

Joseph Smith Papers Conference

October 11, 2019 | Conference Center Theater

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

8:00–8:15 a.m.

Welcome and Conference Introduction

8:15–9:45 a.m.

Protecting the Saints: Joseph Smith's Use of Power in Early Nauvoo

Chair: Jessica Nelson, Church History Department
Spencer W. McBride, Church History Department
"The Political Education of Joseph Smith"

Benjamin E. Park, Sam Houston State University
"Establishing the Ancient Order: Navigating Power and Politics in Early Nauvoo"

David W. Smith, Independent Scholar
"Establishing the Office of Trustee-in-Trust"

10:00–11:30 a.m.

Ecclesiastical Expansion: The Establishment of the Relief Society

Chair: Kate Holbrook, Church History Department
Jennifer Reeder, Church History Department
"Reading Between the Lines: Politics and Personality in the Nauvoo Female Relief Society's 'Living Constitution'"

Jonathan A. Stapley, Independent Scholar
"Ecclesiology, Liturgy, and Cosmology in Early Nauvoo"

Megan Stanton, University of Wisconsin–Madison
"Gendered Collaboration in the Female Relief Society"

11:45 a.m.–12:45 p.m.

Lunch

Volume Editor Roundtable

Moderator: Riley M. Lorimer, Church History Department

Participants:

Matthew C. Godfrey, Church History Department

Gerrit J. Dirkmaat, Brigham Young University

Christian Heimburger, Church History Department

1:00–2:50 p.m.

The Potential and Limitations of Textual Sources

Chair: Sharalyn D. Howcroft, Church History Department

Gary James Bergera, Smith-Pettit Foundation
"The Joseph Smith Papers Editorial Apparatus and the Beginnings of Nauvoo Plural Marriage: A Review"

Andrew F. Ehat, Joseph Smith Research Institute
"Heavenly Mysteries, Earthly Realities: Challenges in Writing Early Nauvoo History"

Janiece Johnson, Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, Brigham Young University
"Joseph and the Book: Smith and His Relationship to the Book of Mormon"

Ryan Bell, Independent Scholar
Brian Passantino, Utah State University
"Social Networks and The Joseph Smith Papers"

3:05–4:35 p.m.

Pragmatic Aspects of Joseph Smith's Expanding Theology

Chair: Lisa Olsen Tait, Church History Department

Jordan Watkins, Brigham Young University
"Suffering and Salvation: The Temporal Contexts of Joseph Smith's Nauvoo Teachings"

Susan Staker, Independent Scholar
"Angels in Nauvoo: Adam Rising, Enoch Falling (1840–1841)"

Christopher James Blythe, Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, Brigham Young University
"The Development of Baptism in Nauvoo"

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PARTICIPANT BIOS

Ryan Bell, Independent Scholar
“*Social Networks and The Joseph Smith Papers*”

Ryan Bell is a native of Ogden, Utah, and attended Ben Lomond High School. He has a bachelor’s degree in digital forensics from Dixie State University, a bachelor’s in sociology from Weber State University, and a master’s in sociology from Oxford University. His research interests center on social network analysis and the application of network science to studying social life.

Gary James Bergera, Smith-Pettit Foundation
“*The Joseph Smith Papers Editorial Apparatus and the Beginnings of Nauvoo Plural Marriage: A Review*”

Gary James Bergera is the managing director of the Smith-Pettit Foundation and the company director of Signature Books, both of Salt Lake City, Utah. He is author/coauthor or editor/coeditor of seven books. Most recently, he edited the diaries of Leonard J. Arrington, published in three volumes as *Confessions of a Mormon Historian*. His publications have received awards from the Mormon History Association, the Utah Historical Society, and the Dialogue Foundation. He currently serves on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Mormon History* and the *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal*. He is the 2018 recipient of the Leonard J. Arrington lifetime achievement award from the Mormon History Association.

Christopher James Blythe, Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, Brigham Young University
“*The Development of Baptism in Nauvoo*”

Christopher James Blythe is a research associate for the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship and is working on a study of Latter-day Saint interpretations of Book of Mormon geography. He spent three years with the Joseph Smith Papers Project. His book, *Terrible Revolution: Latter-day Saints and the American Apocalypse*, will be published next year by Oxford University Press.

Gerrit J. Dirkmaat, Brigham Young University

Gerrit J. Dirkmaat is an assistant professor of Church history and doctrine at Brigham Young University. He worked as a historian and writer for the Church History Department from 2010 to 2014 with the Joseph Smith Papers Project and served as a volume coeditor and historian for *Documents, Volume 1* and as the lead volume editor for *Documents, Volume 3*. He has continued to work as a volunteer editor for the Joseph Smith Papers Project on *Administrative Records: Council of Fifty, Minutes, March 1844–January 1846* and on *Documents, Volume 8*. He is also the author of dozens of academic articles. He currently serves as editor of the academic journal *Mormon Historical Studies*, published by the Mormon Historic Sites Foundation, and serves on the church history editorial board for *BYU Studies*.

Andrew F. Ehat, Joseph Smith Research Institute
“*Heavenly Mysteries, Earthly Realities: Challenges in Writing Early Nauvoo History*”

Andrew F. Ehat has spent his career in the computer software and publishing industries, notably with WordPerfect Corporation, Novell, Infobases, and Western Standard Publishing. He is the author of OriginalSources.com, which has been distributed by World Book, Inc. and Encyclopaedia Britannica to millions of students and scholars for the past twenty years. As director of the Joseph Smith Research Institute, he is preparing works on the history and teachings of Joseph Smith.

Matthew C. Godfrey, Church History Department

Matthew C. Godfrey is a general editor and the managing historian of the Joseph Smith Papers Project. He has served as the lead historian on three Joseph Smith Papers volumes—*Documents, Volume 2; Documents, Volume 4; and Documents, Volume 7*—and has contributed to two other volumes. He is the author of *Religion, Politics, and Sugar: The Mormon Church, the Federal Government, and the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company, 1907–1921* (Utah State University Press, 2007) and the coeditor of *The Earth Will Appear as the Garden of Eden: Essays on Mormon Environmental History* (University of Utah Press, 2019).

Christian Heimburger, Church History Department

Christian Heimburger received a PhD in American history from the University of Colorado Boulder. He is a volume editor for the Joseph Smith Papers and is part of the team that produced *Documents, Volume 5* and *Documents, Volume 9*, as well as the forthcoming *Documents, Volume 13*. In addition to his work on Joseph Smith and the early church, Christian studies the history of Japanese American incarceration during World War II and is currently finishing a book manuscript on that subject. In spring 2018, he published an article in the *Utah Historical Quarterly* that examined the history of Japanese American incarceration and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and explored how the state of Utah memorializes these dark chapters in American history.

Janiece Johnson, Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, Brigham Young University
“*Joseph and the Book: Smith and His Relationship to the Book of Mormon*”

Janiece Johnson is general editor of *Mountain Meadows Massacre: Collected Legal Papers* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2017) and coauthor of *The Witness of Women: Firsthand Experiences and Testimonies from the Restoration* (Deseret Book, 2016). She is currently the Laura F. Willes Faculty Research Associate at the Maxwell Institute at BYU.

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Spencer W. McBride, Church History Department
“*The Political Education of Joseph Smith*”

Spencer W. McBride, PhD, is a historian and documentary editor at the Joseph Smith Papers Project. He is the author of *Pulpit and Nation: Clergymen and the Politics of Revolutionary America* (University of Virginia Press, 2016) and the coeditor of the forthcoming *Contingent Citizens: The Shifting Perception of Latter-day Saints in American Political Culture* (Cornell University Press, 2020). He is currently writing a book on Joseph Smith’s 1844 presidential campaign (Oxford University Press).

Benjamin E. Park, Sam Houston State University
“*Establishing the Ancient Order: Navigating Power and Politics in Early Nauvoo*”

Benjamin E. Park received his doctorate from Cambridge University and currently teaches American religious history at Sam Houston State University. His first book, *American Nationalisms: Imagining Union in the Age of Revolutions, 1783–1833*, was published by Cambridge University Press in 2018, and his second book, *Kingdom of Nauvoo: The Rise and Fall of a Religious Empire on the American Frontier*, will be published by W. W. Norton/Liveright in February 2020. He is currently editing *The Blackwell Companion to American Religious History* and is coeditor, with Quincy Newell, of *Mormon Studies Review*.

Brian Passantino, Utah State University
“*Social Networks and The Joseph Smith Papers*”

Brian Passantino graduated from BYU in 2016 with a bachelor’s degree in ancient Near Eastern studies. He is currently a graduate student in history at Utah State University, where he is studying the history of the Latter-day Saint canon.

Jennifer Reeder, Church History Department
“*Reading Between the Lines: Politics and Personality in the Nauvoo Female Relief Society’s ‘Living Constitution’*”

Jennifer Reeder is the nineteenth-century women’s history specialist at the Church History Department and has a PhD in American history from George Mason University. She has coedited *The Witness of Women: Firsthand Experiences and Testimonies from the Restoration* (Deseret Book, 2016) and *At the Pulpit: 185 Years of Discourses by Latter-day Saint Women* (Church Historian’s Press, 2017). She also writes Church history topics essays that accompany the *Saints* volumes and global histories for the Church History Department publications division.

David W. Smith, Independent Scholar
“*Establishing the Office of Trustee-in-Trust*”

David W. Smith received a master’s degree in public administration and a bachelor’s degree in philosophy, both from Brigham Young University. He has been published in *BYU Studies Quarterly* and has presented at the BYU Religious Education Student Symposium. He works in the Missionary Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Susan Staker, Independent Scholar
“*Angels in Nauvoo: Adam Rising, Enoch Falling (1840–1841)*”

Susan Staker lives on Whidbey Island in Washington State, where she reads, writes, gardens, rides the ferry, and walks her dog. In past lives, she did editorial work for Adobe Systems, Signature Books, and Sunstone Magazine and studied narrative theory at the University of Utah. Read about her current project at IslandIdiotGirl.com/2016/03/09/after-adobe-a-book-of-joseph/.

Megan Stanton, University of Wisconsin–Madison
“*Gendered Collaboration in the Female Relief Society*”

Megan Stanton is a historian of American religion and kinship. She received her PhD from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. She is writing a book on the intersections of kinship with church governance in the nineteenth-century Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Community of Christ).

Jonathan A. Stapley, Independent Scholar
“*Ecclesiology, Liturgy, and Cosmology in Early Nauvoo*”

Jonathan A. Stapley is a historian and scientist. His volume *The Power of Godliness: Mormon Liturgy and Cosmology* was recently published by Oxford University Press (2018).

Jordan Watkins, Brigham Young University
“*Suffering and Salvation: The Temporal Contexts of Joseph Smith’s Nauvoo Teachings*”

Jordan Watkins is an assistant professor of church history and doctrine at Brigham Young University. His current book manuscript, *Slavery and Sacred Texts: The Bible, the Constitution, and Historical Consciousness in Antebellum America*, is under contract at Cambridge University Press. Before joining the faculty at BYU, Jordan worked as a coeditor at the Joseph Smith Papers.

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