

The Annual Summer Seminar on Mormon Culture

“THE GOLD PLATES AS CULTURAL ARTIFACT”

Brigham Young University

July 11 - August 19, 2011

In the summer of 2011, the Neal A Maxwell Institute at Brigham Young University will sponsor a summer seminar for graduate students and junior faculty on “The Gold Plates as Cultural Artifact.” The seminar will be held on the BYU campus in Provo, Utah, from July 11 to August 19. Admitted participants will receive a stipend of \$3000 with an accommodations subsidy if needed. The seminar continues the series of seminars on Mormon culture begun in the summer of 1997.

The seminar will be conducted by Richard Bushman, Professor of History Emeritus at Columbia University, and Terryl Givens, Professor of Literature and Religion at the University of Richmond.

The seminar will consider the gold plates as a cultural object situated in various environments ranging from the Book of Mormon to modern popular culture. From the beginning the plates have fascinated disbelievers as well as believers. They have sparked ongoing research and debate and still figure in Mormon song, story, and art. The plates take their place alongside a host of sacred objects that figure in the world’s religious imagination and stand in a long tradition of recovered lost records. The seminar will ask how cultural meanings have attached themselves to the gold plates in these various environments and what the plates mean today.

Each participant will be asked to prepare a paper on some aspect of the plates’ cultural history for presentation in a public symposium in the final week. Applicants are welcomed from the fields of history, literature, anthropology, sociology, religious studies, philosophy and other humanistic and social scientific fields. Graduate students at any level of preparation are eligible. Junior faculty are also invited to apply.

Applications should be submitted by February 15, 2011. Notifications will be sent by March 15, 2011. Application materials are attached. For further information write:

Summer Seminar on Mormon Culture

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