

Editorial

The cover photograph for this issue of *The Conrad Grebel Review*, presenting no obvious and immediate signification, begs some explanation. At first glance, it is a study in 1960s Mennonite headgear – the men fashionable in their bowlers and fedoras, the women modest in their kerchiefs. But there is another “gender-political irony” here, referred to by Jeff Gundy in his article on depression and Mennonites. The setting is a 1960 relief sale in Illinois and there is tragic-comic irony in the fact that the women behind the chain-link fence are undoubtedly the makers of the quilts in the foreground, not the proprietary men in front. The picture noted by Gundy (p.14) is slightly different (we couldn’t secure the exact photo), but his grandmother Ella Ringenberg, second from the left, is in both. Her life, and death, is one of the “scatter plots” around which Gundy’s essay is organized. His thoughtful and hopeful reflection begins what one hopes is an increased discussion of the prevalence of depression in individuals and families as well as the possible intersections between melancholia and particular ethno-religious traditions.

The other articles in this issue address questions about Anabaptism/Mennonitism mainly from philosophical and theological perspectives. Daniel Liechty, writing from a background in theology and clinical social work, explores the meanings of postmodernism for Anabaptism by tracing the evolution of communications technology from the ancient through to the postmodern world. He proposes that in the move from a reading-based modern consciousness to the currently developing one oriented towards visual images, Anabaptist adherents must caution against a fixation on the written word, which Liechty describes as “a spiritual unity held firm by doctrinal conformity.” Instead, he proposes that the “speech-action” modelled by 16th century Anabaptists will be the best communicative tool to express ethical concerns based on the gospel message of love.

Next, Paul Doerksen critiques theologian John Milbank’s notion of ontological peace and raises questions about its relevance to Anabaptist thought. Earl Zimmerman examines Menno Simons’s model of a “pure” church in a “corrupted” world and reflects on the relevance of that 16th ecclesiological model for Mennonite churches today.

Eric Friesen's voice is familiar to many listeners of classical music radio in both the United States and Canada. For many years a broadcaster on Minnesota Public Radio, Friesen is currently heard throughout the week on Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Radio Two network, as host of several classical music programs. We're delighted to present his words in print, as he reflects on his affinity for both classical and gospel music.

Winnipeg writer Sarah Klassen contributes a short story, introduced by literary refractions editor, Hildi Froese Tiessen. An assortment of book reviews rounds out this issue.

Marlene Epp, *Editor*

Cover photo: Mennonite Relief Sale, 1960, Morton, Illinois. Courtesy of the Mennonite Central Committee photograph collection. Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana.