During the last decade or so, Mormonism's generally monolithic public discourse - largely shaped, controlled, and distributed by the LDS church - has blossomed like Brigham Young's proverbial rose in the desert: from Mormon rhetoric to Mormon rhetorics. These rhetorics will be the focus of this class. Over the course of the semester, we will trace the Mormon historical narrative; examine the tradition's sacred texts, doctrines, and shifting church policies; and consider the influence and rhetorics of LDS leadership. We will also make a special effort to nuance and complicate "official" institutional narratives with attention to both academic and vernacular historical, sociological, and ethnographic accounts of what it means to be Mormon. Of special focus during the semester will be Mormonism’s struggle with and rhetorics about marginality, first as a marginalized "peculiar" group itself and second as a group that has, at times, had complicated relationships with marginalized groups within its membership, including women, people of color, and people who identify as LGBTQ.

This class is offered the second half of summer semester June 22 - Aug 2
Summer 2017      Tue & Thurs     10:45 am - 1:45 pm