

research identifying well-documented objects and using those to make attributions to makers and to make comparisons with other objects. The volume is well designed and illustrated to capture the essence of the exhibit where these objects, some previously unexhibited, could be seen together. Cooper and Minardi state that the book “is not about dovetails and glue blocks” but rather “the furniture and what it can tell us about the people who made and owned it as well as the culture and craft production of the areas in which it originated” (xxiv). This goal is achieved in a catalog that is full of personal names, places, and dates. However, in their attention to these details, the authors sometimes miss the opportunity to explore larger historical issues. Their call to future scholars to build on their study recognizes that there is still more to be said about Pennsylvania furniture.

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Evan Haefeli. *New Netherland and the Dutch Origins of American Religious Liberty* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012). Pp. 384. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$45.00.

The title of Evan Haefeli’s book leads the reader to expect a discussion of the standard view of how the Dutch from the melting pot that was seventeenth-century Amsterdam brought religious tolerance to New Netherland and thus to the Middle Colonies and ultimately to the United States. But this is not the case Haefeli makes. The subject is much more nuanced.

Although religious toleration was a legal right in the Dutch Republic enshrined in article 13 of the 1579 Union of Utrecht, which ordained that “everyone shall remain free in religion and that no one may be persecuted or investigated because of religion,” toleration was not tolerance. American religious liberty, Haefeli writes, had its origins not in sixteenth-century Dutch political thinking but in Stuart England. When James, duke of York and a Roman Catholic, was given New Netherland by his Roman Catholic-leaning brother Charles II in 1664, one of his first acts was to allow the discriminated-against Lutherans to call a minister—something the Dutch had not allowed during their forty-year tenure (except in New Sweden on the Delaware), just as they had not allowed public worship by Jews, Catholics, Quakers, or other dissenting Protestants. In New Netherland, the Reformed

Dutch Church was the official church and the only one permitted to conduct public worship. Freedom of the conscience was the freedom to worship privately, not the freedom to worship in groups in public.

Taking a social-historical approach to his topic, Haefeli draws on both Atlantic history, which holds that the American colonies were part of a trans-Atlantic world in which events in Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean affected people, trade, and ideas interactively, and borderlands history, which stresses the fluidity and permeability of boundaries—not only geographical but among and between Europeans, Americans, Indians, and Africans—in early American history. Into this multicultural context enter the Stuarts, restored to their authority after two decades of trauma and civil war. Beset with the need to maintain their Restoration, and mindful of their own proclivities for Roman Catholicism, one part of Charles II's strategy was to extend tolerance to all comers. Haefeli does not spell this out clearly enough. He provides "readers unfamiliar with Dutch history . . . useful orientation" to the events and religious groups relevant to the Dutch-American story, but he is not equally helpful to readers hazy on Stuart history. So, reader, beware. Brush up on your Stuart history before proceeding.

This aside, the author makes, and convincingly, many salient points not heretofore part of the dialogue about the influence of the Reformed Dutch Church in New Netherland. He indicates, for instance, in chapter 1 that radical philosophical developments of the 1650s and 1660s in Amsterdam made it a very different city from the one the original settlers had known in the 1620s and 1630s. In the 1650s, the establishment of Amsterdam City's own colony on the Delaware, New Amstel, introduced there a "unique and special time in Dutch history, and in the history of America," for New Amstel's authorities allowed some of those radical experiments in religious liberty to establish a first footing on American soil (53).

Haefeli's treatment of connivance, the Dutch practice of winking at religious dissent (such as hidden house churches and synagogues), is thoughtful and nuanced. He points out that foreigners interpreted the religious diversity in the side streets and attics of Amsterdam as religious freedom, when it was not. Connivance developed, he writes, to "smooth over some of the rough edges created by the clash between the pretensions to hegemony of the Dutch Reformed Church and the reality of its incomplete hold on the hearts and minds of the inhabitants of the Dutch world, but it varied widely depending on the authorities in charge and how closely they supervised" (56). Not all clandestine religious activity was winked at. Some was discouraged, even in

tolerant Amsterdam. In New Netherland, with the exception of the Delaware communities, it was routinely suppressed.

Everywhere in the Dutch world, by the seventeenth century a global world, it was the same. Religious diversity was not forbidden, but religions not of the Calvinist persuasion were expected to acknowledge the primacy of the Dutch Reformed Church and keep their worship out of sight. This was truer in New Netherland than in certain Dutch trading communities in northern Europe, New Sweden on the Delaware, and especially Brazil, where the Dutch authorities extended a formal grant of toleration to Catholics and Jews.

Because of these ambiguous situations, the Dutch could think of themselves as tolerant, as they did not actively engage in religious persecution. But the tolerated could claim the Dutch were intolerant because they did not permit public worship beyond their own church. As the author points out, this contradiction allowed the Reformed Church to live surrounded by religious diversity without endorsing it, just as it permitted all to live with the Dutch without accepting the Dutch Reformed Church.

As the Dutch expanded their trade and their colonies around the globe, they encountered more exotic faiths—Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, and Confucian—and although they were constrained by the Union of Utrecht from compelling these diverse people to conform to Dutch Reformed beliefs, the hope was always that by merely suppressing the competition, rather than requiring conformity, dissenters would be drawn to the Reformed Church, thus growing it from within and spreading its influence benignly wherever Dutch trade routes took it.

This well-argued book will compel all who write of the Reformed Dutch Church in the future to shun reflexive claims for Dutch tolerance. It was more complicated than has been thought. The author concludes with the idea that the greatest contribution of the Dutch to American religious diversity was not to promote tolerance, but to hold the mid-Atlantic out of English hands until the Restoration, giving pluralism a chance to root itself deeply and permanently in what became New York and New Jersey and parts of Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Delaware.

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