

HUMOR

CALL FOR PAPERS • The Annual Meeting of Mormon Scholars in the Humanities

March 23–24, 2018

Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah

Mormon Scholars in the Humanities invites proposals for its 2018 annual conference. The conference topic this year is humor, and papers or panels organized around the theme are encouraged. However, as always, we invite papers on other topics, including those that reflect one's current professional research interests in the humanities.

Mormons have a sometimes difficult relationship with humor and especially its outcome: laughter. In Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin's final conference address, "Come What May, and Love It," he encouraged Mormons to learn to use humor. He told a number of humorous stories to highlight its value and usefulness. People laughed, loudly. This reaction highlights the possible conflict: while we encourage humor, Mormon scriptures prohibit loud laughter. This example is just one conflict surrounding humor that potentially troubles a people of paradox. Mormons have been the butt of satirical writing, jokes, and television, as well as a famous musical. Mormons have also produced a wide variety of humor in their history. The conference encourages participants to reflect on the ways humor and related topics like laughter and the comic are configured in humanities disciplines and consider how those configurations speak to contemporary Mormon culture.

Potential topics include:

- What is the role and place of humor, and how might it be associated with related topics such as folly, parody, gallows humor, wit, irony, spoof, travesty, tricksters, jesters, and clowns?
- How do Mormon approaches to humor compare with those of other cultures and traditions?
- What is the relationship and nature of satire about and/or by Mormons?
- What theological possibilities are there in the combination of humor and Mormonism?
- What is the relationship between laughter, gender, power, sexuality, and identity? Who gets to make others laugh, who gets to laugh, and why?

We invite 250–350 word abstracts for papers, as well as proposals for organized panels. Abstracts and proposals are due January 5, 2018; acceptance notices will be sent out by February 5, 2018. Submissions are made using an online portal (link below); a link to the portal is also available at www.mormonscholars.net.

All presenters are required to register for the conference, but they are not required to be members of the LDS church. MSH welcomes submissions by independent scholars and graduate students. Graduate students wishing to be considered for a Graduate Student Travel Fund award should indicate so when making their submission.

Submission Portal: <https://goo.gl/forms/X11XJt10oA9CsYD42>

Deadline: January 5, 2018