Studies. Working with a seed-grant from the George and Dolores Dore Eccles Foundation, the Center established two one-year fellowships in Mormon Studies.

This fellowship is the first step toward establishing Mormon Studies as a permanent part of the University of Utah. Our graduate research fellowship will be the only one in the country at a time when the academic study of Mormonism is burgeoning.

With your support, we can ensure the future of this fellowship. Any size contribution will make a difference and help us reach our goal.

Will you join us in making the fellowship a reality?

To make a donation to the Mormon Studies Fellowship Endowment, please contact Bob Goldberg by email at bob.goldberg@utah.edu or by phone at (801) 581-8844.