

2011 St. George, Utah Conference Call for Papers

From Cotton to Cosmopolitan: Local, National, and Global Transformations in Mormon History

The forty-sixth annual conference of the Mormon History Association will be held May 26-29, 2011, at the Dixie Center in St. George, Utah. The 2011 theme, "From Cotton to Cosmopolitan: Local, National, and Global Transformations in Mormon History," evokes both the specific history of St. George and environs, and Mormonism as a religious tradition more generally.

Once a sparsely populated corner of what became the American Southwest, St. George was founded as part of the LDS Church's Cotton Mission in 1861. This year's conference marks the sesquicentennial of the community's settlement and seeks to highlight the remarkable transformation of the city and the region from isolated outpost to recreation destination. The theme also refers to the transformations of the Mormon tradition, in all of its varieties, from its frontier American origins in the early nineteenth century to its contemporary global presence at the dawn of the new millennium. The conference also aims to further the transformation of Mormon history and historiography from its provincial origins to greater consideration of broader trends, themes, and connections, as well as new interpretations. It is emblematic that St. George, its region, and college were for decades the residence and intellectual home of one of the great change agents of Mormon historiography, Juanita Leavitt Pulsipher Brooks.

The program committee welcomes papers and panels on all aspects of the transformations in the history of the Mormon-Restoration tradition. Studies focusing on the conference location and its environs (from Las Vegas to Colorado City), region-related themes, and/or notable anniversaries, are particularly encouraged. Accordingly, the following topics are of interest: the founding and history of the Cotton Mission (1861); the development of St. George and southern Utah; Mormon perspectives on and involvement in the American Civil War (1861-1865); the history and impact of Dixie College (1911); the environmental and agricultural history of the region, including the use and conflict over resources (particularly water and timber), the founding of national parks, the impact of nearby nuclear testing, and the development of nature-related tourism; and Mormon relationships with Native Americans.

While we encourage presentations related to the conference theme, we also welcome high-quality proposals related to any aspect of Mormon history. The Program Committee will give preference to complete two- or three-paper session proposals, but individual paper proposals and innovative formats will also be considered. Please send an abstract of each paper (no more than 300 words) outlining your argument and sources, plus a short CV (no longer than 2 pages) for each speaker; complete panel proposals should also include a short abstract describing the rationale and contribution of the overall panel, as well as suggestions for session chairs and respondents. Previously published papers will not be considered. Since MHA is particularly interested in fostering a new generation of scholars, generous donors have offered to pay the travel expenses for some undergraduate and graduate students whose proposals are accepted. Students' proposals should include estimated expenses if applying for a travel grant.

The deadline for proposals is October 1, 2010. Proposals should be sent by e-mail to mhameeting2011@gmail.com. Hard copies of proposals can also be sent to Matthew Grow, Center for Communal Studies, 8600 University Blvd., Evansville, IN 47712. Notification of acceptance or rejection will be made by January 1, 2011. Additional instructions and information are available on the MHA website at <http://www.mhahome.org>.

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