

Nancy L. Coleman and Olav Veka. *A Handbook of Scandinavian Names*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. 2010. Pp. 195. \$27.95US (softcover)

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A Handbook of Scandinavian Names is a popularized presentation for North American parents who are looking for a Scandinavian name for their children. That means names used in Denmark, Norway, or Sweden. The book is also meant for readers who want information about names in their immigrant families, and for readers with a general interest in naming and naming traditions (p. viii).

We can read about Scandinavian name traditions since the Middle Ages up till now, both given names and surnames. This is the history of given names produced from words in the old Scandinavian language (Old Nordic) and Christian names transformed by the Scandinavian history of languages. Most of the names in the book are used in Scandinavia today. The book also includes old names out of use, for inspiration. Some chapters contain a presentation of Scandinavian immigration in USA or Canada, and the use of Scandinavian names by the immigrants and their descendants today.

Several considerations for parents are discussed, especially the meaning of names, linguistic and cultural background, distribution, whether a name was used at the time of emigration or it is a modern name in Scandinavia today. An important part is the discussion of what names will be easy to pronounce or difficult to pronounce properly in Northern America. There are informative lists containing names of both kinds. Pronunciation is also part of all the entries in the dictionary, which will be dealt with below.

The meaning of old Scandinavian names corresponds to a certain extent with old German and Anglo-Saxon names, and names from other European languages. Such meanings are, for

instance, ‘fight’, ‘guard’, the names of some weapon types, ‘strength’, animal names, ‘beautiful’, ‘holy’, other religious concepts, and names of gods. The female name *Gunnhild* consists of *gunn* and *hild*, both parts meaning ‘battle’. The female name *Helga* and the masculine *Helge* (Old Nordic and Icelandic: *Helgi*) means ‘holy’. *Sigrid* (f) and the variant *Siri* mean ‘victory’ and ‘beautiful’. *Ragnvald* (m) means ‘decision’ and ‘ruler’, *Torolv* (m) is composed of the god Thor’s name and ‘wolf’. *Erik* (m) is ‘alone’ + ‘ruler’, *Knut* (m) is ‘knot’, *Geir* (m) is ‘spear’, and the feminine name *Åse* (often written *Aase*) is ‘god’ (pp. 1–50, 124).

Well-known Christian names were transformed to Scandinavian variants some 600 to 700 years ago. Thus, *Katarina*, *Margareta*, *Helena*, *Nikolaus*, *Laurentius*, *Mathias*, *Magdalena*, *Peter*, and *Johannes* have become *Kari/Karin/Karen*, *Marit/Margit/Marte*, *Eli/Elin/Ellen*, *Nils/Niklas*, *Lars*, *Mads/Mats*, *Malene/Malin*, *Per/Peder*, and *Jon/Jens*.

Like names from most of the world, Scandinavian names were modified in North America, both in pronunciation and spelling. *Knut*, *Erik*, *Nils*, *Kari*, and *Åse* (*Aase*) often became *Knute*, *Eric*, *Nels*, *Carrie*, and *Ose*. *Karin* was transformed to *Karen*, which is also a Scandinavian variant (pp. 85–119). In the USA and Canada, there are also cases of changes like *Østen* to *Osten* and *Øystein* to *Austin*, names which have a common origin (pp. 106, 114, 119). The normal origin of *Austin* in North America is the English surname *Austin* based on the Latin given name *Augustinus* (Hanks, et al. 2006).

A dictionary containing about 1500 names is useful part of the book (pp. 1–50). For all the names there is information about pronunciation, meaning, and use. The pronunciation of names follows a popularized style from phrase books for tourists, a solution which may be appropriate for parents who do not know IPA script. The system used in the dictionary seems somewhat complicated for readers. Here are some examples from the introduction to this theme (pp. ix–xv). The female name *Aud* (meaning ‘prosperity’) is pronounced like the American-English sequence “oud”, “Similar to ou in loud”. The female name *Ruth* is according to

the book pronounced like “rewtt” in Swedish and Norwegian. The letter *r* in Scandinavian languages is “rolled using the tip of the tongue” (p. xii), or pronounced “at the back of the throat, like French *r*” (p. x), depending on the dialect. The “th” is pronounced like *t* (p. x).

Even though the authors present a comprehensive amount of helpful information about pronunciation for about 1500 names, there are inaccuracies. The notation *ew* in the name *Ruth* is a way to explain how a short *u* is pronounced. The “ew” is “similar to *ew* in ‘few’” according to the authors. This is wrong because the /j/-part of *ew* is not pronounced in this name. *Gunnhild* is said to be pronounced “gewn-hill, gewn-nill” (p. 9), which is also misleading in the same way. The name *Åse* (also spelled *Aase*) is allegedly “oaseh”, where *oa* is “Pronounced like *oa* in ‘boat’”. This is not precise. The letter *Å* is normally not pronounced as a diphthong (except in some local dialects) but like /o/ and /o:/.

Inconsistencies between the general introduction to pronunciation and the phonetic spelling in the dictionary also exist. An example is “aa” that is used for long *a*-sound in Swedish and Norwegian, according to the introduction, for instance “daag” for *Dag* ‘day’. Whether the use for Danish is meant to be the same is not clear. In the dictionary this *aa* is also used in many names which normally have a short *a*-sound as in *Ragnhild*, *Hallvard*, and *Mats*, with pronunciations given as “raag-nill”, “haal-vaar[d]”, and “maats”. It should be “rag-nill”, “hal-var[d]”, and “mats”.

There are different pronunciation variants within Scandinavia for many names. *Helge* is pronounced “hel-yeh” in Danish and “hel-geh” in Swedish and Norwegian, and *Gitte* is “gid-deh” in Danish and “git-teh” in Swedish and Norwegian. Inconsistencies like these exist in the dictionary but will not be treated here.

Even though there are errors in the information about pronunciation, the presentation will be useful to a great majority of the names for readers without knowledge of the Scandinavian

languages. They can, for instance, avoid the English pronunciation *ayver* for *Ivar* and say *eevaar*. It must be stressed that dealing with pronunciation for three languages concerning about 1500 names calls for extensive controls and is almost impossible to do precisely.

The book also includes some name lists which present the top names in the Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Norway, and Sweden) in the 1920s (pp. 133–134) and in the third millennium (pp. 139–145). Based on the lists, the authors present some great differences between the countries. The most remarkable find is that Denmark from 2006 to 2008 broke radically with international naming trends in the beginning of the third millennium, including the other Scandinavian countries (p. 139). Within these two years, according to the authors, Danish parents to a high degree changed to prefer names with a long tradition in Denmark. However, this is not a correct description of the situation. This error is caused by comparing a name list for Danish children born in 2006 with a list including the complete Danish population in 2008.

It is also stated that Icelandic parents broke radically away from old Scandinavian names to a more international style, mainly names from the Bible, between 2006 and 2008 (p. 140). This is a mistake caused by comparing a name list including the complete Icelandic population in 2006 with a list of children born in 2008 (Statistics Iceland). These changes described for Denmark and Iceland have not happened over two years but through a couple of generations. The authors' intention is to describe changes among names for newborn children. To carry this out, lists of newborns both for 2006 and 2008 are needed both for Denmark and Iceland.

Lists for 1920s show some differences between the countries because the Norwegian list contains only first names and the others contain all given names for each person, i.e., also names which are normally categorized as middle names in North America (Norwegian Statistics, Swedish Statistics, Danish Statistics). First names are normally those given for daily use

in Norway and Denmark. The Swedish tradition of what is the commonly used name is slightly different. The lists mentioned above cannot be used for comparison.

In the Danish list, the female names *Marie* and *Margrethe* are ranked first and second (p. 133). *Maria* and *Margareta* hold the same positions in the Swedish list. None of these names are among the ten most frequent first names, or in daily use, in any of the countries, according to official statistics for the 1920s (Danish Statistics, Swedish Statistics). Even though there are differences between the countries both now and in the 1920s, they are not as great as is stated by the authors.

Another theme is immigration. Immigration to Canada and the use of Scandinavian names there are addressed (pp. 112–119). The main area of this immigration is the western part of the country. The authors have collected data from Alberta and British Columbia. They point out names of Scandinavian origin, like feminine *Astrid*, *Kari*, *Freya*, *Ingrid*, *Karen*, *Kirsten*, *Kristin*, *Lena*, *Liv*, *Maren*, and *Randi*, and masculine *Anders*, *Bjorn* (< *Bjørn*/*Björn*), *Eric* (< *Erik*), *Finn*, *Gunnar*, *Lars*, *Leif*, *Norman*, *Odin*, *Soren* (< *Søren*/*Sören*), and *T(h)or*. The authors also state that the use of *k* instead of *c* may be a marker of Scandinavian background, like *Katrina*, *Kirsten*, *Kristin*, *Kristina*, *Karl*, *Kristian* and *Erik*. Although these findings are built on low frequencies in the official data, they seem to be appropriate.

Two of the top one hundred names in Canada for newborns in 2008, *Annika* and *Eric/Erik*, have also been popular in Scandinavia in the second half of 20th century (pp. 113–119). *Annika* is “probably a marker name in the Swedish Canadian community”, according to the authors (p. 113). The authors also present a discussion of the female names *Danica*/*Danika* and *Dana*, and the masculine name *Dane* (pp. 113–117). They state that “*Danica*/*Danika* is rare in Scandinavia [...], but there is reason to believe that it has become a marker name in the Danish Canadian community” (p. 113). According to my supplementary investigations, all these names are part of widespread Western trends, also supported by *Annick* in France and Canada

(Duchesne 2001:113, 270, Besnard 2007:21, Hanks et al. 2006, SSA). Therefore, I find it reasonable to regard the use of these names in Canada as part of Western trends perhaps with the occasional Scandinavian inspiration for some parents.

A reliable footprint of Scandinavian names in Canada are surnames based on common given names in Scandinavia at the time of immigration, such as *Andersen* and *Anderson* (pp. 118–119). The authors have also found typical Scandinavian surnames as given names in Canada: *Nelson*, *Jensen*, and *Hansen* (p. 119; the same and other examples in the USA, p. 112).

The chapter “Name Laws” is a presentation of such laws in Scandinavia (pp. 135–138). There is an introduction to rules for what given names and surnames may be given to children. Parts of the presentation are wrong. About the Danish law it is said (p. 135) that “[i]f no name has been agreed upon and the mother’s name is a patronymic type name, the child will be given a *matronymic* name; that is; the mother’s given name with the ending *søn* for a boy and *datter* for a girl. For example, Birthe Jensen’s child would be given the surname *Birthesøn* or *Birthesdatter*, rather than *Jensen*.”

This situation is very uncommon. What is incorrect here is that primary and secondary patronymics are confused (Danish Personal Name Act). Usually, names like *Jensen*, *Johnson*, *Wilson* may be regarded as patronymics because of their origin in a father many generations ago. (This term is unlike the French *patronyme* which means surnames of all types.) This name category is more precisely called *secondary patronymics* in Scandinavia, or more commonly *sen-names* (surnames with *sen*-endings which correspond to English *son*-endings). The patronymic in its first generation, which is based on the given name of the father, is called the *primary patronymic* or *real patronymic*. The term *matronymic* is used for a corresponding name derived from the mother’s given name. These names are also often simply called patro-

nymics and matronymics and are disambiguated by context. In a definition part of the book, these terms are correctly described (pp. 183–184).

The rules mentioned in the quotation above concern primary patronymics. The name *Jensen* in the example is a secondary patronymic, and should be replaced with a primary patronymic or matronymic. A primary patronymic might be *Jensdatter*, i.e., Jens' daughter, if the given name of someone's father was *Jens*. Thus, if no name has been agreed upon and the mother's name is a patronymic or matronymic type name, the child will be given a *matronymic* name, that is, the mother's given name with the ending *søn* for a boy and *datter* for a girl. For example, Birthe Jensdatter's child would be given the surname *Birthesøn* or *Birthesdatter*, rather than *Jensdatter*.

About the Norwegian law, it is stated (pp. 135–136) that if the mother has no surname, the surname of the child will be given her name “with an ending that shows the relationship of mother and child,” that is, a matronymic name. This concerns a rule related to the theme explained above. These rules are quite similar in the Danish and Norwegian laws (Norwegian Personal Name Act). In Norway the complete population, except the royal family, has surnames.

One more statement about the Norwegian name law concerns the right to give children a hyphenated surname based on the surnames of the parents. The name Solveig Undset-Arnestad can be based on *Undset* from one of the parents and *Arnestad* from the other. *Solveig* is a female given name. The authors present the following potential: “But other parents look ahead to when a child with a lengthy last name might marry a person with another lengthy last name. For example, Solveig Undset-Arnestad might marry Håvard Solstad-Jensen, and it would be a problem if they wanted their children to have all the names: Elsa Solstad-Jensen-Undset-Arnestad. And the problem would potentially multiply with each new generation. In

order to prevent endless surnames, some couples choose to give their children only one surname.” (p. 136)

This is wrong. According to the Norwegian name law, a person may not get more than two surnames. They have to be connected with a hyphen as illustrated above. Additional surnames from the parents (or other surnames) may be registered as middle names, without hyphens between middle names and surnames.

As pointed out in this review, there are errors concerning pronunciation as well as statistics about the use of given names in Scandinavia, and some less central parts of the Danish and the Norwegian name laws. Despite some errors, the book may be useful for the target group, viz., North American parents. Most relevant will be the dictionary on Scandinavian names and the overviews of naming traditions in Scandinavia. This is the type of information which often is not professionally based in international name dictionaries for parents and other North American readers. Chapters focusing on advice for parents also contain much relevant information. *A Handbook of Scandinavian Names* was awarded the first prize in the category *Reference* at 21st Annual Midwest Book Awards in May 2011 (The Midwest Independent Book Publishers Association 2011).

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Swiercz - Tiviakov Wroclaw 2010 1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Qxd5 3 Nc3 Qd6 Other continuations (apart from 3...Qa5 and 3...Qd8, which we discuss in later chapters) do not deserve detailed discussion: 3...Qc6? For us it is highly reassuring that one of the top Russian players can reach a dubious position as White. 21...Bxf3! 21...Rxb8 22 cxd5 cxd4 23 0-0-0 is unclear, but 21...Bb7! seems the most accurate: after 22 Bc7 (22 Bf4 cxd4 23 Ke2 e5 gives Black the initiative) 22...cxd4 (22...h3? loses material: 23 d5 hxg2 24 Rg1 e6 25 dxe6+ Kxe6. We shall also discuss such structures in the 3...Qa5 lines (see the first part of Chapter 3, i.e. Games 24 and 25). Game 5. 22 Bxa7 Bxg2 23 Rg1 Rxa7 24 Rxg2 cxd4 25 Bg6+ Kg8 26 c5. A Handbook of Scandinavian Names includes a dictionary of more than fifteen hundred given names from Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, plus some from Iceland and Finland. Each entry provides a guide to pronunciation and the origin and meaning of the name. Many entries also include variations and usage in Full description. Saved in: Bibliographic Details. Main Author: Coleman, Nancy L. In book: The Routledge Handbook of Scandinavian Politics (pp.306-312). Chapter: 24. Publisher: Routledge. 2. We have aimed to provide a nuanced understanding of Scandinavian politics today and over time by unpacking the similarities and differences between the Scandinavian countries and tracing how they have developed over time. Binding Forces, 1815-2010. London: Routledge. Handbook of Scandinavian Names Paperback 15 Oct 2010. by Nancy L Nancy Louise Coleman (Author). 4.2 out of 5 stars 4 ratings. See all 2 formats and editions Hide other formats and editions. Product details. Paperback: 195 pages. Publisher: Univ of Wisconsin Pr; 1 edition (15 October 2010). Language: English. ISBN-10: 0299248348. Olav Veka is president of the Norwegian Name Association (Norsk namnelag) and the author of many reference works and textbooks on Norwegian language, literature, and names. He contributed the entries on Norwegian and Danish surnames to the Oxford Dictionary of American Family Names. No customer reviews. 5 star (0%). Aspects of Scandinavian and German Product Liability - A Comparison. Bloth, Christian. 2000. Scandinavian Idea of Informational Fairness in Law - Encounters of Scandinavian and European Freedom of Information and Copyright Law. PÅjysti, Tuomas. 2007. Commercial Law in the Information Age. Torvund, Olav. 2018. 65.