

Editors' Introduction

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Journal of Amish and Plain Anabaptist Studies (JAPAS). The goal of this journal is to provide a place for the theoretical and empirical examination of plain Anabaptist groups. We welcome both quantitative and qualitative research from scholars who wish to examine the cultural, demographic, economic, historical, and sociological dimensions of plain Anabaptists.

In this first issue, we lead off with three articles by the editors themselves. Although this may seem unusual, it is with purpose. The first article by Cory Anderson and Joseph F. Donnermeyer is titled “Where Are the Plain Anabaptists?” It is a geographical introduction to the plain Anabaptist groups which form the focus of this journal, including Amish (i.e. buggy-driving Amish and car-using Amish-Mennonites), Apostolic Christians, Brethren, Bruderhof, Hutterite, Russian (Low German) Mennonite, and Swiss Mennonite.

In the second article—“Who Are the Plain Anabaptists? What Are the Plain Anabaptists?”—Cory Anderson begins by providing a description of the seven Anabaptist traditions which fit within the editorial frame of JAPAS. He briefly discusses their historical development, why each is within the journal’s definition of plain Anabaptist, and differences between the traditions. In the second part of the article, he extends his analysis to answer the “What” side of the ledger through three concepts: religion, ethnicity, and social system. In Appendix A, Anderson provides a complete list of plain Anabaptist churches which fit within the seven traditions he describes.

The third article— “The Amish Population: County Estimates and Settlement Patterns” —presents results of a census of the Amish population, which was commissioned by the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies for the *2010 U.S. Religion Census*. This article, by Joseph F. Donnermeyer, Cory Anderson, and Elizabeth Cooksey extends the original analysis by including a population count for all Amish settlements in Ontario and by updating the count of settlements through 2012.

The next three articles represent the kind of manuscripts we hope to have submitted to JAPAS by scholars who have written about seven plain Anabaptist churches and peoples. The first of these is by Elizabeth Cooksey and Joseph F. Donnermeyer. It presents a demographic analysis of the Amish population in Iowa, including the recent growth of new settlements in the Hawkeye state. Seonhee (“Sunny”) Jeong uses social capital theory to examine entrepreneurship among the Amish in the Arthur/Arcola settlement of west-central Illinois.

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The third and final article in this first issue is by Christopher Petrovich. He provides a historical narrative of realignment and division in the Amish community of Allen County, Indiana (Grabill/New Haven). His article is the first in what we hope to be an ongoing series of articles by members of plain Anabaptist churches. JAPAS wants to provide this opportunity in hopes of soliciting strong research from those within plain Anabaptist communities who seek to know their own people but neither hold academic credentials nor have the formal graduate-level training that is commonly the foundation of academic journals. We hope each issue includes at least one accepted article, short or long, which we will designate as such.

In addition to the open access online edition, Ridgeway Publishing is making available a print edition, which may be ordered by calling (585) 798-0050. Our hope is that this journal may meet an increasing demand for article-length publishing outlets dedicated to these quickly growing distinctive subcultures. As this journal grows, we will be looking for assistance—reviewers and editors—and invite your involvement and referrals.

We also welcome books to be sent out for review. Please notify us by email first.

Make inquiries and submissions to the editors. Below is our contact information.

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