

## REVIEWS

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### A Brief Account of the People Usually Denominated Shakers.

ABSOLEM H. BLACKBURN, WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY ELIZABETH A. DE WOLFE.

Ashfield, Mass.: Huntstown Press, Aletheian Leaves Series, Number Two, 1996 (originally published 1824). Publisher's Preface (by David D. Newell), notes, introduction; 44pp. Edition limited to 226 copies. \$28.

Absolem Blackburn was an apostate author whose contact with the Shakers appears to have been limited to a stay at Union Village in 1819 and eight months at West Union from mid 1823 to early 1824. He kept no diary or journal so his account is based on his memory of personal experiences and reading both Shaker and apostate authors. Blackburn addresses five topics in his account; (1) the history of the Shakers, focusing on Ann Lee, (2) the development of Shakerism in the west, (3) a description of the settlement at Busro (West Union), (4) Shaker doctrines, and (5) Shaker practices.

It is obvious that his view of the history of the Shakers has been influenced by earlier apostate authors and this portion of his account is the least accurate. For example, he cites as fact that Ann Lee was a prostitute during the American Revolution, and that Jemima Wilkinson, also known as The Public Universal Friend, was one of Mother Ann's associates. Blackburn does not limit his criticism to the Shakers but characterizes 99 out of 100 persons who participated in the Great Revival of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio, as either "counterfeits, or else subjects of momentary extacy"[sic] (p.15).

At times, Blackburn plays the role of the ethnographer with excellent detailed descriptions of Shaker life, but these can be punctuated with a stinging comment, or a complimentary one. In one case, Blackburn lauds the Shaker sisters for their excellence in doing laundry

and even addresses his female readers by saying, "Hear ye Ladies of Kentucky is this not an example worthy of your imitation?" (p. 33). He continues complimenting Shaker women for their work ethic, but then, as if jolted by some unknown force, enters into a lengthy apology to the Ladies of Kentucky.

There are descriptions of Shaker settlement pattern, architecture, theology, and social organization. The description of the Shaker village of West Union (Busro), located northwest of Vincennes, Indiana, near the Wabash River, is short but valuable. It can be assumed that Blackburn's memories of the village are accurate since he was there from June, 1823 to January, 1824, and his book was completed in November, 1824. There are few firsthand accounts of this community and as an extra bonus, Blackburn includes a lengthy letter from Elder Henry Miller at West Union. This letter is a response to one of Blackburn's, and it is here that we learn that the Shakers provided Blackburn with clothing and nursed him back to health when he was sick.

To this reviewer the strength of the reprint edition of this book is the "Publisher's Preface" by David D. Newell and an introduction by Elizabeth A. De Wolfe. These give the reader valuable background information that add greatly to understanding Blackburn's remarks. This is a rare publication that appears to have escaped the attention of most Shaker scholars. To have it reprinted is a great service to Shaker scholars and those interested in communal history.

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## The Communitarian Moment: The Radical Challenge of the Northampton Association

CHRISTOPHER CLARK

Ithaca, N Y: Cornell University Press, 1995; preface, illustrations, notes, index; 269pp., \$27.50 clothbound.

The Northampton Association of Education and Industry formally lasted only from 1842 to 1846, but crafted its new community at an especially significant time. While acknowledging the value of reexamining the history of intentional communities over the whole course of the nineteenth century, Christopher Clark here repositis the 1840's as the "communitarian moment" in American history. This is a well-written, cogent study of people who, while exiting stage left, as it were, carried

the essence of the drama with them. Clark not only looks at the model society that members sought to build but follows their lives before and after their involvement. The historical context has people as well as forces in it.

Not easily categorized in communal studies, this Massachusetts group of antebellum reformers has been largely neglected since the 1890's. The disappearance of its records and the relative obscurity of its membership help explain this lack of attention. Nonsectarian but religious in purpose, non-Fourierist but secular in organization, without a charismatic leader or a central dogma, the Northampton Association nevertheless addressed crucial issues of its day. And its call for equality in racial and gender relations and emphasis on the rights of labor is particularly resonant in our own time. The surfacing of missing records in the 1980's coincided with Clark's work that led to his *Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780-1860*. Given his twin interests in the history of communal societies and in the rise of capitalism in the United States, Clark was well positioned to give the Northampton Association its due.

In its four-and-a-half years the Northampton Association was home to 240 men, women, and children—though never more than 120 at a time. Most members had connections with Garrisonian abolitionism and its reform networks. Ideas of community were interwoven with the principles of moral suasion and nonresistance. Monogamy was proclaimed as God-given. Members could keep (or contribute as stock) their money or goods. The community was uniquely open to African-American membership, yet, few blacks joined. Those who did included the abolitionist and editor David Ruggles and Sojourner Truth, then unknown, who launched her career while in Northampton. Economic survival keyed on the silk industry purchased along with surrounding properties. Debt and scarcity of capital would be unrelenting problems. In the first year intense debate arose over the division between the "Industrial Community" of all members and the "Stock Company" of investor-members, who wielded more power. Equality of wages for men and women was agreed upon—at the prevailing rate for women workers. But the fight over the concept of wages would continue until the new Constitution of 1843 ended the inequality of capital and labor. Despite the economic difficulties of the remaining years of its formal organization, the community achieved considerable harmony. Frederick Douglass would remember it as a place with "no high, no low, no masters, no servants, no white, no black."<sup>1</sup>

1. Frederick Douglass, in "What I Found at the Northampton Association" (p. 130), in Charles A. Sheffield, ed., *The History of Florence, Massachusetts, Including a Complete Account of the Northampton Association of Education and Industry* (Florence, Mass., 1895).

Christopher Clark has written an important book, one elucidating the vision of some quite practical people. Eventually, bowing to continuing external adversity, the challengers retreated. The "moment" passed. Making exemplary use of wide-ranging research in primary sources and of the relevant scholarly literature, Clark is instructive in how we remember their challenge. Recently, another scholar pointed to the need to study the antebellum communitarian movement as a whole.<sup>2</sup> This is not that book. But neither is it simply the study of a single community. Clark succeeds in resuming the Northampton Association to the dramatic personae of the "communitarian movement in nineteenth-century America. However briefly, it seemed a possible denouement of the drama.

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## Zion City, Illinois: Twentieth Century Utopia

PHILIP L. COOK

Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1996; preface, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index; 283 pp. \$34.94 clothbound, \$14.95 paperbound.

Zion City, Illinois, has long been a town subject to curiosity and too little a subject of inquiry. Since the 1920's it has epitomized blue-nosed America with its emphasis on restrictive legislation intended to protect and serve its ideals of a Christian community, but its origins and early history have been shrouded in myth, particularly concerning its founder, Alexander Dowie.

Zion City was the product of several impulses, the largest being the evangelical surge begun with the Keswick revivals in England that came to fruition in Los Angeles with the Azusa Street revivals. That surge was felt all over the world and touched a Presbyterian cleric in Australia who decided to launch a world-wide crusade in the late 1880's that led him to Chicago and the great exposition of 1893. In Chicago Dowie pitched his tent just outside the gates of the great fair and urged the throngs of passersby to repent. Dowie's message was one of holiness and healing and built upon an Anglo-American

2. Carl Guarneri, "Reconstructing the Antebellum Communitarian Movement: Oneida and Fourierism," *Journal of the Early Republic* 16 (Fall 1996): 463-488.

message that had been enunciated on both shores by Cullis, Boardman, and Montgomery. Dowie's appeal was broad in both the social and theological sense since he espoused an agenda that was tolerant of racial integration, opposed to capital punishment, but also opposed to an emergent scientific culture that emphasized sepsis rather than faith. In Chicago he was immediately at loggerheads with the local medical establishment which objected to his faith healing meetings and homes, to his promise of quick cures through faith, and his constant attacks on the corrupt character of urban life. During the whole of the 1890's, for example, he ridiculed in the pages of his journal, *Leaves of Healing*, the Masonic lodges for their secret practices and unions. He was a figure of immense controversy (and girth) who took on the city government, the police and almost anyone who stood in the way of his crusading zeal.

Toward the end of the decade Dowie wearied of the struggle against the forces of Mammon in Chicago and decided to establish his own Christian commonwealth north of the city. His "Apostolic Christian Catholic Church" was, in fact, a planned Utopian community directed by Dowie and laid out under his supervision. It was an ambitious enterprise and one well funded by local supporters and admirers across the nation. The workers employed to build this new town were "clean, Christian men" who neither smoked or drank, and lots were sold to like-minded settlers. By 1901 there were two hundred new buildings on site including an imposing hotel that served the needs of visitors seeking Dowie's healing hands. As the town grew so did Dowie's megalomania. His costumes became more regal, his titles more elaborate, his lifestyle more sumptuous. Lace workers came from England, "Zion Stores" were established for residents to purchase their goods and the enterprise prospered till there over 5,000 residents at Zion in 1905. It collapsed in 1906.

The late Philip Cook started his research on the Dowie enterprise as a doctoral dissertation at the University of Colorado in the 1960's and worked on the project for almost thirty years. His is an institutional history of both the growth of the Dowie empire and the organizational structures he erected to sustain it. There is no other modern history that contains information about both the economic and social effort that went into the Dowie empire. Cook made good use of Dowie's periodical, *Leaves of Healing*, and had access to latter-day supporters of his program. There were, of course, dissidents who thought Dowie an impostor, a religious and medical fraud and a modest philanderer.

Such institutional histories tend to flatten out personalities in the face of empire building issues and Cook sometimes sleights Dowie's remarkable charismatic presence and fails to understand, essentially, the appeal that both holiness and healing had to the hearts and minds

of many believers. For example, Cook overlooks the fact that Dowie had missions to the ethnic minorities in the Pilsen District of Chicago. On a larger scale Cook might have taken notice of the mention by James Joyce of the crusading Dowie in *Ulysses*, for it is within that larger context of fin-de-siecle personalities and movements that he needs to be understood. Without Philip Cook's essential research and work Dowie and Zion might remain oddities rather than integral players in the process of resisting certain turn of the century transformations.

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## Fire, Salt, and Peace: Intentional Christian Communities Alive in North America

DAVID JANZEN AND OTHERS IN SHALOM MISSION COMMUNITIES

Evanston, 111.: Shalom Mission Communities, 1996; illustrations, notes, appendices; 207pp. (Distributed by Paralepsis Books, P.O. Box 6116, Evanston, IL 60204-6116).

David Janzen has achieved a blend of theory and experience in this book. The theory is in the introduction, "Salted with Fire," in which he explains the title and his understanding of Christian community. Christian communities, according to Janzen, organize their lives around the teachings of Jesus and from the "Spirit-inspired communal experience of the early church in Jerusalem" (p. 12). Janzen explains that the groups studies for this book share common characteristics, such as common finances and property, living in close proximity, mutual accountability and input in the decisions of members, frequent meals together, common work or ministry, shared spiritual disciplines with a vital communal worship life and at least two years of history.

Rich Foss, Dale Gish, and Anne Stewart also contribute short essays to Part 1 of the text in "A Pentecostal's Journey to Mennonite Community," and "Why Live in Interracial Community." Part 2, "Community in Twenty-Nine Flavors," is an engrossing journey to twenty-nine communities that range across the country. A box at the head of each section provides information on the focus, setting, foundation, number of members, affiliation, contact, and address/phone number. The story of each community is told in the context of spiritual nurture. Worship, children and families, membership process, women's roles, leadership, political and social action, counter-cultural

values, conflicts, crisis and renewal, and empowering connections. The communities span denominations, races, and ideologies. Assisi Community (Washington, D.C.), Forest River Hutterite colony (Fordville, North Dakota), New Covenant Fellowship (Athens, Ohio), and Reba Place Fellowship (Evanston, Illinois) are a few of the twenty-nine communities described in Part 2.

Part 3, "Reflections Inspired by this Generation of Communities," is a collection of eight short essays by David Janzen. Further delving into the theory and reasons for Christian community, this section discusses boundaries and inner strength, community for mission, and following Jesus into the next millennium.

A helpful three-part appendix concludes the book: "Where to Find 148 Communities" by Debbie Bloom, "A Few Timely Books for Christian Communities," by Vern Blackwood, and "Questions Behind the Community Self Portraits," by Dale Gish.

"Sincere" and "honest," rather than "scholarly," "original," and "academic" describe this book. There is a wealth of research in communities for the Roman Catholic tradition, for example, that could have been made the first and third sections of this book more convincing. Janzen relies too much on experience; although this is a good approach, it can easily be undergirded and made more convincing with research.

The book makes a good companion for the Fellowship of Intentional Communities' *Directory*, *Communities* magazine, and the forthcoming work by Deborah Altus and Timothy Miller on the study of the '60's communes.

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## Holding the Line: The Telephone in Old Order Mennonite and Amish Life

DIANE ZIMMERMAN UMBLE

Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996; preface, illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index; 192pp., \$35 cloth-bound.

This new study on the way in which telephone use has influenced the beliefs and practices of Old Order Mennonites and Amish. Al-

though this issue has been discussed previously in numerous books—note particularly John Hostetler's classic work, *Amish Society* (1980), and Donald Kraybill's *The Riddle of Amish Culture* (1989)—Umble's treatise is a good introduction to the rationale used by two traditionalist Anabaptist communities to determine how members should deal with the new invention. It is also a fascinating look at the way in which the telephone transformed rural America in general at the turn of the century.

Umble tells the well-known story of the attempt of two separatist societies to maintain an isolated existence protected from the social, economic and religious influences of a dominant culture. Late nineteenth century inventions, including the telephone, automobile, radio and electricity, brought the "world" closer to their doorsteps, threatening major transformative change in Old Order Amish and Mennonite life. Simultaneously these groups were dealing with the issue of whether or not to use English, as opposed to German, in church services.

The creative manner in which the Old Order groups either placed general prescriptions on, or limited, telephone use for those who remained in the membership helped forestall continuous interference from the secular, non-Anabaptist business world. It also controlled the amount of time spent on entertaining party line conversations. If members were only allowed to make calls from telephones located near the barn, as was the practice of the Old Order Amish, the church community could maintain some measure of control over outside influences. The impact of American individualism was thus limited, historic non-conformity preserved.

To make all of this understandable to a general audience Umble provides short introductions to the two Old Order Anabaptist groups, as well as a brief history of the communications industry in the United States, focusing in both cases on the southeastern Pennsylvania scene. In the course of this narrative one learns interesting factual information about the development and influence of early telecommunications. At one point in the story, for example, one finds two farmers installing telephone wires between wooden boxes on their respective farms, which they then cover with tanned hides to protect them from inclement weather. Umble also includes numerous photographs which help the reader get a good sense of life in those times. This is all interesting and fascinating stuff and the book is well-written.

With regard to her primary theme, "holding the line," however, one finds Umble engaged in analysis which does not vary markedly from the works of Amish scholars such as Hostetler and Kraybill. The telephone indeed becomes one critical way in which the world tries to creep into the Old Order community. This causes division, based on



whether or not members—with *Gelassenheit* humility—accept the position of the church.

Umble goes further, however, and suggests that the Old Order reaction to the telephone is in fact "paradigmatic" for the way the Old Orders responded to other kinds of technological change in the twentieth century. She makes this claim based on the fact that the telephone was the first new technology which radically transformed the way in which people lived in rural Pennsylvania. Based on the evidence provided in this book, one wonders about the accuracy of such a thesis. Greater reliance on personal interviews with traditionalist Amish and Mennonites throughout the country would provide more substantive support for such an argument. I am concerned about generalizations apparently based primarily on Pennsylvania Old Order perspectives.

One senses that Umble often assumes that Lancaster (Pennsylvania)-area Amish hold beliefs which are identical to those who live elsewhere. Though this sort of abbreviated simplicity is perhaps necessary in a book of 200 pages meant to appeal to a general audience, it leads to a number of inaccuracies. Umble notes, for example, that "New Order" Amish use automobiles. This is true in Pennsylvania but not in southeastern Iowa. In an attempt to give a quick overview of Anabaptist history, Umble notes that the 16th century Anabaptists rejected participation in government. This was not universally the case. One of the most prominent of the early Anabaptist leaders in southern Germany, Pilgram Marpeck, was a civil engineer employed by various city governments. Though Umble does occasionally use the example of Amish and Mennonite experiences in areas outside of Pennsylvania to provide supporting evidence for her hypothesis, she sometimes offers decontextualized comments which confuse the reader. Umble notes, for example, that the Upper and Lower Deer Creek Amish congregations in Iowa had controversies with regard to telephone use in the early 1900's. She never follows up on what happened to these congregations, however. The Lower Deer Creek congregation in fact eventually joined the Mennonite Church; Upper Deer Creek joined the Conservative Mennonite Conference. Neither congregation thus remained in the Old Order fold. One is thus left wondering why this example was presented.

Notwithstanding concerns expressed above, Umble's book is still an interesting study for a general reading audience. The history of American telecommunications in rural Pennsylvania, the story of the creative manner in which traditionalist groups dealt with such an important technological innovation, are all fascinating stuff. Umble explains very clearly the reason why certain religious groups—and

perhaps all of us to some extent—might have an interest in controlling aspects of the communications revolution.

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## Shared Visions, Shared Lives: Communal Living Around the Globe

BILL METCALF

Forres, Scotland: Findhorn Press, 1996, illustrations, 192 pp. \$13.95

*Shared Visions, Shared Lives* presents the world of communal living in the words of its participants in fifteen first-person accounts from the USA (Padanaram, The Farm, the New Meadow Run Bruderhof), France (Communaute de l'Arche), Canada (Community Alternatives and The Emissaries), New Zealand (Riverside), India (Auroville and Christavashram), Japan (Yamagishi Toyosato), Germany (UFA-Fabrik), the UK (Findhorn Foundation), Mexico (Los Horcones), Israel (Kibbutz Einat), and Brazil (Lothlorien). This book is important for two reasons: first, the subjective experiences of members make these communities come alive for the reader and add a real-life dimension missing from the strictly academic accounts of community: second, because subjective accounts constitute "objective" data for social scientists, these accounts can be compared to give us both an idea of the similarities of communal life and its rich diversity.

Bill Metcalf, a communitarian and a social scientist, accomplishes these ends by framing the collection with an introduction for the reader, which includes his own background and experience, a glossary of terms pertaining to communal living, a history of Utopian communalism, and other details that help to position the reader, and a conclusion identifying the common threads that run throughout the accounts. Each account includes an introduction to the community itself and photographs of members.

One of the first impressions that emerges from reading these accounts is that these communities are anything but "utopian." The authors stress the hard work that communalism requires, especially in the formative years. Every one of these communities is founded upon lofty ideals, but the trick is to implement those ideals in a workable way. Some of the communities are small and some have more than a thousand members. The paradox of communal living is, as communitarian

Chris Palmer (Riverside) tells us, "that most of those who are attracted to communal living tend to be idealistic and strongly individualistic."

While the communities have different arrangements for communal sharing, their representatives all mention adjustments that have to be made to accommodate the real-world differences among people and problem-solving that is a part of any community. At Padanaram, according to author Rachel Wright Summerton, the members "hold all things in common" and "count nothing one's own." Similarly, Atsuyoshi Nijima of Yamagishi Toyosato and Acharya K. K. Chandy of Christavashram live completely communal lives in which "all income is pooled."

On the other hand, Sigrid Niemer of UFA-Fabrik and Chris Palmer of Riverside are members of urban communes, one holding to communalism for its 70 members but hiring outside workers, and the other assessing different contributions from members while providing certain common services. The Farm, as described by Albert Bates, shifted over many years from a "communal purse" to a "decollectivization."

While most of the communities have a religious basis, some entertain secular ideologies, such as Los Horcones, a community based on "radical behaviorism." The emphasis is on the way in which environment influences behavior. According to member Juan Robinson, "A healthy community can only be formed by people who know themselves, and thus know why they are living as they do."

Because it conveys a variety of experiences in global perspective, *Shared Visions, Shared Lives* is an excellent and inexpensive book to use in the classroom, either as an introduction to the study of intentional communities or in courses concerned with cross-cultural experiences. It reads wonderfully and is a good springboard to more elaborate studies of community.

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## America's Communal Utopias

DONALD E. PITZER, EDITOR

Chapel Hill, N. C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997; foreword (by Paul S. Boyer), preface, introduction, seventeen chapters, appendix, bibliographical essay, index; 537pp.; \$60 hardbound, \$24.95 paperbound.

This important book is indispensable for anyone exploring the history of American communal movements. Donald E. Pitzer and his

authors, leading historians in the field, have produced an imaginative and useful volume that serves as scholarly collection, student text, and reference work. Seventeen essays provide clear and accessible introductions to significant communal groups, from Pietists of the colonial period to Father Divine's Peace Mission. Each essay has a chronology and list of sources, while a general appendix contains a bibliographical essay and an updated list of American communes founded before 1965.

A collective volume such as this is appropriate both to the character of the groups it discusses and to their diversity and variety. Dedicated to the late Arthur E. Bestor, Jr., it substitutes for the kind of single-authored general account of American communal Utopias that has proved so difficult to write. Pitzer writes that future editions may tackle the communal movements of the late twentieth century, which the present book does not cover, and a different range of earlier groups. If this volume does, indeed, mark the first offering of an unfolding project it is doubly to be welcomed.

The present collection focuses mainly on the nineteenth century. Many topics are familiar: Priscilla Brewer writes on the Shakers; the late Karl Arndt on George Rapp's Harmonists; Pitzer himself on New Harmony as a stage in the history of Owenism; Carl J. Guarneri on the American Fourierists; Lawrence Foster on Oneida; Jonathan G. Andelson on Amana; Jon Wagner on Bishop Hill; James E. Landing on Cyrus Teed's Koreshan Unity; and Robert V. Hine on California socialist communes. Others may be less so: Donald F. Durnbaugh sketches the Pietist Utopias of the eighteenth century, and Robert P. Sutton the American experiences of the disciples of Etienne Cabet and his *Voyage en Icarie*; Dean L. May discusses successive phases of Mormon communalism, Pearl W. Bartelt the agricultural communes established by late nineteenth century Jewish immigrants, and J. Gordon Melton the Theosophist communities of the turn of the century. Robert S. Weisbrot's essay on Father Divine's Peace Mission is alone in dealing with a wholly twentieth century (and largely African American) group, though striking essays about two of America's largest communal movements—by Gertrude E. Huntington on the Hutterites, and by Lawrence J. McCrank on monasticism—also cover recent developments.

For readers like this reviewer, who tend to focus on Anglo-American communities, this book is a striking reminder of the scope of American communalism. Pitzer writes that he omitted groups like Zoar and Bethel, which "would have overloaded the German component of the book" (p. 11); even so, the influence of the German Reformation is impressive. So is the backwash of the Counter-Reformation on American shores, as monastic communities devoted to contemplation or

social service proliferated in the nineteenth century. McCrank points out that Catholic monasticism became the largest American communal movement, yet the historiography of communalism has been largely Protestant in its assumptions. We see the long hand of the past at work: links with medieval monasticism once cut off by the Reformation; fallout from Anabaptist revolts and splits in Lutheranism; the enduring fascination with alchemy or the paranormal that surfaced among Rappites, Mormons, Cyrus Teed's Koreshans, Theosophists, and contemporary New-Agers. Even in the nineteenth century American utopianism was not just an encounter with the problems of "modern" society.

Pitzer has avoided the temptation to impose order on the variety of movements discussed by sorting them into categories. The essays are instead addressed to a theme, the concept of "developmental communalism" which Pitzer laid out in articles in the 1980's. His argument, that communalism is a form that occurs within wider—usually changing—social contexts, and that communal groups often remain static only at their peril, provides a thread running throughout the volume.

Communal organizations may "develop" in two senses. On one hand, they may themselves change or evolve. Shakerism, in Priscilla Brewer's view, evolved in response to the doctrine of continual revelation. So did the Oneida Community under the tutelage of John Humphrey Noyes. On the other hand—and this is the sense that Pitzer himself stresses—communalism may form only a stage in the broader evolution of a social movement. For the Rappites, according to Arndt, the members of Bishop Hill, according to Wagner, and many Jewish agrarians, according to Bartelt, communalism was a pragmatic adaptation to the exigencies of poverty or immigration, often regarded as a temporary phase. Guarneri, as in his book on the Fourierists, notes that their phalanxes were only part of a wider, developing reform effort. For Weisbrot, the Peace Mission's communalism was only incidental to its emerging commitment to social activism.

Communalism was not always a stage in a progression of changes, however. The Hutterites passed through several communal phases, and with the branching off of hundreds of new colonies since their arrival in the U. S. have retained communalism as a way of life. Dean L. May queries the view that Mormon communalism was a temporary phase by pointing to the many Mormons who expressed the hope for a restoration of communal living in the future. Sutton notes the similarity of communal forms in successive Icarian settlements, whose "internal arrangements . . . were dramatically unchanging" (p. 292), though he does not reconcile this apparent rigidity with some Icarians' ability to overcome obstacles and sustain community life for over four decades.

Apart from Pitzer's preface and introduction the book contains no summary statement. Wider conclusions are left to the reader, as are reflections about the state of Utopian studies and its future. The concept of "developmental communalism" embodies recent scholars' efforts to focus less exclusively on individual communities and more on movements and their social contexts, though the book's organization into essays on separate communities and movements largely excludes the kind of comparative discussion that has also become common. And is it simply mischievous to remark that there is nowhere here any hint that communal studies might have made, or might take, a linguistic or post-modernist turn? Given the diversity of America's communal Utopias and the difficulty of making valid generalizations about them, they would seem to be subjects ripe for such treatment.

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## Menonite Women of Lancaster County: A Story in Photographs 1855-1935

JOANNE HESS SIEGRIST

Intercourse, Pa.: Good Books, 1996; map, text, photographs, references; 220pp.; \$14.95 paperbound.

This unusual collection of 215 photographs (from 1855 to 1935) and commentary presents various aspects of the lives of Lancaster County Menonite women. The book is based on Joanne Hess Siegrist's harvest (from 1984 to 1996) of more than 2,000 of the best known photographs about Menonites of Lancaster County from over 300 households. The book "focuses . . . on Menonite women who were born before 1915. Each photograph contains at least one person who grew up in a Lancaster County Menonite family or as an adult joined the Menonite Church in Lancaster County" (p. 6). The aim is to reveal, by these photographs, "what went on in the lives and minds of Lancaster County Menonite women who lived in the early twentieth century" (p. 7). To identify the photographs, 95% of which were found with no identifying information, Siegrist used interviews, family books and records in homes and churches, and resources at the Lancaster Menonite Historical Society.

The photographs are organized as follows, with an introduction for each section: "An Overview of Lancaster County Menonite Women:

Their Many Faces, Their Open Lives, Their Secret Selves," "Motherhood and Children," "Farm Life and Work," "School and Studies," "Church Life and Faith," "Family Outings," "The Lure of the West," "Quilting and the Arts," "Older Years and Reunions." The section introductions, providing a context for the photographs, are especially helpful because of the dearth of information from journals, letters, or family memory books.

A very significant feature of this book is its documentation of the changes in dress. Juxtaposed are photographs of Mennonites wearing fashionable clothing and then (after the revival movement of 1896-1910 and the establishment of a dress code in the 1920's) plain clothing. The transition between fashionable and plain clothing is sometimes seen even within photographs containing both plain and non-plain Mennonites. (The commentary about some photographs of fashionably-dressed people explains that later when they joined the church, they adopted plain clothing.)

Another notable feature is the illustration of a wide range of Lancaster County Mennonite women's activities: snitzing apples; cutting corn; milking cows; making quilts, dresses, shirts, men's coats, wallpieces; swimming; dancing at a Maypole dance; going sightseeing at Ocean Grove; walking on the Atlantic City boardwalk; and working as hotel waitresses at Ocean Grove. Surprising photographs include one of Anna (Barge) Leaman playing a violin (p. 201) and one of Fannie Andrews, "Lancaster County's first known Mennonite female photographer" (p. 31).

This book includes a list of references: a number of family histories; genealogical files and library of the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society. In turn, this collection may well be the stimulus for further research on topics related not only to women's studies but also to Lancaster County Mennonite society in general, for example, leisure activities and development of the plain clothing dress code.

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## Mary's City of David

R. JAMES TAYLOR

Benton Harbor, Mich.: Mary's City of David, 1996; preface, illustrations; 181pp., \$56 clothbound.

If size and longevity are markers of communal success, the House of David was one of the most successful of them all. One of several

strands of descendants of the nineteenth-century English visionary Joanna Southcott, the House of David was founded as a communal movement by Benjamin Purnell in 1903 in Benton Harbor, Michigan. In the early decades of the twentieth century the movement enjoyed robust prosperity, attracting so many members it often had to maintain a lengthy waiting list. A variety of businesses, including a popular amusement park, sustained the colony, and it was probably best known to the country and world at large for its exhibition baseball teams whose members, like all House of David adherents, never cut their hair or beards. Things began deteriorating, however, when Purnell disappeared after being charged with statutory rape of two sisters in 1923, was finally located in hiding in 1926, and then died just after his trial in 1927. Infighting set in, and in 1930 a court divided the property between two factions, one led by Mary Purnell, Benjamin's widow, who carried the tradition forward until her death in 1953.

Both factions still exist but are aging and dwindling. R. James Taylor, the youngest member of the City of David, Mary Purnell's group, has now produced a gorgeous coffee-table book that contains some basic history, reproduces important House of David documents, and above all tells the story through fine illustrations. The oversized (11 1/2 x 14 1/2") volume begins with the story of Southcott and her successors, proceeds through the early work of Purnell and the ingathering of the flock at Benton Harbor, describes the great glory years of the colony, characterizes the division after Purnell's death, and chronicles the City of David under Mary Purnell from the 1930's down to the present. Graphically, the volume reproduces many clippings from House of David publications, several drawings, and abundant photographs of colony members, buildings, and activities.

*Mary's City of David* is a work of celebration, not rigorous scholarship, and some might fault it on those grounds. The history is certainly opinionated; we are given a treatment of the Purnells that is sympathetic to the point of hagiography. The volume also has some persistent errors and inconsistencies in prose usage and a number of typographical errors and would have profited from a careful, disinterested editing. But to focus on such relatively minor matters misses the larger point, that the work preserves and presents an abundance of House of David history that would otherwise remain hidden from most eyes in the Benton Harbor archives. In its very existence the book's scholarly contribution is substantial.

Like the Shakers, Father Divine's Peace Mission Movement, and several other communal societies whose heydays are past, the House of David faces the future with some doubt, and attention to historic



preservation of the artifacts of this movement with a fine architectural and documentary tradition are much in order.

Proceeds from this elegant, expensive work will go toward preservation projects. For that reason alone it would rate purchase by those who care about the communal past. Getting a fine book into the bargain is icing on the historical cake.

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## Noted in Brief ...

JONATHAN ANDELSON

From time to time the book review editor receives copies of publications which merit attention from the journal's readership, but which space limitations or other considerations preclude a complete review of. Four such volumes are noted here in brief.

Sure to be welcomed by everyone interested in communal societies is reissue by The Johns Hopkins University Press (July, 1997, \$24.95) of the paperback edition of John Hostetler's *Hutterite Society*, with a new 500-word preface by the author. This classic anthropological case study of one of the most successful communal societies in history is a model of detail and clarity. Combining both historic and ethnographic information, Hostetler's book touches on all major aspects of Hutterite life up to 1974, the year of the book's original publication. In the new preface Hostetler notes some of the changes in Hutterite society and includes a brief comment on the Western Hutterites' stormy relationship with the Bruderhof.

Michael Barkun (Department of Political Science, Syracuse University), past editor of this journal, has edited a collection of stimulating and provocative essays entitled *Millennialism and Violence* (Portland, Ore.: Frank Cass and Company, 1996), in which eight authors from various disciplines explore the connection between these two phenomena. Some chapters focus on theoretical issues, while others detail the cases of medieval Christian millennialism, Maori millennialism, Earth First!, and the "rescue movement," the most radical opponents of abortion. All make for riveting reading as the clock ticks toward AD 2000.

Two small press publications on the Shakers are also noteworthy. *Maps of the Shaker West: A Journey of Discovery*, by Martha Boice, Dale Covington, and Richard Spence (Dayton, Ohio: Knot Garden Press, 1997; 140pp., \$19.95) "chronicles the Kentucky revival sites and Shaker communities in the Shaker West." Included are such rarely reported colonies as Eagle Creek, Straight Creek, and Darby Plains in Ohio, and also better known sites like Pleasant Hill and South Union, as well as a discussion of the Shakers' connection to the Underground Railroad. Short chapters on each community are supplemented with nearly fifty maps. The book is indispensable for anyone interested in locating Western Shaker sites.

For those interested in Shaker music, Roger L. Hall, *A Guide To Shaker Music—With Music Supplement* (Stoughton, Mass.: Pinetree

Press, 1997; 50pp., \$12) offers a seemingly exhaustive bibliography and discography about the subject. Hall, a composer and musicologist, has been researching Shaker music since 1971 and here presents information about everything from sheet music editions of Shaker songs and recordings of the songs and the music they inspired (Aaron Copland's "Appalachian Spring" being the best known), to scholarly studies as well as popular accounts of what is surely one of the most enduring corpuses of music to come from a communal society.