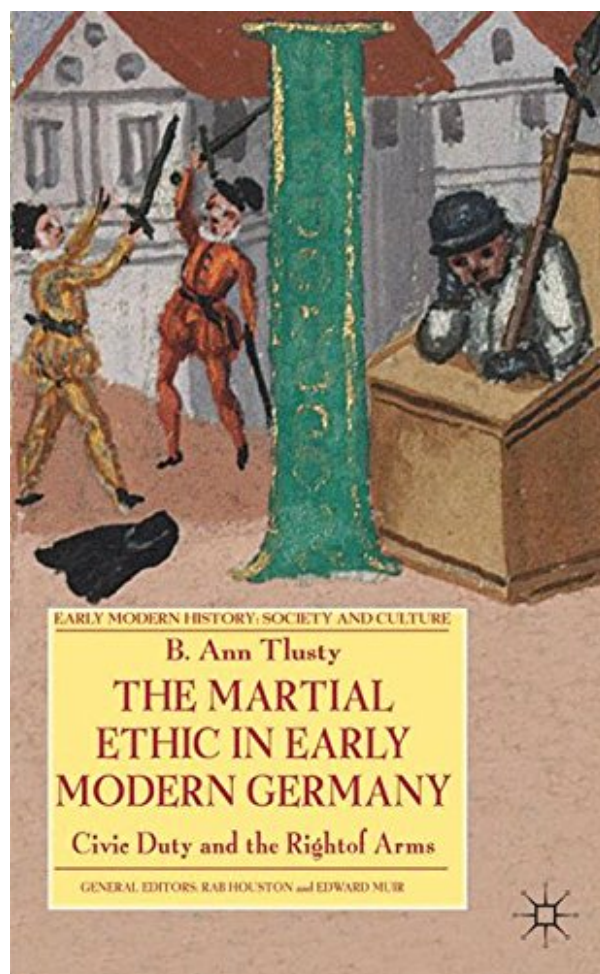
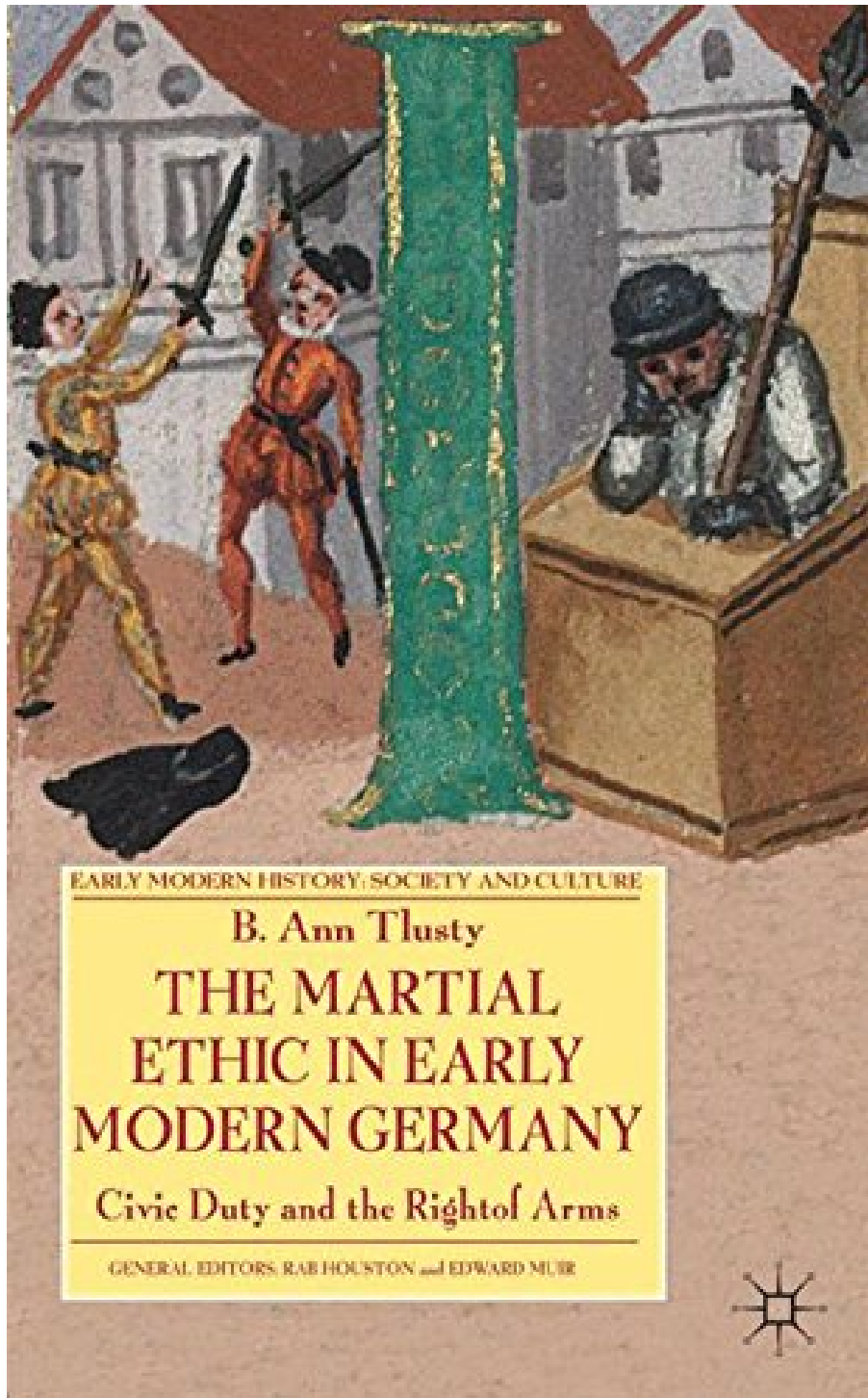


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## About the Author

B ANN TLUSTY Professor of History at Bucknell University in Pennsylvania, USA. Her publications include *Bacchus and Civic Order: The Culture of Drink in Early Modern Europe* (2001) and the co-edited collection *The World of the Tavern: Public Houses in Early Modern Europe* (2002), as well as numerous articles on gendered behaviours including drinking, duelling, gambling, and fraud.

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For German townsmen, life during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was characterized by a culture of arms, with urban citizenry representing the armed power of the state. This book investigates how men were socialized to the martial ethic from all sides, and how masculine identity was confirmed with blades and guns.

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- Original language: English
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- Dimensions: 8.91" h x 1.20" w x 5.70" l, 1.50 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 386 pages

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Phenomenal resource

By Juerg Gassmann

Ann Tlusty's book is a phenomenal resource for the researcher interested in the non-aristocratic, city-based culture of the German lands in the late middle ages and early renaissance. Her research is extensive, the literature comprehensive and a treasure trove.

Her book shines a light on the colourful world of how the cities' burghers managed their own affairs, their overall success in maintaining their self-governing status and the justifiable pride they took in the fact. Older history tended to contrast the "patriotic" and "democratic" (or at least "republican") martial Swiss cantons with a Germany where the burghers were eclipsed by the princes. Ann Tlusty's well-documented narrative is a lively-argued contribution to the on-going, healthy correction of that image; all of Germany, including Switzerland, was one legal and cultural space, and regional diversity was matter of degree.

For me as a practitioner of historical European martial arts, it is also satisfying to see Ann Tlusty give the training and culture of combat with the various bladed weapons their proper due. It is furthermore a challenge to the numerous HEMA researchers and experts to bring their findings into the academic world.

Still, I have three comments, quibbles or observations:

- Ann Tlusty discounts the military merits of city militias, basing her judgement on the fact that cities abandoned training with the long pike in the late 16th C; the long pike was integral to the fearsome "tercio" formation, the key to Spanish-Habsburg battlefield dominance. But the abandonment of the pike probably has more to do with the changes in fortifications, which put a premium on musketry and gunnery from cover, and skill with blade weapons for hand-to-hand combat. There was no room for pikes. The cities' fascination for long guns and artillery, well documented by Tlusty, is perfectly rational in that context. That city militias behind prepared fortifications were a potent force is demonstrated by the numerous futile sieges during the 30 Years' War, and highlighted by the 1,500 mostly militia defenders of Brünn/Brno holding off a 28,000 strong Swedish army in the war's closing phases.

- In Chapter 8 Case Study I, Ann Tlusty illustrates a conflict between "law" and "custom"; in reality, it is a conflict between "law" and "law" inherent in the mind-bogglingly complicated legal machinery of the feudal order. The stresses of the feudal order were exacerbated by the Reformation and, in Germany, found their violent resolution in the 30 Years' War; commonwealths that had achieved a measure of constitutional consolidation before the Reformation – like Switzerland – escaped the war (Case Study II of the same chapter, in my view, is not typical of any age, but the situation; one can imagine a similar conflict arising with the US or English commandant in a newly liberated WW II French or Italian town).

- Ann Tlusty draws a straight line from the 17th C shooting societies to the patriotically-motivated citizen armies of the 19th C, seeing the intervening period as a time where the historical martial spirit was attenuated and then subverted. She misses a trick here; the actual development is more complicated, and much more supportive of her thesis. After the 30 Years' War, princely rulers, seeking to perfect absolutism, relied on small, highly-trained professional armies made up of pressed or mercenary ranks and officered by the nobility (as a further quibble, I disagree with Tlusty's assessment that the 17th C saw the opening of military advancement to the bourgeoisie and the marginalisation of the nobility – the opposite is the case). But these professional forces had nothing to do with patriotism, only with princely claims of "l'état c'est moi". The consequence was the collapse of the "anciens régimes" – including the vaunted Swiss estates – under the onslaught of Napoleon's troops; absolutism's "subjects" were not "citizens", they had no "fatherland" to feel patriotic about. But patriotism survived in the shooting societies, the gymnastic societies (Turnvereine) and the students' societies (Verbindungen); it was these that demonstrated, protested – and fought – first against Napoleon, and then against the restoration efforts of Metternich and his acolytes in the time between Napoleon's defeats and the revolutions of 1848. True, the Second "Reich" is nobody's image of the heady liberalism of the "Vormärz". But, for better or worse, it is the embodiment of the patriotic citizen-militia nation-state.

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