

## Earl H. and Anita F. Hess Archives and Special Collections

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The Earl H. and Anita F. Hess Archives and Special Collections is housed in the High Library at Elizabethtown College and contains a variety of resources for the study of the Amish and other Plain Anabaptist groups. Founded in 2014, the Hess Archives brings together the archival, rare book, and artifact collections of the High Library with related collections held by the college's Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies. For the long-term preservation of these rare and unique holdings, the Hess Archives was built with a dedicated HVAC and fire suppression system. The archives is managed by a full-time, professional archivist. Researchers interested in using the collections should contact the archivist to schedule an appointment. Contact information can be found on the archives' website, <https://www.etown.edu/library/archives/>. The archives is open Monday to Friday, and there is no fee for entry. Individuals interested in donating materials to the Hess Archives should also contact the archivist.



*The Hess Archives is located on the lower level of the Elizabethtown College High Library.  
(Photo courtesy of Joshua Cohen)*



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The Hess Archives' collection strengths include the history of Elizabethtown College as well as Anabaptism and Pietism with an emphasis on Amish life and culture; global Anabaptism; Ephrata; peace, reconciliation, and experiences of war; and select personal papers of Anabaptist and Pietist scholars. The archives is also a major repository for materials on the Church of the Brethren. Elizabethtown College was founded in 1899 by members of the Church of the Brethren, and the Hess Archives is the designated repository for the Atlantic Northeast and Southern Pennsylvania Districts and their historically associated congregations and institutions.

Researchers who study Plain Anabaptist communities will find a number of useful collections in the Hess Archives and Special Collections. The following describes several collections of note but is not exhaustive. Researchers should contact the archivist or the Young Center to discuss their research needs.

### Periodicals and Directories

The Hess Archives has a large selection of periodicals written by and for Plain communities, including both general interest publications like *The Diary*, *The Budget*, and *Die Botschaft* and special topic periodicals like *Buggy Builder's Bulletin*, *Ladies' Journal*, and *Blackboard Bulletin*. Several, such as the *Gemeinde Register* (Ohio), *Die News* (Wisconsin), *Northland Newlink* (Michigan), *The Grapevine* (Iowa), and *Lancaster Gemeinde Brief* (Pennsylvania), focus on specific states or geographic regions. Many frequently used titles are listed on the High Library's Anabaptist and Pietist Studies Research Guide (<https://libraryguides.etown.edu/anabaptistpietist>), and researchers can search for individual titles through the library's Journal Finder at <https://www.etown.edu/library/>.



Left: A student reviews Amish periodicals in the Hess Archives Reading Room. (Photo courtesy of Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh) Right: Intern Abigail Sholes '23 catalogs artifacts inside the Hess Archives climate-controlled storage. High density, mobile shelving is visible in the background. (Photo courtesy of Elizabethtown College Office of Marketing and Communications)

The Hess Archives also has excellent holdings of Amish and Old Order Mennonite directories, many going back several decades. Directories typically include lists of families in a district (including names, addresses, ages, and occupations), maps, a history of the community, and lists of ministers.

### **Personal Papers of Anabaptist and Pietist Scholars**

One of the largest and most frequently used collections in the Hess Archives are the personal papers of Donald B. Kraybill, Distinguished College Professor, Senior Fellow, and Professor of Sociology Emeritus. The Donald B. Kraybill Collection finding aid (along with the other finding aids described in this article) can be found at <http://etownarchives.libraryhost.com/>.

The Donald B. Kraybill Collection contains materials from 1690 through 2021 and spans 83 boxes (over 91 linear feet) donated by Kraybill between 2014 and 2022. The collection contains newspaper clippings, correspondence, primary source materials, meeting minutes, interview transcripts, and survey data. The majority of the materials in this collection relate to Amish and Mennonite groups within Pennsylvania, with a focus on Lancaster County. The collection includes materials from Kraybill's extensive research on Amish groups, including research used in his published works. Some of the varied topics covered include legal issues, women's health, forgiveness, and background information on many different Amish, Mennonite, and Brethren groups. Due to the sensitive nature of some materials, all researchers working with this collection must complete a privacy agreement provided by the archivist.

Another frequently used collection of personal scholarly papers in the Hess Archives is the Karen M. Johnson-Weiner Papers, 1844–2022. This collection spans 14 boxes (over 10 linear feet) donated by Johnson-Weiner in 2022 and contains correspondence, photographs, handwritten and typed notes, research materials, Johnson-Weiner's published work, and an assortment of artifacts including hats, bonnets, dolls, children's clothing, and a school bell. This collection includes Johnson-Weiner's correspondence with Amish and non-Amish individuals, and her research on Amish schools, language, Amish women, the Amish in New York state, and other topics relating to Amish life. The decades of correspondence with Amish individuals, primarily women, is particularly fascinating. Examples can be found in Johnson-Weiner's article, "Buy That Stamp! Letter Writing and Amish Research: A Personal Reflection on a Research Technique," in volume 3, issue 2 of this journal (2023). Users of this collection must also complete a privacy agreement provided by the archivist.

Another collection that is valuable for the study of Plain Anabaptist women is the Louise Stoltzfus Papers, 1984–2002 (1.8 linear feet). Stoltzfus was a native of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and was raised in an Old Order Amish family. A freelance writer and editor, she was the author of several books and was the former curator of the People's Place Quilt Museum and director of the People's Place Gallery. Her collection in the Hess Archives focuses on materials used in the preparation of her book *Quiet Shouts: Stories of Lancaster Mennonite Women Leaders* (Herald Press, 1999) and includes correspondence, manuscripts, and research notes.

Scholarly papers in the Hess Archives are not limited to materials on Anabaptist groups in the United States. The Calvin Redekop Old Colony Mennonite Research Collection, 1952–2012 (1.25 linear feet) contains demographic data, interview transcriptions, correspondence, photographs, newspaper clippings, and other research materials relevant to Redekop's research on Old Colony Mennonites in Mexico and Canada.

In addition to the Kraybill Collection, two collections with materials on varied Anabaptist groups are the Donald F. Durnbaugh Papers and the Stephen E. Scott Papers. Durnbaugh (1927–2005) was a leading historian of the Church of the Brethren, and his papers include extensive research materials on a number of different Anabaptist and Pietist groups. The Scott Papers are also diverse and extensive, including information on a multitude of Christian denominations and organizations, detailed records of Amish settlements, census information, maps, research completed for Scott's books, and articles on Amish and Mennonite groups, as well as audiovisual materials including recordings of worship services and Amish music. Stephen Scott (1948–2011) worked as Research and Administrative Associate at the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies from 1997 until he passed away in 2011.

### **Other Manuscript and Archival Collections**

In addition to scholarly papers, the Hess Archives also contains other manuscript and archival collections relevant to research on Plain Anabaptist communities, both contemporary and historical. The oldest of these resources are materials related to the Ephrata Cloister, a semi-monastic, mystical religious community founded by Dunker Conrad Beissel in 1732. The Hess Archives contains two manuscript music books from Ephrata, both containing music composed for their 1739 hymnal, the *Zionitischer Weyrauchs-Hügel*, accompanied by striking Fraktur illustrations. The Hess Archives is also fortunate to hold two manuscript books containing copies of letters and devotional writings by Israel Eckerlin, who was the prior of the Brotherhood of Zion (the male celibate order) at Ephrata until 1745, when he and his two brothers, Samuel and Gabriel (also celibate male members), were expelled. According to Jeff Bach, Director of the Young Center Emeritus, the Ephrata Chronicle (*Chronicon Ephratense*) states that after the Eckerlins left in autumn 1745, there was a book burning to destroy all of the materials that Israel had written (presumably all in manuscript form), so the fact that copies of these documents by Eckerlin survive changes the picture of his role and how he was remembered at Ephrata.

The Eli Zook Correspondence, 1861–1867 is a small but interesting collection in the Hess Archives. There are 37 letters in the collection, 26 of which are written in English, with the remaining written in a script closely resembling Pennsylvania Dutch. Eli Zook Jr., an Amish man born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, was a teenager when he was sent to work with his grandparents, Christian and Veronica (Schmucker) Zook, in the Big Valley settlement. These letters were sent to Eli Zook while he was staying in the Big Valley and end when he marries and returns to Lancaster County.

The Hess Archives also contains relatively recent personal and organization papers related to the Amish. The Ben Riehl Collection, 2005–2021 includes two boxes of interview transcripts,

correspondence, notes, and research materials. Subjects include youth groups, cultural practices and ideas, and relationships between the Amish and other groups. Riehl is an Old Order Amish businessman living in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He has been a friend of Donald Kraybill since 2005 and has helped Kraybill with his writing on the Amish through informative interviews and feedback on Kraybill's manuscript drafts.

Another collection with relatively recent materials on the Amish is the National Committee for Amish Religious Freedom Records, 1984–2020. NCARF was founded by non-Amish people at the University of Chicago in 1967 with a goal to preserve “the religious liberty of the Old Order Amish (and related Anabaptist groups, including Mennonites).” The NCARF Records includes legal correspondence, court documents, newspaper articles, and other materials pertaining to Amish people who have been involved in court proceedings. Subjects include slow-moving-vehicle emblems on buggies, religious freedom cases, school sanitation regulations and public sewer projects, zoning ordinances and urban development in counties with high Amish populations, Chesapeake Bay pollution management, questions regarding the legality of Pennsylvania Amish schools, the “Amish Act” (Social Security child tax credit exemption), shunning cases, accusations of abuse in the Amish community, television shows and movies that portray Amish people, child custody disputes, child labor law violations, and photo ID requirements for the Amish.

### **Rare Books**

The Hess Archives includes extensive rare book holdings including European and early American printings of Anabaptist texts. Examples include a 1685 Dutch edition of *Martyrs Mirror* with 104 copper etchings by Jan Luyken, numerous books from the Saur press (including the 1739 *Zionitischer Weyrauchs-Hügel* and multiple copies of the 1743 German Bible, the first European language Bible published in America), as well as an extensive collection of Ephrata Cloister press materials. Many of the Ephrata materials came to the Hess Archives in 2019 as part of the Clarence Spohn Collection. Spohn, a lifelong resident of Ephrata, worked at the Ephrata Cloister from 1968–1996, serving as museum educator from 1988–1996. Inventories of the collection, including digitized volumes, can be found at <https://libraryguides.etown.edu/spohn>.

The Hess Archives rare book collection also includes relatively recent small press Amish and Mennonite publications, many of which came to the Hess Archives from the book collection of Donald Kraybill. Examples include hymnals, devotional literature, school materials, cookbooks, memoirs, and histories.



*Materials in the Hess Archives are frequently used in classroom instruction. Here students in an Early American Literature class examine a 1748 Ephrata Martyrs Mirror. (Photo courtesy of Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh)*

### **Audiovisual Collections**

The Hess Archives includes several audiovisual collections related to Plain Anabaptist groups. The largest of these is the Dennis L. Hughes Photographs of the Amish, which consists of over 18,000 images taken by East Petersburg, Pennsylvania, photographer Dennis L. Hughes. The photographs depict Amish life and culture in the United States with a special emphasis on the Amish in Lancaster County and date from the 1980s through the early 2000s. Hughes first became interested in the Amish when he was a young boy growing up in Lewistown, Pennsylvania, near the Big Valley area. Subjects include buggy styles, agricultural work, mud sales, Amish schools, Amish children, and more. The collection includes photographs taken for Donald Kraybill's books *Amish Enterprise* and *The Riddle of Amish Culture*. Several thousand of the images have been digitized, and many are available online at <https://jayscholar.etown.edu/exhibit/hughes-photographs-of-the-amish/>. Here you can also find a 2021 oral history interview with the photographer.



*The Hess Archives regularly makes use of space in the High Library IDEA Lab for interactive displays and exhibitions. Here students in an English Technical Writing class view an exhibition of materials in the Dennis L. Hughes Photographs of the Amish. The exhibition was curated by Emily Erdlen '23 and archivist Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh. (Photo courtesy of Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh)*

The Hess Archives also contains several valuable recorded interview collections. One digitized collection contains Amish, Mennonite, and Brethren interviews conducted by Donald Kraybill and colleagues in the 1970s and '80s to track responses to modernity and change in these different groups. A more recently acquired collection is Erik Wesner's interviews with Amish small business owners for his book *Success Made Simple: An Inside Look at Why Amish Businesses Thrive* (Jossey-Bass, 2010). To preserve anonymity, only transcripts of the Wesner interviews will be made available.

### **Artifacts**

While not the primary collecting focus, the Hess Archives and Special Collections does contain selected artifacts. Many of these objects are used in displays in the Bowers Interpretive Gallery in the Young Center. Examples include Plain clothing, Brethren love feast items, quilts and other textiles, and Amish dolls. More information about the Bowers Gallery and its exhibits can be found at <https://www.etown.edu/centers/young-center/gallery.aspx>.