

Editors' Introduction
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Special Issue: Population and Settlement Studies

Joseph F. Donnermeyer

Professor Emeritus/Academy Professor
School of Environment and Natural Resources
The Ohio State University
donnermeyer.1@gmail.com

Steven M. Nolt

Professor of History and Anabaptist Studies
Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies
Elizabethtown College
nolts@etown.edu

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The North American Amish population continues to grow at a remarkable rate, spawning more settlements in many new areas. The 2022 conference “The Amish and Their Neighbors,” hosted by the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown College, included three paper sessions dedicated to population and settlement studies. We are pleased to offer six of those studies in this issue of the *Journal of Plain Anabaptist Communities*, with more to follow in subsequent issues. Readers will find a description by Edsel Burdge of the so-called Michigan Amish Fellowship, an affiliation of Amish settlements that now stretches beyond the border of the Wolverine State. Geographer John Cross examines landownership patterns in Wisconsin, while scholars from West Virginia University, led by Corey Colyer, report in detail on demographic patterns across multiple affiliations in the Greater Holmes County, Ohio, settlement and Henry Troyer charts fertility across several Holmes County affiliations. Thomas Meyers offers a comprehensive demographic profile of the Elkhart-LaGrange Old Order Amish settlement based on his work with decades’ worth of settlement directories. Finally, Mark Dewalt mined Amish publications to determine Amish mortality rates in the twenty-first century.

This issue also features seven reviews of recent books. In a review essay of Patty Bear’s *From Plain to Plane: My Mennonite Childhood, a National Scandal, and an Unconventional Soar to Freedom*, Edsel Burdge provides readers with background on the little-known Reformed Mennonite Church, which figures prominently in Bear’s tragic account. Six more reviews of books by or about (or both) Amish and Plain Mennonite community, culture, and beliefs then follow. Several titles are reviewed by Plain Community members. The final book under review, about



Mennonite mission and service workers in Africa, includes several contributors and biographical subjects who were raised in Plain Mennonite churches.

Additional Amish and Amish-Mennonite demographic and community studies will appear in future issues of *JPAC*, along with other papers from the Young Center conference that explore interactions, both cooperative and conflictual, that result from the presence of new settlements in new places. The timeliness of this issue's contents—peer review and revision following the conference in June—resulted in this issue appearing a bit later than usual. Also contributing to the publication delay was the fact that the entire website hosting the journal was down for nearly a month in late summer. We apologize to those who were unable to access the journal at that time and also offer thanks to the staff of the Ohio State University Libraries for rebuilding their online journal site so quickly.

We hope this issue will continue to contribute to the scholarly conversation—the first four issues of the journal have generated nearly 30,000 views thus far—and we look forward to sharing more fascinating content with you shortly.

JPAC is dedicated to publishing both empirical and theoretical work related to Plain Anabaptist communities, including, among others, the Amish, conservative Mennonites, Amish-Mennonites, Apostolic Christians, Brethren, Bruderhof, and Hutterites. *JPAC* articles may include emerging issues associated with Plain Anabaptist communities, diverse theoretical perspectives, and methodological approaches to the study of Plain Anabaptist groups, and significant research findings about Plain Anabaptist populations.

The *Journal of Plain Anabaptist Communities* is a jointly sponsored journal of the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown College in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, the Amish & Mennonite Heritage Center in Berlin, Ohio, and The Ohio State University Libraries.

JPAC's predecessor at OSU was the *Journal of Amish and Plain Anabaptist Studies (JAPAS)*. Articles from volumes 1–6 of *JAPAS* can still be accessed, free of charge, in the Knowledge Bank of the OSU Libraries: <https://kb.osu.edu/handle/1811/54888>.

If you would like to discuss ideas for manuscripts for possible publication in the journal, please contact Joe Donnermeyer (donnermeyer.1@gmail.com) or Steve Nolt (nolts@etown.edu). Visit <https://plainanabaptistjournal.org/about> to access additional detail about *JPAC*, including author guidelines. As these guidelines state: "Submissions should be in Microsoft Word, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, left justification only, and no headers or footers." We allow prospective authors to select from one of two styles for citations: the American Psychological Association (APA) style (7th edition) and the Chicago Manual of Style (17th edition). In this manner, we recognize the diversity of backgrounds of prospective authors, especially because standard publication formats vary among academic disciplines.

Erratum

12/1/2022: Corrected "morality" to "mortality".