

CLAREMONT MORMON STUDIES

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2009 ❖ ISSUE No. 1

Impressions of Claremont

BY Richard L. Bushman

Howard W. Hunter Chair of Mormon Studies, Claremont Graduate University

Claudia and I came to Claremont primarily for adventure, and we have not been disappointed. For all the heavy lifting in researching and writing, preparing classes, and criticizing students' work, there is a strong element of play. It is fun

to talk about imponderable questions like the nature of religion. It is entertaining to work through the religious deliberations of people long since dead. What is more exhilarating than a seminar discussion that takes off?

We like the feel of the buildings and the campus. The dappling of sunshine and shade playing on the walls gives everything a cool, inviting demeanor. Our office is light and airy, the way we would like our teaching to be. We like the students, everyone with a story and a sharply etched personality. All are striving



for something just out of reach but desirable.

Our only regret is that our adventure costs the students so much. It takes a miracle everyday to pay the huge cost of tuition and support not just one life, but in many cases two

or more. There

is something positively medieval about the asceticism attached to the study of religion at Claremont.

I hope that the combination of learning and hardship will form

us into a band of

brothers and sisters. Learning in the Latter-day Saint tradition is meant to be fraternal. We pledge ourselves to each other as well as to our studies. We teach one another out of the best books.

Claudia and I feel privileged to be part of this grand enterprise, and our association with this collection of striving scholars is the part we like most of all. ❖

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CGU MORMON STUDIES ON ITUNES U



Claremont Graduate University and the School of Religion have added lectures and other presentations to iTunes U. Some of our Mormon Studies events are now available in this collection. Visit

<http://bit.ly/cgu-on-itunes>

to subscribe and download audio tracks.

The Year Ahead

The response to last year's Mormon Studies lecture and conference series has encouraged the program to line up another group of eminent speakers. No single theme has dictated the selection; the governing principle has been to get the best we could find. —R. BUSHMAN

SEPTEMBER 24

Daniel Walker Howe

"Joseph Smith's America"

Daniel Howe is author of the Pulitzer Prize winning history, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848*, and Professor of History Emeritus at UCLA. He was Rhodes Professor of American History at Oxford University from 1992 to 2002. Howe was born in Ogden, Utah, and knows Mormons well.



OCTOBER 22

**Father Alexei Smith and
Robert L. Millet**

*Catholic–Dialogue on
Priesthood and Sacraments*

Father Alexei Smith, the priest in charge of inter-faith dialogue for the Los Angeles diocese will represent Catholicism, and representatives of the LDS community will speak for Mormonism. There will be an informal afternoon conversation and a formal lecture and response in the evening.



NOVEMBER 12

Harry S. Stout

"Joseph Smith and Jonathan Edwards"

Harry S. Stout is Professor of History, Religious Studies, and American Studies at Yale University and Jonathan Edwards Professor of American Christianity, Yale Divinity School. He is general editor of the Jonathan

Edwards Papers and a member of the National Advisory Board for the Joseph Smith Papers. He is uniquely qualified to compare these two giants of American religious history.



FEBRUARY 18

Grant Hardy

"Reading the Book of Mormon"

Grant Hardy, Associate Professor of History at the University of North Carolina Asheville, is best known to Mormons for *The Book of Mormon: A Reader's Edition*, but he soon will be better known for his structural analysis of the Book of Mormon coming out with Oxford University Press next year. Hardy explains how the three major historians in the book, Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni constructed their narratives differently, making each of these writers a distinctive presence in the book.



MARCH 18

Daniel C. Peterson

*"The State of the Debate over
the Book of Mormon"*

Daniel Peterson, Professor of Islamic Studies and Arabic at Brigham Young University, is best known in the academic world as an expert on Islam. As editor of the *FARMS Review of Books* for many years, however, he is well informed on the controversies surrounding the historicity of the Book of Mormon. In his talk, he will report on the debate as it stands right now.



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APRIL 15

Martha Bradley Evans

"The Fundamentalists Today"

Martha Evans, Professor of Architecture at the University of Utah, also directs the Honors Program. She has written on the Utah controversy over the ERA and a joint biography of four Mormon women entitled *Four Zinas : A Story of Mothers and Daughters on the Mormon Frontier*. She gained insight into Fundamentalist polygamous communities doing research for her book *Kidnapped from that Land: The Government Raids on the Short Creek Polygamists*.



MAY 21–22

Association of Mormon Scholars in the Humanities

The Family and Human Relationships in History, Literature, Art, and Philosophy Conference

The Association is now soliciting papers for the conference. Every story, it is said, is a family story. Yet in stressing the freedom and self-sufficiency of the individual, modern culture de-emphasizes the degree to which people are born in dependency, of specific parents, and develop in and through relationships with others, most closely in the family. By considering the family, family history, and human relationships, this conference will invite inquiry into changes in the culture of the family over time, inquiries into family memory, depictions of the family and the individual in art and literature, and philosophical investigations of the role of family, friends, and mentors in personal development.



The lectures are given on Thursdays at 8 P.M. in the Mudd Auditorium, Claremont School of Theology, and are free and open to the public. ❖

Women's Oral History

The Howard W. Hunter Program for Mormon Studies announces an ongoing oral history project to begin this fall. Women in three areas, Claremont, Pasadena, and Newport Beach will begin interviews to flesh out the "lived history" of LDS women in the 20th century primarily in Southern California, to document and categorize experiences otherwise unrecorded. Work will begin in those three areas to locate candidates for interviews, to transcribe, edit, and index the interviews, and to work toward a conceptualization of Mormon women's experience. The project will be undertaken in connection with the class "Mormon Women in the Twentieth Century" REL 313 to be offered in the school of religion this fall. Nominations for people to be interviewed and offers to become involved in the program, from students or from the community, will be welcomed. Write Dr. Claudia Bushman at the School of Religion, 831 N. Dartmouth Avenue, Claremont, California, or at claudia.bushman@benikana.com. ❖

Q&A WITH VISITING SCHOLARS



Under the sponsorship of CMSSA, each lecturer in this year's series meets with graduate students for informal discussions about current issues in the field and useful strategies in pursuing a career in scholarship. CMSSA members and other graduate students are invited to attend these discussions which are usually held a couple of hours before the evening lecture. For more information on these student events, visit the student association's website at <http://rsc.cgu.edu/cmssa> or sign up with the CMSSA mailing list by emailing mormonstudies@gmail.com.

On Mormon Studies at Claremont

BY Karen Torjesen

Former Dean of the School of Religion, Claremont Graduate University

Mormon Studies at Claremont is a significant contributor to religious pluralism at Claremont. For years we have outstanding Mormon students in Philosophy of Religion, Theology, History of Christianity, Biblical Studies, and more recently Women's Studies in Religion. They mastered their fields of study, contributed interesting research, and went on to teaching positions across the country, but their presence had little impact on the study of religion, nor did their perspective as Mormons generate new questions, nor did their classmates learn much from them about the fascinating history and complex of practices of Mormonism. Now that has changed. It reminds me of the process of

developing women's studies at Claremont. For many years women students were working on the side to learn what they could about women's issues. Their perspectives required a new way of looking at things, different questions, even different epistemologies, but there was no space for these in the way the study of religion was constituted. When women's studies courses and programs were introduced an inevitable transformation began to take place. When women scholars of religion were

invited to have a voice, to raise their own questions, the study of religion began to change. New content led to new methodologies, new methodologies lead to new epistemologies.

"Mormon Studies at Claremont will ... help us rethink the categories of what constitutes a religion."

Mormon Studies at Claremont will do something similar for the study of Christianity and will help us rethink the categories of what constitutes a religion. Religious pluralism

will mean that we (all of us) will all be impacted, our field of vision will become larger and our understanding of religion more complex. ❖

Past Events

The School of Religion at CGU has sponsored events in Mormon Studies since 2000. The following outline lists conferences, lectures, and courses which have comprised the Mormon Studies program at CGU since its inception.

COURSES

Richard Bushman

The Mormon Theological Tradition FALL 2008

The Mormon Experience: Sociological Perspectives (with Armand Mauss) SPR 2009

Claudia Bushman

Mormonism Through the Eyes of Women FALL 2008

Women's Religious Autobiographies SPR 2009

Armand Mauss

Mormons in the History of the American West SPR 2005

Mormons in Sociological Perspective SPR 2006

Mormons in the History of the American West SPR 2007

The Mormon Experience: Sociological Perspectives (with Richard Bushman) SPR 2009

Brian Birch

Mormonism and Christian Theology SPR 2008

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CONFERENCES

Positioning Mormonism in Religious Studies and American History **OCTOBER 2004**

Featured professors Philip Barlow, Kathryn Daynes, Kathleen Flake, Terry Givens, and Grant Underwood.



Joseph Smith and the Prophetic Tradition: A Comparative Inquiry **OCTOBER 2005**

Featured professors Richard Bushman, Robert Millet, and Robert Rees.



"May These Principles Be Established": Mormonism in the Political Arena **MARCH 2008**

Biennial conference of the Claremont Mormon Studies Student Association.



Mormonism through the Eyes of Women: Envisioning New Spaces for Theology and Practice **MARCH 2009**

Conference sponsored by the Claremont Mormon Studies Student Association which featured speakers Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, Claudia Bushman, Margaret Toscano, and other graduate students. Visit <http://ccdlibrarians.claremont.edu/collection.php?alias=/cms> for full conference video and papers.



Parallels and Convergences: Mormon Thought and Engineering Vision **MARCH 2009**

Co-sponsored with the Mormon Scholars Foundation and JPL. Terry Givens gave the keynote lecture.



Upon All Nations: Religious Pluralism **MAY 2009**

Society for Mormon Philosophy and Theology conference.

LECTURES

Richard Bushman
Was Joseph Smith an American Prophet? **FEB 2003**

Jan Shipps
Are Mormons Christian? **OCT 2003**

Armand Mauss
The Most Segregated Hour: Race and Religion in the American West **FEB 2004**

Daniel Peterson & Hamid Mavani
A Mormon–Muslim Conversation **OCT 2007**

Truman Madsen
Philosophy and Mormonism **FEB 2008**

Richard E. Turley, Jr.
LDS Response to the Mountain Meadows Tragedy **MAR 2008**

Mark Paredes
Mirrors and Windows: Facing Religious Stereotypes and Prejudice **APR 2008**

Ronald Walker
Brigham Young: New Approaches **SEP 2008**

Richard Mouw & Robert Millet
Evangelical Views of Joseph Smith **OCT 2008**

Marlin K. Jensen
The Role of the Church Historian **NOV 2008**

D. Michael Quinn
The Ambiguous History of Us–Versus–Them in Early Mormon Experience **NOV 2008**

David Hall
Through a Different Glass: Reconsidering the Puritans and their Legacies in American Religious History With Reflections on Mormonism **FEB 2009**

Karen Torjesen (Brown Bag Lecture)
Mormonism and Early Christianity **FEB 2009**

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich
Reading Nineteenth-century Mormon Diaries **MAR 2009**

Anselm Min (Brown Bag Lecture)
Are Works for the Dead Efficacious? **MAR 2009**

Grant Underwood
The Genesis of Mormon Scripture: Revising Joseph Smith's Revelations **APR 2009**

In the Lifeboat with a Tiger

BY David Golding

President of the Claremont Mormon Studies Student Association

Professor Bushman once asked how I was holding up in the sometimes tumultuous world of graduate studies in religion. Like many of my fellow classmates, I have encountered in religious studies historical facts, theories, interpretations, and criticisms that seem unsettling and abrasive, especially at first. How one resolves or reacts to the tensions that such academic inquiries produce can have significant consequences on one's life.

I had just finished Yann Martel's *Life of Pi* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2001), which tells the story of a young man from India who embraces three religions: Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam. This young man finds himself, at one point, lost somewhere in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and trapped in a lifeboat with a 450-pound Bengal tiger for a companion. This character must struggle to survive by not only fighting through his mental and spiritual tensions, but against the ferocious appetite of this

daunting animal.

I told Professor Bushman that I felt at times like Pi, except that empirical observations that challenge my prior thinking intimidate me rather than a tiger. But, like Pi, in many ways this tiger keeps me alive and provides meaning in its own way. Unlike Pi, I have never felt like I wrestle with the tiger alone.

Even before I committed to study at CGU, Richard Livingston introduced me to the Claremont Mormon Studies Student Association. Since then, I have had the opportunity to engage in rigorous debate with fellow Latter-day Saints of wildly different opinions and persuasions. CMSSA provides a forum for not only Latter-day Saint graduate students but for anyone interested in Mormon studies, and my interactions

with non-LDS students have also enhanced my appreciation for communities beyond my own. I have no doubt that without this forum

for personal and professional dialogue, I would have more acutely felt that I face the study of religion by myself.

I'm grateful that students before me had the foresight to care for each other in personal and professional ways. Often, I'm most challenged intellectually by my peers in CMSSA. Not only do I feel prepared to confront the challenges this course of study brings by my membership in CMSSA, but I notice my professional abilities as a scholar-in-training improve. I encourage my fellow students to get involved and to take advantage of our ongoing conversation on Mormonism and religious studies. ♦

"Unlike Pi, I have never felt like I wrestle with the tiger alone."

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