

The Peregrine Foundation

The Peregrine Foundation is a nonprofit organization that distributes information about high-demand religious groups, totalitarian sects, intentional communities and communes. It's projects include:

The KIT Information Service

The KIT Newsletters *last updated January 28, 2001,*

The Carrier Pigeon Press *last updated July 4, 1997*

The Peregrine Foundation Archives *last updated May 7, 1999*

Please read Contested Narratives: A Case Study Of The Conflict Between A New Religious Movement and its Critics by Julius H. Rubin uploaded *December 30, 1998*

NOTE: Prof. Rubin's book, *The Other Side of Joy: Religious Melancholy Among The Bruderhof* (Oxford University Press, \$45) is now in print.

[links to other sites](#)

Also, check the newsgroup alt.support.brunderhof

Mission

The Peregrine Foundation is a charitable, educational and research public foundation created in 1992 to assist families and individuals living in or exiting from experimental social groups. Its newsletters and books inform the public-at-large about the structure and ideologies of various religious sects, communes and intentional communities.

History

In 1989, a modest two-page 'KIT Round-Robin' newsletter was sent to thirty names, all ex-members of a high-demand religious sect known variously as The Bruderhof, The Society of Brothers and previously as The Hutterian Brethren East. Within a year it expanded to 18,000 words, mailed each month to over 350 addresses. Two years later the all-volunteer staff created The Peregrine Foundation as the parent organization and started The Carrier Pigeon Press to publish book-length memoirs and a series titled "Women from Utopia." Other projects followed (see the list above) including annual conferences in Massachusetts and the United Kingdom, a BBS for e-mail contacts, and ongoing searches for other 'graduates' and survivors. By January, 1995, the mailing list neared 1000 with almost two million words in print. As of 1998, we changed to a subscription format that reduced the mailing list to roughly half.

Click [here](#) for an article about the evolution of the organization by its founder, [Ramon Sender Barayon](#).

Feedback and queries can be sent to [Peregrine Foundation Staff](#).

List of Available Articles and Papers

The following is a list of items available here for reading and downloading. *Last updated June 6, 1998.*

"Out Of The Opium Den" -- My Life In the Bruderhof Communities 1988 - 1990 by John Stewart. A rejected member, still a devout follower of Jesus, describes his time in the Bruderhof communities. *New edit April 22, 1998.*
Chapter of a Life Story, by Ethan Martin, *September 10, 1995*
File K: Excerpts from newspaper articles from the COBI press conference, *July 1995, September 10, 1995.*
How I Escaped From The Bruderhof, by Ramon Sender Barayon, *September 10, 1995.*
Document Excommunicating The Bruderhof from the Hutterian Church, *December 11, 1990.*
Draft of A Bill of Rights for Religious Communities and Their Members, prepared by Benjamin Zablocki, Ph.D.

The Media Packet Itemized

To Whom It May Concern Letter giving an overview of the current situation vis-a-vis the Bruderhof and various ex-members and concerned individuals. *updated September 10, 1995*
 File A: **The Society Syndrome**, Depressive Illness and Conversion Crises in a Christian Fundamentalist Sect, by Julius H. Rubin, Ph.D.
 File B: **List of Alleged Abusive Incidents** compiled from various sources. Although incomplete, it helps the reader form a picture of what some of the problems are that exist.
 File C: **Expelled Bruderhof Members Speak Out** by Professor John A. Hostetler, noted authority on Amish and Hutterite groups.
 File D: Excerpts from **Daniel Hofer Sr.'s first appeal** of a Canadian court's decision regarding the right of Hutterite elders to expel him from his colony.
 File E: **Letter from banker I. Donald Gibb** to Hutterite minister Rev. John Stahl outlining a history of his banking relationship with various Hutterite colonies. He describes how Elder Jakob Kleinsasser defaulted on a large loan, and how he investigated further and discovered losses totaling over \$40 million dollars due at the very least to mismanagement and poor investments. It was mainly due to Gibb's research and his alerting the Hutterian Church leaders that Kleinsasser was voted out of office.
 File F: **Stress and Conflict in an International Religious Movement: The Case of the Bruderhof**, by Timothy Miller, Department of Religion, University of Kansas. Paper read at CESNUR/INFORM/ISAR Conference, London, March, 1993.
 File G: **The Abuse of Charismatic Authority Within the Bruderhof**, by Julius H. Rubin, Ph.D. Presented at 'Power, Its Use and Misuse in Anabaptist, Mennonite and Brethren Communities,' July 25-27, The Young Center for the Study of Anabaptist and Pietist Group, and the Association of Mennonite Scholars and Anthropologists, Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA.
 File H: **Heini Arnold and the Early Woodcrest Community**, by Ramon Sender Barayon. Presented by Julius H. Rubin at 'Power, Its Use and Misuse in Anabaptist, Mennonite and Brethren Communities,' July 25-27, 1993, The Young Center for the Study of Anabaptist and Pietist Group, and the Association of Mennonite Scholars and Anthropologists, Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA.
 File I: **Open Letter to the Bruderhof** from a Workshop at the 1990 Friendly Crossways Conference for graduates and survivors of the Bruderhof.
 File J: A list of **Concerns and Suggestions** compiled from various KIT Newsletters and from concerns expressed and experiences described at various KIT conference workshops.

If you wish the complete set of items listed above, which we call 'The Media Packet,' mailed to you, click [here](#) for ordering information. The cost will be \$5/domestic, \$10/ foreign postpaid.

Other Available Items

Our Broken Relationship With The Society of Brothers, by Samuel Kleinsasser. An article written to a request by the Schmiedenleut Conference of the Hutterian Church Committee regarding what stand the Schmiedenleut Conference of the Hutterian Church should take towards The Society of Brothers (Bruderhof).

If you wish the above item mailed to you, the cost will be \$1. (Also you will find ordering info for a 118-page, hard-copy set of additional writings by Samuel Kleinsasser et al. on related topics) Click [here](#) for ordering information.

Why Do You Want To Join? A young man about to join the Bruderhof dialogues via e-mail with various ex-Bruderhofers before -- snap! -- "seeing the light!"

Some Observations on The Bruderhof, The Holocaust and Christianity by Charles Lamar. A discussion of Christian theology vis-a-vis The Bruderhof life and the Nazi Holocaust.

An Analysis of Some Bruderhof Traits by Ramon Sender Barayon. Some personalities' need for authoritarianism, a comparison of Nazi traits with some unfortunate Bruderhof parallels, and an informal analysis of elder Heini Arnold's character type.

Memories of the New Hutterite Bruderhof 1920, 1961 and 1993 by Herbert Sorgius. Recently deceased old member describes his arrival at the original German bruderhof.

The Monday Morning F Xways Meeting 8/12/91 as mentioned in the Best of KIT 1991, VOL. III.

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Hutterian Church Excommunicates The Bruderhof, 1990

The Hutterian Brethren Church of the Darius & Lehrerleut Conference to the Society of Brothers who call themselves Hutterian Brethren: 12/11/90: Greetings: The reuniting of the Hutterian Brethren Jan 7, 1974, at Sturgeon Creek Colony, Manitoba, with the Society of Brethren, or Arnold Leut, Woodcrest, New York, was the topic of the meeting and conversation. We were all in unison that you were accepted on a probationary basis, so that you would get acquainted and accept the teaching and tenets, rules, *Ordnungen* and Principles of The Hutterische Church as they were practiced by us at that time and our forefathers, so that you may adopt and adhere to them, which up to that time you shunned and trod with your feet, and in fact disgraced and abused the messengers that were sent to you from time to time, all out of love for your salvation.

First: Regarding Millennium: You still cling to the false doctrine of The Millennium, the so-called 1000 years of The Kingdom, which is against The Apostolic Creed (articles 6 & 7) to which we all said 'Yes and Amen' in our baptismal vows, and again those of us in the ministry of the 'Word.' Our forefathers made no mention of this 1000 years of The Kingdom of God here on earth, in their abundant writings and epistles in which they recognize the 1st and 2nd Advent, or The Coming of our Lord; of the third they know not. We agree wholeheartedly with them. This Blumhardt teaching we cannot accept.

Secondly: The Rearing of Children: We cannot agree with you on the issue of sending young people to school outside of our communities at the age when they need the most protection from the wiles of the devil which are rampant in this world as never before. The reasons stated in Johann Christoph Arnold's letter of Nov 2, '86 (especially reason No. 2) are totally not acceptable to us, even though he erroneously tried to prove that our Hutterian forefathers sent their young people out in the world for a trial period of up to two years. We have many other sermons that prove that the passage he quotes from Heb. 12:5-9 was only intended as an analogy or comparison. The rearing of children (your letter of Nov. 3, 1986 defending your position) is not in harmony with the teachings of Ehrenpreis (pps. 70-74) or in Peter Rideman's book, (p. 130). You on the contrary need teachers, nurses, doctors, for your business, for your means of income, people with technical knowledge. Why didn't Jesus think of that when he chose his disciples? He must have been very naive not to know how to build his church to make such a selection.

We fear that sending our children, and especially our young people who have reached the age of puberty, into outside schools is like throwing lambs out to the wolves. At this age, young people are most vulnerable to evil influences. This is not a good way to test for 'dead wood.' Delphini.

Third: March to protest Death Penalty: Referring to 'The Plough' # 25 (Aug, 1990) 'Hutterites March Against Death Penalty.' What a disgrace. Surely Christians are against any kind of killing, whether by the Death Penalty or any other form, but have we ever heard of Hutterites marching with other denominations, or taking part in such activities? No! Never in Hutterite history or in biblical history. What would our forefathers say to such practices? Or Paul 2 Cor 6:13-16. How did you dare to say that you were representing the Hutterites in Canada????

Fourth: Torches, Idols: Your use of fire and candles in your gatherings and services is also foreign to us. We believe that this is on the road that leads to idolatry.

Five: Presentation of babies to the church: Your presentation of babies to the church may look like an innocent ritual to you, but seems to us as being only half a step away from infant baptism.

Six: Supporting Courts: The condoning or abetting of one Colony or Colony Member suing another in a secular court of law, in which you have been a willing and aggressive partner in complete contrast to the advice of Paul: Dare any of you having a matter against another go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints, etc. etc. 1 Cor 6. It is also against the stand Hutterites have taken for 4 1/2 centuries. (Matth 5:25-26, 38-48.)

Seven: Hutterite Sermons, Musical and Acting: Wedding at Elm River in Manitoba. Where in the 500- year history of

the Hutterites have we ever heard of play acting, putting on a live show or imitating any part of the scripture, or the words of the bible or any parable (The Ten Virgins)? Surely this was a dishonor to God and church. Imagine imitating the devil and our Savior Jesus Christ! What blasphemy and impious act before God! And when asked at a meeting Oct 8, 1987, this was denied, and the truth was refused deliberately. Where are the teachings of Peter Rideman, whom you said and claimed you were following more fervently than any of the three Leut? And this was also affirmed by some of the Schmiedenleut Ministers, when all along they and you knew that this was not being done. One can only imagine how much more of this is going on in the eastern colonies. How did you dare to willfully violate the ordinances and humble practices of the scripture and the church by introducing musical instruments on any occasion? Has this not infiltrated in some of our dear Schmiedenleut Colonies and caused a drifting in your direction? This is why we are so concerned and therefore, try by all means, to not let this happen, to our Lehrerleut and Dariusleut Colonies. So help us God.

And also the main downfall of your people is that you do not preach the Hutterian Sermons, or *Lehren*, which to us are so sacred, and indeed biblical, and were written by men of suffering and inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and were sealed with blood and tears. These sermons are the solid foundation that keeps our church alive and in order, and Jesus is the head of this true church. The booklets that you publish and send to all the colonies are as far apart from these sermons as heaven and earth, especially the last one was utter nonsense. Note 2 Cor 5: 6-7.

Eight: Regarding Baptism: It has been brought to our attention that you still baptize by immersion. If so, we advise you to read p. 417 or the whole letter that Elder Peter Walpot wrote the Polish delegates in the year 1570, written in 'The Chronicle of the Hutterites.' Because of this, the Hutterian Brethren did not accept them even as novices.

Nine: The Letter from New Zealand [quoted KIT II # 9 Oct '90 - ed.]: Your blaspheming attitude about the Word of God (see letter of April 27, 1987) by Neville Cooper to Jacob Kleinsasser)

1. The Bible is the greatest weapon of the devil.
2. The Bible is not the Word of God.
3. The living Word is the Word of God which God wants to speak to us at this moment, not what he said to Moses, or Elijah, or even to Jesus.

Ten: Lovemeal: Our opposition to your lovemeals which you practice today, which our former Elder Rev. Joseph Waldner refers to in his letter to you April 6, 1975, wherein he tells you they do not belong to us.

Although it is true that in 1974 the Schmeidenleut, Lehrerleut and two of the Dariusleut ministers agreed to the uniting with the Arnoldleut after they heard the pleas of the then present Arnoldleut, and we earnestly thought you would adopt the Hutterian Brethren Customs and traditions and ordinances as much as possible (and all Elders acted in good faith), however we are very well aware that you did not keep your promises, and instead of coming closer to us, you are so to speak, deliberately drifting in the opposite direction. Especially like in the case of musical instruments and radios, you seem to have absolutely no concern whatsoever whether we agree with you or not. It doesn't seem to bother you the least bit, let the other Hutterians think what they may, therefore, even if it is hard for us to do:

We are forced to revoke the 1974 unification.

We fear that such forbidden sins may slowly infiltrate into our colonies. Although it is said, that you say you don't live on customs and traditions but on love, may we point out to you that a church without customs and traditions is not a true church. God is a God of ordinance, and he wants ordinance to be adhered to by his followers, and that includes customs and traditions.

In German: *Gott ist ein Gott der Ordnung, und er will haben dasz unter seinen Volk Ordnung sein soll.*

Now what causes division between us? Let us read Jes. 59 v 2. 'But your iniquities (*Untugend*) have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear. And 1 John 5 v 7 says "All unrighteousness (*Untugend*) is sin." Now we do not claim to be infallible, because we are prone to sin like all humans, but when the Elders of a church deliberately and without any considerations openly exercise play-acting, music and all such things, as mentioned in this letter, we feel we have to voice our objections, lest we should be found guilty in the eyes of the almighty God.

Therefore we, the Darius and Lehrerleut
Congregations, declare and reveal to you the Arnold
Congregation, that hereafter you are not recognized as
Brothers in Faith, and ask you to refrain, yes, stop using
and tarnishing the Hutterite name and image with your
anti-Hutterian deeds. We ask that in the future you not
send any of your literature and 'The Plough' for fear of
being led astray, because we have sadly experienced that
our counselling was in vain all these years. Very Sincerely,

signed for the Dariusleut, John K. Wurz, M. S. Stahl.
For the Lehrerleut, John S. Wipf, John Kleinsasser.

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