

YOUNG CENTER

News

THE YOUNG CENTER FOR
ANABAPTIST AND PIETIST STUDIES
AT ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE



New research materials in the Hess Archives and Special Collections

The already robust collection of Amish-related materials available for research at Elizabethtown College's Hess Archives has grown significantly this summer.

Karen Johnson-Weiner, Distinguished Professor of Anthropology Emerita at SUNY Potsdam and the author of several books about the Amish, recently donated her collection of letters, photographs, artifacts, and other materials. Don Kraybill, Distinguished College Professor, Senior Fellow, and Professor of Sociology Emeritus, added materials to the donation he made previously. In addition, Kraybill and Ben Riehl, a member of the Lancaster Old Order Amish community, contributed interview recordings, transcripts and correspondence between 2005 and 2021. And the National Committee for Amish Religious Freedom donated its papers.

As Etown student Emily Erdlen and college archivist Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh well know, donations require categorization, rehousing, and the creation of finding aids to enable Etown students and outside scholars to access them.

Erdlen, who began working with Grove Rohrbaugh last fall when she first considered a career as an archivist, interned in the Hess Archives this past summer as part of the college's Summer Scholarship, Creative Arts and Research Program. Working full time for nine weeks, Erdlen developed a processing plan for the new materials and reboxed them for preservation purposes. In addition, she added to the [Kraybill finding aid](#) and wrote new finding aids for [Johnson-Weiner's materials](#) and the [Ben Riehl Collection](#). To enhance her understanding of Amish communities and concepts, she attended the Young Center's Amish conference in June,



Emily Erdlen (left) and Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh (right) discuss Amish artifacts donated to the Young Center by Karen Johnson-Weiner.

and she participated in an oral history interview with Johnson-Weiner.

Kraybill's newly donated materials are wide-ranging. They include results of a survey about Amish women's health and welfare in the Lancaster settlement; documents on "People Helpers," an informal network of Amish laypeople addressing mental health issues; interviews with members of the Amish community on topics including dress practice, shunning, and suicide; correspondence and notes related to the American Experience film "The Amish" and the Amish Mafia TV series; Lancaster Amish settlement topical files, and one Amish man's writings and his correspondence with Kraybill between 1985 and 2020.

Johnson-Weiner donated decades of cor-

respondence with Old Order Amish women (primarily from the conservative Swartzentruber subgroup); correspondence with teachers as part of research for her book on Old Order schools; field notes on Old Order women and language changes; materials related to Swartzentruber court cases; and language data comparing Swiss Amish German and Swartzentruber German.

"We are especially excited to make the papers of Karen Johnson-Weiner available to researchers so soon after their acquisition," Grove Rohrbaugh said. "Johnson-Weiner's papers contain 35 years of correspondence with Old Order Amish women. A collection with this much material written by Amish women is an unmatched treasure."

(continued on page 4)

From the Director



The Young Center has long been a unique place of connection, bringing together diverse people and traditions with the goal of better understanding one another and ourselves. Old Order and more assimilated Anabaptist and Pietist groups connect with Young Center programming, as do those from beyond these traditions. Researchers meet community members, government agencies and nonprofit groups find resources, students are linked to the archives, and members of the wider public find a hospitable place to ask questions and learn.

This summer, our conference, “The Amish and Their Neighbors,” brought together some 150 people to share experiences and network with one another. In July, German and American pastors who share a commitment to peacemaking met here to discuss the ministry of reconciliation in their respective social and political contexts. And in August and September, the Young Center hosted four dozen USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service staff members from seven states who want to increase their understanding of the Plain Community farmers with whom they work.

In the coming weeks we anticipate welcoming members of an area Church of the Brethren congregation seeking a deeper understanding of their faith tradition, and hosting a group of journalists from Germany who want to learn more about Pennsylvania German culture and especially its varied religious dimension.

Our public events this semester, described elsewhere in this issue, explore fascinating historical and contemporary stories of connection and interaction, including the role of music of shaping European and Native American Moravian relationships, and the way some Amish communities are seeking to manage the world of connectivity offered by the internet.

We are delighted to continue the Young Center’s long-standing role as a place of connection and engagement, seeking to build bridges and cross boundaries through increased mutual understanding.

Steve Nolt
Director

Joe Donnermeyer named Snowden Fellow for Fall 2022

The Young Center is pleased to announce that [Joe Donnermeyer](#), professor emeritus in the School of Environment and Natural Resources at The Ohio State University, has been named the Snowden Fellow for fall 2022.

A criminologist for most of his academic career, Donnermeyer also has had a strong interest in the Amish. His Amish research centers primarily on population and social change, especially since the mid-twentieth century. “The Amish are perhaps the most

demographically dynamic group in North America,” he said.

During his time at the Young Center, Donnermeyer plans to focus on the settlement and population growth of the Amish, especially in the twenty-first century. His objectives are to add vital information to his field notes on the expansion of Amish communities in North America and to begin development of a monograph on settlement and population growth.

“With support from the Snowden Fellowship, I will continue to engage in three primary research activities related to advancing studies in Amish demography,” he noted.

“First, I will continue to build a data set of demographic information from smaller and newer Amish settlements. A more clear-cut definition of ‘small’ will be established later, but it will likely focus on settlements with five or fewer church districts. Given the doubling of settlements since 1999, ‘new’ will be defined as settlements founded in the twenty-first century, and perhaps even more recently, once an inventory of directories that include newer settlements is established.

“Second, I will build a demographic database of other Plain Anabaptist communities. This expanded database will aid in future studies that compare similarities and differences of population characteristics of the Amish with conservative Mennonites and possibly other plain Anabaptist groups.”

“Third,” Donnermeyer continued, “I will identify for in-depth analysis two other key characteristics directly associated with social change in Amish society: occupational change and rates of baptism of daughters and sons into the Amish faith once they reach the age of decision.”

Resources in the Hess Archives and the Young Center, as well as resources at Muddy Creek Library near Ephrata, will expand and supplement his previously collected field notes on settlement and population growth.

Donnermeyer will present a talk about his work on November 10 at 7 p.m. in the Bucher Meetinghouse.

The generous gift of Lucille Snowden endowed the Snowden fellowship and lecture. The Young Center invites nominations and applications for its fellows programs. Visit www.etown.edu/youngctr for details.

Summer Fellow continues work on book project

[Conrad Kanagy](#), Etown College professor of sociology, took up residence at the Young Center this summer to work on his new project: the first biography of Old Testament theologian Walter Brueggemann, professor emeritus at Columbia Theological Seminary.

“Brueggemann’s roots are deep within the German Evangelical Pietist tradition of the Prussian Union,” Kanagy said, “I have conducted sixteen interviews with him and traveled to visit him in Traverse City, Michigan, this summer. I have also interviewed nearly twenty others who have known Professor Brueggemann as student, colleague, peer, and parent. The book will examine how German pietism has informed Brueggemann’s work.”



Conrad Kanagy (left) visits with Walter Brueggemann in his Michigan home.

Pastor colloquy

In July, the Penn Central Conference of the United Church of Christ and the Union of Evangelical Churches in Germany held a weeklong pastoral colloquy at the Young Center. Twenty-five pastors from Germany and the United States attended.

The two groups have been sponsoring such gatherings for pastors on peace-related themes for decades. This year's theme, "Building a Just Peace in an Unjust World: Learning with and from Our Anabaptist Colleagues," included presentations by Jeff Bach, Steve Nolt, and Conrad Kanagy.

From left: Rev. Larry Smith, York, Pennsylvania; Rev. Tobias Kampf, Borgisdorf, Brandenburg, Germany; and Rev. Katrin Rudolph, Zossen, Brandenburg, Germany.



Dale W. Brown Book Award recipient named

Moravian Soundscapes: A Sonic History of the Moravian Missions in Early Pennsylvania by [Sarah Justina Eyerly](#) is the 2022 recipient of the Dale Brown Book Award. The award, named for author and theologian Dale W. Brown, is given annually to an outstanding book in Anabaptist and Pietist studies published during the previous three years.

Moravian Soundscapes (Indiana University Press, 2020) examines forty years of mid-eighteenth-century Moravian missions. The [interactive website that accompanies the book](#) gives readers the unique opportunity to listen to sound samples and view pictures and interactive maps.

Jewel A. Smith of the University of Cincinnati reviewed the book in *Church History*. She calls it "an important contribution to our understanding of the significance of the history of Moravian missions in eastern North America not only because of extensive historical details but particularly regarding how song and sound shed light on an era in history that was hitherto shrouded in darkness."

The book award judges also praised the book. "*Moravian Soundscapes* offers a creatively conceived, meticulously researched, original study of the sound-

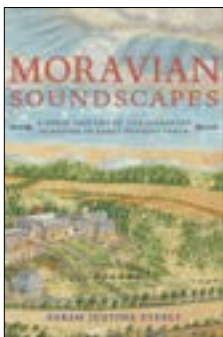
scapes of Moravian missions in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania," one noted. "Three things in particular make Eyerly's work especially compelling: she is very adept at describing in writing sensory—especially sonic—settings; she situates herself in her historical landscape and narrative in creative ways; and she takes advantage of digital technology to reproduce the eighteenth-century sonic landscapes she investigates in a companion website."

Another judge called the book "highly significant to the topic of Moravian music and Moravian interactions with Native people. Many books have been written on Moravian music. Several books have been written on Moravian interactions with Native

groups. However, this is a groundbreaking work that tries to bring the two together (successfully, in my judgement) and to set it in the soundscapes of the surrounding world."

Eyerly is an associate professor and Curtis Mayes Orpheus Professor of Musicology at Florida State University. Her research interests include sound studies, performance practice, music and religion, Native American and Indigenous Studies, and the geohumanities. She will present a lecture about *Moravian Soundscapes* on September 22 at 7 p.m. in the Bucher Meetinghouse.

The deadline for 2023 Brown Book Award nominations is December 15, 2022. Visit www.etown.edu/youngctr for details.

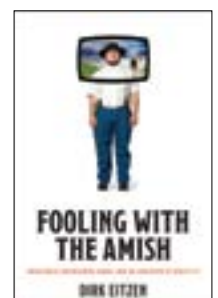


New book explores impact of reality TV

Fooling with the Amish: Amish Mafia, Entertaining Fakery, and the Evolution of Reality TV, the most recent title in the Young Center series published by Johns Hopkins University Press, was just released.

In the book, Dirk Eitzen, professor of film and media at Franklin & Marshall College, examines deception in reality TV and audience responses to it, using *Amish Mafia* as an example. What is it about the so-called reality of these shows that appeals to viewers? How and why are people taken in by

falsehoods in the media? Eitzen's ultimate answer to these questions is that, in taking liberties with facts, *Amish Mafia* works very much like gossip. This helps to explain the workings not just of *Amish Mafia* and other reality TV shows but also of other forms of media fakery, including fake news.



Conference receives positive responses

ATTENDEES APPRECIATE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN AND NETWORK

Around 150 people attended the Young Center's multidisciplinary conference, "The Amish and Their Neighbors," on June 2, 3, and 4. In their comments and post-conference survey responses, participants noted the value of hearing about the work of other researchers and practitioners, and the opportunities to connect with colleagues and meet new people with similar interests.

Judy Stavitsky, author of a new book about Amish women, said, "The level of presenters' expertise and the wide range of knowledge easily shared between attendees, makes this the go-to conference for serious practitioners and academics."

Attorney Chris Wittstruck, a first-time conference attendee and presenter, noted, "Intellectual gatherings such as the Amish conference are critically important. By shining a light on segments of society that don't look, speak or act like the mainstream, we foster a deep understanding of why some

are different, and develop the basis for the respect and acceptance they deserve. In this, the 2022 conference was a resounding success."

And a Plain Community member noted that the most beneficial aspect of the conference was "understanding each other as neighbors and understanding we have a common core of humanity."

"As the Amish population continues to grow and expand into new areas, the Amish are interacting with new neighbors, in new places and in new ways," Young Center director Steve Nolt observed. "The conference provided an opportunity for civic leaders, academics, and professionals from areas as diverse as public health, economic development, child welfare, and demography to interact and share their insights and experiences, discussing areas of cooperation and conflict, as well as ideas for building greater cultural understanding."



Doctoral Fellow studies Anabaptist philosophy

Caleb Zimmerman, a PhD student at Temple University, spent the 2022 spring semester at the Young Center. Zimmerman graduated from The King's College in New York City and earned a diploma in philosophy from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. In his doctoral program, he is studying the philosophy of religion and ethics, specifically the implications of the early Anabaptist two-kingdom dualism for value theory.

"I've really benefitted from my time at the Young Center," Zimmerman said. "Steve, Jeff, and Edsel have been extremely helpful not just in giving me literature recommendations but also by engaging philosophically with the ideas I'm trying to develop. It's also been cool to hear what others are working on in lectures and conversations and to get a feel for the broader landscape of Anabaptist studies. And it's been encouraging to have people support my work."

"One of things I've learned is that the line between history and philosophy is blurrier than I thought it was (in a good way)," he continued. "Good historians know the ideas that shaped events and good philosophers are historically informed. I think being at the Young Center has helped me to see the value of tracing the historical currents of the ideas philosophers analyze today."

New research materials

(continued from page 1)

Last semester, Erdlen, as both a Zeigler Fellow and as a Hess Archives student assistant, condensed and organized the papers of Stephen Scott, creating an archival collection of his files on different religious groups and the research for his published work. The materials will be ready for research use soon.

And Etown student Erin Moore is wrapping up processing the records of the National Committee for Amish Religious Freedom; that finding aid will be available soon.

A link to the finding aids for materials in the Earl H. and Anita F. Hess Archives and Special Collections is located here: <https://www.etown.edu/library/archives/index.aspx>.

To schedule a research appointment, contact Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh at 717-361-1506 or email grover@etown.edu.

UPCOMING EVENTS

All lectures will be presented in the Bucher Meetinghouse.

BROWN BOOK AWARD LECTURE Moravian Soundscapes: Hearing New Histories of Early America

SARAH EYERLY

Thursday, September 22, 7 p.m.



This presentation explores the soundscapes and musical practices of eighteenth-century Moravian mission communities in eastern Pennsylvania. The sonic histories of these religious communities provide new insights into the ways that music and sound functioned as a site of cultural encounter between German missionaries and Indigenous communities in early America, demonstrating the rich and multifaceted meanings that eighteenth-century music and religious history hold for contemporary Americans.

[Sarah Eyerly](#) is an associate professor and the Curtis Mayes Orpheus Professor of Musicology at Florida State University. Her current projects include a biography and documentary film on the life of the eighteenth-century Mohican musician Joshua; heritage tourism and Indigenous representation at Moravian mission sites in Ohio; and sound reconstruction of the Apalachee and Spanish musical culture of Mission San Luis in Tallahassee, Florida. Her first book, *Moravian Soundscapes: A Sonic History of the Moravian Missions in Early America* received the 2022 Dale W. Brown Book Award.

BRETHREN HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Saturday, October 15, noon to 4 p.m.

Young Center

Enjoy bicycle-churned homemade ice cream, popcorn from the Reist popcorn wagon, and other treats served in the tent outside the Young Center. Games and crafts for children and a magic show round out this family-friendly event.

LECTURE

Virtually Amish: Preserving Community at the Internet's Margins

LINDSAY EMS

Thursday, October 20, 7 p.m.



The Amish are famous for their disconnection from the modern world and all its devices. But Old Order Amish today are selectively engaging with digital communication technology. Drawing on extensive ethnographic fieldwork conducted in two Old Order Amish settlements in Indiana, Lindsay Ems finds that the Amish do not allow

digital communication technologies to drive their behavior; instead, they actively configure their sociotechnical world to align with their values and protect their community's autonomy. This talk will explore the various decisions made by members of Amish communities to guide digital communication technology use in an effort to maintain community wellness.

Lindsay Ems is an associate professor of communication and media studies at Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana. Her research explores the social impacts of digital communication technologies. Her new book, *Virtually Amish: Preserving Community at the Internet's Margins*, explores approaches to resisting the damaging forces of high-tech capitalism that impact all who live and work in today's information society, as deployed in Old Order Amish communities.

SNOWDEN LECTURE Keeping Track of Settlement and Population Growth of the Amish in North America

JOE DONNERMEYER

Thursday, November 10, 7 p.m.



It is estimated that the Amish population is doubling every twenty to twenty-two years, which is an amazing rate of growth for any group of people, anywhere in the world. Likewise, the number of settlements or communities is doubling at nearly the same pace. This lecture will examine how this growth has come about and the geographic expansion of the Amish beyond Pennsylvania and several Midwestern states, into the southern, western, and New England regions, as well as into Canadian provinces both to the east and west of their historic locations in Ontario. Population and settlement growth is a product of both internal forces, such as high fertility/large families combined with a high rate of baptism of daughters and sons into the Amish faith; and external forces, such as advantageous land prices and the rise of nonagricultural economic opportunities. The lecture will conclude with projections of population and settlement growth to the mid-century as possible presentiments of change in the cultural and social fabric of the Amish.

[Joe Donnermeyer](#) is professor emeritus in the School of Environment and Natural Resources at The Ohio State University. Although a criminologist for most of his academic career, he has a deep and continuing interest in the social, cultural, and economic changes affecting the Amish. Donnermeyer has published two books and numerous peer-reviewed book chapters and journal articles about the Amish. He cofounded and serves as coeditor of the *Journal of Plain Anabaptist Communities*, part of the digital library at The Ohio State University.



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Summer sermon project

Senior Fellow Emeritus Don Kraybill and his granddaughter Natalie Rodriguez spent several weeks this summer categorizing the sermons of Church of the Brethren pastor Paul R. White Sr. (1927–2018). A pastor for more than forty years, White served congregations in five different states and kept Sunday bulletins as well as his handwritten sermons, notes, and comments in a series of manila folders.

The project's purpose was to provide future researchers with information about topics, sermon titles, and scripture texts used by a typical, theologically and politically middle-of-the-road Church of the Brethren pastor in the second half of the twentieth century.

Kraybill and Rodriguez developed an efficient system to code six variables—date, congregation, sermon title, biblical text, event, and notes. Kraybill pulled a folder, checked for a bulletin, and read the key information aloud. Rodriguez typed the details into an Excel spreadsheet.

In addition to coding the variables, they studied the sermons to chart social change during the period. For instance,

in the 1950s and early 1960s, White preached a sermon about rural life each spring. But as his congregants moved off the farm, he eventually stopped preaching those rural life sermons, although a picture of rural life, including a tractor in a field, continued to be printed on the bulletin covers for a while until that, too, disappeared.

The two enjoyed working together but the project could be boring at times, Kraybill said, so they joked about some of the sermon titles and tried to guess what the topic of the next sermon would be. “Interesting,” is Rodriguez’s one-word description of the work.



FALL 2022

YOUNG CENTER *News*

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