

ANABAPTIST-MENNONITE SCHOLARS NETWORK NEWSLETTER

www.AnabaptistScholars.net

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Scholars, congregations, Mennonite identity

I frequently receive requests to join the A-MSN from non-Mennonite graduate students or established scholars who are doing research on some aspect of the Mennonite community or Anabaptist history. I respond that they are most welcome to join this association, but that we are not primarily defined by a common object of research.

Rather, what is Mennonite about the A-MSN primarily is the identity of the members. Indeed, some Mennonites study Mennonite history, communities, and theology; but Mennonites also study Shakespeare and political theory.

The A-MSN grew out of those Mennonites who gathered at the AAR/SBL (American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature), thus the emphasis was on Bible, theology, and religion. While these disciplines still represent the majority of the members as well as the majority of announcements and book notices in the newsletter, the A-MSN no longer understands the gatherings at the AAR/SBL to be its own event (though we do publicize it, see p.2). The Steering Committee is committed to making this association truly interdisciplinary.

I hope that those who study Mennonite social groups, literature, history or theology from the “outside” will continue to want to be a part of this association. But I especially hope that Mennonite scholars who study “non-Mennonite” subjects will push this newsletter and this association to find ways to meet their needs.

There are several ways that the A-MSN can serve its members who both reflect a diversity of disciplines but also some common connection to Mennonite identity. One might be to help facilitate connections among existing Mennonite scholarly groups, associations, and institutions. Our frequent collaboration with the Anabaptist Sociology and Anthropology Association (ASAA) is one instance of this.

Another is to pursue conversation about issues that might be common for many members regardless of discipline. One of these is the theme of the present issue: the relationship between scholars and the congregation. This

theme is distinct from that of the more methodological question of the connection of faith commitments and scholarship. Given that the life of the local congregation is a focal point of Mennonite belief and practice, there are a variety of particular issues and tensions that arise for the members of any profession (e.g. business, law, government) as they seek to share their gifts with a local congregation and in turn to be welcomed by the community. Several of these particular to academic professionals are identified in the lead paragraphs of Lydia Neufeld Harder’s essay. Paul Heidebrecht then reflects on choices that doctoral students make as they seek involvement in a local church.

However, both of these invited contributions are by theologians, and there are certainly particularly nuances in the relationship that theologians might have with their local congregations that may be different for scholars of psychology, literature, or biochemical engineering. I invite letters or responses especially from members of these disciplines. I also invite reflections from pastors or other leaders of congregations that have a large percentage of faculty members or students, either Mennonite institutions or any public or private university.

Conferences

The June 2006 conference on the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* that we co-sponsored with Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary and the ASAA was a great success. A news release plus conference papers are at: www.ambs.edu (go to “Welcome” then “Events.”) We are now co-sponsoring a conference on “Anabaptist Conviction After Marpeck” together with other groups (see p. 9). This is conceived as a interdisciplinary conference that examines Anabaptist belief and practice past and present. The many other calls-for-papers in this issue present a series of ways to develop conversations with colleagues throughout North America and beyond.

—Jeremy M. Bergen, editor

Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholars Network

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The Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholars Network is a project of the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre, Conrad Grebel University College. The Institute of Mennonite Studies is a co-sponsor.

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Membership dues

1 year: \$20 US / \$25 Cdn
 3 years: \$55 US / \$65 Cdn

Dues for graduate students have been waived thanks to a grant from the Faculty Calling Project of the Mennonite Education Agency.

Make cheques payable: "Conrad Grebel University College" and send to the address above.

Members outside Canada and the U.S. may pay via Visa or Mastercard. Contact the editor for de-

Mennonite Scholars & Friends at the AAR/SBL annual meetings

2006 Host: Bluffton University

Reception: Friday, November 17, 7:00-8:30 p.m.
 Renaissance Washington Hotel, Rm: Congressional B

Forum: Saturday, November 18, 9:00-11:30 am
 Renaissance Washington Hotel, Rm: Meeting Room 4

"Boyarin on Yoder: Expanding the Conversation"

- 9:00 Welcome, William Trollinger, Bluffton University
 Presiding, Trevor Bechtel, Bluffton University
- 9:10 Daniel Boyarin, University of California Berkeley,
 "Judaism as a Free Church: Footnotes to John
 Howard Yoder's *The Jewish-Christian Schism Revisited*"
- 10:00 Further footnotes on:
Rhetoric, Gerald Biesecker-Mast, Bluffton University
Paul, Laura Brenneman, Bluffton University
Judaism, Randi Rashkover, York College of Pennsylvania
Zionism and Palestine, Alain Epp Weaver, University of Chicago
Jesus, J. Denny Weaver, Bluffton University
- 10:50 Response, Daniel Boyarin
- 11:00 Audience discussion
- 11:15 Business meeting
 (Discussion regarding the future of the Mennonite Scholars & Friends receptions and forums in light of the decision of the AAR to meet separately from the SBL starting in 2008.)

Announcements

The Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown College welcomes applications and inquiries for appoints as Young Center Fellows in fall 2007 and spring 2008. Senior scholars and doctoral fellows are both welcome. For more info email Donald Kraybill, interim director. Kraybilld@etown.edu

Registration is now open for "Places, People, & Prayers: 2007," a Middle East study tour to be offered by Eastern Mennonite Seminary from May 4-26, 2007. This tour is a rich offering of opportunities to see the biblical sights (Places), to speak with Palestinians and Israelis about the world they live in (People), and to worship together as a group and with Palestinian Christians and Orthodox Jews (Prayers). Tour co-leaders are Dorothy Jean Weaver, Professor of New Testament, and Kevin A. Clark, Instructor of Spiritual Formation. This tour is open to all interested persons on a first-come, first-served basis. Travelers may enroll for 3 semester hours of EMS credit. For more information, contact Dorothy Jean Weaver at weaverdj@emu.edu. Registration deadline: Dec. 31, 2006.

Power Dynamics and the Scholar in the Congregation

By Lydia Neufeld Harder

"I would never want to pastor your congregation," commented a friend who is a pastor in another congregation. "There are too many experts who think their job is to be critical of the church!" He was responding to my comment about the advantages that our congregation has with its many members who can bring their intellectual resources to bear on the issues that it faces.

"I don't like pastors much," confessed another friend who is a scholar. She is a champion of the notion of hermeneutic community where every voice, including her own, should count equally in the congregation. Specifically she was reacting to the notion of pastoral "office" with its understanding of the authority of pastoral leaders.

"I feel that the congregation is taking advantage of me when I teach or preach without receiving any financial compensation," complained another friend who is a graduate student in theology. He was speaking in the context of the frequent use of his professional skills in his small congregation at a time when he had few financial resources.

At various times, I have identified with all three of my friends in their complicated relationship to the congregation. Since I have been particularly interested in biblical interpretation, I have sometimes lamented and criticized what I perceived as the sloppiness and imprecise interpretation of congregational members and preachers. It took me a long time to realize that even though a congregation's hermeneutic is not as methodologically precise as a scholar's, it may be more poetic (as in its worship) and more diverse (as in its study and lived response) than a scholar's more narrow focus. I have had to repent of my arrogance.

At the same time I have also been vulnerable as a theologian (especially a female theologian) who entered this vocation later in life. Other women and men have not understood my need to study, to analyze, to discover new truth in the scriptures and in my experience. My choice to study has been understood as a sign of pride and a rejection of the more practical ways in which I could have been a "doer of the word," instead of merely a hearer. Barriers have been created which sometimes did not allow me to freely give of my gifts to the congregation. At the same time expectations were put on me that were unrealistic as well as unpaid.

This uneasy relationship between Mennonite scholars and the congregation is not new. In fact, ever since a

small group of people took the authority of the clerics as well as the state officials into their own hands and baptized each other, there has been ambiguity and confusion about power relationships in Anabaptist congregations. Since some of these early leaders were also educated persons able to articulate faith in a way that challenged both other scholars and other preachers the power dynamic often became complicated. For example, Menno Simons included strong admonitions to the "Learned Ones" in his *Foundation of Christian Doctrine* accusing them with words like: "Your boasted wisdom leads you astray and the pride of your hearts causes you to stumble."¹ Yet Menno Simons was himself a priest who had studied theology for many years and whose wisdom sometimes sounded arrogant.

Perhaps one of the reasons for today's uneasy relationship between the congregation and its scholars is also the very nature of scientifically oriented academic work. Objective methodologies ask us to distance ourselves from the subject of our research. Yet the congregation asks for subjective involvement and easily rejects those who wish to analyze the congregation and its theology without fully identifying with it. Critical thought demands a stepping back, a detached analysis of situations and issues, yet congregations demand commitment and solidarity with members and their concerns. Scholars of religion or theology are particularly suspect when they enter the congregation prominently wearing the hat of the scholar rather than the church member. They are then perceived as exerting power from the outside rather than mutually giving and receiving counsel within the community. Yet the insight of the scholar may be exactly what the congregation needs at that moment. How can this contribution be given without unleashing unhealthy power conflicts?

Power and how it is used has been a crucial concern in Mennonite ethical thought. However, more has been said about conflict and power issues that arise in relating to society and government institutions than about conflicts that arise among members of the congregation. And when power has been acknowledged, it has not often been spoken of in terms of the power of those who have the gift of articulation, of rhetoric, of reason. Perhaps it is in this "postmodern" age, when the power of language both for good and for evil is being analyzed in new ways, that we can best recognize the power dynamics that are created in congregations when scholars enter those communities. And yet we cannot forget that within the Men-

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nonite tradition gaining higher education was often reason enough to suspect someone of heresy. This creates a vulnerability for scholars that must also be acknowledged. (After all, the low German saying, deeply embedded in the congregation that I grew up in, suggests that “the more learned you are the more mistaken you are”)

I have struggled with these power issues throughout my vocation as a scholar and have come up with three responses that all require further discussion. First of all, I have willingly identified myself as a scholar of the church, powerful because of my academic knowledge, yet vulnerable because of the suspicion of that same knowledge. I have realized that this is an unofficial naming. Therefore, I have looked for a group to “license” me, to support me and to make me accountable for my teaching in congregations. I have become a founding member of “The Teaching Circle,” a kind of guild that offers courses to congregations within the Mennonite conference in our area. It has been helpful to set consistent fees for my work together with others and to offer my skills and knowledge to congregations within that context. The freedom that I felt in leading a workshop in my own congregation (even though it was a volunteer activity) came with this much clearer identity as a teacher within the church.

Secondly, I have begun to work at setting boundaries for my scholarly work. When I am in the congregation, I have become more conscious of the weight that can be put on my words. I have begun the immense job of guarding against dominating others by assessing not only the intellectual impact but also the emotional power of what I say. At the same time, I have become more vulnerable, speaking my personal convictions within my congregation, trusting that they will not reject me even when they reject my ideas. For I am more than a scholar. Thus the boundary between my vocation as a scholar and my membership in a congregation has become higher. Yet the moving back and forth has become easier as I recognize the validity of both academic and church institutional settings, realizing that for me both places have become important but different settings in which to be accountable for who I am and what I do.

This approach also has implications for those who are not ready to commit themselves to a congregation or to identify themselves as Anabaptist-Mennonite scholars. Can they enter the congregation casually, perhaps searching for a community, perhaps seeking a tradition that can nourish them? Again, respect for the boundary between one’s scholarly vocation with the power and authority accompanying it and the church community with its expectations of vulnerability and commitment must be respected. Honest naming of these boundaries, even to oneself, can help break down relational barriers caused by

power differences.

Finally, I have realized anew my need for community worship with its components of praise, of confession, of proclamation, of affirming faith, of prayer, of witness and of sending. These are not readily experienced in the academic setting but are most necessary for me as I attempt to live out my faith. In acknowledging my need of worship I discover a context in which power dynamics can most easily be replaced by mutuality and friendship among all of God’s people. Thus the congregation becomes a necessary community nourishing me for the scholarly role I play in the larger society.

¹ *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons*, ed. J.C. Wenger, trans. Leonard Verduin (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1956), p. 208.

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Research Notes

I am currently writing a Lacanian reading of medieval female mystics, focusing on Teresa of Avila and Jacques Lacan's theory of the alienating structures of language and gendered relation to the Other.

Jeremy Garber
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* * *

I am currently working on a paper on the origin and development of the Word of Faith churches in Lithuania. My researcher and co-writer is Maija Kozlova, a 2006 LCC grad. Word of Faith churches originated in the mid 1980s under the influence of “prosperity gospel” teachings from the West. I will especially be analyzing how and why they have decisively moved away from their original theological starting point. The paper will be presented at the Christians Associated for Relations with Eastern Europe meeting in Washington DC, November 17.

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Changing Perspectives on Church

By Paul C. Heidebrecht

Of the many variables that my wife and I weighed as we decided where I would pursue a doctorate in theology, where we would go to church was not high on the list. Indeed, there were so many other important matters to consider first – finding professors who shared my research interests, finding funding to support my studies, and finding a livable city for our growing family. In hindsight, it is clear that all these were worth considering, yet it is also clear that church has ended up being a much more significant part of my graduate school experience than I ever expected.

When reflecting upon my experience thus far, not only do I think of the ways I have been shaped by studying at Marquette University, a Catholic, Jesuit institution in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, but I think of the ways I have been shaped by worshiping for several years at a nearby Presbyterian church, and, more recently, by my involvement in the formation of a new Mennonite church. I should also say at the outset that my experience as a graduate student has been significantly shaped by the fact that I am married and have young children. Keeping these particulars in mind, I hope that recounting my journey might be helpful for other Mennonite graduate students as they seek to balance their academic career and church involvement, as well as for those pondering the pursuit of graduate studies.

When I decided to attend Marquette I was looking forward to being immersed in a Jesuit institution, and I expected to spend much of my time getting acquainted with Catholic thought and church history. To my surprise, I have ended up spending just as much time reflecting upon Mennonite thought and church history. Certainly religious diversity is not a new phenomenon in the Department of Theology at Marquette; although most faculty are Roman Catholic, there are also representatives from Protestant, Orthodox, Jewish, and Muslim faith traditions. And in recent years a majority of the students entering the graduate program have been non-Catholic. Nonetheless, until recently I was the only Mennonite graduate student, and thus I often found myself being called upon to offer a Mennonite perspective on whatever issue was at hand. The response of my teachers and fellow students to this perspective has contributed to my sense that having a Mennonite around is seen as more than a novelty; this perspective is genuinely appreciated.

One of the reasons that the Mennonite tradition is of interest to my Catholic colleagues is our high view of the church. Like many contemporary Mennonite theologians

I have found myself urging people to see the church as the primary audience and the starting point for Christian theology and ethics. In light of this focus, one of my professors was a little taken aback to discover that I had become involved in a mainline Protestant church in Milwaukee. Perhaps looking to justify my unique status, I was quick to mention that I still considered myself Mennonite since I retained my membership in my home congregation in Ontario. But this only led to more questions! Just what, she probed, did my Mennonite identity really mean for me in light of my insistence that the local manifestation of the church, the congregation, should take more precedence over institutional structures? What did being Mennonite mean for me when I was no longer able to maintain face-to-face relationships with fellow church members?

Certainly some of my professor's reaction can be attributed to her difficulty in comprehending what it is like to be part of such a small church tradition – there are more Roman Catholics in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee than there are Mennonites in the Western Hemisphere! Nonetheless, the questions she raised prompted me to reflect further on the nature of my commitment to my home congregation, and to the church in general.

It was only a couple of months prior to moving to Milwaukee when I discovered that the Mennonite congregation I assumed my family and I would connect with was actually several miles away in a neighboring city. Disappointed but undaunted, we began looking around for a church closer to home, and, after just a few weeks in the area, we settled into a friendly Presbyterian church near the Marquette campus. We were attracted by the possibility of building relationships in this urban, ecumenical congregation, and soon became friends with people not only of Presbyterian background, but people with Catholic, Mormon, and even Mennonite roots. While moving from a Mennonite to a Presbyterian church hardly qualifies as a radical ecumenical experiment, we were nonetheless excited about what we might learn during this sojourn outside our own denomination. Once again, however, it seemed that I ended up learning just as much about my Mennonite convictions as I did about the tradition of my hosts.

For example, I was confronted by different assumptions about who was qualified to preach. Due to my field of study, and, even more importantly, my seminary degree, early on I was asked if I would be willing to cover the pulpit while our minister was away on vacation. On the one hand I was flattered, but on the other I was con-

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fused. From my perspective, there were several more obvious candidates to ask before me – members of the church who, while they may have lacked a seminary degree, were highly respected and articulate.

At this early stage in my academic program, I was also quick to draw clear boundaries between my academic life and my congregational involvement. When people I met in our new church home learned that I was studying theology, invariably one of their first questions was what I intended to do with my degree (a common experience for students everywhere!). I was surprised by how often it was assumed that I must be preparing for some sort of role in church ministry. Perhaps I should not have been surprised, given that we were attending a church in a denomination that has long tradition of highly educated clergy, a church where our pastor was addressed in formal contexts as “Reverend Doctor.” In any case, my response always emphasized that I hoped to teach in a college or university setting, making it clear that I planned to live out my vocation as a theologian safely ensconced in the academy. By limiting my church involvement (at least any involvement that might appear ministerial), I was reacting in part to any assumption that I had a special obligation to serve because of my background and course of study.

There were several other ways that worshiping in this particular Presbyterian church forced me to try to articulate why I was drawn to Mennonite thought and practice, yet it was my involvement in a third community that really forced me to reconsider the role of church in my life. Early on during our time in Milwaukee we had, along with Mennonite friends from our Presbyterian church, made an effort to seek out other folks who, like ourselves, had moved to the area for school or work and subsequently found themselves without a Mennonite church home. We managed to find a few others interested in exploring what it meant to be a Mennonite in Milwaukee, and the success of our initial meeting sparked monthly gatherings. Over the next two years these gatherings continued, providing opportunities to socialize, sing familiar songs, and do others things that Mennonites have been known to do – putting together school kits for MCC, discussing pressing issues in the church and world, and supporting each other through significant transitions in life.

While it was clear all along that our Mennonite friends were drawn together by a shared desire for community that was not being met elsewhere, in recent months it became clear that many also shared a calling to nurture a *worshiping* community that would welcome others to join us. And thus I have found myself in the middle of the exciting and daunting process of helping to start a new Mennonite church in Milwaukee, just about the last situa-

tion I expected to find myself in when I decided to pursue graduate studies!

There is much that is uncertain about this new venture. We have only just completed the process of writing our initial vision statement, and we are still learning how to worship together. Furthermore, we still need to see if we can sustain the level of effort required to live out our vision without burning people out, a struggle all too common among small urban churches. Indeed, on some days I wonder at the wisdom of joining in this new church, given the demands of my studies.

Increasingly, however, I have come to see these two dimensions of my life as closely related. Given my own academic interest in the practices of the church, to avoid doing my part to help shape and participate in the practices of my church would be problematic to say the least. I would now, in a way that I would not have a couple of years ago, actually embrace a sense of obligation to contribute my gifts to the life of my church. While I am still convinced that all are called to share their gifts, regardless of their level of education or area of study, I have come to think it a little ironic that Mennonites would be more inclined to assume that a doctoral student in theology is preparing for a life in academia rather than in church ministry! It is much clearer to me now that the vocation of the theologian is inextricably bound up with the ongoing life of their church.

I do not want to minimize the challenges that graduate students face in finding a balance between their studies and congregational involvement (not to mention their relationships with family and friends). My changing perspective on church has coincided with growing confidence and greater flexibility in my academic life. And I certainly do not want to downplay the benefits of worshiping and becoming involved in a non-Mennonite church community. My opportunity to become involved in a Mennonite church emerged due to many factors beyond my control. What I do hope this reflection demonstrates is my growing awareness that church should not be an afterthought for Mennonite graduate students. I have come to recognize that, despite its challenging and transitory nature, this phase of my life would be missing something crucial if I avoided church involvement. And thus I would also urge prospective students to add where they might worship to their list of things to think about when deciding where to pursue a graduate degree.

Paul C. Heidebrecht is a doctoral student in theological ethics at Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI.
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Faculty Positions

ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE invites nominations and applications for **Director of the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies**. The Young Center engages in research, interpretation and teaching related to the religious communities that derive from historic Anabaptism and Pietism. The center organizes public programs and conferences, hosts visiting scholars, and edits Young Center Books in Anabaptist and Pietist Studies. The director carries responsibilities for administration, scholarship and teaching. Strong administrative and entrepreneurial skills are required. An important consideration will be the applicant's vision for expanding the scholarly stature and contribution of the center. Challenges and opportunities include increasing the center's base of financial support, cultivating stronger relationships with similar research institutes and other religious communities, and expanding the center's summer and short-term educational programs for scholars and teachers. In addition, applicants should have a strong record of scholarship in at least one branch of Anabaptist and Pietist studies and show evidence of effective teaching. This is a 12-month, administrative position with possibility of faculty rank; salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience. AA/EOE. Applicants should provide a letter of application which includes a vision statement for future development of the center, a CV, and three names of references with contact information to: Elizabethtown College, Attn: Human Resources, One Alpha Dr., Elizabethtown, PA 17022-2298. hr@etown.edu. A review of applications will begin on November 1, 2006 and will continue until the position is filled. For more information, see www.etown.edu/youngctr and www.etown.edu/humanresources/

CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY invites applications for a tenure-track position in **Social Science**. This position is slated to begin August 2007, and may be filled by someone with expertise in Sociology, Human Geography, Cultural Anthropology, or Psychology. For more information, please contact Gordon Zerbe, V.P and Academic Dean at gzerbe@cmu.ca, or check the website at www.cmu.ca.

LITHUANIA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE announces two openings in **Biblical Studies** for Fall, 2007. LCC offers accredited B.A. degrees in a Christian academic setting and has an enrollment of 550 students. Candidates will teach required core courses in Bible to all students, as well as more specialized courses. Teaching at LCC offers you the opportunity to teach in a rapidly changing, post-Soviet society among students who come from a variety of faith and national backgrounds. Hiring preference will be given to applicants with a Ph.D. and willingness to make a multi-year commitment. Consideration will also be given to applicants who have at least an M.Div. or M.A. in Biblical Studies, or who can only serve short term. LCC operates on an externally funded support model, so applicants should be willing to explore financial support possibilities from mission agencies, churches, friends and family contacts. Teachers looking for a challenging sabbatical experience are also welcome. Our faculty come from a variety of Christian traditions, and are expected to be committed Christian believers who can teach in an ecumenically sensitive manner. Send application letter and CV to sschoolcraft@lcc.lt. For more information go to our website at www.lcc.lt. Interviews will be held at the AAR/SBL meetings in November. Stephen Dintaman, Theology Department, Chair, sdintaman@lcc.lt

BLUFFTON UNIVERSITY invites applications for the following full-time tenure-track faculty positions to begin fall 2007:

Accounting: Academic preparation in accounting and/or substantial professional accounting experience required. A terminal degree (Ph.D. or functional equivalent) is desired. Review of applications begins immediately and continues until appointment is made. This appointment may be earlier than fall 2007 depending on candidate availability.

Economics: Academic preparation in Economics or closely related field, such as political economy, economic systems, economic history or international development. An understanding of both mainstream and alternative economic paradigms is highly desirable. A terminal degree (PhD or functional equivalent) will be required for tenure. Review of applications begins December 1 and continues until appointment is made.

Education – Early Childhood: Doctorate preferred and required for tenure; ABD considered. Areas of specialization are open but preference given to candidates with interests in literacy and/or language development. Review of applications begins November 15 and continues until an appointment is made.

Education – Special Education: Doctorate preferred and required for tenure; ABD considered. Review of applications begins November 15 and continues until an appointment is made.

Psychology: Ph.D., ABD, or international equivalent required upon appointment. Areas of specialization are open but preference will be given to candidates with interests in applied social, cross-cultural, community, or industrial-organizational psychology. Review of applications begins immediately and continues until an appointment is made.

Compensation for these positions is commensurate with education and experience within the university pay scale. Send letter of interest, curriculum vita or resume, three letters of reference (submitted directly from referee or if necessary from placement office), and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Academic Affairs, Bluffton University, 1 University Dr., Bluffton, OH 45817-2104. See www.bluffton.edu. Bluffton University welcomes applications from all academically qualified persons who respect the Anabaptist/Mennonite peace church tradition and endorse Christian higher education in a liberal arts environment. Members of underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply. EOE.

Books

Brice H. Balmer. *Meeting Our Multifaith Neighbors.* Herald Press, 2006.

Marva J. Dawn. *Joy in Divine Wisdom: Practices of Discernment from Other Cultures and Christian Traditions.* Jossey-Bass, 2006.

Marva J. Dawn. *Unfettered Hope: A Call to Faithful Living in an Affluent Society.* Westminster John Knox Press, 2003.

Marva J. Dawn. *Talking the Walk: Letting the Christian Language Live Again.* Brazos Press, 2005.

Marva J. Dawn. *The Sense of the Call: A Sabbath Way of Life for Those Who Serve God, the Church, and the World.* Eerdmans, 2006.

Ray Gingerich and Earl Zimmerman, eds. *Telling Our Stories: Personal Accounts of Engagement with Scripture.* Cascadia, 2006.

Loren L. Johns and James R. Kraybill, eds. *Even the Demons Submit: Continuing Jesus' Ministry of Deliverance.* Herald Press; Institute of Mennonite Studies, 2006.

Rebecca Slough and Shirley Sprunger King, eds. *Nurturing Spirit Through Song: The Life of Mary K. Oyer.* Cascadia Publishing House, 2006; copub. Institute of Mennonite Studies; Herald Press.

Linford Stutzman. *Sailing Acts: Following an Ancient Journey.* Good Books, 2006.

Lawrence M. Yoder. *The Muria Story: A History of the Chinese Mennonite Churches of Indonesia.* Pandora Press, 2006.

Calls for Papers

Religion and Popular Culture

2007 Southwest/Texas Popular Culture and American Culture Associations, Albuquerque, NM

February 14 - 17, 2007; www.h-net.org/~swpca/ Deadline for proposals: **November 15, 2006.** The Southwest/Texas branch of the PCA/ACA announces a call for papers on popular culture and religion to be presented at its annual meeting in Albuquerque. Papers should be approximately 20-25 minutes long. Proposals should be no longer than 300 words. Days and times of sessions to be determined. The Southwest/Texas regional meeting is the largest regional meeting of the PCA/ACA. This is a great conference both for younger scholars and seasoned veterans. The papers are always interesting, the discussion is thoughtful, challenging, and fun. People are laid back and glad to talk about the various aspects of pop culture. Religion scholars often find that religion is a subject in many other aspects of the conference as well. Panels will be formed according to the themes of the papers presented. This would be a great time to talk about portrayals of religion in the media, especially if we could hear from a variety of perspectives. It would also be a good place to start a discussion on pop culture, religion, and theory. Other than that, anything goes. Proposals are invited from a broad range of perspectives. Yoga, quilting, football, hot rods, hip hop, consumerism, militarism, Christianity - all forms of religion are open for discussion. Papers on religion in the Southwest would be particularly appreciated. Papers are welcome from graduate students as well as established scholars. We are aiming for variety and cross-disciplinary dialogue rather than narrowly focused discussions.

Please send a brief abstract with short bio to: wesley.bergen@wichita.edu or to: Wes Bergen, Dept. of Religion, Wichita State University, Wichita, KS 67260-0076.

Summary of Calls for Papers

Religion and Popular Culture

Albuquerque, NM, Feb. 14-17, 2007

Proposals due: Nov. 15, 2006

Inheriting John Howard Yoder: A New Generation Examines His Thought

Toronto, ON, May 25-26, 2007

Proposals due: Dec. 15, 2006

Myth and Reality of Anabaptist/Mennonite Women ca. 1525-1900 in Continental Europe

Amsterdam, Aug. 31-Sept. 1, 2007

Proposals due: Feb. 15, 2007

Honoring a Legacy, Embracing a Future: Three Hundred Years of Brethren Heritage

Elizabethtown, PA, Oct. 11-13, 2007

Proposals due: Dec. 31, 2006

Mennonites, Family, and Sexuality in Historical Perspective

Waterloo, ON, Oct. 12-13, 2007

Proposals due: Feb. 16, 2007

Anabaptist Conviction After Marpeck

Bluffton, OH, Oct. 25-27, 2007

Proposals due: Apr. 25, 2007

Calls for Papers

Inheriting John Howard Yoder: A New Generation Examines His Thought

A symposium organized by the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre on the University of Toronto campus.

May 25 - 26, 2007. The purpose of the symposium is to provide a forum for emerging scholars to contribute to the ongoing assessment of John Howard Yoder's thought. Proposals dealing directly with Yoder's work from a variety of disciplines, perspectives and religious traditions are strongly encouraged. The intent of the symposium is to bring together thoughtful voices both critical and appreciative of Yoder's legacy. Priority will be given to graduate students, doctoral candidates and those who have recently received a PhD. Senior scholars are invited to participate as primarily respondents and are encouraged to relay their interest to the contact person listed below. Papers accepted for presentation will need to be submitted in advance to facilitate the participation of respondents. Send proposals of 400-500 words (including name, contact information, and institutional affiliation) to Jonathan Seiling at:

j.seiling@utoronto.ca. Proposal Deadline: **December 15, 2006.**

For more info see: <http://grebel.uwaterloo.ca/tmtc/yoder.shtml>

Myth and Reality of Anabaptist/Mennonite Women ca. 1525-1900 in Continental Europe

Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, **August 31 - September 1, 2007**

The research on women and religious dissent so far has been focusing upon questions like: why were women attracted to religious dissent? What positions were allowed to women in religious movements like Anabaptism, Calvinism and Lutheranism? What about equality and patriarchy in these new communities? The goal of our conference is to offer an other focus, by using a comparative, contextual, critical and multidisciplinary scope. We propose a new approach: 'imagology'. Imagology has recently emerged within cultural studies. It concerns the study of representations, stereotypes and traditions of self image. Imagologists question the objective information value of "images", study the structural and biased presuppositions behind these images and stereotypes and show the consequences of these beliefs in history and historiography. Our focus will be on the images and stereotypes of Anabaptist/Mennonite women in documents and in historiography, on the development of these images and stereotypes, on the differences between these various images and stereotypes, and how to interpret them in the proper cultural, intellectual, social and/or church historical settings. Further information: www.godgeleerdheid.vu.nl/english/index.cfm

Papers delivered at this conference will be published in a special volume. Email paper proposals of a maximum of 200 words before **February 15, 2007** to: Dr. Mirjam van Veen, m.g.k.van.veen@th.vu.nl

Anabaptist Conviction After Marpeck

Bluffton University, **October 25 - 27, 2007**

Co-sponsors: Mennonite Historical Society (MHS); Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholars Network (A-MSN); Anabaptist Sociology and Anthropology Association (ASAA); Institute of Mennonite Studies (IMS)

Proposals are invited for papers which address the emergence and development of Anabaptist convictions in light of the work and life of Pilgram Marpeck and of the Marpeck circle. The planning committee welcomes proposals from the standpoint of any academic discipline and solicits both presentations that are primarily descriptive as well as those that make prescriptive claims. The conference seeks to strengthen the development of contemporary Anabaptist convictions through a careful analysis of the emergence of historical Anabaptist convictions—especially those found in the Marpeck circle. Suitable topics include, but are not limited to, the social and historical background of Marpeck and his circle, the religious and political exigencies addressed by the texts of the Marpeck circle, the theological and historical relationships between Marpeckites and other Anabaptist figures and groups, the contemporary discovery and appropriation of Marpeck, the illumination of historical and contemporary Anabaptist theological developments and controversies by the convictions of the Marpeck circle, and comparisons of Marpeckite convictions with those of other historical and contemporary Anabaptist circles. The conference will be held at Bluffton University, where a student center named after Pilgram Marpeck highlights the continuing visual and material impact of a once obscure sixteenth-century radical reformer. The conference is sponsored by Bluffton, along with the Mennonite Historical Society (MHS), the Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholars Network (A-MSN), the Anabaptist Sociology and Anthropology Association (ASAA), and the Institute of Mennonite Studies of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. The ASAA will contribute additional non-thematic presentations for the conference. The conference planning committee presently includes the following members who are also representing the organizations which follow their names: Trevor Bechtel, A-MSN, Gerald Biesecker-Mast, ASAA; Sue Biesecker-Mast, Bluffton University; John Rempel, Institute of Mennonite Studies, AMBS; John D. Roth, Mennonite Historical Society; Jason Moyer, J. Denny Weaver. Paper proposals should be sent by **April 25, 2007** to Gerald Biesecker-Mast, Bluffton University, 1 University Dr., Bluffton, OH 45817; e-mail: mastg@bluffton.edu.

Calls for Papers

Honoring a Legacy, Embracing a Future: Three Hundred Years of Brethren Heritage

The Young Center at Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA

October 11 - 13, 2007

Formed in Schwarzenau, Germany, in 1708, the Brethren movement emerged out of the ferment of radical Pietism while at the same time embracing older Anabaptist traditions. This academic conference, part of a series of tricentennial events celebrating the rich 300 year heritage of the Brethren movement, will focus on the historical development and cultural life of the Church of the Brethren and related groups. Proposals for papers, or entire sessions, may be related to any aspect of the Brethren experience in North America or abroad. The conference planners especially encourage interdisciplinary proposals from disciplines and specializations within the humanities and social sciences. Proposal format: For each paper or session proposal, provide a title, a one page abstract of 150 to 200 words, and a one page resume with full contact information and institutional affiliation (if any). Proposal deadline: **December 31, 2006**. Submit by e-mail to scottse@etown.edu. The local program committee will screen proposals and inform presenters of its decision by March 31, 2007. For more information, consult the Young Center's website at www.etown.edu/youngctr or e-mail David B. Eller, conference director, at ellerdb@etown.edu.

Mennonites, Family, and Sexuality in Historical Perspective

October 12 - 13, 2007, at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, ON

Sponsored by: Institute of Anabaptist Mennonite Studies at Conrad Grebel University College; Mennonite Historical Society of Canada / Divergent Voices of Canadian Mennonites Sub-Committee; Mennonite Central Committee Canada

In 1999 the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada (MHSC) established a sub-committee, Divergent Voices of Canadian Mennonites (DVCM), to undertake a multi-year series of projects that would address research and education gaps in the history of Mennonites in Canada. The first phase of DVCM explored the topics of the history of Mennonite women, Aboriginal-Mennonite relations, the Kanadier Mennonites, and Mennonites and refugee newcomers, primarily in the context of several day conferences planned and hosted by the Chair of Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg. In 2006, a second phase of activity was initiated, and Conrad Grebel University College was invited to host a conference on the History of Mennonites, Family, and Sexuality for fall 2007. Conrad Grebel University College (CGUC) is a teaching and residential college affiliated with Mennonite Church Eastern Canada and located on the campus of and affiliated with the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario (approximately 1 ½ hour drive from Toronto's Pearson airport). Though the idea and reality of 'family' has been central to Mennonite self-understanding, as reflected in scholarly analysis and popular depiction, there has been minimal research on or conversation about the meaning, structure, and function of families in Mennonite history. Even less examined is the notion of sexuality. A 1999 conference at Goshen College on the theme of 'Family' made significant inroads into investigations on this topic. The 2007 conference will contribute to historical understanding on such topics as the following: family relations within particular Mennonite immigrant or denominational subgroups; meanings of childhood and adolescence; widows and widowers; family demography; family size and fertility regulation; prescriptive literature on sexuality; theological perspectives on family and sexuality; domestic violence; sexual orientation; gender in Mennonite families; memoir/ autobiographical explorations of family life; and comparative historical studies of family life, for example. The conference may include a keynote speaker and other topically-related events. The planning committee, led by the Institute of Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies at CGUC, invites proposals for 20-minute paper presentations to be included within a 1 ½ to 2 day conference with single sessions. Proposals can address any of the topics named above or other subjects that illuminate historical perspectives on Mennonites, family, and sexuality. It is expected that presentations reflect academic scholarship and will be of community interest. The conference program will reflect a combination of accepted paper proposals and invited presentations. Please send an abstract/proposal (less than one page) and a one-page short CV by **February 16, 2007** to Marlene Epp, mgepp@uwaterloo.ca. Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, ON, N2L 3G6.