
September 2020

Determining the Impact of the Anabaptists Using Bullinger's Propaganda Strategies in Von dem unverschampten fräfel

Jovanna Shirky
West Virginia University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/wvuhistoricalreview>



Part of the [European History Commons](#), and the [History of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Shirky, Jovanna (2020) "Determining the Impact of the Anabaptists Using Bullinger's Propaganda Strategies in Von dem unverschampten fräfel," *West Virginia University Historical Review*. Vol. 1: Iss. 1, Article 5.

Available at: <https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/wvuhistoricalreview/vol1/iss1/5>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by The Research Repository @ WVU. It has been accepted for inclusion in West Virginia University Historical Review by an authorized editor of The Research Repository @ WVU. For more information, please contact researchrepository@mail.wvu.edu.

Determining the Impact of the Anabaptists Using Bullinger's Propaganda Strategies in Von dem unverschampten fräfel

JOVANNA SHIRKY*

Many scholars of the Reformation contend that the Anabaptist movement did not significantly impact the society of its day. However, my analysis of Heinrich Bullinger's anti-Anabaptist work *Von dem unverschampten fräfel, ergerlichem verwyrren unnd unwarhafftem leeren der selbgesandten Widertöuffern* indicates that the Anabaptists did pose a significant threat to the socioreligious structures that both the mainstream Reformation and Catholicism endorsed. By analyzing Bullinger's propaganda strategies within the work, I find that the beliefs and practices of the Anabaptists challenged the most basic structures of society, thus alarming Bullinger and others who opposed the movement. Bullinger's language within the work and the nature of his anti-Anabaptist arguments reveal that his concern reached beyond theological matters to more basic social matters. When considered in the context of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of social capital, it is clear that the influence of the Anabaptists extended beyond obscure theological debate into the social foundations of fifteenth-century European society.

In 1531 Huldrych Zwingli, the fiery leader of the Swiss Reformation, died in the Battle of Kappel, leaving his protégé Heinrich Bullinger to take his place. One of Bullinger's first priorities was to act against the growing threat of a small group of reformers who challenged the most basic structures of society by rejecting long-respected institutions including magisterial authority and infant baptism. The same year Zwingli died, Bullinger published an extensive work refuting the dangerous views of these dissidents, the Anabaptists. Bullinger's work, entitled *Von dem unverschampten fräfel, ergerlichem verwyrren unnd unwarhafftem leeren der selbgesandten Widertöuffern* (On the Outrageous Crimes, Offensive Perversion, and False Teachings of the Self-proclaimed Anabaptists),¹ was his first and defining published work in his lifelong fight against the Anabaptists and provides important clues about the role of the Anabaptists in the Reformation. While some scholars of the Reformation argue that the Anabaptists never posed a significant threat to the mainstream Reformation and the social structures it upheld, Bullinger's strongly worded and extensive propaganda against the Anabaptists indicates that the early Anabaptists' influence on the society of their day went farther and deeper than previously thought. Bullinger's criticisms, which are largely based on social matters rather than theological quibbles, align with the social theories devised by Pierre Bourdieu that recognize the importance of social capital in directing social dynamics. When considered in the context of Bourdieu's social theory, Bullinger's propaganda strategies in *Von dem unverschampten fräfel* reveal that the Anabaptists did indeed significantly impact the world of the Reformation era, contrary to the assessment of some scholars.

An analysis of Bullinger's propaganda strategies in *Von dem unverschampten fräfel* requires consideration of a variety of factors, including the background of the author himself; the evolution of Anabaptism within the Swiss Reformation; and an analysis of the historiography surrounding Bullinger, his work, and the Radical Reformation. In my analysis of *Von dem unverschampten fräfel* I have divided Bullinger's propaganda strategies into four categories—criticism of the

*Jovanna Shirky received a BA in history with a minor in English in 2020. Her research interests include the interhuman dynamics of history in general, and in particular the Reformation.

¹Carrie Euler, *Couriers of the Gospel: England and Zurich 1531-1558* (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2006), 213.

Anabaptists' lack of education, improper conduct, violent actions, and dishonorable religious behavior—and have prefaced my primary source analysis with a discussion of Bourdieu's theory of social capital, the methodological context in which my analysis is located.

Bullinger came from a highly intellectual background that informed his leadership of the Swiss Reformation and shaped his fight against the Anabaptists. He was born into a family of clerics in 1504 and underwent a lengthy and thorough education under humanist teachers. At nineteen, Bullinger began work as a teacher at a Cistercian monastery in Kappel, Switzerland, where he developed his humanist views and became good friends with Zwingli. After six years, Bullinger became a Reformed preacher in his hometown of Bremgarten and was only twenty-seven when he succeeded Zwingli in Zurich and published *Von dem unverschampten fräfel*.² Bullinger's humanist education heavily influenced his writing style; he depended on the writings of the early church fathers and a respect for the Old Testament to bolster his interpretation of Scripture, selectively using evidence from both sources that would support his arguments. Using this method, Bullinger and other Swiss reformers attempted to frame the Bible in a way that guided their readers toward a certain meaning of passages.³ Bullinger's method is clearly evident in *Von dem unverschampten fräfel*, which is rife with references to the early church fathers and authoritative interpretations of the Old Testament. The value placed on education by Bullinger and his peers was reflected in the Zurich practice of sending promising future ministers to well-known schools in Germany where they could receive a quality humanist education and continue Zurich's intellectual tradition.⁴

Bullinger's esteem for education stood in stark contrast to the nature of the Anabaptist movement. The originators of Anabaptism, who originally belonged to the circle of reformers in Zurich, broke away from Zwingli and his followers when their wish to amend the sacrament of baptism to be available only to adult believers was rejected by the Zwinglians. The historian George C. Williams dates the birth of Anabaptism to January 21, 1525, when George Blaurock, a former priest, was rebaptized by Conrad Grebel, a humanist scholar and former student of Zwingli.⁵ Although the first leaders of the Anabaptist movement were highly educated, the movement was eventually forced out of Zurich into surrounding rural areas by persecution, where it increasingly became embraced by the poor and uneducated. The intellectual disparity between Bullinger and the Anabaptists would already have been apparent in 1531, when *Von dem unverschampten fräfel* was published.⁶

Scholarly attention to *Von dem unverschampten fräfel* has been relatively scant. In 1959, Heinold Fast gave a fairly thorough account of Bullinger's creation of the book, saying that it was a compilation of several earlier works and was already finished as early as October 1530, a year before Zwingli died.⁷ George Huntston Williams provided more analysis of the motives behind *Von dem unverschampten fräfel*, writing that Bullinger intended his book as a counterattack against the teachings of the Anabaptist preacher Pfistermeyer, who had been active in the neighborhood of Bullinger's first pastorate at Bremgarten. In a wider context, Williams wrote, Bullinger meant his anti-Anabaptist writings to "vindicate the Swiss Reformation" and distance himself from Lutheran charges that the Zurich church had given rise to Anabaptism.⁸ Bruce Gordon echoed this view in

²Bruce Gordon, "Introduction," in *Architect of Reformation: An Introduction to Heinrich Bullinger, 1504–1575*, eds. Bruce Gordon and Emidio Campi (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2004), 18–19.

³*Ibid.*, 25–27.

⁴Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner, eds., *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 115.

⁵George Huntston Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), 120.

⁶Claus-Peter Clasen, *Anabaptism: A Social History, 1525–1618* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), 311.

⁷Heinold Fast, *Heinrich Bullinger und die Täufer: Ein Beitrag zur Historiographie und Theologie im 16. Jahrhundert* (Weierhof, 1959), 30.

⁸Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 851–852.

his 2004 biography of Bullinger, adding that Bullinger wished to retain good relations with the Lutherans.⁹ However, almost no scholars have analyzed Bullinger's propaganda strategies within the book.

Disagreement has arisen over the origins of the arguments Bullinger presented in *Von dem unverschampten fräfel*. John Howard Yoder, in his 2004 book on the Swiss Anabaptists, considered the book an adoption of Zwingli's thoughts regarding the Anabaptists, carefully collected by Bullinger over a long period of time.¹⁰ Other scholars have argued that the book was a product of Bullinger's original thought.¹¹ However, Yoder and most other scholars recognized that *Von dem unverschampten fräfel* was possibly the first attempt to understand the Anabaptist movement as a whole.¹² It certainly was important at the time; Bullinger is said to have distributed copies to every minister involved in debates with Anabaptists, and it became the go-to resource for that purpose.¹³

The most extensive and enlightening treatment of *Von dem unverschampten fräfel* I could find comes from Carrie Euler's 2006 dissertation on links between the Reformation in Switzerland and England. Euler's analysis of Bullinger's dialogues is useful since it is the only treatment of them I could find based on their English translation by John Veron, the version I used for my analysis. Veron, a Protestant French preacher who relocated to England in 1536 and soon after started publishing anti-Catholic and anti-Anabaptist works, published a partial English translation of three of the four volumes of *Von dem unverschampten fräfel*.¹⁴ Veron completed the translation in three parts—the first, *An Holsome Antidotus Or Counter-Poysen, Agaynst the Pestylent Heresy and Secte of the Anabaptistes*,¹⁵ in 1548 and the next two, *A Moste Sure and Strong Defence of the Baptisme of Children, Against [the] Pestiferous Secte of the Anabaptistes*¹⁶ and *A most Necessary & Frutefull Dialogue, Betwene [the] Seditious Libertin Or Rebel Anabaptist, & the True Obedient Christia[n]*,¹⁷ in 1551. Euler underlined Bullinger's emphasis on the importance of education to interpret Scripture correctly, something that Anabaptists lacked, according to Bullinger.¹⁸ Bullinger's work was a dialogue, a form considered "humble and comprehensible,"¹⁹ making it accessible to the average person on the street. In this way, Bullinger's ideas spread all over Europe, giving emphasis to practical and political concerns that echoed with other reformers

⁹Gordon, "Introduction," 24.

¹⁰John Howard Yoder, *Anabaptism and Reformation in Switzerland: An Historical and Theological Analysis of the Dialogues between Anabaptists and Reformers*, ed. C. Arnold Snyder, trans. C. Arnold Snyder and David Carl Stassen (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2004), 94.

¹¹William Peter Stephens, "Bullinger and the Anabaptists with Reference to His Von der unverschampten Frevel (1531) and to Zwingli's Writings on the Anabaptists," *Reformation and Renaissance Review* 3, no. 1 (2001): 96-107.

¹²Yoder, *Anabaptism and Reformation in Switzerland*, 97.

¹³Bruce Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2002), 211.

¹⁴*Dictionary of National Biography Online*, s. v. "Veron, John" by John Goldworth Alger, accessed May 7, 2020, <https://en.wikisource.org/>.

¹⁵Heinrich Bullinger, *An Holsome Antidotus Or Counter-Poysen, Agaynst the Pestylent Heresy and Secte of the Anabaptistes Newly Translated Out of Lat[n] into Englysh by Iohn Veron, Senonoy* (London: Humfrey Powell, dwelling aboue Holburne Conduit, 1548).

¹⁶Heinrich Bullinger, *A Moste Sure and Strong Defence of the Baptisme of Children, Against [the] Pestiferous Secte of the Anabaptistes. Set Furthe by that Famouse Clerke, Henry Bullynger: & Nowe Translated Out of Laten into Englysh by Ihon Veron Senonoy* (Worcester: Ihon Oswen, 1551).

¹⁷Heinrich Bullinger, *A most Necessary & Frutefull Dialogue, Betwene [the] Seditious Libertin Or Rebel Anabaptist, & the True Obedient Christia[n] Wherin, as in a Mirrour Or Glasse Ye Shal Se [the] Excellente and Worthynesse of a Christia[n] Magistrate: & again what Obedience is due Vnto Publique Rulers of all Th[Os]e [that] Professe Christ Yea, Though [the] Rulers, in Externe & Outward Thinges, to their Vtter Dampnatyon, do Otherwyse then Well: Translated Out of Latyn into Englishe, by Iho[n] Veron Senonoy* (Worcester: Ihon Oswen, 1551).

¹⁸Yoder, *Anabaptism and Reformation in Switzerland*, 215.

¹⁹Euler, *Couriers of the Gospel*, 43.

who wanted to quell the Anabaptist movement.²⁰ Euler pointed out that during a period of upheaval and reform in England, Bullinger's writings were used to mitigate the "liberty. . . which would threaten England's stability."²¹ Did Bullinger intend his work for the same purpose in Switzerland? Perhaps. Analyzing Bullinger's propaganda strategies in *Von der unverschamten fräfel*, and more specifically, Veron's translated portions, may reveal much about what Bullinger and other reformers feared about the rise of the Anabaptists.

Veron's translations provide a useful lens for analyzing Bullinger's work. Bullinger's anti-Anabaptist literature fed into a continent-wide effort on the part of states to suppress the Anabaptist heresy. In Switzerland the year after it was published, *Von dem unverschamten fräfel* served as the go-to reference for preachers engaged in the debates with the Anabaptists that took place in Bern. In addition, Bullinger distributed the book to any minister who faced the Anabaptist threat in his parish.²² In England, Veron's translations became a widely recognized contribution to anti-Anabaptist literature used in drafting the country's ecclesiastical laws.²³ Veron prioritized translating the dialogues that addressed issues including the importance of obeying the magistrates and baptism over the dialogues on issues including oaths, arms, and private property (although these issues are also briefly addressed in the translated portions). Veron's choices show that the heart of anti-Anabaptist efforts lay in protecting the power of the state, and thus the existing social structure. Carrie Euler wrote that Veron's translations indicate the importance that foreign reformers placed on Bullinger's theology. Veron's work highlights the issues most important to leaders across Europe who were engaged in the same fight against the Anabaptist social threat that is so evident in Bullinger's propaganda strategies.²⁴ Although Veron did not translate the entire work, his translated portions represent the majority of Bullinger's ideas—enough to gain a complete picture of Bullinger's propaganda methods.

It is also important to understand who the Anabaptists were that Bullinger was addressing. Since Bullinger wrote *Von dem unverschamten fräfel* fairly early on, his opponents would have been the early leaders of the movement. Yoder wrote that the Anabaptists were few in Zurich itself, numbering only about one hundred. However, in these early years the Anabaptists could boast well-educated and articulate leaders in Conrad Grebel, Felix Mantz, and George Blaurock, all of whom had attended university. Yoder emphasized that Grebel and Mantz in particular were "recognized linguistic experts who did not despise scholarship at all."²⁵ Yoder's observation raises questions about Bullinger's claim that the Anabaptists were uneducated and unable to interpret Scripture. Still, of these men only Blaurock was gifted in oratory and had a "fighting disposition."²⁶ They fared badly in the early disputations with Zwingli.²⁷ Later, the Anabaptists were "led to a large extent by poorly educated and spiritually average people,"²⁸ but, Yoder argued, this was on account of persecution, not because the Anabaptists ceased to value a scholarly approach to Scripture.²⁹ Yoder's description of the Anabaptist leadership was echoed by Claus-Peter Clasen, who recognized that many of the early leaders were indeed of intellectual backgrounds. However, Clasen added that alongside these early prominent leaders,

²⁰Ibid., 205, 236.

²¹Ibid., 236.

²²Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 211.

²³Euler, *Couriers of the Gospel*, 221.

²⁴Ibid., 218.

²⁵Yoder, *Anabaptism and Reformation in Switzerland*, 213.

²⁶Ibid., 117.

²⁷Ibid., 116.

²⁸Ibid., 115.

²⁹Ibid., 213.

many craftsmen and peasants played crucial roles in leadership of the infant movement.³⁰ Since the Anabaptists' message mainly appealed to the poor, the movement slowly moved out of urban centers and ceased to attract more intellectuals.³¹ Gradually, Anabaptists grew to view higher education with contempt.³²

Understanding how historians have viewed the Anabaptists and the wider Radical Reformation provides important context for analyzing Bullinger's writings. Over time, historians' views of the Anabaptists have varied widely, beginning with Bullinger's own history of the group, which was enormously influential in how the Anabaptists were viewed by historians for the next few centuries.³³ In a 2002 historiographic essay, John D. Roth wrote that to Bullinger and his contemporaries, Anabaptists were simply "seditious revolutionaries" who were threats to society.³⁴ This view of the Anabaptists persisted until the mid-twentieth century, when historians (mainly those with Anabaptist ancestry) began presenting the Radical Reformation in a more positive light. These included Williams and Roland Bainton, who described the Radical Reformation as a "legitimate and coherent expression of religious reform."³⁵ Williams's 1962 extensive survey of the Radical Reformation and Bainton's 1963 collection of studies on the Radical Reformation both presented it as an important aspect of the wider Reformation that, although abortive, had lasting implications.³⁶

The 1970s brought a new debate centered around the origins and the impact of the Anabaptists. Claus-Peter Clasen's 1972 book on the subject found that although early Anabaptists were well educated, the movement soon moved to rural areas where it survived only among a handful of peasants. Clasen conceded that the Anabaptists' beliefs did pose "a potential threat to civilization,"³⁷ but observed that the movement never gained enough adherents to wield a significant impact on society. Thus, according to Clasen, the Anabaptists do not deserve much attention as a legitimate subset in Reformation studies.³⁸ However, in 1980 Steven Ozment argued that "sheer numbers do not. . . automatically measure social impact or importance."³⁹ The sense of urgency and strong language in *Von dem unverschampten fräfel* suggest that Ozment is right; factors other than numbers must have contributed to the social impact of the Anabaptists. Social historians also looked for evidence in the social makeup of radical groups to show that the Radical Reformation stemmed from social unrest rather than theological disagreements or religious desires.⁴⁰ In a 1985 article, Werner O. Packull echoed Clasen, writing that Anabaptism was never a "powerful mass movement," but stemmed from a wider social movement, the "Reformation of the Common Man."⁴¹ Packull's idea that the Anabaptist movement was socially driven opens an interesting discussion to which my analysis of *Von dem unverschampten fräfel* contributes—that the extent to which the early Anabaptists impacted society lay in sociological considerations, and could not be determined solely through consideration of their numbers or intellectual abilities.

³⁰Clasen, *Anabaptism*, 309.

³¹Ibid., 317.

³²Ibid., 316.

³³Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 848-849.

³⁴John D. Roth, "Recent Currents in the Historiography of the Radical Reformation," *Church History* 71, no. 3 (2002): 524.

³⁵Ibid., 525.

³⁶Williams, *The Radical Reformation*.

³⁷Clasen, *Anabaptism*, 425.

³⁸Ibid., 428.

³⁹Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform, 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980), 348.

⁴⁰Roth, "Recent Currents in the Historiography," 526.

⁴¹Werner O. Packull, "The Origins of Swiss Anabaptism in the Context of the Reformation of the Common Man," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 3 (1985): 54, 38.

Alejandro Zorzin offered a unique perspective on the Anabaptists that further defined their attitude toward the intellectual culture that Bullinger embraced. In a 2008 article, Zorzin wrote that there is a notable dearth of early Anabaptist publications, an absence that indicates that they sought to distance themselves from their highly educated opponents. While Bullinger and other mainstream reformers published complicated polemical tracts, the Anabaptists preferred to transmit their ideas by word of mouth and in hand-copied documents.⁴² It is possible that this method of spreading ideas acted as salt in Bullinger's wound and helped further divide the Anabaptists from the leadership of the Swiss Reformed Church.

Because it was a well-recognized and influential work, *Von dem unverschampten fräfel* provides a solid representation of widespread attitudes beyond Bullinger's own and stands as a valuable resource for understanding the part the Anabaptists played in the wider context of the Reformation. Historiography addressing Bullinger, his writings, and the Anabaptist movement provides important context and outlines debates that would benefit from a close analysis of *Von dem unverschampten fräfel*. My analysis contributes to the continuing discussion over how much the Anabaptists and other movements of the Radical Reformation impacted the society of their day.

My analysis of Bullinger's work is supported by the idea of cultural capital, a term that appeared in the sociological theory of Pierre Bourdieu. In the 1980s, Bourdieu introduced the notion that a power struggle exists between social groups, centered on the possession of "cultural capital," or skills, tastes, and experiences that inform one's place in the social universe.⁴³ In his 1984 book *Distinction*, Bourdieu explained that people operate on subconscious impulses that are oriented toward their "most vital interests."⁴⁴ These impulses include a desire for power based on having the ability to classify and name a certain set of people, thus assigning them their place in society.⁴⁵ Bourdieu mentioned specific strategies used to classify groups of people, including "labelling judgments" that emphasize one particular trait of a group in order to color them in a certain way.⁴⁶ Bullinger certainly did this in his characterizations of the Anabaptists. Bourdieu's theory indicates that a consideration of Bullinger's classifications of the Anabaptists can help to reveal the motives behind Bullinger's anti-Anabaptist propaganda, which targeted what Bullinger perceived to be a significant Anabaptist threat to the current social order.⁴⁷

Sociologists have elaborated upon Bourdieu's original theory to include more specific types of capital that are subsets of cultural capital. In my analysis, I address three types of capital: intellectual capital ("the value of all the knowledge and ideas of the people in a society"),⁴⁸ embodied cultural capital (by this, I mean adherence to proper conduct and behavior within society), and religious capital ("the degree of mastery of and attachment to a particular religious culture").⁴⁹

⁴²Alejandro Zorzin, "Reformation Publishing and Anabaptist Propaganda: Two Contrasting Communication Strategies for the Spread of the Anabaptist Message in the Early Days of the Swiss Brethren," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 82 (2008): 503-516.

⁴³Pierre Bourdieu, "Social Space and Symbolic Power," *Sociological Theory* 7, no. 1 (1989): 17.

⁴⁴Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 474.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 479.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 475.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 482.

⁴⁸*Cambridge Dictionary*, s.v. "intellectual capital," accessed April 22, 2020, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/intellectual-capital>.

⁴⁹Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 120.

The final sections of *Von dem unverschampten fräfel* were printed in Zurich in February 1531, but Bullinger may have completed the work as early as October 1530.⁵⁰ The work was his first major anti-Anabaptist book, and acted through “popular art” as a “spiritual weapon” to root out Anabaptist influence that preachers and the state believed was “smoldering” in many congregations.⁵¹ Bullinger employed the popular dialogue format for his book and wrote in the vernacular in order to render his arguments “humble and comprehensible.”⁵² He arranged it as a conversation between two characters: Simon, “that taketh the Anabaptistes parte,” and Jojada, “who representeth the true christen man.”⁵³ Bullinger’s choice of these two names in itself supports my argument that Bullinger attempted to characterize the Anabaptists negatively; both names carry heavy connotations. The name “Simon” probably refers to Simon Magus, a man recorded in the New Testament who offered to buy the spiritual power of the apostles; his name therefore stood for arrogance and worldliness.⁵⁴ Bullinger himself referred to Simon Magus in the text of *Von dem unverschampten fräfel*, saying that they “that in the gospell, do seke carnall thyngs, and fleshly [i.e., the Anabaptists] are the fellowes of Symon Magus.”⁵⁵ On the other hand, the name Jojada is a sixteenth-century version of “Jehoiada,” a Biblical name that means “Yahweh knows.”⁵⁶ Bullinger’s insinuation is abundantly clear.

A major theme of Bullinger’s anti-Anabaptist propaganda is his characterization of the Anabaptists as possessing little intellectual capital. Desultory adjectives dot the entire work, suggesting both a lack of education and intellectual immaturity, but Bullinger’s major objections to the Anabaptists’ intellectual level fall into three clear categories: lack of historical knowledge, lack of grammatical knowledge, and poor biblical analysis skills.

Instances of Bullinger’s descriptions of the Anabaptists as uninformed are too numerous to analyze exhaustively. A passage in the dialogue on the office of the preacher is representatively sharp in its criticisms: “What learnynge should we loke for, where rudenes, and (as thei do speake themselves) simplicitee, is taken for hyghe rudicion? I dooe passe over here, many of them, which can scarcely reade, yea and what wyll saie of them, ye can reade no maner of thyng.”⁵⁷ In another dialogue, Bullinger wondered why the Anabaptists attempt to put their minds to matters that “passeth their strengthe.”⁵⁸ The frequency with which Bullinger referred to the intellectual inferiority of the Anabaptists suggests that the issue may have been a real point of concern for him. Because he came from a strong intellectual background, having to face the arguments of those who he saw as uneducated must have been insulting. Still, Bullinger used the Anabaptists’ lack of intellectual capital as a strong weapon against their influence in society.

Bullinger also criticized the Anabaptists’ tendency to characterize themselves as “simple” or “little children,” saying that these characterizations actually do not reflect well on the Anabaptists’ legitimacy, even though they are meant to. In one of his few long speeches, Simon, who initially represents a sympathizer with the Anabaptists (although later he seems to become an Anabaptist himself), was framed by Bullinger as lacking intellect: “We, which are symple persons, are so tossed and carried to and fro, in so much, that we can not tel, what is beste to bee doone.”⁵⁹ In several places, Bullinger put words in Simon’s mouth in a similar way, indicating that those

⁵⁰Fast, *Heinrich Bullinger und die Täufer*, 30.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 23.

⁵²Euler, *Couriers of the Gospel*, 43.

⁵³Bullinger, *An Holsome Antidotus*, 19.

⁵⁴Euler, *Couriers of the Gospel*, 214.

⁵⁵Bullinger, *An Holsome Antidotus*, 53.

⁵⁶Euler, *Couriers of the Gospel*, 214.

⁵⁷Bullinger, *An Holsome Antidotus*, 106.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 225.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 39.

who are susceptible to the wiles of the Anabaptists are intellectually inferior, and thus that the Anabaptists' arguments are not worthy of serious consideration and lack legitimacy. To introduce a dialogue devoted to clarifying the difference between simplicity and lack of education, Bullinger criticized the Anabaptists' biblically-based argument that "God did manifest himself to the littell ones and not to the wise."⁶⁰ Bullinger responded that this saying does not refer to degree of education, but rather to quality of motive, which allowed him still to discriminate against the Anabaptists based on their low level of education.

In the following dialogue, Bullinger expanded these thoughts more, offering an explanation of diction in a way that belittled the Anabaptists' intellectual understanding of nuances of meaning. While Simon contends that the less learned a man is, the better fit he is for religious office, Jojada replies that "the symple" are not those who "lacke wisdom and learnynge," but rather refers to "he whiche is playne and sincere."⁶¹ In addition, Bullinger wrote, the apostles were not unlearned men but were taught by Christ for three years; thus, they possessed true wisdom as well as true simplicity.⁶² Bullinger further defined the truly learned as having been "taught by God, & to the glory of God."⁶³ This statement is an example of Bullinger's subjective definition of what constitutes teachings that are to the glory of God, which excluded any kind of wisdom or learning that he did not agree with. This dialogue, although short, is packed with indications that Bullinger was engaged in an attempt to separate and define the Anabaptists as lacking legitimate intellectual skills.

In addition to criticizing the Anabaptists' understanding of true wisdom, Bullinger also disparaged them by suggesting that they do not know history. To begin the dialogue on original sin, Bullinger remarked that the Anabaptists must know nothing of Peter Abelard, a past heretic, because they made the same theological mistakes as he did. "In this thyng," writes Bullinger, "are ye blameworthy, that ye Anabaptistes do know neither new nor olde histories, yet ye wyll be teachers. What audacitie is this?"⁶⁴ Bullinger evidently could not accept the fact that the Anabaptists dared to presume to preach without being educated in church history. In a following dialogue, when Simon protests that the Anabaptists base their teachings on Scripture rather than the theology of other groups, Jojada rebukes him, saying, "If they had read and tasted the old histories, they wolde be more modest and sobre and not so presumptuous."⁶⁵ Bullinger followed this statement with another expression of outrage that those so ignorant would call themselves teachers. In these examples, it is clear that Bullinger was genuinely concerned with the lack of education of his adversaries and made full use of the obvious disparity in intellectual capital to underline, in as strong a way as possible, that the Anabaptists do not deserve to be heeded.

Grammatical discussions figure surprisingly largely in Bullinger's work. In the same way that he criticized the Anabaptists' lack of historical knowledge, Bullinger made a point of emphasizing their lack of grammatical knowledge. In one instance, Bullinger took the time to give a short lesson about the Latin word "tollit," meaning (according to Bullinger) "taketh away,"⁶⁶ as it pertains to Christ's removal of all sin. Simon serves as a crutch to illustrate the confusion of the Anabaptists over the difference between collective sin and individual sin. Although here Bullinger did not outright accuse the Anabaptists of grammatical ignorance, he constructed the conversation in a way that put Simon on the lower intellectual level.

⁶⁰Ibid., 81.

⁶¹Ibid., 83.

⁶²Ibid., 85.

⁶³Ibid., 87.

⁶⁴Ibid., 145.

⁶⁵Ibid., 153.

⁶⁶Ibid., 146.

In a more extensive discussion, Bullinger presented synecdoche as a legitimate and enlightening way to interpret the Bible. In his dialogue on eternal sleep, he bemoaned the fact that the Anabaptists “doo not, nor wyl not, understand this figure sinecdoche, nor the other figures, and tropes. Which thyng causeth them to erre, in many thynges.”⁶⁷ Bullinger used synecdoche heavily in his dialogues on baptism, justifying his use of the trope by saying that “the custome and maner of the Scripture (which custome and maner is used almost among all nations)”⁶⁸ is not to itemize every category of person which is being referred to, but to use synecdoche. Bullinger followed his own advice, relying on synecdoche to support a wide interpretation of the Bible, specifically regarding whether the first apostles baptized children or not. Over the course of several pages, Bullinger took great pains to explain how synecdoche supports the legitimacy of infant baptism, insisting on the importance of a solid intellectual interpretation of the Bible: “Who doth not see, that ye expounde all thynges after the letter, & yet ye doo not weygh & ponder it?”⁶⁹ Throughout his discussion of synecdoche, Bullinger framed Simon as being confused about the use of the trope, thus helping to establish a dichotomy between the educated reformers and the uneducated Anabaptists.

Bullinger also dismissed the Anabaptists’ ability to analyze the Bible correctly based on their lack of education. To close his dialogue defending the authority of the magistrates, Bullinger outright denied the Anabaptists’ ability to correctly interpret Biblical passages. “They do pycke and gather certain bytter and grevous sayinges oute of the psalmes and prophetes,” he writes, “which afterwarde being learned without boke, they do vomite againste the magystrates.”⁷⁰ This representative excerpt illustrates that lack of education was framed by Bullinger as a serious impediment to biblical analysis skills, and therefore spiritual legitimacy as a religious group within society.

Extremely notable is the frequency with which Bullinger employed propaganda tactics against the Anabaptists that have nothing to do with their teachings or theology but target their conduct and characteristics. These propaganda strategies were aimed directly at undermining the Anabaptists’ embodied cultural capital in the eyes of the world, and often came clothed in spicy language that illustrates the fiery character of debates between the Zurich reformers and the Anabaptists.

Bullinger found fault with the Anabaptists’ lifestyle, including their family life and means of supporting themselves. Early in his book, Bullinger summarized all the Anabaptist heresies that he planned to refute in the work. In the middle of this summary, he inserted this paragraph: “Suche are therfore spoters & macules of christes flocke whiche do forsake their familye and houshold, and beyng adduced or geuen to sedicious fables, do fede them selves, with other mens laboures.”⁷¹ Bullinger’s assertions here are not logically connected to the Anabaptists’ religious teachings, so other motives must have driven him to include them. He repeated this argument in another dialogue, saying that many Anabaptists “do leave and forsake their owne wyves and children, yea all offyce and honesty beyng casted a syde, dooe lyve, feade, and fatte them selves, with other mens labours, snortyng bothe daie and nyght, most slougardely.”⁷² These criticisms served a useful purpose for Bullinger—they painted the Anabaptists as antisocial in the deepest sense, thus allowing his refutation of their theological heresy to be readily acceptable to his audience. Whether or not Bullinger’s claims are justified, his inclusion of these criticisms in his comprehensive refutation of Anabaptist heresy indicates that criticizing the cultural capital of

⁶⁷Ibid., 211.

⁶⁸Bullinger, *A Moste Sure and Strong Defence*, 35.

⁶⁹Ibid., 45.

⁷⁰Bullinger, *A most Necessary & Frutefull Dialogue*, 43.

⁷¹Bullinger, *An Holsome Antidotus*, 50.

⁷²Ibid., 25.

the Anabaptists was of great concern to him and was important in his efforts to mitigate their influence.

Bullinger elaborated on the laziness of the Anabaptists in later dialogues. In his dialogue justifying private property, Bullinger pointed out that “if [the Anabaptists] had as much as they do lacke, thorough their owne negligence and slugherdnesse, they woulde fynde by and by a way, to justify their unjust and evyll gotten goodes.”⁷³ Bullinger not only implied that the Anabaptists were lazy, but that they manipulated their theology to support their corrupt motives. Later in the same dialogue, Bullinger mentioned again that the Anabaptists “boasteth. . . in forsakyng of their houshold, and in their slouthfulnes wherin thei do wander about, as ydle vacaboundes.”⁷⁴ This comment refers to the Anabaptist practice of itinerant preaching based on early apostolic mission, where preachers would travel alone, conveying their ideas by word of mouth and depending on others’ hospitality.⁷⁵ Bullinger used this reference to the Anabaptists’ itinerant preaching to characterize them as socially anomalous. By supporting itinerant preaching, Bullinger argued, the Anabaptists disregarded the social norms of the day that required men to stay at home to work and provide for their families.

Bullinger went beyond pointing out the Anabaptists’ rejection of social norms by accusing them of more serious misdemeanors, including theft and prostitution. In one instance, Bullinger claimed that the only miracles the Anabaptists have ever performed “are, that they. . . make the gammons, and legges of bakon, hangynge in the larders, of the symple and poore people, invisible.” Similarly, Bullinger accused the Anabaptists of encouraging prostitution, saying that Anabaptist women “doe abhominabli prostitute, and make common theire owne bodies to all men. . . besyde that, that ye publicans, and harlottes shall be preferred, to the ryghtwes, in the kyngdome of heaven.”⁷⁶ These accusations were among Bullinger’s most forceful in his attempt to deprive the Anabaptists of cultural capital, since these offenses against society were universally condemned and greatly shocking.

One interesting thing to note about Bullinger’s argument style is his frequent concern that the Anabaptists, through their false teaching, “boast and advance their spirit. . . deceivynge the simple and rude people.”⁷⁷ Here, it is important to consider Bullinger’s intended audience; his book’s comparatively simple language and popular dialogue style clearly indicate that it was meant for the ears of “simple and rude people,” as well as for the Anabaptists themselves. Bullinger seems genuinely concerned that they not be taken in by the heresies of the Anabaptists. To his audience, Bullinger described the Anabaptists as dangerous and false, thus utterly different from himself and the true church he represents. Bullinger’s comments both helped to create a divide between himself and the Anabaptists and illustrated the implicit social structures of early modern European society that the Anabaptists were challenging and that Bullinger wanted to defend.

In a myriad of choice wordings, Bullinger characterized the Anabaptists in the least complimentary terms possible. In one instance, he expressed frustration over those who refused to recant, and even those who recanted in the past but then reconverted and “obstinatly defende. . . their heresee.”⁷⁸ Such men, wrote Bullinger, are beyond help. He also characterized the Anabaptists as fickle, lightheaded people who lack mental discipline: “It is the poynte of an unwise man to say, I thought not, and havynge hearde, but one parte, to geve sentence.”⁷⁹ In an interesting

⁷³Ibid., 125-126.

⁷⁴Ibid., 140.

⁷⁵Zorzin, “Reformation Publishing,” 512.

⁷⁶Ibid., 26.

⁷⁷Ibid., 63.

⁷⁸Ibid., 58.

⁷⁹Ibid., 209.

instance, Bullinger slipped in a subtle comment insinuating that Simon is using cunning, instead of honest theology, to trip him up in his arguments: “Also this dothe folowe, that thou being overcomen with the truth, dost seke how to bring me into an other purpose, least I should bind the more straightly.”⁸⁰ While arguing that the Anabaptists do not possess constructive or legitimate wisdom, Bullinger went so far as to describe the wisdom of the Anabaptists as “not comyng from above, but yerthly beastelyke and deavelyshe.”⁸¹ This type of comment, of which I have provided only a selection, seems to be unwarranted by and unconnected with whatever theological dispute Bullinger was engaged in at the moment. This suggests that there were other factors at work in the divide between Bullinger and the Anabaptists.

Another interesting propaganda strategy that Bullinger adopted was to compare the Anabaptists to heretics of the past who were widely known to have possessed bad characters and committed evil deeds. At the beginning of his dialogue on grace, Bullinger described the faults of the Catharians,⁸² who “the Anabaptistes. . . are in all things lyke unto.”⁸³ Bullinger did not mince his words in his description of the Carthians: “They dyd congregate & assemble a particuler Church, avoidyng and shunyng al comunion or felowship of synners. In the meane season, they dyd passe al mortal men, in presumptuosnesse and arrogancy, in envy, hatered & contencion, in covetousnesse, & intemperancy of lyfe.”⁸⁴ Using this strategy allowed Bullinger to use strong language about the Anabaptists while not aiming it directly at them, and operated as another subtle method that contributed to Bullinger’s systematic categorization of the Anabaptists.

Another theme of Bullinger’s propaganda strategies is that of violence—what violence is acceptable, and what is not—and the unsoundness of the Anabaptists’ disturbance of society. Early in the first dialogue, Bullinger condemned several instances of alleged Anabaptist violence. Bullinger focused on the Anabaptist takeover of the town of Waldshut (rendered by Veron as “Waltzhountum”).⁸⁵ In his words, the Anabaptists “did utterly subverte the entire cite of Waltzhountum, and did cause many of the cytezens. . . to be exyled, and to be put from their possessions.”⁸⁶ The town of Vormantia,⁸⁷ according to Bullinger, almost suffered the same fate. In a town named Sanctogalius,⁸⁸ an Anabaptist supposedly “did smite of his own brother’s head,”⁸⁹ claiming the act was divinely sanctioned. Bullinger took issue not only with the Anabaptists’ violent acts, but also with their apparent disregard for valued social capital: citizenship and material possessions. In fact, he seems to have equated violence with a lack of cultural capital on the part of the Anabaptists.

The incident at Waldshut to which Bullinger refers deserves closer attention, as it is more complicated than Bullinger makes it seem. In 1524, an army of peasants did in fact clash with their Austrian overlords, but they were neither Anabaptists nor motivated religiously at all.⁹⁰ In 1523, the pastor of Waldshut, Balthasar Hubmaier, had come under the influence of the Swiss reformers and began to institute radical reforms in Waldshut. However, his reforms were a little too radical for the reformers in Zurich; he began to develop ideas about delaying infant baptism

⁸⁰Bullinger, *A Moste Sure and Strong Defence*, 27.

⁸¹Bullinger, *An Holsome Antidotus*, 56.

⁸²Bullinger is most likely referring to members of the movement of Christian dualists that existed in southern Europe between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, known today as Cathars.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 152.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*

⁸⁵Euler, *Couriers of the Gospel*, 145.

⁸⁶Bullinger, *An Holsome Antidotus*, 24.

⁸⁷Worms, Germany.

⁸⁸St. Gallen, now the capital of the Swiss canton of St. Gallen.

⁸⁹Bullinger, *An Holsome Antidotus*, 25.

⁹⁰Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 66.

and allegedly had contact with Thomas Müntzer, which is probably why Bullinger connected the uprising in Waldshut with the Anabaptists.⁹¹ Although Hubmaier may have capitalized on social unrest to win over the people of Waldshut to Anabaptism, the uprising was not motivated or led by Anabaptists. This indicates that either Bullinger's bias against the Anabaptists blinded his judgment, or that others with bias misinformed him.

In the dialogues included by Veron in *A most Necessary & Frutefull Dialogue*, which were largely concerned with magisterial authority, Bullinger addressed the issue of violence widely, consistently painting the Anabaptists as people who endorsed violence by rejecting the authority of the magistrates. Simon calls for magistrates who "amend not" to be "rooted out of the earth," and later wishes that the "ungodly may be utterly destroyed, and roted out of the earth."⁹² Jojada replies that "violence, bloude, and warres" must not be used to this end, as they are "tumults and evyl waies,"⁹³ and then promotes prayer as a more virtuous way to combat tyrants. In a telling omission, Bullinger did not mention a string of violent acts the Zurich authorities had already committed against the Anabaptists, including the execution by drowning of Felix Mantz and the public whipping of George Blaurock in 1527.⁹⁴ Bullinger's theology is impeccable and impressive, but the language he used to characterize the Anabaptists through Simon is telling; they come across as lawless, violent troublemakers, further depleting their cultural capital.

In addition to physical violence, Bullinger accused the Anabaptists of causing upheaval and disrupting the peace of society, both within the church and in public. Bullinger used this argument in countless instances; for example, he argued that the Anabaptists did not deserve to preach because they "move sedicion" and "separat and make division in the church."⁹⁵ While discussing the role of prophets in the church, Bullinger insinuated, none too subtly, that the Anabaptists were inherently violent by describing them as "mad and phantasticall men" who "all cry out at once, with an unsemely clamor."⁹⁶ Here, Bullinger used the Anabaptist way of worship to paint them as disruptors with distasteful, inappropriate customs that turned the peaceful orderliness of the church upside down.

Bullinger's treatment of violence is often contradictory. At the beginning of his dialogue on the unity of the church, he seems to justify violence where it is used against the "ungodly." In response to Simon's remark that Christ came "not to bring peace but the swoorde,"⁹⁷ Jojada clarifies that the sword, while it should not be used against the godly, is certainly meant for the "infidels" and "ungodly."⁹⁸ He then accuses the Anabaptists of using dissension within the church as a sword, "which sworde is not among the godly in the Churche."⁹⁹ By this, Bullinger implied that the Anabaptists were separate from the church, and thus deserved the sword to be used against them. Bullinger further justified his harsh treatment of the Anabaptists, saying that "we dooe not lye, when we accuse them of tumulte"¹⁰⁰ and thus are not persecuting them. Bullinger set this statement as a response to the closing of the Beatitudes: "Blessed are ye, when men dooe curse you, and speake all evil against you,"¹⁰¹ which is the defining Biblical passage establishing persecutors against persecuted. Bullinger's statement was therefore meant as a clear justification

⁹¹Ibid., 67.

⁹²Bullinger, *A most Necessary & Frutefull Dialogue*, 36-37.

⁹³Ibid., 36.

⁹⁴Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 145.

⁹⁵Ibid., 97.

⁹⁶Bullinger, *An Holsome Antidotus*, 117.

⁹⁷Ibid., 119.

⁹⁸Ibid., 120.

⁹⁹Ibid.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 134.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

of his persecution of the Anabaptists. This disparity suggests that rather than (or in spite of) the violence of the Anabaptists being a major, serious theological concern for Bullinger, he uses it as a tool for coloring them in a negative light.

Some of Bullinger's arguments that on first glance seem to be focused on theology take on the flavor of deprivation of religious capital. A major theme within Bullinger's work is that of the relation between the temporal and the spiritual. Bullinger used this theme to inform his discussions over who deserves to preach, who can have the Spirit, and appropriate attitudes toward Scripture. These discussions feed into Bullinger's larger objection about the dissension the Anabaptists were causing in the church.

Bullinger devoted an entire dialogue to arguing against the Anabaptist practice of allowing unqualified men to preach in public. He allowed that anybody should be able to "talke of God, yea, & synge of him," but frowned on men taking upon themselves the role of "common preacher, not being called."¹⁰² This, he argued, destroys the authority of the church, causing upheaval and chaos. To make it even worse, he wrote, the Anabaptist preachers "separate. . . from the church, to seke woods and corners, there to assemble a company, to institute and ordein sectes."¹⁰³ The Anabaptists' apparent rejection of the order of the church in place of worship and spiritual leadership signaled to Bullinger that they were challenging the authority of the church, and he used this example to focus not on the content of the Anabaptists' preaching but its manner, thereby painting them as irreligious rebels.

Bullinger also addressed the Anabaptists' approach to Scripture and the Spirit. Throughout his work, he used Biblical references heavily to underline his points, and through this made two different jabs at the Anabaptists: not only are they not intellectually equipped to understand the Scriptures properly, but by refusing to understand them correctly they deprive themselves of possession of the Spirit. Because an Anabaptist "striveth againste the holy Scripture. . . [he] cannot bee that spirituall man, whome Paule doth speke of."¹⁰⁴ Therefore, wrote Bullinger, the Anabaptists "can judge nothing" but "ought to be judged and tryde, by the worde of God."¹⁰⁵ Here, Bullinger attempted to deprive his adversaries of the religious capital that existed within the established church at the time. Since they either could not or would not access the Scriptures appropriately, Bullinger consigned the Anabaptists to the other side of the judgement seat, and thus on a lower level than those in the right.

Elsewhere in the same dialogue, Bullinger further defined the spiritual state of the Anabaptists by claiming that they don't possess the godly Spirit at all, but the spirit of man. In a comparison between Anabaptist preachers and a Catholic priest who could only believe what the "bishop of Rome" allowed, Bullinger was indignant: "Beholde my Symon, what abhominacion is this, that a mortall man shulde take upon hym, to adprobate & alowe the divine and heavenly veritee, and let hym selfe judge over God?" The Anabaptists, he wrote, in doing the same "boast and advance their spirite" and thus deceive the "simple and rude people."¹⁰⁶ In making this argument, Bullinger took all legitimacy away from the Anabaptists' spiritually, thus depleting their spiritual capital. Bullinger did not base his argument here in theology, but merely on a subjective definition of what constitutes true understanding of the Scriptures. This suggests ulterior motives.

In the dialogue on the unity of the Church, Bullinger introduced a new argument over the difference between temporal and spiritual matters that seems to contradict his fierce protectiveness

¹⁰²Ibid., 91, 90.

¹⁰³Ibid., 91.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 78.

¹⁰⁵Ibid.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., 63.

of the office of the magistrate and other institutions of power that are intertwined with the Church. He took issue with the fact that the Anabaptists caused dissension within the church over “outward” things including baptism, rents and tithes, Christian men holding political office, the taking of oaths, and wealth.¹⁰⁷ Even though in earlier dialogues Bullinger argued at length about the spiritual value and importance of these issues and how they are carried out in society, here he condemned the Anabaptists for raising them as issues for disagreement. Again, he used his argument to separate the Anabaptists from the established church on a spiritual level, helping to define them as “other,” and thus less.

In another departure from theological argument, in his dialogues on baptism Bullinger again attacked the practical manifestations of the Anabaptists’ heresies, although briefly and not directly. To close his argument, he remarked, “Besydes that, your consequences are false, and wythoute foundatyon. If ye be nothyng ashamed of your false consequences, we wyll be nothyng ashamed of our true.”¹⁰⁸ Here, it is clear that Bullinger didn’t only have a problem with the Anabaptists’ faulty theology but with how their theology was playing out in society. Bullinger’s language also betrays an exasperation that points to the seriousness and urgency of his refutation of Anabaptist heresy.

Bullinger’s propaganda strategies aimed at minimizing the social capital of the Anabaptists are too numerous and obvious to ignore. While they are mostly socially driven and unconnected to the theological thrust of the work, they are also hidden within Bullinger’s theological arguments. The consistency and purposefulness with which Bullinger used these strategies indicate that the social clout of the Anabaptists concerned him just as much as their perceived misinterpretations of the Bible. Bullinger certainly had cause for concern; Anabaptist leaders, most notably Thomas Müntzer, had been involved in the Peasant Revolt of 1524–1525 and, to the Zurich reformers, embodied the social disturbance and upheaval of the revolt.¹⁰⁹ The Peasant Revolt would have loomed large in Bullinger’s memory, lending urgency to his concerns. When considering Bullinger’s forceful propaganda set against the backdrop of the very real threat of major social upheaval led by the Anabaptists, it is doubtful that the Anabaptists “had no discernible impact on the political, economic, or social institutions of their age,”¹¹⁰ as Clasen contended, or deserve to be “condemned to ephemeral minority status,”¹¹¹ as other scholars have done. Instead, it is clearly evident that the Anabaptists represented a strong challenge to the social structures of their day. While my analysis demonstrates that the Anabaptists exercised a considerable impact on society, it does not attempt to define the nature or extent of the Anabaptists’ impact on society. This would be a matter for a more extensive study.

Using sociology to analyze primary sources and make historical arguments, as I have done, proved to be extremely productive. Sociological theories allow historians to dive deeper into their subjects and, rather than just horizontally assess the surface effects of documents, vertically explore the depth and complexity of the people who produced the documents, who all existed and operated within the vast realm of social dynamics. Looking at documents from the perspective of social dynamics also equalizes the outwardly differing fields of economics, politics, and religion, for example, thus creating an environment where all these fields inform each other on a deep level. My analysis, which uses a theological document to shed light on social issues, helps dispel the erroneous thought that “the works of theologians who discussed and refuted the Anabaptist

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 132.

¹⁰⁸Bullinger, *A Moste Sure and Strong Defence*, 31.

¹⁰⁹Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 44.

¹¹⁰Clasen, *Anabaptism*, 428.

¹¹¹Packull, “The Origins of Swiss Anabaptism,” 54.

doctrines are likewise of limited value to the social historian,”¹¹² thus expanding the scope and power of historical research.

¹¹²Clasen, *Anabaptism*, xv.

REFERENCES

- Bainton, Roland. *Studies on the Reformation*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1963.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Translated by Richard Nice. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984.
- . “Social Space and Symbolic Power.” *Sociological Theory* 7, no. 1 (1989): 14-25.
- Bullinger, Heinrich. *An Holsome Antidotus Or Counter-Poysen, Agaynst the Pestylent Heresy and Secte of the Anabaptistes Newly Translated Out of Lati[n] into Englysh by Iohn Veron, Senonoys*. London: Humfrey Powell, dwellyng aboute Holburne Conduit, 1548.
- . *A most Necessary & Frutefull Dialogue, Betwene [the] Seditious Libertin Or Rebel Anabaptist, & the True Obedient Christia[n] Wherin, as in a Mirroure Or Glasse Ye Shal Se [the] Excellente and Worthynesse of a Christia[n] Magistrate: & again what Obedience is due Vnto Publique Rulers of all Th[Os]e [that] Professe Christ Yea, Though [the] Rulers, in Externe & Outward Thinges, to their Vtter Dampnatyon, do Otherwyse then Well: Translated Out of Latyn into Englishe, by Iho[n] Veron Senonoys*. Worcester: Ihon Oswen, 1551.
- . *A Moste Sure and Strong Defence of the Baptisme of Children, Against [the] Pestiferous Secte of the Anabaptystes. Set Furthe by that Famouse Clerke, Henry Bullynger: & Nowe Translated Out of Laten into Englysh by Ihon Veron Senonoys*. Worcester: Ihon Oswen, 1551.
- Cambridge Dictionary. Accessed April 22, 2020. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>.
- Clasen, Claus-Peter. *Anabaptism: A Social History, 1525–1618*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972.
- Dictionary of National Biography Online. Accessed May 7, 2020. [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/V%C3%A9ron,_John_\(DNB00\)](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/V%C3%A9ron,_John_(DNB00)).
- Euler, Carrie. *Couriers of the Gospel: England and Zurich 1531-1558*. Zurich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2006.
- Fast, Heinold. *Heinrich Bullinger und die Täufer: Ein Beitrag zur Historiographie und Theologie im 16. Jahrhundert*. Weierhof, 1959.
- Finke, Roger and Rodney Stark. *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- Gordon, Bruce. “Introduction.” In *Architect of Reformation: An Introduction to Heinrich Bullinger, 1504–1575*. Edited by Bruce Gordon and Emidio Campi. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2004.
- . *The Swiss Reformation*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2002.
- Ole, Peter Grell and Bob Scribner, eds. *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Ozment, Steven. *The Age of Reform, 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980.
- Packull, Werner O. “The Origins of Swiss Anabaptism in the Context of the Reformation of the Common Man.” *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 3 (1985): 36-59.
- Roth, John D. “Recent Currents in the Historiography of the Radical Reformation.” *Church History* 71, no. 3 (2002): 523-535.
- Stephens, William Peter. “Bullinger and the Anabaptists with Reference to His Von der unverschampten Frevel (1531) and to Zwingli’s Writings on the Anabaptists.” *Reformation and Renaissance Review* 3, no. 1 (2001): 96-107.
- Williams, George Huntston. *The Radical Reformation*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962.
- Yoder, John Howard. *Anabaptism and Reformation in Switzerland: An Historical and Theological Analysis of the Dialogues between Anabaptists and Reformers*. Edited by C. Arnold Snyder.

Translated by C. Arnold Snyder and David Carl Stassen. Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2004.

Zorzin, Alejandro. "Reformation Publishing and Anabaptist Propaganda: Two Contrasting Communication Strategies for the Spread of the Anabaptist Message in the Early Days of the Swiss Brethren." *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 82 (2008): 503-516.