Selective Annotated Bibliography of Colonial Communal Settlements
By D. F. Durnbaugh

**P. C. Plockhoy and the Valley of the Swans**

A largely accurate, carefully-documented study that includes original sources.

Provides useful information on the Dutch background.

In contrast to previous studies, shows that P. C. Plockhoy died in Delaware after his colony was raided and did not find his way to Germantown. Rather, it was his son who resettled in Pennsylvania.

Further detail on the Plockhoy settlement and the Dutch background.

**Jean de Labadie and Bohemia Manor**

A well-documented overview of the Bohemia Manor community.

Considered the most-erudite woman in seventeenth-century Europe, van Schurman was a leader of the Labadists.

A thorough monograph on the background of Labadie and the formation of his colonies in The Netherlands, Germany, Surinam, and North America.

Describes the connection between the Labadist movement and the larger Pietist movement.
Johannes Kelpius and the Society of the Woman in the Wilderness
A failed attempt to link the Kelpian movement with the Ephrata Society, claiming that the latter was almost completely dependent upon the former.

Useful description of the orientation of the Kelpian movement in the context of the times for dissenting religious movements.

A solid monograph on the two leaders of the mystical communal group near Germantown.

Places the Kelpian-led movement into a broader perspective of Radical Pietist and Böhmist ideology.

Conrad Beissel and the Ephrata Society
Alderfer, E. Gordon. The Ephrata Commune: An Early American Counterculture.
A generally dependable overview of the beginning, flowering, and demise of the unique Ephrata Society.

Provides a basic understanding for the esoteric imagery, language, and symbolism of this fascinating society that flourished throughout much of Colonial America. It supersedes all previous interpretations of the Ephrata Society which was renowned for its cultural achievements in art and music.

Contains an introduction to Ephrata and translations of some basic texts, but not totally accurate in detail and translation.

Klein, Walter C. Johann Conrad Beissel, Mystic and Martinet, 1690-1768.
An unsympathetic and biased biography, the only one so-far written, the work cannot be recommended as a satisfactory account of Beissel’s life. There are two mistakes in the title
alone.
Long considered the standard work on Ephrata, it has been found by later scholarship to be undependable in documentation and interpretation. The author found and preserved many original sources and did much to call attention to the Ephrata story.
A well-documented account of the dramatic lives and deaths of the four Eckerlin brothers, sometime Ephrata leaders and frontier settlers.

**Count Zinzendorf and the Moravians**
Denominational history.
Autobiographical writings of thirty women who lived in Moravian settlements in Colonial America; they provide keen insight into the thought and devotional world of the Moravian Brethren.
A prize-winning comparative study of Moravians in Germany and North America.
Remains the standard history of the Moravian Church.
This solid monograph, based on the sources, describes the shift from a completely communal life and economy to one of shared but more family-centered life.
Displays both the original multi-cultural orientation of the Moravians and a developing racial sensitivity.
A bilingual edition, with very helpful annotation, of the protocols of the important Pennsylvania Synods of 1742 guided by the Moravian leader, Count Zinzendorf.
General Treatments and Reference Works
Useful compilation.
Demonstrates the underlying Radical Pietist orientation of many of the early religious communities.
Fogarty, Robert S., ed. *Dictionary of American Communal and Utopian History*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1980. Although now somewhat dated, it provides significant information especially on communal leaders, but also on the groups themselves.
The most comprehensive and authoritative study, with chapters written by leading scholars of communitarian movements.
Helpful brief descriptions of communal groups and leaders.
Documented portrayals of the leading communal groups.
A potentially useful compilation hampered by serious errors of fact, organization, and interpretation, rendering it untrustworthy.