

The Not-So-Quiet in the Land: The Anabaptist Turn in Recent American Evangelical Historiography

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David R. Swartz. *Moral Minority: The Evangelical Left in an Age of Conservatism*. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2012; Brantley W. Gasaway. *Progressive Evangelicals and the Pursuit of Social Justice*. Chapel Hill, NC: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2014; Molly Worthen. *Apostles of Reason: The Crisis of Authority in American Evangelicalism*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2014.

In the historiography of North American Anabaptism, evangelicalism typically functions in one of two ways. Some Mennonite-produced analyses have depicted evangelicalism as a threat to Anabaptist distinctives, infiltrating and infecting thought and practice on peace, simple living, and the gathered church—a so-called declension thesis.¹ By contrast, other scholarship—often produced by Anabaptist groups outside the denominational orbits of the (Old) Mennonite and the General Conference Mennonite churches—has envisioned evangelicalism as an ally to Anabaptist values. It argues that shared convictions have guided the two traditions toward mutual influence and fruitful dialogue—a kind of integration thesis.² Whether focusing on

¹ Examples of scholarship in this historiographical trajectory include most of the essays in C. Norman Kraus, ed., *Evangelicalism and Anabaptism* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1979); Theron F. Schlabach, *Gospel Versus Gospel: Mission and the Mennonite Church, 1863-1944* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1980); Beulah Stauffer Hostetler, *American Mennonites and Protestant Movements: A Community Paradigm* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1987); Paul Toews, *Mennonites in American Society, 1930-1970* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1996); and Calvin W. Redekop, *Leaving Anabaptism: From Evangelical Mennonite Brethren to Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches* (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 1998).

² The language of “integration thesis” is my own. Examples of scholarship in this historiographical trajectory include the essays by Sider, Michaelson, and Wenger in Kraus, *Anabaptism and Evangelicalism*; Nathan E. Yoder, “Mennonite Fundamentalism: Shaping

corruption or cordiality, though, these two divergent historiographical models share at least one conviction: Given evangelicalism's demographic and cultural dominance within North American Christianity throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the Anabaptist story cannot be told without some reference to this larger tradition.³

Yet for all the attention paid to evangelicalism by scholars of Anabaptism, scholars of evangelicalism have paid little to no attention to Anabaptists. Mennonites and Brethren in Christ rarely feature as actors in narratives of evangelical experience in America.⁴ A variety of factors shapes this historiographical reality, including Anabaptists' own ambivalence about their status as evangelicals. Perhaps the most significant factor in the absence of Anabaptism in evangelical historiography is what historian Douglas A. Sweeney has termed the "jockey[ing] for historiographical position" among two factions of scholars that he terms the Reformed and Holiness schools of evangelical history.⁵ The historiographical models proposed by these two schools have dominated the literature on evangelicalism as it has emerged over the last three decades. In effect, they have so determined the actors in histories of evangelicalism that related groups—including groups like Anabaptists that do not always claim the evangelical label yet nevertheless moved through the 20th century in related ways—have been excluded from

an Identity for an American Context" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Notre Dame, 1999); Jared S. Burkholder and David C. Cramer, eds., *The Activist Impulse: Essays on the Intersection of Evangelicalism and Anabaptism* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012); David R. Swartz, "American Anabaptists, the Evangelical Left, and the Search for a Third Way," *Brethren in Christ History and Life* 37 (2014): 161-80; and Tim Erdel, "'Better Right Than Mennonite': From 'Egley Amish' to the Defenseless Mennonite Church to the Evangelical Mennonite Church to the Fellowship of Evangelical Churches," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 89 (2015): 467-87.

³ An assessment of evangelicalism in Mennonite historiography is Bruce L. Guenther, "Evangelicalism in Mennonite Historiography: The Decline of Anabaptism or a Path to Dynamic Ecumenism?" *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 24 (2006): 35-54.

⁴ Since the monographs under consideration in this review essay focus primarily on evangelicalism in the United States, my use of the terms "America" and "American" should be understood as referring to the United States. References to "North American" should be understood as referring both to the United States and Canada.

⁵ Douglas A. Sweeney, "The Essential Evangelicalism Dialectic: The Historiography of the Early Neo-Evangelical Movement and the Observer-Participant Dilemma," *Church History* 60 (1991): 70-84; quotation 71.

the narrative.

Even so, in recent years the prevailing models of evangelical historiography have proven too limiting. Several studies of post-World War II American evangelicalism published since 2012 exemplify the emergence of a new trajectory that moves beyond the “essential evangelical dialectic”⁶ of the Reformed and Holiness schools. It constitutes an Anabaptist turn in recent evangelical historiography, as scholars have inserted Anabaptists as key figures in the history of American evangelicalism.

The three books under review—Swartz’s *Moral Minority*, Gasaway’s *Progressive Evangelicals and the Pursuit of Social Justice*, and Worthen’s *Apostles of Reason*—represent the most significant contributions to this Anabaptist turn. This essay considers their treatment of Anabaptists as historical agents in the emergence and development of post-war evangelicalism. In doing so, it assesses the significance of their revisionist approach in reorienting the dominant models of evangelical historiography, and concludes with some reflections on the potential for this new paradigm.

Dominant Historiographies

Before examining each book in detail, I must briefly consider the dominant evangelical historiographies, the Reformed school and the Holiness school.⁷ Douglas Sweeney describes scholars in the Reformed school as narrating the history of North American evangelicalism as a story of intellectual and institutional leaders. Its studies are populated by Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists, and others who shaped conservative Christianity as ministers, theologians, and leaders of institutions like Westminster Theological Seminary and the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE).⁸ Exemplified by Mark Noll, George Marsden, Joel Carpenter, and others,⁹

⁶ This language belongs to Sweeney; see *ibid.*

⁷ In a way, the debate itself is now fairly dated. The contest between Reformed school scholars and Holiness school scholars for “control” of evangelical historiography raged most heatedly in the late 1980s and early ’90s. By 2000 the debate had largely waned, with the Reformed school emerging victorious. Still, the contest’s basic contours provide a conceptual framework for ongoing studies of the movement.

⁸ Sweeney, 71-72.

⁹ *Ibid.* Studies in the Reformed camp include, but are by no means limited to, George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press,

the Reformed school frames evangelicalism primarily as an “intellectual religious movement” for which “the core issue . . . was ideas.”¹⁰

By contrast, the Holiness school—typified by Donald Dayton and the late Timothy Smith—narrates evangelical history from the perspective of holiness, Pentecostal, and charismatic groups. Scholars in this school argue that the roots of modern evangelicalism lie not in the bourgeois ivory tower of Westminster Seminary or NAE convention halls but in the working-class cultures of rural camp meetings and urban revivals, contexts that nurtured progressive sentiments like abolitionism, women’s suffrage, and social reform.¹¹ Ultimately, the Holiness school seeks to construct a more populist vision of evangelicalism—a “people’s history’ to replace the prevailing elitist history approach,” as Sweeney describes it.¹²

Despite these diverging trajectories and disparate casts of characters, however, both schools tend to agree on at least one point: Since the mid-20th century, evangelicalism as a distinct movement has become increasingly difficult to define. The new or neo-evangelicalism of the post-World War II era is a denominationally and confessionally diverse coalition, including in its ranks fundamentalists, Presbyterians, Pentecostals, Mennonites, and others.¹³ Scholars have pointed to this diversity as an explanation for evangelicalism’s increasingly open ideological posture in the last half of the century.

2006); Joel Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997); and Mark Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield, and the Wesleys* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004).

¹⁰ Douglas Jacobsen, “Re-visioning Evangelical Theology,” *Reformed Journal* 35 (1985): 18, quoted in Noll, *Rise of Evangelicalism*, 71.

¹¹ Sweeney, 73-76. Studies in the Holiness camp include, but are not limited to, Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1957), and Donald W. Dayton, *Recovering an Evangelical Heritage* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976).

¹² Sweeney, 74.

¹³ For primary source documents detailing the institutionalization of “neo-evangelicalism” in the years during and after World War II, see Joel A. Carpenter, ed., *A New Evangelical Coalition: Early Documents of the National Association of Evangelicals* (New York: Garland, 1988). For a listing of early members of the NAE, see James DeForrest Murch, *Cooperation without Compromise: A History of the National Association of Evangelicals* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1956), 202-203.

At the same time, scholars have struggled to develop an appropriate framework for characterizing this evangelical heterogeneity. Smith, for instance, has used the metaphors of a mosaic and a kaleidoscope to explain the “diversity of our [evangelical] histories, our organizational structures, and our doctrinal emphases.”¹⁴ Similarly, Marsden has quipped that “by 1960 one might classify as ‘evangelical’ anyone who identified with Billy Graham,”¹⁵ while also claiming that by the 1970s the movement had fragmented to the extent that “no one—not even Billy Graham—could claim to stand at the center” of it.¹⁶

Such unsettled historiographical terrain naturally raises a plethora of questions for scholars of American religious history. What happened to the neo-evangelicalism of mid-20th century America to so fragment it? In light of such fragmentation, how can we explain the seemingly unified rise of the Christian Right in the late 1970s and ’80s? More fundamentally, can we even answer such questions about the nature of American religion through the lens of evangelicalism? Has the concept itself—notoriously difficult to define in any coherent manner—lost its use as a heuristic device? How might a total reconceptualization of the category “evangelical” help us to better understand the function of born-again religion in 20th- and 21st-century history?

The books under review answer these questions—at least in part—by introducing Anabaptists like Mennonites and Brethren in Christ as characters in the drama of evangelical story.

Moral Minorities and Evangelical Progressives

David Swartz and Brantley Gasaway focus on explaining the development of evangelicalism after 1960: What happened to the project of transdenominational “cooperation without compromise” amid the tumult of the civil rights movement, second-wave feminism, anti-Vietnam protests,

¹⁴ Timothy L. Smith, “The Evangelical Kaleidoscope and the Call to Christian Unity,” *Christian Scholar’s Review* 15 (1986): 125.

¹⁵ George M. Marsden, “Preachers of Paradox: The Religious New Right in Historical Perspective,” in *Religion and America: Spiritual Life in a Secular Age*, ed. Mary Douglas and Steven Tipton (Boston: Beacon Press, 1982), 156.

¹⁶ George M. Marsden, “Unity and Diversity in the Evangelical Resurgence,” in *Altered Landscapes: Christianity in America 1935–1985*, ed. David W. Lotz (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), 71.

nuclear proliferation, and the culture wars? Earlier scholarship viewed the public emergence of the Christian Right as the logical outcome of a culturally engaged evangelical resurgence and as a conservative backlash against a secular counterculture revolution. But Swartz and Gasaway chart a lesser-known but equally significant development: the rise of a progressive evangelicalism, often called the Evangelical Left.

Both scholars root this progressive trajectory in the World War II-era theological and ethical work of Carl F. H. Henry, architect of a resurgent neo-evangelicalism. In such books as *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (1947), Henry exhorted his co-religionists to abandon their political quietism, engage the surrounding culture, and assume a greater role in the public square. Though rooting progressive evangelicalism in Henry's Reformed theology, neither Swartz nor Gasaway limit their narratives to Presbyterian or Baptist leaders or to the institutions privileged by the Reformed school. In *Moral Minority*, Swartz delineates the historical trajectory of progressive evangelicalism by explaining that "the path [of neo-evangelicalism] out of fundamentalist exile took many directions" (24).

This approach enables Swartz to profile the individuals and groups from varied denominational, theological, and doctrinal backgrounds that shaped the nascent movement. Each chapter of *Moral Minority* offers a biographical sketch of a significant figure in the Evangelical Left, tying each individual to a key theme for progressives: *The Other Side* publisher John Alexander and civil rights activism; *Sojourners'* Jim Wallis and anti-war protest; Oregon senator Mark Hatfield and electoral politics; communitarian Sharon Gallagher and gender equality; Latin American theologian Samuel Escobar and the "Third World" critique of the capitalist, militarist West; and Reformed scholar Richard Mouw and the cultural mandate.

Of particular relevance to the present review is Swartz's chapter on Brethren in Christ professor and theologian Ronald J. Sider and the influential call to simple living, anti-materialism, and economic justice issued to evangelicals by Anabaptist-Mennonites. Placing Sider's contributions in historical and theological context, Swartz describes how "the quiet in the land" moved beyond their ethnic enclaves in the 1950s, "increasingly identifying with evangelicalism" and "prodding [that tradition] toward prophetic social engagement" (153). He describes in detail Sider's 1977 book *Rich Christians*

in *an Age of Hunger*, which offered a scathing moral indictment of Western affluence and indifference to injustice, and introduced the language of sin to broader societal debates about global poverty. Swartz concludes that, with this book, Sider offered “Anabaptism’s most influential contribution to evangelicalism in the postwar era” (156). Swartz also highlights other Anabaptist texts that induced evangelical readers toward simplicity and justice, especially Mennonite Central Committee volunteer Doris Longacre’s 1976 “thrifty yet exotic cookbook” *More With Less* (160-63, quotation 160). In a separate chapter, he devotes attention to Mennonite theologian John Howard Yoder’s provocative yet popular *The Politics of Jesus* (204-206). Thus, without overstating their influence, Swartz establishes convincingly the place of Anabaptists in the Evangelical Left of the 1960s and ’70s.

One key example of their significance was Sider’s leadership role in the 1973 Thanksgiving Workshop of Evangelical Social Concern, held in Chicago. This meeting drew together the somewhat disparate strands of progressive evangelical sentiment for the signing of the Chicago Declaration, a manifesto against racism, sexism, economic injustice, and militarism. For Swartz, this gathering was the high-water mark of the Evangelical Left, occurring at a time before the rise of Jerry Falwell when evangelicalism’s rightward turn “was anything but assured” (218). But in subsequent years, he explains, this “progressive united front” collapsed. Identity politics fragmented the fragile coalition. African-Americans rejected the movement’s sustained racial inequalities. Evangelical feminists chafed against the preponderance of male leadership and felt powerless despite numerous attempts to gain a greater voice within the movement. Theological clashes between the establishment-focused Calvinists and countercultural Anabaptists damaged the fragile unity. Moreover, evangelical progressives’ fusion of conservative theology and social action made them ideological orphans in the polarized political arena of the late ’70s. Their “consistently pro-life” rhetoric isolated them from Democrats’ hardening pro-choice orthodoxy, while their opposition to war and their liberal attitudes toward economics and foreign policy distanced them from Republicans. In this vacuum, the Christian Right captured the evangelical political imagination. As a result, Swartz concludes, “progressive evangelicals . . . were left behind by both the left and the right” because of their inability to “fit [into] an evolving two-party political system” (214).

Yet these non-Right evangelicals did not disappear. In *Progressive Evangelicals and the Pursuit of Social Justice*, Brantley Gasaway explains the animating ideas and inducements that sustained the minority movement during Reagan-era conservatism and ideological culture wars. Rooting his analysis in the historical trajectory described by Swartz, Gasaway explains progressive evangelicals' motivating "public theology." He utilizes the activities and resources of three prominent progressive evangelical institutions—Wallis's *Sojourners*, Alexander's *The Other Side*, and Sider's Evangelicals for Social Action—as lenses through which to assess this philosophy. Despite differences in style and substance, these three institutions and their figurehead leaders shared a "set of theological convictions about public affairs and politics that shaped their efforts to promote a just society" (54). Arguing that all people have both individual rights and collective or communal responsibilities that deserve equal protection, progressive evangelicals called Christians to embrace a biblical understanding of social justice rooted in a shared commitment to the common good and undergirded by a desire to ensure equal opportunities through the equitable distribution of socioeconomic resources. Armed with this "public theology of community," progressive evangelicals engaged the public sphere.

In six successive thematic chapters, Gasaway describes how progressive evangelicals applied this public theology to different issues: racism, sexism, abortion, gay rights, poverty, and nationalism and militarism. Importantly, he shows that progressive evangelicals were hardly uniform in their response to these issues. Despite a shared public theology, they adopted varied biblical interpretations and political priorities that ultimately produced divergent, sometimes contrasting responses. Thus, Gasaway can describe progressive evangelicalism as a "coherent yet complex religious movement" (15) with a "dynamic, multivocal nature" (16)—conclusions that further reinforce the diversity of evangelicalism in the last half of the 20th century.

Like Swartz, Gasaway acknowledges that Anabaptism contributed an important expression to this manifold movement. Even so, he devotes limited attention to analyzing this influence. He describes Sider as a "lifelong Anabaptist" (68) and modestly highlights the shaping force of Anabaptist theology on Wallis's early work (55). He also acknowledges the influence of John Howard Yoder on Sider and Wallis, both of whom "endorsed

[Yoder's] . . . Anabaptist view of the church as a countercultural, alternative community—a visible witness to God's just kingdom" (68). Gasaway also makes brief references to Anabaptism in discussing progressive evangelicals' rhetoric on peace, nationalism, and militarism (238, 266). Even so, given the book's preoccupation with ideas and its privileging of Sider as a key voice within the progressive evangelical movement, the author could have devoted significantly more attention to a genealogy of Anabaptist theological influence. After all, Sider self-consciously drew on his Anabaptist "heritage" in his writing and speaking, even as he framed his arguments in evangelical language.¹⁷

Nevertheless, both books significantly advance scholarship on evangelicalism after 1960, and help to make sense of the fragmentation and diversification of those claiming the evangelical label. Yet neither text delves deeply into the more fundamental problem: the contested nature of the term "evangelical."

Re-mapping the Evangelical Mind

At first blush, Molly Worthen's *Apostles of Reason* may seem to present the trappings of a conventional history of evangelicalism in the Reformed school tradition. She centralizes familiar historical actors, including Carl F. H. Henry, Harold Ockenga, Billy Graham, and Francis Schaeffer. They function in familiar institutions such as the NAE, *Christianity Today*, and Fuller Seminary, and they express their evangelical activism in familiar projects—evangelistic crusades, the church growth movement, and theological education, among others. Yet Worthen's monograph is anything but conventional. She orients familiar material around a fresh, compelling argument. Acknowledging evangelicalism's historical roots in 17th-century Pietism and Puritanism as well as 18th- and 19th-century revivalism and moral reform movements, Worthen ultimately describes evangelicalism

¹⁷ See especially Ronald J. Sider, "Evangelicalism and the Mennonite Tradition," in *Evangelicalism and Anabaptism*, ed. C. Norman Kraus (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1979), 149-168, and Ronald J. Sider, "On Writing Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger," *Brethren in Christ History and Life* 1 (1978): 35-40. For analysis of Sider's Anabaptist "heritage" in his work, see Swartz, "Re-Baptizing Evangelicalism: American Anabaptists and the 1970s Evangelical Left," in *The Activist Impulse*, 262-91, and Jeffrey McClain Jones, "Ronald Sider and Radical Political Theology" (Ph.D. Diss., Northwestern University, 1990).

neither doctrinally nor confessionally but as an intellectual tradition shaped by a set of questions about “the relationship of faith and experience to human reason” (11). She contends that evangelicalism’s attempts to make Enlightenment science compatible with pre-modern religion have produced a crisis of authority, an “ongoing . . . struggle to reconcile reason with revelation, heart with head, and private piety with the public square” (2).

Such a far-reaching reconceptualization of evangelicalism as a heuristic device problematizes conventional tellings of evangelical history, creating an opening through which Worthen can introduce those “communities on the fringes of evangelicalism’s ‘mainstream’ that might contest the term altogether,” including Wesleyans and Anabaptists (5). Thus she can effectively synthesize both evangelical histories by Marsden, Carpenter, Dayton, Barry Hankins, Steven Miller, and others with narratives offered by Anabaptist-Mennonite scholars such as Nathan Yoder, Perry Bush, and Steve Nolt to achieve the interpretive triumph that is *Apostles of Reason*.

The first part of Worthen’s book considers the resurgence of neo-evangelicalism, its ostensibly Reformed obsession with defending biblical inerrancy, and its assertion of a Christian worldview as the cornerstone of Western civilization. The second part considers the transforming influence of anthropology on evangelical missionary activity, as well as the rise of the charismatic movement as an evangelical leaven in High Church liturgy. Part three contends that the culture wars of the late 20th century grew out of an internal conflict within evangelicalism between left-leaning progressive social activists and conservatives, like Francis Schaeffer, who sought to re-assert inerrancy and worldview ideology amid convulsions within the larger culture.

Anabaptists loom large in this narrative. In the 1940s and ’50s, as the NAE emerged under the leadership of Henry and Ockenga, Mennonite church historian Harold Bender posited a vision of evangelical Anabaptism as a solution to the identity crisis and intellectual turmoil within his own religious community. The argument bolstered Mennonites’ self-confidence, and armed them with a historical tradition by which they could challenge the patriotic, individualistic neo-evangelical consensus (42-45). In subsequent decades, Bender’s student John Howard Yoder confronted evangelicals with sustained critiques of their culturally relativistic approach to mission

(133) as well as their tacit endorsement of just war and Niebuhrian realism (196-97). Yet Yoder also used the first-person plural in his voluminous correspondence with evangelical leaders, considering himself (in Worthen's words) not so much "an outside commentator but a firsthand participant" (78) in the evangelical project. Moreover, Ron Sider drew on his experiences teaching and living at a Brethren in Christ college in a poor section of urban Philadelphia to compose *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, which shaped late 20th-century evangelical thinking on justice (183). These Anabaptist leaders, Worthen convincingly shows, cultivated an evangelical insider status precisely because they believed their traditions had something to gain by saving evangelicals from civil religion.

With *Apostles of Reason*, Worthen offers a gripping historical account, written in lucid prose and peppered with wit. The book constitutes the most definitive account to date of the evangelical mind.

Concluding Reflections

These studies by Swartz, Gasaway, and Worthen clearly demonstrate the emergence of a new historiographical trajectory within the study of evangelicalism—a trajectory bound neither to the Reformed nor Holiness school approaches and distinguished, at least in part, by its insertion of Anabaptists into the standard narratives of evangelical resurgence. The studies portray Mennonite and Brethren in Christ people as more than pacifist gadflies on the margins of evangelical institutions; indeed, Anabaptists influenced and participated in evangelical activities in key ways throughout the 20th century, often by claiming an evangelical identity while simultaneously critiquing evangelical excess.

This narrative is not entirely new; Mennonite scholars have tracked the interactions between evangelicalism and Anabaptism for decades.¹⁸ Still, it signals a decisive change within the historiography of evangelicalism. These studies signal the emergence of a third historiographical trajectory, an Anabaptist school that tells the story of evangelical history from the perspectives of those who may or may not claim that religious label but who undoubtedly converged with and diverged from the neo-evangelical consensus after 1945. What might a third way of narrating evangelical

¹⁸ See footnotes 1 and 2.

history contribute to an already crowded historiography?

First, such an approach might centralize the voices and perspectives of African American and Latino/a Anabaptists—groups often neglected in studies of both evangelicalism and Anabaptism. Some scholars, particularly historian Felipe Hinojosa, have already advanced the discourse by examining Mennonite-evangelical intersections through the experiences of Latino/as in the American Southwest. Hinojosa has shown that late 20th-century Latino/a Mennonites saw themselves as *evangélicos*, a position that differentiated them from many of their white coreligionists. While whites evinced ambivalence toward the evangelical label, Latino/as embraced it.¹⁹ Future scholars may draw similar claims about black Mennonites. The largest congregation in Mennonite Church USA—Calvary Community Church in Hampton, Virginia—is a megachurch with 2,200 mostly African American members; this reality certainly suggests the confluence of both Anabaptist and evangelical themes. By incorporating blacks and Latino/as as key actors, an “Anabaptist school” of evangelical history could dramatically reconceptualize the study of both evangelicalism and Anabaptism, subfields that typically focus on white intellectuals and institutional leaders.

Second, an Anabaptist school might embrace a methodological approach that American religious historians call “lived religion.” Worthen offers a hint of what such an approach might look like: “. . . Yoder’s Anabaptist heritage emphasized the *personal habits* and *local community* through which God’s word *informed everyday life*. Discipleship, more than dogma, was the primary way to follow Christ” (76, emphasis added). If the Reformed school stresses ideas articulated by elites and the Holiness school focuses on cultural movements stirred by working-class religionists, the Anabaptist school ought to pay attention to everyday practices and habits of living.

In this sense, explaining the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ experience across the 20th century requires more than just attention to the intellectual work of Bender and Sider; it necessitates careful consideration of daily habits of discipleship, holiness, peacemaking, and separation. How has

¹⁹ Felipe Hinojosa, *Latino Mennonites: Civil Rights, Faith, and Evangelical Culture* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2014); Felipe Hinojosa, “Pool Tables are the Devil’s Playground: Mennonite Voluntary Service in South Texas, 1952-1968,” in Burkholder and Cramer, eds., *The Activist Impulse*, 237-61.

theology been discussed at the dinner table or “practiced in the kitchen,” to borrow a phrase from Swartz? What happened when Mennonite and Brethren in Christ teenagers and college students joined their friends at a Youth for Christ rally or an Inter-Varsity Bible study? How did Bible memorization, Christian radio, and attendance at the Brunk or Augsburgers crusades shape the lives of Mennonite farmers, housewives, and professionals? How did patterns of discipleship and community transform as Anabaptists moved from the farm to the suburbs and the cities? To what extent did terms of global service with Mennonite Central Committee transform the day-to-day experiences of those who returned to North America?

These questions point to narratives quite distinct from the intellectual and political histories offered by Worthen, Swartz, and Gasaway. Yet the questions might ultimately get us closer to the essence of evangelicalism. Like Anabaptists, Reformed and Holiness evangelicals also practice their faith in community, both locally and globally. To fully understand these born-again believers, scholars must move beyond doctrine and ideas to lived reality and everyday practices of religion.

The above suggestions chart one possible trajectory for the emerging Anabaptist school of evangelical history. Without doubt, Worthen, Swartz, and Gasaway have tapped a rich vein of historical inquiry—a vein that promises to yield not only new insights about evangelicalism and Anabaptism, but more importantly about the role of religion in American life in the 20th century.

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