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Review Essay

Advances in Hutterian Scholarship

Review of: **Janzen, Rod, and Max Stanton. 2010. *The Hutterites in North America*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.**

Review of: **Katz, Yossi, and John Lehr. 2014[2012] *Inside the Ark: The Hutterites in Canada and the United States* [2nd ed.]. Regina, SK: University of Regina Press.**

By William L. Smith, *Sociology, Georgia Southern University*

Certain elements of Hutterite life have changed significantly since the publication of *Hutterian Brethren: The Agricultural Economy and Social Organization of a Communal People* by John W. Bennett, *Hutterite Society* by John A. Hostetler, *The Dynamics of Hutterite Society* by Karl A. Peter, and *The Hutterites in North America* by John Hostetler and Gertrude Enders Huntington. These classics are widely cited by scholars and it has been a long time since any new scholarly books have been written on the Hutterites. Peter identified the Hutterites, “as an ongoing sociocultural entity constantly adapting to environmental, political, and social circumstances” (xiii). Rod Janzen’s and Max Stanton’s book *The Hutterites in North America* and Yossi Katz’s and John Lehr’s book *Inside the Ark: The Hutterites in Canada and the United States* provide a much needed discussion and updating on contemporary Hutterites and their encounter with and adaptation to the twenty-first century.

Janzen, a historian, and Stanton, an anthropologist, spent twenty-five years visiting Hutterite colonies in the United States and Canada, witnessing firsthand the changes to Hutterite life. The authors provide readers with an exceptional historical-social-cultural analysis of the everyday lives of Hutterites. The Hutterites are a communal group and an intentional community who share a common set of Christian / Anabaptist religious beliefs. One of the most important points, if not the most important point, made by the authors is that the Hutterites are a diverse group and there is often a great degree of variation between Hutterite colonies and even within colonies. They are divided into four distinct branches or *Leut* (German for people): Lehrerleut, Dariusleut, Schmiedeleut One, and Schmiedeleut Two. The Lehrerleut are the most conservative and the least diverse, the Dariusleut are moderates and the most diverse, and the Schmiedeleut are the most liberal, although the Schmiedeleut One are the most liberal regarding cultural and religious issues while the Schmiedeleut Two are more conservative and aligned with the Dariusleut, sharing what might be called the middle ground among the various *Leut*. The Dariusleut have the most colonies (159), followed by the Lehrerleut (139), Schmiedeleut Two (118), and Schmiedeleut One (61).

To further support their point on Hutterian diversity, the authors compared two colonies one from Montana and the other from Manitoba. The Montana colony farms and manages

livestock and fosters social isolation. Children rarely complete high school and community cell phones are to be used only in cases of emergency and for business purposes. They have never had Internet access, although they use computers to help manage their farming operations, but these computers are not being replaced and will eventually be discarded. Church services are conducted in German. Musical instruments, photographs, and radios are not allowed and women wear traditional full head coverings. Their residences are very simple and minimalist in design and furnishings. The Manitoba colony relies primarily on manufacturing enterprises to generate income. Most children complete high school and several have graduated from college. The Internet is readily accessible to colony members and their manufacturing enterprises are computerized. Church services are conducted in English when the colony is hosting visitors. They have a choir, and colony youth can take piano lessons. The colony is involved in mission activities often with non-Hutterites, and members play volleyball, paint, and ski cross-country.

The authors devote a chapter to the four Hutterite branches highlighting how religious and cultural practices vary among them and how the Schmiedeleut divided into two camps, One and Two. Other chapters discuss Hutterite origins and history; immigration and settlement patterns; beliefs and practices; family life and rites of passage; identity, tradition, and folk beliefs; education; colony structure, work patterns, governance, gender and the role of women; population and demographic considerations such as birth, retention rates, and the process of starting new colonies (branching); management of technology and social change; interactions with non-Hutterites or those known as the English; and the future of Hutterite society. There is an appendix listing all of the Hutterite colonies in North America as of 2009. Colonies are grouped by *Leut* and information is provided for each colony regarding year founded, location, province or state, and the name of the parent colony.

Aspects of Hutterite life that have changed in recent decades, according to Janzen and Stanton, include: smaller family size; more defections; the addition of choirs among the Schmiedeleut and Dariusleut (historically Hutterites have not had choirs); iPod use among young Schmiedeleut; male-female population imbalance (fewer male runaways return, thus reducing the marriage pool, especially for Lehrerleut women); increased dieting and exercise among women; more healthful foods consumed; support of education in Dariusleut and Schmiedeleut colonies beyond the eighth grade, even for college, albeit only for those majoring in education returning to teach in colony schools; facilities (space) in some colonies designated just for worship; the increase of manufacturing enterprises, though agriculture is still their primary economic pursuit; the increased Hutterite standard of living; the impact of evangelical Christianity on individual Hutterites and their decision to leave the colony; growing concern over the impact of technology (cell phones, iPods, the Internet) and the mass media on their lifestyle; and a belief shared by some that there is less unity among Hutterites in comparison to the past.

Janzen and Stanton conclude that Hutterite society is prospering even though vocal critics continue to prophesy their demise. The authors state, "The Hutterites are the most successful communal society in modern history, and Hutterite cultural and spiritual health is unquestionably

vibrant in the 2000s” (302). Some scholars and communalists might quibble with the authors about their position and argue that possibly the Israeli kibbutzim are the most successful communal society in modern history. To support their point, the authors note that Hutterites are still strongly committed to communal Anabaptism and that their numbers have tripled in the last sixty years.

Both Katz and Lehr are geographers who are interested in analyzing and explaining the impact technology has had on the lives of colony members, the various strategies Hutterite leaders use to control the complex boundaries that separate Hutterites from non-Hutterites, the differences between colonies and the future of Hutterian society. This list of concerns is not exhaustive. The authors attempt to provide the reader with a comprehensive account of the “story of the Hutterites” (xix) but acknowledge that the story they are telling is primarily about the Schmiedeleut.

The book is organized into two parts, with the first part containing 12 chapters that deal with following issues: the origins of Hutterianism in the sixteenth century; the history of the group until the late nineteenth century; the organization and legal structure of the community; the spatial organization of colonies; religion and tradition; the economics of colony life and the role of technology; education; leisure time; relationships with non-Hutterites; women and their role in colony life; runaways / defectors (*Weglaufen*); and the impact of globalization and social change. The second part of the book is divided into five appendices, the largest one containing the ordinances and conference letters of the Schmiedeleut from 1762 to 2012. Another one of the appendices is a listing of all Hutterite colonies in North America as of 2014. Colonies are grouped together by province or state, and information is provided for each colony regarding parent colony, year founded, and *Leut*. The appendices comprise approximately half of the book.

Katz and Lehr note that among the Schmiedeleut “manufacturing is the rule, not the exception” (103) and it is more likely to be found among the Dariusleut but not the Lehrerleut. Unlike their Amish cousins, the Hutterites look more favorably on technology and technological change when it benefits the community, particularly in their farming operations and manufacturing enterprises. A latent or unintended function of the introduction and expansion of manufacturing enterprises on Hutterite colonies is that, “the acquisition of industrial skills gives young people a chance to acquire trades and skills that enable them to find work in urban areas without difficulty” (185). Hutterites also are known to be good farmers, and they are knowledgeable about farm equipment and agricultural practices. The possession of these particular skill sets have contributed to increased defection rates among young Hutterite men, many of whom do not return to the colony. On many colonies, the defection rate exceeds the birth rate. Some colonies do not allow defectors to visit or interact with their family and friends. Another threat to the stability of colony life is one posed by evangelical Christianity, which “offers personal salvation through a direct relationship with Christ, salvation that comes without communal living or removal from the world” (183).

The authors believe the greatest change experienced by Hutterites within the past twenty-five years has been the schism among the Schmiedeleut. This schism was largely the result of different strategies used to cope with the ever increasing presence and influence of the outside world on Hutterite life. There was a dispute over the ownership (design and patent rights) of some farm equipment between two of the Schmiedeleut colonies that led to a series of law suits. A prominent Hutterite minister was accused of financial malfeasance and with interfering in the affairs of other colonies. Another key factor causing this schism was the Hutterites' on-again, off-again relationship with the Bruderhof people (a New York State communal religious group) who live a more modern lifestyle than the Hutterites. Katz and Lehr note that it is unlikely that the two Schmiedeleut factions will resolve their differences in the near future.

The authors believe the Hutterite way of life is under siege by the forces of modernity and the secular world. The values of the modern world—including individualism, liberalism, and egalitarianism—are infiltrating the colonies, undercutting the conservative, authoritarian, and collective foundations of Hutterite society. Technology, especially the use of cell phones with Internet access, opens the colony to the world and its many temptations. Katz and Lehr conclude that church authority and the salience of Hutterian religious beliefs and practices have weakened during the past twenty years, but they expect the Hutterites to continue to adapt and remain a presence on the communal scene.

Appendix five contains the ordinances and letters of the Schmiedeleut from 1762 to 2012. There are entries for specific years during this time frame that highlight the duties and obligations of those who occupy certain positions in the colony, such as minister, manager, farm boss, and cook. The entries also discuss regulations and rules including: the wearing of beards, whether cousins should marry, hunting, clothing, pocket watches, runaways, use of alcohol, smoking, travel to funerals, and shunning. It was common for the rules to change back and forth during these years. For example, early on only the farm boss could have a pocket watch, but later on, those working in the fields or at night could possess one.

Both sets of authors disagree with some of the conclusions reached by other scholars about the Hutterites. For example, Hostetler (1974) found that the Hutterite *Leuts* accepted the differences among them, but Janzen and Stanton note that while that may have been true years ago, it is not true today. Janzen and Stanton challenge Hostetler (1974) and Hostetler and Huntington (1996) about their claims that Hutterite women are overly critical, especially of men. Janzen and Stanton claim that since no evidence was given comparing Hutterite women with non-Hutterite women, that conclusion is meaningless. The authors also disagree with Stephenson (1985) who concluded that the work of Hutterite women is valued less than that of Hutterite men, thus contributing to a loss of status and an earlier death than one would expect among women. Janzen and Stanton claim that the status of Hutterite women—like men—increases with age, and that they provide much informal advice and guidance to others in the colony. Katz and Lehr disagree with Rozen regarding her explanation for why Hutterite women are marrying later than before. Rozen (1987) claims mechanization has reduced the amount of work available to

young men, and they thus delay marriage. Another contributing factor to delayed marriage is that Hutterite young women do not want to leave their colony and friends (since Hutterite women move to their husband's colony) for a man who does not yet have a position in the colony. Katz and Lehr found that this is not true and that Hutterite women do not agree with Rozen's conclusions. Since more Hutterite young people are finishing high school, this probably more than anything else delays marriage. Katz and Lehr also report that Hutterites dispute Hostetler's (1974) position that young women from wealthier colonies postpone marriage with men from less affluent colonies. Both sets of authors acknowledge that religious motives now are the primary reason influencing most runaways / defections, but surprisingly, Janzen and Stanton found survey data that indicated that runaways were more likely to mention other reasons for leaving—e.g. disagreements with colony leaders and lack of satisfaction with colony work—than religious reasons for leaving.

Janzen's and Stanton's book is in-depth and more comprehensive in scope and coverage than Katz's and Lehr's book. Katz's and Lehr's decision to focus on the Schmiedeleut has both positive and negative repercussions. They provide more discussion about the Schmiedeleut than do Janzen and Stanton but at the cost of paying less attention to the other two branches. This a significant difference between the two books, especially when one considers that the Hutterites are not monolithic. Janzen and Stanton are also more optimistic in their assessment than are Katz and Lehr about the future of Hutterite society.

I recommend both of these books. They are a welcome addition to the field of Hutterite studies. Additional, in-depth and comprehensive studies of the Hutterites are needed on a variety of levels including Hutterite society as a whole, the four branches or *Leuts*, and individual colonies. Scholars need to address more specifically the impact that boundary maintenance mechanisms have on the survival and cultural identity of the Hutterites (see Smith 1996).

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Book Reviews

Review of **Stevick, Richard. 2014[2007]. *Growing Up Amish: The Rumspringa Years* [2nd edition]. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.**

By Denise Reiling, *Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology, Eastern Michigan University*

The first thing that should have caught my attention when I received my copy of Richard Stevick's second edition of *Growing Up Amish* was that he had changed the cover image from one of a male and female adolescent riding in an open-top buggy—the picture of traditional conformity—to an image of a single male, walking down the road in a blatantly cocky fashion, under his own power rather than being conveyed, staring unabashed, straight into the camera. His black vest is flapping open, and his white shirt is partially untucked, loose, and gaping around the collar, so big as to be ill-fitting. He is taking a long, cool drag on a cigarette. A decade ago, I would have honed-in right off on this image as rather inappropriate for a jacket cover of a book about the generalities of Amish youth culture. Apparently it has become far too commonplace to see images of Amish deviance for me to have noticed. This is what Stevick brings new to his second edition: what has changed seemingly so quickly.

What did catch my attention first was that Stevick had changed the subtitle, which struck me as not a common thing to do. *The Teenage Years* had become *The Rumspringa Years*. Perhaps it seems a small thing to notice, but as a sociologist from the symbolic-interactionist perspective, I noticed. Language is culture's primary conveyor of meaning, so I entered the text searching for the bigger changes that I assumed would support this seemingly small one. Was Stevick attempting to communicate that the teenage years are now dominated more so by the deviance that can occur during Rumspringa (for hasn't Rumspringa come to be synonymous with deviance?) than by other aspects of this coming-of-age period?

Stevick allows Mose Gingerich, one of the first reality TV stars (*Amish in the City*), to have the opening words in the book, which cleverly reflect the question that lingers at the end of the book about the future of Amish culture, although Gingerich speaks it as a statement: "If they

still take us back after being on television, they'll take us back no matter what we do" (ix). The placement of this quote is brilliant of Stevick because it summarizes what I drew out as his major thesis point and reason for writing a second edition only seven years after the first: Amish families, communities, and Amish culture, writ large, are facing challenges brought about by the internet and social media that are qualitatively different from those of any other time, with normative boundaries being pushed by youth further to the edge than previously thought possible without the bough breaking.

Stevick writes that when he began work on the second edition in 2012, he noted in amazement that in the 2007 edition, he made no mention of *MySpace* or *Facebook* and used only eight words—eight—to comment on cell phone usage (x). This seems unimaginable to anyone who has spent any time within the three largest Amish communities of late. (Note that I restrict my comment to include only the “big three,” a point I will return to later in this review). In fact, Stevick's attention to technology-based changes is such that he dedicates the entire preface of this edition to what he refers to as the “e-savvy” “electronic generation” of Amish youth (x-xi).

The reader also learns in the preface that the felt need to publish an update began to coalesce in mid-2011 when Stevick was contacted by his publisher at Johns Hopkins University Press regarding a news story printed in the *Lancaster Sunday News* reporting use of the internet and *Facebook* by Amish youth (x). The remainder of the preface leads the reader through the adventure Stevick embarked upon to gain entrée into the Facebook lives of Amish youth. His goal was to understand the manner in which the use of social media by individuals who have not yet taken baptism, who are not yet “officially” Amish, could potentially impact not just the individual but the future direction of Amish culture.

Stevick makes a distinction in his analysis of this issue between “faster” groups that are more likely to emerge from within larger “urban Amish” rather than smaller groups (with his acknowledgement that little is known of smaller groups). Chapter one contains a very good discussion of the impact of these faster, urban groups on the type and level of deviance committed by youth during the Rumspringa period, the conditions under which a more peer-centered rather than adult-centered environment for youth during the Rumspringa period will emerge, and the consequences of that environment on youth behavior.

The preface and first chapter, with their emphases on social media and the notion of “fastness” set the stage for what will emerge as the primary difference between Stevick's first and second edition, which is the exploration of the use of social media and the internet. The book otherwise covers the same topics as the first edition, describing the lifespan from childhood to adulthood. It is interesting that Stevick changed eight of the eleven chapter titles in a way that appears to reflect subtle changes within Amish youth culture, whether or not intentional on his part. This is not to say that the other chapters do not contain new information, indeed not. I felt that there was something new and fresh in every chapter, which is not always the case with subsequent editions.

Chapter eight, “Rumspringa: Stepping Out and Running About,” and chapter three, “Adolescence: Building an Amish Identity,” are worthy to be singled out for mention because they convey the greatest amount of information on the two biggest changes. Chapter eight brings to light the depth and magnitude of change that has occurred in acceptance of the internet, smart phones (which are qualitatively different from standard cell phones), and social media. Readers unfamiliar with the current circumstances will likely be surprised to learn that the Amish are concerned over matters such as males’ involvement in online pornography, for example.

Although the issue of social media forms the core of the most critical new material, Chapter three deserves recognition for Stevick’s more fully developed discussion of a sense of self than in his first edition, including a discussion subtitled, “A Healthy Sense of Self.” Here, Stevick brings forward new information about reports of disordered eating among Amish girls. I applaud this inclusion, but I do not believe as strongly as Stevick that this issue is recent to emerge due only to the tendency of Amish people to “...keep this information away from outsiders, whether they be neighbors, physicians, or academics” (56). I question whether it is more the case that we do not want to see because we want to believe his concluding statement on the matter: “Whenever children are wanted, loved, and nurtured by a caring mother, father, extended family, and the community, they are likely to develop both a confidence in their self-worth and a positive sense of themselves as Amish” (57).

In a similar vein, a reviewer of Stevick’s first edition criticized Stevick for what in his read was an over-emphasis on the positive influences on youths’ decision as to remain or defect from the Amish, failing to acknowledge the threats. In his second edition, Stevick redeems himself by including a brave discussion of these matters under the subtitle, “*Dynamics of Amish Retention*.” Stevick brings forward evidence of what some readers would view as rather harsh treatment at the hands of Amish culture, such as reports that those who defect from the Amish are told they are doomed to Hell. These are hard stories to hear because they conflict with what we want to be true.

Stevick is forthright again in his epilogue, wherein he openly confronts the potentially explosive tension between adults who advocate for greater parental surveillance and guidance of youth away from destructive forces and those who advocate for non-involvement, as per past practice, believing that youth should find their own way. The role of parents during the Rumspringa period has sparked debate within the literature as well, which Stevick covers in chapter three.

Most of what the reader will learn from this book concerns youth living in the three largest communities, which is a limitation of Amish studies in general. Stevick is to be commended, however, for the number of times that he cautions the reader to not inappropriately generalize his findings to all or even most communities. He also provides a better-than-expected sampling of what is known about the smaller communities. Anyone’s ability to write more broadly than Stevick is seriously hampered by the fact that there simply is not much research on

the lived experience within smaller communities available.

The final point I have to make is that I would like to have seen Dr. Stevick work more with the sociological concept of cultural lag, a problem that emerges when the technological imperative (if technology is available, it must be used) drives us into usage before contemplation of the consequences of our actions. I would have liked a solid acknowledgement of cultural lag as a cultural universal, not a condition experienced by only Amish people. I have no doubt that he knows this, but when the hallmark of Amish culture is its much touted uniqueness, it can slip from one's consciousness. I bring this voice to the table because a consistent plea of Amish people has been for the world to understand that they "are no different." It is a matter of form versus substance: they share culturally-universal forms of social arrangements, even though the substance of those forms may vary.

None of the criticism I make of this work should take away from the strength of the work and the contribution it makes to the literature. Richard Stevick's second edition of *Growing Up Amish* should be required reading for anyone within Amish studies, whether to inform their research or teaching. His book would serve as a highly valuable textbook in university and college courses in the area of Amish, cultural, ethnic, or ethno-religious studies. Other professionals would be well-served by this book as well, particularly those providing medical and mental health services to Amish people and those within public-school education and law enforcement in that it could improve cultural competence among providers.

I enjoyed reading Stevick's second edition even more than I enjoyed reading his first. To summarize, I would say that it was an easy read, accessible to a diverse audience, but that language seems to be used increasingly as a proxy for "unscholarly," and that is indeed not true in Stevick's case. I enjoyed reading the book because it informed my research, teaching, and my thinking about fellow human beings as they traverse a dynamic, ever-changing world that at times outpaces their cultural response, just as it does in mine. It was engaging, forthright in a fashion that rings authentic, a truth-telling, and yet written with sufficient contextual grounding so as to not make Amish youth and cultures appear bizarre. Stevick writes about Amish youth and the cultures they create with great respect, cultural competence, and sensitivity.

I look forward to a third edition and anticipate that one will be forthcoming because Stevick's academic interest in the research questions he poses and the concern he holds for the future of Amish culture suggests that a third edition may be at least in the back of his mind. Even though Dr. Stevick is now emeritus professor of psychology from Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, he at least relocated to a geographic region rich with data collection opportunities: Holmes County, Ohio. By the way, I learned all of this biographical information from Stevick's Facebook page. I believe an Amish kid might say "touché" in response to this turn-about-is-fair-play tactic, or more likely: "WD. TFFW." (Translation for those not as e-savvy as Amish kids: "Well done; Too funny for words.").

Review of Ehnle, Kurt, and Jane Ehnle. 2011. *Heritage of Faith: A History of the Church with an Apostolic Christian Focus*. Fairbury, IL: Heritage Press.

By John Swartz, *Curriculum Development, Christian Light Publications*

“Heritage of Faith” is a 367 page ten-unit high school level course prepared for students in Apostolic Christian Church schools and homes. The first three units cover church history from the time of Christ through the Reformation. Units four through eight concentrate on Apostolic Christian Church (ACC) history. Unit nine is a brief history of how the Bible came to us, emphasizing the superiority of the King James Version. Unit ten is a history of hymnology with a focus on *Zion’s Harp*, the official ACC hymnal.

Accompanying the course is a student workbook, an extensive teacher’s guide, and a 23 page list of additional resources. Eighteen 10” by 16” sheets compose a color coded timeline including major events of 2000 years of Christian history. The timeline is a valuable teaching tool and supplement to the *Heritage of Faith* course. This timeline could well be posted around the classroom walls. A smaller version, 6.5” by 10.5” sheets, is also available.

The text is interestingly written and attractively illustrated. The two-column format with frequent headings avoids monotonous blocks of reading. Photos, paintings, maps, and sidebars tastefully enhance the text, complementing the written presentation. Personal accounts help keep the history from becoming dry.

Introductions summarize every unit, present a unit outline, and list vocabulary words. Each unit is divided into four or five lessons, making a total of 44 lessons for the course. Each lesson heading includes an appropriate Scripture verse or verses. Beneath the heading is a timeline pertaining to the lesson followed by “thoughts/questions to guide the student’s thinking and focus as they read” (teacher’s guide, X).

In the student workbook, each lesson includes a page for writing the vocabulary definitions and a page of review activities. Review activities may consist of short answer questions, more involved questions that require paragraph answers, or descriptive lists of events or individuals. Timeline and map activities end each unit.

The teacher’s guide includes discussion questions, journal prompts, and answers to all the material in the student workbook. Suggestions for additional activities integrate language arts skills and expand the student’s interaction with the unit objectives. Although the course may be covered in one semester, if the additional activities are pursued, a year-long study would be advantageous.

Looking more specifically at the individual units, the first unit covers the early church to AD 300. Considerable attention is given to individuals and their faithfulness in the face of persecution. Unit two is a brief summary of the Church from AD 300 to AD 1700. Unit three

discusses the Anabaptist movement, ending with a lesson on the *Martyrs' Mirror*.

The founding and spread of the Apostolic Christian Church in Europe occupies units four and five. Samuel Froehlich, born July 4, 1803, experiences a spiritual awakening and conversion around 1825. In his zealous preaching and pursuit of truth Froehlich falls out of favor with the state church of Switzerland. At 28 years of age, in February 1832, he receives adult baptism by Pastor Ami Bost in Geneva, Switzerland.

Although Froehlich had contact with Baptists, Calvinists, and Mennonites, he did not completely agree with any of them. His discussions with an old Mennonite minister did result in the development of a noncombatant stance regarding military service.

Froehlich's preaching journeys to various cantons of Switzerland result in the formation of several congregations and the development of a new denomination called the Evangelical Baptist Church. Along with others outside the state church, Froehlich's followers experience discrimination and persecution in Switzerland and surrounding European countries.

The church providentially grows. Two young men from Hungary travel to Switzerland for further training in the locksmith trade. During this time they come in contact with the Froehlich movement, become believers, and are baptized. One is given the authority to baptize converts. On their return to Hungary, they are not hesitant in sharing their newfound faith. As the ripples spread, the church expands into the Balkans, Romania, and the Ukraine. In the Eastern European countries, the adherents are known as Nazarenes rather than Evangelical Baptist.

Units six and seven detail the beginning and spread of the ACC in America. An Amish-Mennonite congregation in Lewis County, New York was having spiritual difficulties. Someone who was acquainted with Froehlich's Evangelical Baptist Church in Europe was attending the Mennonite meeting. He suggested they write to Froehlich for advice. Hearing of the spiritual needs among the Lewis County Mennonites, Froehlich ordained 28 year-old Benedict Weyeneth as elder to come to America to fulfill the request for spiritual help. Weyeneth preached repentance and baptism by immersion. Both bishops in the Mennonite congregation, as well as many other members, left the Amish Mennonite church and formed the first ACC congregation in America. This congregation was known as the "New Amish Church."

Sometime in the 1850s, because of persecution in Hungary, an elder in the Nazarene (ACC) church immigrated to Sardis, Ohio. He, as well as other leaders in the ACC, lived exemplary lives, preached zealously, traveled extensively, and sacrificially ministered where they heard of those seeking spiritual help. Many of their early adherents had an Anabaptist (Mennonite / Amish) background.

The Apostolic Christian Church ministers emphasized true conversion and repentance, which they felt was often lacking in the Amish-Mennonite congregations. They also stressed the importance of baptism by immersion, a practice held to today for those joining their fellowship.

The waves of European immigration in the latter 1800s and early 1900s contributed to the growth of the ACC. But the church also faced challenges. The cultural differences between the early adherents, many from Amish-Mennonite background, and the later adherents, many from a Nazarene background in Central and Eastern Europe, led to a split in the early 1900s. The ACC remained the larger group, and a smaller group called the Apostolic Christian Church (Nazarene) was formed. Another division occurred in 1932. These divisions, along with the difficulties of World War I and reduced immigration, led to a period of slower growth. However, the ACC has continued to expand, with more recent growth in urban areas.

Unit 8 directs students to study the history of their own congregation. The lessons in this unit guide the student in doing original research. Two research papers are required. This hands-on approach to history has considerable potential and pedagogical value.

The title of unit nine is “How the Bible Came to Us.” Content includes the formation of the Old and New Testaments, Bible translations, and a focus on the *King James Version*. I was surprised to read that “the formal Elizabethan language had passed from the scene almost 300 years before” the *King James Version* was published in 1611 (290). This would place Elizabethan language in the Middle English period (1066 to 1450) rather than the Early Modern English period (1450 to 1690). Hopefully this error will be corrected in future printings.

Unit ten concludes this *Heritage of Faith* course with a study of sacred hymnology spanning the early centuries through the 1800s. Various hymn writers and composers are introduced. *Zion’s Harp*, the principal ACC hymnal, receives considerable attention. A few other hymnals also published by the ACC are briefly mentioned.

Reviewing this course was interesting and informative. The perspective could perhaps best be summed up by quoting from the prologue in *Marching to Zion*, the 810-page recent definitive history of the ACC. “Admittedly, it is a little less than objective at times, and the author’s deep affection for the church probably shows through then. In any case, the intent of the book was to make a historical record that will serve to inspire and delight present and future generations” (Klopfenstein 2007, 8).

I was impressed with both the physical quality of the course material and the pedagogical value. This is a very appropriate course for ACC youth, as well as others interested in becoming more acquainted with this church’s history. This course has the potential to achieve the goal stated by Klopfenstein: “to make a historical record that will serve to inspire and delight present and future generations.”

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Review of **Elder, D.R. 2014. *Why the Amish Sing*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.**

By Gracia Schlabach, *Lyndonville New Order Amish Community*

In recent decades many facets of Amish life have been explored in detail—except for their singing, and especially, singing in a variety of social settings. This deficiency is remedied by *Why the Amish Sing*. After many visits and personal interviews in the Holmes County, Ohio, area over a period of several years, Elder shares first-hand observations of Amish singing from an ethnomusicologist perspective.

In part one, “Amish Life and Song,” Elder steps inside a one-room schoolhouse one Friday mornings where a young boy named Roman enthusiastically selects the song, “Bedenke, Mensch, das Ende” (“Consider, Human, the End”). Although its message may seem morbid, she uses the song as a framework in which to place Amish singing within context of lifestyle and identity. These children follow the legacy of their Swiss Brethren ancestors as well as early settlers in central Ohio.

The chapter entitled “Functions of Amish Singing” is a masterpiece that shows how singing serves not only as a medium for worship and devotion, but also for enjoyment, communal memory, and cultural maintenance amid ongoing change. A case study of “Es Sind Zween Weg” (“There are Two Roads”) highlights the deliberate, daily choices which are part of living a separated life, a concept Elder calls boundary development.

Part two, “Singing in Childhood and Adolescence,” clearly demonstrates that Amish parents use song to transmit values and cultural identity to their children, whether their agrarian heritage via lullabies such as “Schlof, Bubeli, Schlof” (“Sleep, Baby, Sleep”) or their faith and belief through hymns, both German and English. A case study of school repertoire is youth hymn singing and Wednesday evening Bible study.

Part Three, “Singing for Worship,” covers subjects typically associated with Amish and their singing: church services, the centuries old *Ausbund* hymnal, and the familiar “Loblied” (“Song of Praise”). Elder brings in new dimensions by comparing recent transcriptions of Amish slow tunes and those made in the 1930s to the 1960s. Another not-so-common observation involves pulpit intonations.

Part four, “Singing for Special Occasions,” continues on a similar theme, that of weddings, funerals, and holidays. Singing for shut-ins and while traveling are also part of community. I doubt that Elder was actually present at the New Order wedding she describes in chapter eleven because the account veers from her earlier pattern of accurate observation and becomes a garble of chronology and practice from different areas. Things like singing the tune of “Battle Hymn of the Republic” right after the ceremony would not have taken place at this particular wedding.¹

The final chapter, “Songs for the Future,” portrays twenty-first century Amish singing as a window of change. Among the younger generation, there is a renewed surge of interest for perpetuating the slow *Ausbund* tunes. At the same time, many are interested in learning to read musical notation and sing in four-part harmony. New texts and new melodies—some even by Amish writers—make their way into the existing repertoire, yet do not upset the balance.

The book comes in full circle to describe yet another one-room schoolhouse scene, this time in Pennsylvania. The students at Nickel Mines School sang “Bedenke, Mensch, das Ende” only hours before a gunman intruded on that fateful morning in October 2006. Selflessness and humility, reverence and trust in God—all these are part of the Amish singing experience. Singing is a part of the Amish survival process, a method of preservation, a means of resistance to worldly forces, and ultimately, a preparation for eternity.

Three appendices are “Additional Musical Examples,” “Research Methods,” and “Historical Studies on Amish Music.”

Elder builds upon historical studies but goes far beyond them to cover Amish singing in all its social contexts. Yet, as in earlier research done by outsiders, the missing link remains: the connection between Amish tunes and their sources not properly identified. To overlook this integral point leads to much unproductive hair-splitting between versions. Were variant tunes for “Es Sind Zween Weg” compared with their source, the early American hymn tune *Rockbridge*, their difference would simply reinforce the typical process of aural preservation. Therefore, Elder falls prey to an aspiration earlier researchers also often did: seeking a new discovery about the “Loblied” when there are only layers that require a patient persistent peeling back. Her significant breakthrough of an obsolete tune is but an adapted version of *Great Physician*. This tune is in common use as a “fast tune” among many communities.

A number of other technical gaffes preclude the book’s reliability as a definitive musicological reference. Songbooks are misidentified twice (60, 80) and one transcription is attributed to the wrong source (115). The German texts in the musical examples are rife with copy errors ranging from “*Gott is die Leibe, Ich liebe auch mich*” to using the Greek letter beta for the German *ess-zett*. To the casual reader, however, these issues are minor. In this much-needed book, Elder brings fresh, current insight and skillfully illuminates why the Amish sing.

Endnote

¹ Many of the individuals Elder met are personal acquaintances from my native Holmes County. Here the groom is a cousin to my sister-in-law, and the bride, her neighbor. The western New York community where my family now resides is mentioned on page 136 in “Singing the Journey.”

Review of **Cates, James. 2014. *Serving the Amish: A Cultural Guide for Professionals*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.**

By Lawrence P. Greksa, *Anthropology, Case Western Reserve University*

Anyone interested in Amish health, particularly mental health, is familiar with the publications of James Cates, a clinical psychologist who has extensive experience working with the Amish in the Elkhart-LaGrange settlement. In this book, Cates set himself the goal of providing guidance for human services professionals working with the Amish. I'm not a human services provider but, in my opinion, he succeeded in this goal. This book will also be useful for others, however, because Cates discusses some sensitive topics (e.g., drug abuse and addiction, violence towards women, and child abuse) that generally receive little attention in descriptions of Amish society.

The book is divided into four parts, with the first two parts providing background with some advice to practitioners interspersed throughout and with the last two parts providing specific advice to practitioners working with the Amish. Part one, "Culture and Context," contains one chapter which briefly summarizes Amish society and key beliefs. Part two, "Life Experience," contains six chapters. The first two of these chapters provide some general background relevant to human services providers, primarily mental health professionals. Cates first describes the changing relationship of the Amish with mental health professionals, particularly the increasing involvement of the Amish in mental health care. He emphasizes the difficulties of working in a "high context" culture in which there is a basic distrust of outsider service providers and provides some reasonable guidance for human service providers on what is required to overcome these difficulties.

The third chapter in part two briefly describes the Amish life cycle, from childhood to old age, including *Rumspringa*. Chapter four discusses the roles of women in a strongly patriarchal society in which their submission to men is biblically mandated. Cates argues that, although there is clearly a concentration of power in the hands of men, it is more complicated than that. He argues that women play an important role in the community and notes that men are also placed in a hierarchical system based on age and religious leadership. Younger men should be submissive to older men; ministers and bishops should be submissive to older religious leaders. In chapter five, Cates discusses sexuality. The Amish have adapted in many ways to modern life but sexuality is not one of them. This is a forbidden topic, and thus little is known, making Cates's contribution particularly important even if limited to his experiences with his Amish clients. He argues that, as with most other behaviors, everything found in English society is also found in Amish society. An important difference is that everything outside of heterosexual sex within a marriage is equally sinful and shameful to the Amish. All require confession and repentance, and once these are accepted by the *Gmay*, the "slate is clean." This makes it difficult to deal with deviant behaviors that we know are likely to be repeated. The same individual can continue with child sexual abuse, for example, confessing and repenting each time until it comes

to the attention of civil authorities. On a different topic, I didn't find the use of condoms by adolescents surprising, but I did find it surprising that Cates sees the beginning of the use of morning after pills by some young women.

Chapter five covers violence and abuse within families. Once again, Cates argues that the same violent acts seen in English society are present in Amish society. Cates isn't speaking of culturally acceptable—at least within Amish society—physical force in the form of spanking; he means domestic violence directed towards women and children. Spousal abuse is particularly difficult for the Amish to handle internally given the submissiveness expected of women. Child abuse is equally difficult since it can lead to the involvement of civil authorities who might decide that children need to be removed from the home. The final chapter in this section reviews Amish beliefs and practices surrounding death.

Part three, "Professional Interaction," consists of five chapters which are the crux of the book for providers working as counselors and therapists, in the field of substance abuse and addiction, law enforcement, health care, and social work. Although some advice to practitioners was provided in the preceding chapters, these chapters include specific practices that Cates has found to be effective when working with the Amish. Cates utilizes vignettes based on his experiences to illustrate points throughout the text, but they are particularly effective in these chapters.

In the chapter devoted to counselors, Cates describes theoretical paradigms that he has found to be effective in working with the Amish (e.g. Person-Centered Therapy and Feminist Therapy). He emphasizes the importance of working with Amish clients on their own turf or in home based sessions. The two chapters on substance abuse and addictions and law enforcement are particularly relevant for youth during *Rumspringa*. For practitioners involved in substance abuse and addiction, Cates argues that because it is rooted in Christianity, Alcoholics Anonymous, particularly if modified somewhat for Amish beliefs, can be effective. The Amish Youth Vision project, with its participation by Amish adults, has also been effective in combating alcohol and drug abuse in the Elkhart-LaGrange settlement. The interactions of the Amish with law enforcement are particularly complicated. The Amish of course recognize the role of civil authority but at the same time believe in a separation between church and state. However, they are not necessarily well informed about the law, leading to civil authorities sometimes becoming involved in cases which the Amish feel should be handled internally. Such cases create a quandary for the agents of the law. The law is the law, but on the other hand, a prosecution for a crime which the community believes has already been handled within the church can lead to refusals to cooperate in the future and the hiding of other crimes.

The chapter covering health care covers material that will be familiar to scholars of Amish health. Cates argues, correctly I believe, that most interactions with the health care system are routine but that misunderstandings do occur. These are sometimes because of a lack of understanding of Amish beliefs by health care providers and are sometimes caused by

miscommunication. Cates argues that most adult Amish are very fluent in day to day conversation but that doesn't mean that they necessarily understand everything that is being said in a medical setting. Unfortunately, they, like many non-Amish, will seldom ask questions, leading providers to mistakenly believe that they have been understood.

The last chapter in this section is directed towards the social workers who are called in to intervene in Amish families when cases of spousal violence or child abuse have come to the attention of civil authorities. Since such interventions can—and often do—result in a disruption of the family through the temporary removal of children, for example, these interactions tend to be viewed as unnecessarily intrusive by the Amish, making the work of a case worker particularly difficult. In order to be successful, they must devise a compromise which respects Amish culture but is also consistent with English law. This is not an easy task. If they fail, the outcome can be similar to that described for law officials, or leading the community to make greater efforts to keep such cases from the attention of civil authorities. Cates emphasizes that a successful compromise is only possible if the case worker incorporates religious leaders into the process.

Part four of the book consists of one chapter and an epilogue in which Cates summarizes guidelines for effectively working with Amish clients. These are followed by an appendix briefly describing other plain groups and another in which he provides a nice summary of the application of DSM-5 to the Amish.

In summary, this book was a joy to read and review. I highly recommend it to both human service providers and anyone else with an interest in the Amish.

Review of **Stoltzfus, Duane. 2013. *Pacifists in Chains: The Persecution of Hutterites during the Great War*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.**

By Donald Eberle, *History, Bowling Green State Univ. / Northwest State Comm. College*

Duane C. S. Stoltzfus states in the Preface that the story of brothers Michael, David, and Joseph Hofer and Joseph's brother-in-law Jacob Wipf, "contributes significantly to one of the darker chapters of this period of American history." Nearly 100 years later this, story is surprisingly and sadly relevant. In the wake of the attacks on September 11, 2001 the United States, "swept up suspects, the innocent and true warriors alike" and "descended into the ranks of nations that systematically torture prisoners." While the historical parallels are not exact as they never are, they are nonetheless disturbing.

The four Hutterites would suffer terribly for their religious beliefs. Michael and Joseph Hofer would give their lives as martyrs, but the most disturbing aspect of the persecution of the Hutterites, as is the case with the detainees at Guantanamo, is the complexity of the situation.

Stoltzfus notes that their story does not “follow a simple script neatly dividing the cast into heroes and villains.”

The Hutterites considered themselves a “pure remnant of believers.” They had both a “social memory” and a “living narrative” of martyrdom dating back to 1536 when Jacob Hutter was burned at the stake. This history of martyrdom recorded in the *Chronicle of the Hutterian Brethren* conditioned the young men to view the war, and their small part in it, as a conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world. Stoltzfus notes that the Hutterites held “an uncompromising view of power and authority” when these kingdoms “stood in conflict.” He argues that they were so sure of their own righteousness that they could be “unshakable in their judgment of others.”

While it is easy to condemn the abuse, brutality, and torture that many conscientious objectors faced after they were inducted into the military under the provisions of the Selective Service Act, it is also possible a century later to “appreciate the challenges set before military commanders and guards who followed a different set of orders, and by their worldview, could not understand why these men would not contribute to the national cause, if only by pushing a broom.”

The war had quickly taken on overtones of a religious crusade. The political and military authorities, and the majority of the public, considered the men who served, either as volunteers or draftees, to be “equally as religious and God fearing” as the conscientious objectors. The conscientious objectors were viewed as “queer men.” At best, they were cowards or shirkers. At worst, they were Pro-German propagandists or traitors. Regardless, their very presence in the military camps was perceived as a threat to military morale and discipline.

After a harrowing train ride, in which fellow inductees forcibly cut off their hair and beards, the three Hofer brothers and Jacob Wipf arrived at Camp Lewis where 52,000 men were underarms. They refused to fill out personal information cards because they were titled “Statement of Soldier.” They also refused to put on a uniform or accept any form of work assignment. Within a few hours, they found themselves confined to guardhouse No. 54 where they remained until they were found guilty by court-martial and sentenced to hard labor at Alcatraz.

Their decisions were inexplicable to the camp commandant, Major General Henry A. Greene, who met with them frequently. Greene’s view that “the end of the war MUST be a victory and a success for our side- for the God of battles also is the God of Love and Justice” was typical of the military authorities who could be as unbending as the Hutterites.

With such diametrically opposed positions, it would seem that no compromise was possible and the fate of the four Hutterite men was sealed from the moment they set foot on the train to Camp Lewis. While some degree of difficulty was inevitable, their story is all the more tragic because a surprising amount of compromise did occur between the government and

conscientious objectors during World War I.

Twenty-four million men registered for Selective Service. Just twelve percent of them would ultimately be inducted. An unknown number of eligible men, perhaps as many as three million, simply failed to register. The vast majority of these men avoided any consequences. The Hutterites considered the “mere act of registering” a civil obligation akin to participating in a census. They agreed that their draft eligible men should register and submit to physical examinations. If called they should report, but they decided that their cooperation must end once the men arrived in a military camp.

The four Hutterites were victims of chance, timing, and a long series of events, any of which, if slightly altered, would have resulted in a much different outcome. This series of events is far too long and complex to relate here, but one example, which occurred before they ever set foot in a military camp, will suffice to illustrate the point.

Local exemption boards enjoyed a great deal of latitude in granting exemptions. Men with children, or other dependents, were routinely granted exemptions. The four Hutterites were all married, and each had children, but, because the colony would care for their dependents in their absence, each answered “no” when asked if they had “a parent, spouse, or child dependent solely on them for support.” Enoch Crowder, the head of Selective Service System, eventually ruled that “members of intentional communities” should not be treated any differently in deciding if they had dependents, but this clarification came too late to prevent the Hofers and Wipf from being inducted.

It is not at all certain however, that this ruling would have mattered to the Hanson County exemption board. David Hofer’s name had not appeared on the initial list of selectees from Hanson County, but the list was revised after the War Department confirmed that it wanted farmers to be deferred. Sixteen men on the initial list were deferred. The Hutterites were farmers, but David joined his brothers and Jacob Wipf on the revised list.

Stoltzfus does a wonderful job of relating the “series of actions [...] that in isolation may have seemed measured and appropriate but the cumulative effect was a miscarriage of justice.” There is plenty of blame. This blame began at the very top, extended through every rank in the military, and included the American public, who viewed conscientious objectors with disdain and derision.

Stoltzfus argues that the default response on the part of both President Wilson and Secretary of War Newton Baker was one of “coercion, not compassion,” but he is especially critical of the Secretary of War for his duplicity and indifference. Baker considered conscientious objectors “well-disposed, simple-minded young people who have been imprisoned in a narrow environment and really have no comprehension of the world outside of their own rural and peculiar community.” He ignored pleas from the various peace churches to allow their church members who were drafted to do their service outside of the military because he was convinced

that the army could take men of “every variety of religious belief and political opinion” and weld them “into a homogenous group”. He was dismissive of the conscientious objectors and the depth of their convictions because he believed that they had “acquired quite unwarranted importance in their own eyes. To each of them, he and his cause became the pivotal and central thing in the world while, or course, as the case then stood, they were, frankly, relatively unimportant.” Although Secretary Baker was not directly responsible for any of the atrocities that occurred under his watch—and indeed he may have been surprised and saddened when he learned the details of these incidents—the military officers at Camp Lewis, Funston, and the United States Disciplinary Barracks, Pacific Branch, better known as Alcatraz, all took their cues from Baker and most of them shared his views on conscientious objectors.

Despite severe persecution, the Hutterite community was reluctant to publicly criticize the government and made no effort to attract publicity to the plight of their conscientious objectors. Through a most improbably set of circumstances, the story would nevertheless become widely known beyond their colony. Stoltzfus does a wonderful job of connecting the dots between the conscientious objectors, Jacob Ewert, the bedridden, paralytic “Mennonite journalist and professor from Kansas” who typed with one thumb and relied upon his brother David, also an invalid, to feed the paper into the typewriter, and Theodore Lunde, the crusading “owner of a piano hardware company.” Through their efforts, some good would ultimately come from this tragedy. Partially because of their courageous actions, conscientious objectors during World War II would have the option of being assigned to “work of national importance” under civilian direction.

The basic narrative of the confrontation between the pacifist Hutterites and the government during the First World War has been told before but never with such insight or in such detail. *Pacifists in Chains* is fantastically sourced. The access to unpublished letters, written by the Hofers from prison, particularly distinguishes Stoltzfus’ narrative. These letters give the conscientious objectors a voice. They reveal that the men did not seek martyrdom but that they were prepared to die for their beliefs. The day after learning that he would be sent to Alcatraz, Joseph Hofer wrote to his “dear and never-to-be-forgotten spouse” Maria. He wrote that they must “hold firmly to God and plead to him with prayers for the strength of the Holy Spirit, so that we might win the battle and remain firm until the end [...]” He concluded by noting that “the children of God are called to nothing else than to affliction, cross, tribulation, persecution, and hatred from the world.” Joseph Hofer died on November 29, 1918. Military officials dressed him in the uniform of a soldier. Pneumonia was listed as the cause of death. Michael Hofer died on December 2 also of pneumonia. This time military officials respected the wishes of the family and did not dress his body in a soldier’s uniform.

The focus of *Pacifists in Chains* is clearly upon the Hofers and Wipf, and this is understandable not only because of the dramatic nature of their story but also because previously unavailable sources give new insights into the thoughts of the men at the center of this narrative. Stoltzfus discusses some of the other 52 Hutterites who reported to military camps during the

war but not in any great detail. The alleged attempt to win the release of Hutterite men from Camp Funston through the paying of bribes, which resulted in federal charges against three Hutterite leaders, would provide an interesting counterpoint to the story of the Hofers and Wipf.

The persecution of the conscientious objectors was but one small part of the persecution of Hutterites during the Great War, yet this aspect tends to dominate the larger narrative. The tension between the Hutterites and their neighbors was so great that 11 out of 18 colonies relocated to Canada by the spring of 1919. Stoltzfus discusses the broader challenges but not in as much detail as this important issue deserves. This is perhaps a minor quibble though, as Stoltzfus makes an important contribution to part of this larger narrative and raises the bar for anyone who might tell another part.

Stoltzfus concludes that torture “erodes a nation’s moral center just as surely as it dehumanizes the victims and in the end fails to achieve its stated goals.” He notes that the persecution of the Hutterites “was intended to be an example to deter other conscientious objectors. Instead, they became a shameful example of the failure of a government to stand by its constitutional guarantee of freedom to practice religious and promise to safeguard citizens from torture and other cruel and unusual punishments.” This example is as relevant today as ever, and policy makers and the public alike would do well to contemplate from time to time the lessons from the Great War.

Review of Veen, Mirjam van, Piet Visser, and Gary Waite. 2014. *Sisters: Myth and Reality of Anabaptist, Mennonite, and Doopsgezind Women, ca. 1525-1900*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.

By Berit Jany, *Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Colorado*

Agent of the devil, harlot, martyr, marriage breaker, and devout maiden are some of the images attributed to Anabaptist women from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. These diverse pictures from a wide array of perspectives were the focus of attention of the conference “Myth and Reality of Anabaptist / Mennonite Women in Continental Europe ca. 1525-1900” held at the Free University of Amsterdam in 2007. Scholars came together to explore the images of Anabaptist women in Europe across the centuries. Those scholars in attendance from across Europe included Piet Visser, Mirjam P.A. de Baar, Mirjam van Veen, and Nicole Grochowina, among others. From North America, most prominent were Gary Waite, Mary Sprunger, Mark Jantzen, and Michael Driedger. Their findings were put together in this collection of essays, a 2014 publication.

Attention to the role of women in the radical reformation movement has been given in a number of works, for instance *Profiles of Anabaptist Women* (eds. C. Arnold Snyder and Linda A. Huebert Hecht) and *Aufsässige Töchter Gottes* (Marion Kobelt-Groch), as well as essays by

Auke Jelsma and Ineke van't Spijker. Sigrun Haude bemoaned the decline of research on Anabaptist women since the 1990s in her contribution to the *Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism* (eds. John D. Roth and James Stayer). Moreover, she pointed out that “no fundamental analysis of gender in Anabaptism and Spiritualism in general exists” (426). While the number of publications on the topic of Anabaptist women’s history has since grown, the editors of *Sisters* explain that scholarship on female believers has mostly focused on the early revolutionary stages of the movement and has placed heroic female martyrs at the center of attention. This pursues a traditional approach to the movement’s past, which is concerned with historically significant individuals and their accomplishments. With this current publication, however, the editors and writers jump into deeper waters by moving beyond the established history of exemplary women during the early period of Anabaptism and toward identifying and evaluating the image of Anabaptist women at various stages in the movement’s history.

In their analysis of the multifaceted image of the female Anabaptist, contributors follow an imagological approach. Here, too, the authors are testing the waters by utilizing imagology, a critical literary theory concerned with the examination of stereotypical perceptions of (marginalized) groups, thereby taking the concept of identity, culture, nationality, and alterity into account. Thus, the contributors of this volume explore the construction of images of the female believers and the relevance of the applied stereotypes. The analysis of negative images exposes the methods and rhetoric of opponents to blacken the movement’s reputation. Furthermore, this analysis reveals a “great deal about the broader expectations and norms for women as a whole at the time” (1). It also illuminates both (ostensibly) positive and negative images—constructed by male leaders in Anabaptist circles—to serve as a means of securing traditional gender hierarchies, despite the early movement’s seemingly egalitarian nature. In their readings of the movement’s historical and hagiographic sources, scholars uncover the superficiality of gender equality. Looking at the ways of disguising gendered hierarchies by way of images of an ideal Anabaptist woman, the researchers attend to questions such as: How did Anabaptist women see themselves? Did they aspire to the ideal image set by elders? How did this image change over the nearly five centuries of Anabaptist history in Europe?

The authors of this publication offer answers to these queries through case studies in which they explore visual, musical, and textual sources from each of the major regions where Anabaptists resided: Switzerland, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, and parts of Prussia and Russia. They examine cases in both urban and rural contexts and from the perspective of both opponents and members of the movement, including women themselves. Essays are organized in three clusters: “The Sixteenth Century: Propaganda, Persecution, and Myth-Busting;” “The Long Seventeenth Century: Caricatures, Stereotypes, and Super Sisters;” and “The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: Subordinate Sisters in Control.” This chronological framework offers a great insight into the changing perceptions of Anabaptist women and the historical context that influenced these images.

Sisters is an excellent collection of studies that guide readers in their rediscovery of

familiar texts such as *Het Offer des Heeren* through a gender-conscious lens. The volume also draws attention to lesser known texts and introduces new archival findings pertaining to the experience of female believers over the course of four centuries. It sheds light on the way that ideals about women's roles had wide-ranging impact on all aspects of private and public life within and outside of the religious movement. While the entire corpus of essays contributes to the aim of this collection to study the imagology of Anabaptist women, individual chapters pursue this topic and utilize the new methodological approach in varying ways. A few essays focus predominantly on investigating the origin of stereotypical perceptions of Anabaptist women, for instance, Mirjam de Baar's examination of the term *Menniste Zusje* which was often used as a sarcastic reference to the supposed duplicity of young Anabaptist women in the Netherlands for the last several centuries.

Other essays dissect stereotypes and put all effort into proving them wrong, as is the case in Martina Bick's study of Anabaptist hymns in which she challenges the assumption that women did not make extensive contributions to the cultural and literary life of their communities. Yet other chapters give a detailed description of the image that was drawn by polemic writings and discuss the programmatic aims behind these negative portrayals of Anabaptist women; Marion Kobelt-Groch's analysis of Thomas Birck's marriage manual, for instance, reveals the attempt by the Protestant pastor to prevent interfaith marriages by depicting Anabaptist women as a danger to the spiritual and moral life of Lutheran men. Similarly, Mirjam van Veen's study of anti-Anabaptist polemics voiced by Dutch Reformed ministers who accused Anabaptists of destroying traditional marriage and family served as a response to the movement's challenges to the established church on issues of morality and church discipline.

In a few of the contributions to this volume, authors describe the image of female believers in narrative anecdotes or provide much archival data, thereby refuting previous assumptions about the homogeneity of Anabaptist women and their assumed social rank and financial situation. These studies provide opportunities for further investigation into the subject matter and methodologically sound analysis of the data. Regardless of the varying degrees of clarity within the authors' imagotype-conscious optics, their work to identify stereotypes and trace their dissemination—as well as explain, and in some cases refute, characteristics previously attributed to Anabaptist women—significantly helps raise awareness of the study of female believers in the Anabaptist movement. *Sisters* thus provides a valuable impetus to scholarship in this new field of research.

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