The Ant Hill Kids of Roch

“Moïse” Thériault
Plan

- Brief History
- Doctrine
- Causes of Violence
- Q&A
Brief History - 70s

- 1977 - Early group forms in Thetford Mines, QC, from a 7th Day Adventist study group
- 1977-78 - “Healthy Living Clinic” in Sainte-Marie-de-Beauce
- 1978-81 - “Holy Moses Mountain Family” in Gaspésie
- 1981 - 2 year old Samuel Giguère dies
  - Gaspésie commune raided, Thériault arrested and imprisoned along with three other members
Brief History - 80s

- 1984 - Thériault released from prison, moves the group to Burnt River, ON - the “Ant Hill Kids”
- 1985 - Children seized by Ontario Children’s Aid Society
- 1988 - 1989 - Increased violence by Thériault leads to mass desertion
- 1989 December - Thériault arrested and sentenced to 12 years in prison
Doctrine

- Old Testament, Revelations
- Polygamy
- Medieval court
  - Thériault as king and father
- Miraculous healing
  - Main source of extreme violence
- Views on sex
  - Sexual assault and grooming
Violence

● Extreme hierarchy and power imbalance
  ○ Fight to keep/improve status
● Communal confession + repentance
● Heavy physical labor, no access to medical facilities
  ○ Alienation from society
● Thériault as a “healer”
Research Methods

- Primarily archival
  - Books by ex-members, members, journalists, and a personal account from Thériault
  - News reports from InfoSecte
- Interview with ex-member
- A single academic source
Children

- Strictly hierarchical, based on the status of each wife
  - Purity informed the Monarchic structure
  - Children inherited the status of their parents
- Treatment of children varied vastly
  - Example: death of Samuel Giguère and the homecoming of Thériault’s sons
- Disparities - education, food, shelter, social integration
- Violence and sexual predation