

Foreword:

This year's journal begins with four research papers, situated in three parts of the world. Peter J. Klassen paper offers a comprehensive interpretation of the decline of pacifism as a theological teaching and social practice among Mennonites during their four hundred-year sojourn in Poland-West Prussia. Bruce Guenther revisits the main theme from last year's issue, and argues for the legitimacy of a focus on evangelicalism in the writing of U.S. and Canadian Mennonite history. Carel Roessingh and his student, Tanja Plasil, provide an ethnography of the rise of evangelicalism on Shipyard Colony in Belize and using the theories of Foucault and Bourdieu offer an interpretation of the attending shift in notions of authenticity. Hugh Grant and Michael Rosenstock are economists who, in examining the 1991 Canadian census, discover that late twentieth century Mennonites were less well-to-do than anecdotal evidence has suggested and offer an hypothesis to account for an apparent contradiction.

The main corpus of this year's journal focuses on an important moment in North American Mennonite history, the coming of the so-called 'Boat People' from southeast Asia in 1979 and 1980. For many European-descendent Mennonites this event marked their first sustained encounter with Asians, and helped to re-establish an old Mennonite commitment to refugee assistance and reconfigure Mennonite identity as inter-ethnic and global. The papers, presented at the University of Winnipeg on September 30 and October 1, 2005, were set in different disciplines and focused on various locations in Canada and the US.

The first section contains three personal reflections. Vinh Huynh, who integrated into Winnipeg's professional world, reports on an abiding identification with Mennonites, arising in part from marriage. Chau Dang of Calgary presents a dramatic story of reuniting family members and of his first meetings with Mennonites, including Bill Thiessen, Mennonite Central Committee director for Alberta. Mabel Paetkau offers a first hand account of a Mennonite Central Committee coordinator facing the monumental task of bringing together refugees and their hosts in British Columbia

Seven research papers follow. Stephanie Phetsamay Stobbe, a young Loatian refugee girl in 1979, uses her training in Conflict Resolution Studies to examine relationships between Laotians and Mennonites in Manitoba and British Columbia. Brian Froese provides a post-structuralist critique of California Mennonite aid to Asian refugees in a unique context in which Mennonites had earlier encountered Hispanic refugees. Lucille Marr's study of a Montreal

Mennonite immigration reception center, the Maison de l'Amitié, recalls a growing Mennonite presence in Quebec, one intersected with religious vision, cross-cultural interaction and occasional conflict. Daphne Winland who pioneered work on Hmong-Mennonite relations in Ontario in the 1980s reexamines her sociological approach that interpreted the process of hybridity and cultural recreation. Andrea Dyck studies a Euro-Canadian dominated Mennonite advisory council and its inter-ethnic relationship with the Winnipeg Vietnamese and Chinese Church it helped spawn. Heather Gibson employs the field of material culture to discuss a set of relationships between Old Order Mennonite and Hmong refugee women quilt makers in Pennsylvania. William Janzen analyzes the creation of a unique agreement between MCC Canada and Ottawa that enabled Canada's Mennonites to host thousands of Asian refugees. We regret very much that we not able to publish other papers that provided information on happenings in Southeast Asia, examined the very concept of "refugees" or outlined the experience of African and Hispanic refugees in North America.

The journal ends with reviews of thirty books, including works of fiction, poetry, memoir, biography, family history, photography, social science and peace studies. This review section is an eclectic, provocative and important part of the journal. It brings together two dozen reviewers in a virtual discussion that includes, among other concerns, the possibility of "human goodness," the "intimacy in cross-cultural interaction," the global nature of Mennonitism, and the reoccurring tension between secular and religious thought. Book review editors Kathleen Venema and John J. Friesen have facilitated a stirring conversation and I am deeply grateful for their leadership.

I also acknowledge with gratitude the work of copy editing by Professors Peter Pauls and Al Reimer, as well as the continued advice provided by the Journal's editorial advisory board.

Royden Loewen, editor