As you will read in our newsletter, the current “Mormon Moment” has the potential of stretching into months, years, and even decades. We are truly at the beginning of a time of broad public and scholarly interest in the Latter Day Saints - their institutions, beliefs, and practices. Our colleagues in Mormon Studies have funded academic chairs at Claremont, Utah State University, and most recently, at the University of Virginia. As the American mainstream widens, the University of Utah’s Mormon Studies initiative is in a unique position to enhance understanding and awareness. Remember, as you learn about our progress in bringing nationally known speakers to campus, hosting a conference on LDS women, creating a post-doc in Mormon Studies, and continuing to raise funds to endow the graduate fellowship in Mormon Studies, that we truly appreciate your support. We feel the community building, joining hands in multiplying these Zion moments!

Bob Goldberg, Director
Tanner Humanities Center

**Remember Me: The Inscription of Self in Nineteenth Century Mormonism**

On August 24th, 2012, Harvard University Professor of History Laurel Thatcher Ulrich delivered the 2012 Sterling M. McMurrin Lecture on Religion and Culture to a standing-room-only audience at the Salt Lake City Public Library. In her talk, Professor Ulrich noted the basic human “desire to leave our mark behind.” She supported this with nineteenth century examples of samplers inscribed with the plea: “Remember Me.” Ulrich also observed that in leaving large numbers of diaries, letters, memoirs, and other documents, Mormon men had insured that history would not forget them. Yet, at the same time, Mormon women’s voices could barely be heard. She asked why had so few women’s diaries and documents been found in the archives since Mormon women, like their husbands, fathers, and brothers, were literate and faithful to a church that urged personal record keeping? In answer, she related the stories of the diaries of Eliza R. Snow and Zina Huntington Young, passed to family and friends and stored in breadboxes effectively keeping them from public view. Women’s diaries and letters, she argued, were considered personal and different from the more public documents that men produced. Only recently have they come to light and been shared with archivists and historians.

To tell the complete Mormon story, Ulrich called for a concerted effort to “capture women’s history” and locate women’s writings for they offered a perspective that must not be lost. Beyond these conventional documents, insights about women’s lives can also be found in material things such as samplers, drawings, and autograph books. “What do you have in your house?” Ulrich asked the audience. She challenged her listeners to search their attics and closets for such long forgotten manuscripts, letters, and artifacts so that the past may be revealed in all of its facets.

Professor Ulrich’s lecture opened the “Women and the LDS Church: Contemporary and Historical Perspectives” conference held on August 25 at the University of Utah. To view Professor Ulrich’s thoughtful lecture, please visit the Tanner Humanities Center’s website at www.thc.utah.edu and select “Media Library.”
Women and the LDS Church Conference

The roles of women in the LDS Church have received much popular and scholarly attention recently. The Tanner Center is doing its part to further and publicize this important work. In August, the Center hosted a conference on “Women and the LDS Church: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives.”

Kate Holbrook, Specialist in Women’s History for the LDS Church History Department and former Eccles Mormon Studies Fellow at the Tanner Center, and Professor Matt Bowman of Hampden Sydney College organized the event, bringing a host of scholars from diverse disciplines to Utah. The LDS Church History Department, Utah Valley University, Brigham Young University (Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship and Women’s Studies Program), America West Center, Utah State University (Program in Religious Studies and Center for Women & Gender) joined the Tanner Center in sponsoring the conference.

The conference was organized around the theme of agency and explored women’s roles in the LDS Church. Four panel discussions focused on Professor Ulrich’s call to shine light on LDS women’s beliefs and practices, offering seldom-heard narratives from the past and present. Historians Susanna Morrill, Quincy Newell, and Kate Holbrook related stories of important women in LDS history who exercised their agency in life altering ways. Employing a sociological conception of “agency,” they portrayed women who not only worked against what they believed were oppressive social structures but others who used their agency to make traditional choices to secure existing organizations and practices.

Another panel considered academic approaches to current issues of agency and included a discussion of a study that found significant differences between how LDS women and men demonstrated their beliefs and practiced their religion.

A third panel highlighted what may be the most overlooked aspect of women and the LDS Church, an international perspective. Social scientist Carine Decoo-Vanwelkenhuysen reviewed a survey of LDS women in Europe showing that respondents identified culturally first with their own nation and then saw themselves as Mormons. Matt Heiss, an archivist in the Church History Department who specializes in international growth and change, contended that Mormon practices have revolutionized life for African converts, particularly women from traditional West African nations who find in their new faith a stress on education and equality. By sharing her personal experience, Miriama Kallon, from Sierra Leone, powerfully illustrated Matt Heiss’ argument that Mormonism offers the opportunity for the “meaningful exercise of agency” among West Africans. Also participating in the conference were Claudia Bushman, Jane Hafen, and Neylan McBaine.

With over three hundred people in attendance, the Conference was a valuable first step toward a serious conversation about LDS women, agency, and identity. As Laurel Ulrich reminded us in her McMurrin Lecture, it is in telling stories about their lives and experiences that women lay claim to their important place in the Mormon community.

Miss the Conference? All four panels can be downloaded or watch online at the Tanner Humanities Website www.thc.utah.edu in the “Media Library.”
The Parkinsons Host
Mormon Studies Reception

Dr. and Mrs. Brett and Kelly Parkinson opened their home to the Tanner Humanities Center on December 1, 2012 to highlight the Center’s ongoing work promoting Mormon Studies at the University of Utah. Over 50 attendees gathered to learn about our efforts to increase awareness of Mormon Studies on campus and in the community, including an endowment campaign to permanently fund a graduate fellowship in Mormon Studies.

The evening included an introduction by Brett Parkinson and a musical performance by violinist Kelly Parkinson. Bob Rees, Professor of Religion at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, spoke on the importance of Mormon Studies and the need for new academic venues to facilitate collaboration and research on the subject.

Bob Goldberg, Professor of History and Director of the Tanner Humanities Center, concluded the evening by discussing how attitudes toward Mormonism have evolved at the University of Utah over the past thirty years and exploring the growing significance of the academic study of Mormonism. He observed that there has never been a more opportune time to make Mormon Studies a part of the University’s curriculum and to expand interest in Mormonism on campus.

Photo credits: George Parkinson
An Evening Honoring Marlin K. Jensen

On May 10, 2012, the Tanner Humanities Center hosted a dinner to honor Elder Marlin K. Jensen for his service on behalf of the Tanner Center’s Mormon Studies Fellowship and Mormon Studies Initiative. Marlin Jensen served as the Church Historian for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 2005-2012, and is currently an emeritus general authority for the church.

At the event, Elder Jensen spoke about his time as Church Historian, including his experiences working on key projects such as the Joseph Smith Papers, the return of researchers to the archives, and promoting greater dialogue with the academic community. Jensen also discussed the expansion of the field of Mormon Studies nationally and the importance of the Tanner Center’s work in facilitating the academic study of Mormonism through its graduate research fellowship and other programs.

Said Bob Goldberg, “It is an honor having Marlin as both a friend and mentor. His sense of humanity, integrity, and enthusiasm for the good are powerful engines for change and understanding. I have appreciated our collaborations and look forward to more joint efforts to insure interfaith work and tolerance.”

Research Interest Group on Mormon Studies

Over the past year, the Tanner Center’s Mormon Studies Research Interest Group, led by University of Utah History Professor Paul Reeve, brought together scholars from the University of Utah, Brigham Young University, Utah Valley University, and the LDS Church History Department to organize a Religious Studies undergraduate minor with an emphasis in Mormon studies. The proposed minor would facilitate the creation of multiple new Mormon studies courses at the University of Utah, with possible topics including “The Book of Mormon as Literature,” “Mormonism and Gender,” and “Mormonism and Politics.” This would be an important step to a larger goal: the creation of a full Mormon studies program at the University of Utah.

Postdoctoral Fellowship in Mormon Studies Announced

The Tanner Humanities Center with the sponsorship of the College of Humanities and the Department of Languages and Literature is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. David Bokovoy to a one-year Postdoctoral Fellowship in Mormon Studies for 2013-2014. Dr. Bokovoy will teach five classes, one course specifically focused on Mormon Studies titled “The Book of Mormon as Literature.”

David Bokovoy holds a PhD in Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East from Brandeis University and a BA in History and Near Eastern Studies from Brigham Young University. In addition to his work in Mormon Studies, David has published articles in the Journal of Biblical Literature and Vetus Testamentum. A former LDS Chaplain at Harvard University, Dr. Bokovoy has taught for many years in the LDS Church’s Seminaries and Institute program.

“I am especially impressed,” said Bob Goldberg, “with David’s great knowledge, sincerity, and ability to teach. I know he brings a sensitivity to his subject that will surely enhance respect for all in the university community.”
Rosemary Avance, the 2012-2013 Eccles Mormon Studies Fellow and Ph.D. candidate at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, is interested in how people understand who they are. Rosemary’s fellowship project, “Voices and silences: On the dialogic construction of Mormon identities” studies the ways members of the Mormon faith navigate personal and spiritual identity. She is also researching the role of technology and how individuals represent themselves on blogs, online discussion boards, or podcasts.

When Rosemary began researching fellowships for her dissertation year, she never expected to find a fellowship specific to Mormonism. She expressed how meaningful this fellowship has been for her. “I couldn’t imagine finishing writing the dissertation without the experience of living in Utah.”

Rosemary is excited about the future of Mormon Studies as an academic field. The field of Mormon Studies is growing and she said, “Bob Goldberg and the Tanner Humanities Center are doing much to shift the perspective of Mormon Studies, as is this fellowship.”

Please join us for Rosemary Avance’s Work in Progress Talk on Tuesday, February 12, 2013. Her talk, “Voices and silences: On the dialogic construction of Mormon identities,” will be held in the Tanner Humanities Center Conference Room (Room 143) on the first floor of the Carolyn Tanner Irish Humanities Building. The talk begins at 12:00pm and lunch will be served.
Mormon Studies Fellowship  
Endowment Steering Committee

Robert Goldberg  
Director, Tanner Humanities Center  
University of Utah

Martha Bradley  
Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Dean of Undergraduate Studies  
University of Utah

Lew Cramer  
CEO, World Trade Center Utah  

Spencer P. Eccles  
Executive Director, Governor’s Office of Economic Development

Jess Hurtado  
Hurtado and Associates

Kirk Jowers  
Director, Hinckley Institute of Politics  
University of Utah

James Macfarlane  
Chairman, IC Group

Kent Murdock  
Former CEO, O.C. Tanner; Philanthropist

Brett Parkinson  
Radiologist, Intermountain Health Care

Gregory Prince  
President and CEO of Virion Systems, Inc.

Susan Rugh  
Professor of History  
Brigham Young University

Kim Wirthlin  
Philanthropist

The Tanner Humanities Center offers special thanks to outgoing Mormon Studies Fellowship Endowment Steering Committee Members:

Gregory C. Thompson, Ph.D., is the Associate Dean of the University of Utah’s J. Willard Marriott Library for Special Collections and an Adjunct Assistant Professor of History.

Michael W. Homer has been a trial lawyer in Salt Lake City since 1981. He is currently a Managing Partner at Suitter Axland, PLLC.

James McConkie received a B.A. in political science and philosophy in 1970 from Brigham Young University. He received a J.D. from the University of Utah in 1973 and entered private practice in 1979.

Ned P. Siegfried is a founding partner and co-owner of Siegfried & Jensen since 1990. Ned earned a B.A. in history from the University of Utah in 1980 and a J.D. from Brigham Young University in 1983.

The Tanner Humanities Center welcomes new Steering Committee members:

James L. Macfarlane earned his bachelor’s degree in marketing from the University of Utah in 1954. He worked at Rocky Mountain Bank Note, leaving the company after 25 years as president. Jim went on to cofound a printing brokerage and printing manufacturing company, Integrated Companies (IC) Group.

Kent H. Murdock joined O.C. Tanner Company as president in 1991 and was elected chief executive officer of O.C. Tanner in 1997. Kent graduated from the University of Utah with a bachelor’s degree in 1972 and J.D. in 1975. He recently returned from service as a mission president for the LDS Church in Switzerland.

Brett T. Parkinson, M.D., is a radiologist at Intermountain Medical Center’s Breast Care Center. Brett has been integral in efforts to increase breast cancer screening for women in Utah, as well as humanitarian efforts to improve cancer screening in Tanzania.
We offer our sincere gratitude to our Mormon Studies Initiative Donors:

$20,000+ Donors
Roger Boyer
Kem Gardner
Blake Roney
University of Utah
Office of the President

$10,000+ Donors
Jess Hurtado
Greg Prince
Laurel Thatcher Ulrich

$5,000+ Donors
Spencer P. Eccles
Peter Freed
Bob Goldberg

$3,000+ Donors
Charles Redd Center
Talley Goodson
Jim McConkie

$1,000+ Donors
Curtis Atkisson
Lew Cramer
Todd Eskelson
Fred Esplin
David & Charlotte Hamblin
Jim MacFarlane
Leonadis Mecham
Kent Murdock
Brett & Kelly Parkinson
Susan Rugh
Jeri Schryver

$250+ Donors
Carter Foundation
Jim Clayton
Geraldine Hanni
Marlin Jensen
Dan Johnson
Stephen Johnson
Kim Wirthlin

$50+ Donors
Richard & Claudia Bushman
Shirley Hanson
Dennis Hodson
Robert Hufner
Robin Jensen
Von K Reech
Peter Kraus
Colleen McDannell
Max Mueller
Jack & Itha Rampton
Clark & Marion Searle
Edwina Snow
Greg Thompson
Marian Warner

$250+ Donors
Carter Foundation
Jim Clayton
Geraldine Hanni
Marlin Jensen
Dan Johnson
Stephen Johnson
Kim Wirthlin

But we still need your help!
The Tanner Humanities Center has raised $270,000 toward the $400,000 goal
to endow the Ph.D. fellowship in Mormon Studies. This fellowship is the first
step toward establishing Mormon Studies as a permanent part of the University
of Utah. With your support, we can ensure the future of this fellowship. Any size
contribution makes a difference.

Will you join us in making the fellowship a reality?
To donate to the Mormon Studies Endowment, please contact Bob Goldberg by
e-mail at bob.goldberg@utah.edu or by phone at (801) 581-8844. You may also
donate directly online at ugive.utah.edu by selecting “Tanner Humanities Center”
and noting your gift for the Mormon Studies initiative.
The Obert C. and Grace A. Tanner Humanities Center fosters innovative humanistic inquiry and scholarship. The Center’s public programs create opportunity for lively dialogue among scholars, students, and citizens on issues (from ancient to contemporary) pertaining to human condition.

Founded in 1988 in the College of Humanities as the University of Utah Humanities Center, the Center was endowed and renamed in 1995 through a generous gift from the family foundation of Obert C. Tanner, renowned entrepreneur and late professor emeritus of philosophy.

In 2008 the Tanner Humanities Center moved into its new home, the Carolyn Tanner Irish Humanities Building. Named in honor of Right Reverend Carolyn Tanner Irish, former bishop for the Episcopal Church in Salt Lake City and daughter of Obert C. and Grace A. Tanner, Carolyn continues to support the humanities and serves as a member of the Tanner Trustees.