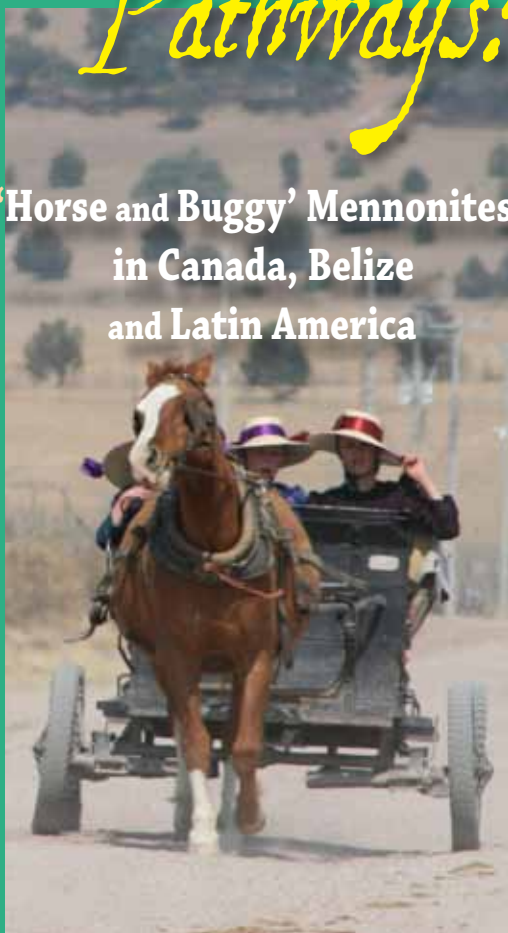


Anti-Modern Pathways:

'Horse and Buggy' Mennonites
in Canada, Belize
and Latin America



21-22 October 2011
Convocation Hall 2W16



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

PREAMBLE

A great deal of scholarly attention has been directed to Amish farm communities, mostly located in the United States. These 'horse and buggy' people are held up as models of anti-modernity, a people close to nature, rooted in large families and close-knit communities, emphasizing humility, discipleship, forgiveness and other spiritual values. They have their share of social problems, but they are known especially for their communitarian faith, simple lifestyle, plain dress, dependence on animals and traditional technologies. They especially learn from wisdom passed down through the generations.

Canada too has its 'horse and buggy' traditionalists. Some 4000 so-called 'horse and buggy' Old Order Mennonites live in southern Ontario. An additional 70,000 similarly traditionalist, Canadian-descendant Old Colony Mennonites have settled in Central and South America. They live in close-knit agrarian communities in English-speaking Belize and Spanish-speaking Mexico, Paraguay, Bolivia and Argentina. Both the Old Order and the Old Colony people practice anti-modern pathways, but they are the subjects of much less attention than the Amish, and often they are either misunderstood or ignored.

This academic conference examines the culture of both the Old Order Mennonites of southern Ontario and the most traditionalist of the Old Colony Mennonites of the Americas. It seeks to understand their ways, their perspectives, their relationships, and their religious faith in historical context. This history conference asks how it has been possible for these anti-modern people to survive in the modern world. It examines both the accomplishments and the social problems associated with anti-modern pathways.

The conference highlights studies by scholars from throughout Canada and Europe who have recently analyzed the ways of the Old Order and Old Colony Mennonites.

PROGRAM

Friday, October 21

9:00 am Coffee and Registration

9:45 CONFERENCE INTRODUCTION

Chairs: Royden Loewen and Hans Werner

Greetings: Neil Besner, VP International,
The University of Winnipeg

10:00 ONTARIO AND MANITOBA:
ECHOES OF ANCIENT WISDOM

Chair: John E. Sharp, Hesston College, Kansas
Andrew Martin, University of Toronto, "Echoes of Ancient Wisdom: The Foundations of Spirituality in the Old Order Mennonites of Ontario."

Lisette Hijink, Ubbergen, Netherlands, "'In Praise of a Good Woman': Preserving Plainness in Everyday Objects and Practices among Old Order Mennonite Women of Waterloo County, Ontario."

Peter Rempel, Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba, "The Westbourne Orthodox Mennonite Church: Old Order Mennonites Settle in Manitoba."

Levi Fry, Mount Forest, Ontario, "An Old Order's Reflections on Community and Discipleship."

12:00 Lunch

1:00 pm MEXICO: MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT

Chair: Andrea Dyck, Manitoba Museum
Tina Fehr Kehler, Winkler, Manitoba, "The Horse and Buggy Mennonites of Campeche, Mexico: Negotiating with 'The World'."

Arlette Kouwenhoven, Amsterdam, "Staying in or Leaving Sabinal: The Fehr Family and the Eternal Question of Migration."

3:00 Coffee

3:30 BELIZE: HOPES AND HARDSHIPS OF COLONY LIFE

Chair: Ben Nobbs Thiessen, Emory University, Georgia
Anne Kok, Free University, Amsterdam, "Where God Sleeps at Night: The Ongoing Struggle against Modernity in Shipyard, Belize"
Tanja Pasil, Center for Volunteer Work, Amsterdam, "'Gemeinschaft und Meidung': Community and Shunning among the Old Colony Mennonites of Shipyard, Belize."

Carel Roessingh, Free University, Amsterdam, "The Heavenly Valley: Small Scale Farmers at Springfield Colony, Belize."

Doreen Klassen, Memorial University, Grenfell Campus, Cornerbrook, "Mennonites and Other Gypsies": Belizean and Mexican Mennonite Women's Migration Narratives."

5:30 Dinner
 7:30 KEYNOTE EVENING: 'CONTESTING MODERNITY'
 Chair: Royden Loewen, University of Winnipeg
 Introductory Lecture:
 Hans Werner, Plett Foundation, "An Overview of Canadian and Canadian-Descendent Horse and Buggy Mennonites."
 Keynote Address:
 Donald Kraybill, Young Centre for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies, Elizabethtown, PA, "Contesting Modernity: The Old Order Struggle with Progress."
 Reception

Saturday, October 22

9:00 am BOLIVIA: INVENTING A RESILIENT CULTURE
 Chair: Conrad Stoesz, Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society
 Karen Warkentin, University of Winnipeg, "'So ha Wie daut emma jedohne' (That is how we have always done it): Collective Memory and the Old Colony Mennonite Identity in Bolivia."
 Christopher Cox, University of Alberta, "The Resilient Word: Linguistic Preservation and Innovation among the Old Colony Mennonites in Latin America."
 10:15 Coffee
 10:45 BOLIVIA: GENERATING NETWORKS AND BOUNDARIES
 Chair: John Janzen, MCC Canada
 Kerry L. Fast, Toronto, "Delivering a *Satel*: Death and Illness in the Colony Village."
 Anna Sofia Hedberg, Dalarna University, Sweden, "Obedience and Transgression among Old Colony Mennonites in Nuevo Durango, Bolivia: Dynamics of Boundaries"
 12:00 Lunch

1:00 pm ARGENTINA/ PARAGUAY: NONCONFORMITY AND REALITY
 Chair: Alexander Freund, Chair in German Canadian Studies
 Lorenzo Cañas Bottos, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, "Sibling Exchange among Old Colony Mennonites in Argentina: Reflections on Spousal Selection."
 Jakob Huttner, Berlin, "Twixt Nonconformity and Reality: The Dynamics of the 'Old Colony' in East Paraguay, A View from Anthropology."
 2:30 Coffee
 3:00 BOLIVIA: ENCOUNTERS WITH NORTHERNERS
 Chair: Leonard Doell, MCC Saskatchewan
 Jack Heppner, Steinbach, Manitoba, "A Northerner's Anabaptist Perspective on the Old Colony Mennonites of Bolivia."
 Martha Hiebert, Steinbach, Manitoba, "The Women of Durango Uno, La Sierra, and Valle Esperanza."
 Dick Braun, Osler, Saskatchewan, "Old Colony Genius on the Farms and in the Shops: Observations Along the Way."
 4:30 IMAGES AND VOICES OF A 10,000 KM LONG VILLAGE
 Chair: Susie Fisher, University of Manitoba
 Kennert Giesbrecht, *Mennonitische Post*: "Traveling the 10,000 Kilometer Long Village."
 Royden Loewen, The University of Winnipeg, "Collecting the Voices: A History of Horse and Buggy Mennonites in the Americas."
 5:30 Send Offs

Other Conference Details

Sponsoring Institutions:
 Chair in Mennonite Studies (The University of Winnipeg) and the D.F. Plett Historical Research Foundation, Inc.

Major Funding Agencies:
 D.F. Plett Historical Research Foundation Inc; the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada; the David and Elizabeth Friesen Foundation

Suggested Lodging:
 Holiday Inn Hotel Downtown. 360 Colony Street, Winnipeg, R3B 2P3. Hotel Front Desk: 1-204-786-7011. For The University of Winnipeg/Mennonite Studies conference rate, book by September 15, 2011.

Publication of Scholarly Papers:
 Selected papers from this conference will be published in the Journal of Mennonite Studies in the 2013 issue. To subscribe please write r.loewen@uwinnipeg.ca.

Suggested Dining:
 At any one of a dozen restaurants within a block or two of the University or in University cafeterias.

Parking:
 Available at numerous parkades within a block or two of the University.

Special Thanks:
 Rudy Nikkel, Warren Schuetz, Susie Fisher, U of W Technical Team, Angela Armstrong, Gilbert Brandt
 D.F. Plett Foundation Board: Leonard Doell, Kennert Giesbrecht, John J. Friesen, Ralph Friesen, Abe Rempel
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 John Corlett, Dora Dueck, Aidan Ens, David Fitzpatrick, Gerald Gerbrandt, Ruth Hastings, John Lehr, Charles N. Loewen, Eliakim Sibanda, Ruth Taronno, Albert Welter