

## BYU Church History Symposium, 2020

### Visions and Visionaries: Joseph Smith in Comparative Contexts

The Department of Church History and Doctrine at BYU and the Church History Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints announce the BYU Church History Symposium, March 12–13, 2020. The symposium will convene at Brigham Young University (March 12) and at the Conference Center Theater in Salt Lake City (March 13). Keynote speakers include Sheri Dew and Richard Lyman Bushman (March 12), and President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (March 13).

We invite scholars of all backgrounds and career stages to submit proposals specifically addressing the broad theme of “Visions and Visionaries: Joseph Smith in Comparative Contexts.” Topics that could be explored under this theme include, but are not exclusive to, the following:

- Joseph Smith’s First Vision and subsequent visions
- Latter-day Saint visionaries
- Other visionaries
- Presbyterianism and Methodism and the First Vision
- Unusual excitement—this is typically described as “revivals” without a clear sense of what that meant to Joseph Smith and his peers
- Women and the First Vision—does it mean something different to women than to men? (see Susa Young Gates in April 1920 *Improvement Era*)
- Youth and the First Vision (see MIA speech contests around turn of 20<sup>th</sup> century; BYU centennial celebration in 1920)
- J. Reuben Clark’s 1938 statement that religious educators must assent to the First Vision as a historical event—context and implications
- How the First Vision has been used in general conference (frequency/emphasis/change over time, etc.)
- How the First Vision has been used in Church curriculum
- How the First Vision has been used in missionary work
- How the gospel topic essay “First Vision Accounts” has been used in classrooms and what difference, if any, has it made for students
- Context and content of Orson Pratt’s *An Interesting Account*
- Context and content of Orson Hyde’s German translation

- Context of other contemporary accounts
- Who did Joseph tell and when?
- Theological content of the First Vision
- Music and the First Vision
- Art and the First Vision
- Cinema and the First Vision
- Pageants and the First Vision
- Joseph Smith among visionaries—how is he alike and different
- Provenance of the accounts
- Antagonists of the First Vision—arguments against it

Proposals should consist of a brief abstract (no more than 500 words) and a current CV. Proposals may be sent to any member of the symposium organizing committee (see below). Deadline for submission is September 15, 2019.

Notification of acceptance will be given by October 15, 2019. Selected papers will be published by the BYU Religious Studies Center and Deseret Book following the symposium.

Respectfully,

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