

The Medical Side of Benjamin Franklin (1911) and Theodore Diller, *Franklin's Contribution to Medicine* (1912). Ninety-four years is a long gap—may Finger's study inspire further work on Franklin and medicine, rather than another near-century of inattention.

Any future work should investigate whether there was any pattern among Franklin's medical interests. True, he commented on a great many medical topics—but he commented on a range of topics anyway. That he was prolific in his interests is no measure of his special devotion to medicine. Did he choose topics of a certain nature? Or was he merely led to them by related interests, as was the case with medical applications of electricity? Or did his many friends and colleagues solicit his attention, leading him to topics he might not otherwise have addressed? To address any of these questions, a scholar would be well-advised to start with Finger's book.

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The Pennsylvania German Broadside: A History and Guide. By DON YODER. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, copublished with the Library Company of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania German Society, 2005. xvii, 366 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliographical essay, index. \$49.95.)

The Pennsylvania German Broadside: A History and Guide is, as its title describes, both a history of a broad spectrum of ephemeral materials, as well as a guide to understanding their significance within Pennsylvania German or Pennsylvania Dutch (a term Don Yoder prefers, p. xiv) culture. Importantly, it is also a guide for studying American folklife, especially ephemeral material culture, by unlocking the everyday lives of individuals of every conceivable social standing, creedal perspective, and economic condition. This volume, while addressing such topics as the history of printing in Pennsylvania and the bibliographic lineage of such study, is centered on how these printed objects invite collectors, scholars, or indeed any interested person, to consider the multitude of ways printing technology allowed Pennsylvania's German immigrants to express themselves and develop a unique culture of their own. The book itself emerges from the donation to the Library Company of Philadelphia of an enormous collection of choice Pennsylvania broadsides in the form of both prints and printed texts that Don Yoder, emeritus professor of folklore and folklife and religious studies at the University of Pennsylvania, had collected for over fifty years. To Yoder, these pieces of paper, printed on one side and sold or distributed to interested individuals, are not simply static museum or archival pieces, but rather the material evidence of the worldviews of both the church and sectarian communities among the Pennsylvania Germans. Such paper ephemera contain invaluable expressions of Pennsylvania Dutch ideas and practices relating to spiritual beliefs, aesthetics,

politics, economics, medicine, ethnicity, and language, as well as leisure and entertainment. Yoder takes the time to explain why these pieces are significant, and even more importantly, how to read these objects as the rich repositories of the past that they are. In some cases, "read" means literally to give due attention to them as printed texts, and Yoder has provided very useful English translations of many of his examples. The volume also is illustrated profusely with both black-and-white and color images/plates.

This book should be of interest to anyone seeking to understand Pennsylvania German culture, but it offers much more than the exploration of an American regional culture and the print artistry and belief systems that grew from it. Indeed, the book is a model for the folklife study of any cultural region or cultural group. It offers an appreciation for the collection, preservation, and study of objects not only considered valuable, such as printed *fraktur* or even hymn or sermon books, but all objects that exist within a culture and identify the lived world of the people, from announcements of community picnics and church bazaars to turkey shoots and dialect plays. Yoder shows himself a master of this appreciation of the most humble ephemeral object as a doorway for understanding a culture's history, aesthetics, and concepts of spirituality. He valuably delineates categories in the book and clearly explains them, whether they be the diversity of Pennsylvania Germans themselves; the variety of secular and religious song and ballad broadsides; or the differences between baptismal and confirmation certificates used by Christian groups (p. 228). The chapters on religious and spiritually based ephemera from religious broadsides and prints are invaluable contributions to understanding the textual and visual "world" of the Pennsylvania Dutch. Equally important, Yoder expands our knowledge of denominational and sectarian American Protestant vernacular religion as he details everything from the reading matter in the Pennsylvania farmhouse and the colorful broadside print in the townhouse to announcements of Sunday school picnics, powwow healing formulas, as well as house blessings and heaven letters.

The Pennsylvania German Broadside exudes the passion that Yoder has as collector, historian, and folklorist for this material and this culture. In addition, it is the story of a scholar's life-long dedication to his work. Half a century ago, it was Yoder's vision to study the Pennsylvania Dutch by paying close attention to the relevance of their oral and material culture, including the recognition of their usually disregarded ephemera. This book represents a fruition of that vision. If the paper ephemera of all American communities had such a devoted collector and analyst who was willing to labor with such challenging material throughout an entire career, the study of American culture, past and present, would be much richer for it.

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