

**AMISH VICTIMIZATION AND OFFENDING:  
A RURAL SUBCULTURE'S EXPERIENCES AND RESPONSES TO  
CRIME AND JUSTICE\***

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ABSTRACT

This article addresses several areas as applied to the rural subculture of the Amish. First, the Old Order Amish will be introduced to the reader. Distinctions will be made between the Old Order Amish and other, cousin, groups. Second, discussion will center on the victimization of Old Order Amish. Several illustrations will be offered along with theories that attempt to explain these phenomena. Third, attention will be given to offending and deviant behavior among the Old Order Amish. Particular focus is placed on Amish youth. Fourth, discussion will turn to the restorative justice model as an effective manner of dealing with criminal justice matters and the Old Order Amish in rural settlements. This model, it will be argued, is ideal for the Old Order Amish based on several subcultural factors. Fifth, and finally, the author will provide some potentially fruitful directions for future research on Old Order Amish social and justice issues.

The Amish have long been a curiosity among many, often called the “peculiar people.” Superficially, such curiosity stems from their unique subcultural ways including one of their main differences—costume. There are many other differences, however, which distinguish the Amish from the larger culture and society of the United States. While costume is a superficial means of understanding the Amish, dress is indicative and symbolic of many other more deeply rooted differences. Social differences, coupled with contact between Amish and non-Amish (“English”) can lead to interesting, and sometimes tragic, encounters.

THE OLD ORDER AMISH IN AMERICAN SOCIETY

*A Brief History*

Many believe they know who the Amish are as a group, yet few people know their history and the importance this history has had in shaping them over time. Two authors, John Hostetler (1955, 1964, 1993) and Donald Kraybill (1989, 2001), have written extensively about the Old Order Amish. One of Hostetler’s main

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works, *Amish Society* (1993), is considered an authoritative work on the Amish. One of Donald Kraybill's many scholarly works about the Old Order Amish, *The Riddle of Amish Culture* (2001), is an important source for understanding the apparent contradictions and perceived mysterious ways of this sect. These books along with their precursors, such as William Schreiber's *Our Amish Neighbors* (1962), serve as important sources concerning Amish culture and customs.<sup>1</sup>

Old Order Amish who reside in the United States are descended from those belonging to the Swiss Anabaptist movement found in 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe and can be traced back to the Swiss Brethren of the early 16<sup>th</sup> century (Hostetler 1955, 1993). "Anabaptist," translated, means "re-baptizer" because these individuals were first baptized within the Catholic faith but believed in adult baptism. The Anabaptists were born of the religious rebellion over official state church doctrine that resulted in the Protestant Reformation. The Anabaptist beliefs including non violence, refusal to take oaths, and the belief in adult, rather than infant baptism, made them the targets of much abuse that included torture and execution. This treatment is chronicled in a 1,000 plus page book of images and descriptions called the *Martyrs Mirror*. Copies of this book, along with the Bible, can be found in many Old Order Amish homes today. The *Mirror* is an important historical document to the Amish since it describes the sacrifices for faith that their forebearers bore. As Kraybill (2001:6) notes, "...the bloody persecution etched a sharp distinction between the charge and the larger world in the Anabaptist mind." The significance of the Anabaptist history cannot be underestimated as a way of better understanding the Old Order Amish culture of today.

Change and conflict for Anabaptists did not stop just after the Reformation. Migration ensued to escape continued harsh treatment and leadership changes resulted in a historical split among Anabaptists. Menno Simons and Jacob Amman, Anabaptist leaders, are very important to understanding the Old Order Amish. Menno Simons, from which the term "Mennonite" is derived, was a Catholic priest in the 16<sup>th</sup> century who felt he had to choose between the doctrines of Catholicism and Anabaptism. He made a choice in favor of Anabaptism in 1536 and became one of their preachers (Hostetler 1993:47). Along with Adult baptism, the Anabaptists had many beliefs derived from the Swiss Brethren making up *The Schleitheim Articles*

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<sup>1</sup>Much of what is written in this section is derived from Schreiber, Hostetler, and Kraybill. The author had the pleasure of meeting and talking with the latter two authors in Shipshewana, Indiana during a conference on Amish Society in the 1990s.

including, “the ban” (excommunication), communion is only for true believers who are baptized as adults, Anabaptist should be separated from evil in the world, the traits of clergy (called “shepherds”), avoiding the “Sword” (advocating pacifism), and the rejection of oaths (Hostetler 1993:28-29) which is also called the “confession of faith” (Kraybill 2001:6).

The Amish branch of the Swiss Anabaptists can trace their beginnings to Jacob Amman (Hostetler 1955). Amman maintained a stricter interpretation of Anabaptist doctrine and advocated foot washing and *Meidung* or the strict social avoidance (shunning) of the excommunicated unfaithful. When other Anabaptist leaders refused to agree to the strict interpretation of the *Miedung*, Amman forced a split, in about 1693, which resulted in the creation of the Amish. Besides these principles, the Amish, under Amman’s direction, also advocated simple grooming and a greater emphasis on humility (Hostetler 1993:47). Therefore, some main distinguishing characteristics found among Anabaptist Mennonites and Anabaptist Old Order Amish today can be linked to different practices steeped in historical foundations. The strictness of church doctrine not only distinguishes the historical split between the Mennonites and the Old Order Amish. There are a variety of Anabaptist group gradations based on the interpretation and implementation of theology including the Beachy Amish and New Order Amish marked by some more progressive Amish practices.

#### *Old Order Amish Social Structure and Geographic Patterning*

The social structure of the Old Order Amish is guided by the principle of *Gelassenheit* or to surrender to God’s will. According to Kraybill (2001), there are five key dimensions of this principle. These guiding principles urge the Amish person from being “haughty” which is something to be avoided. The principles of *Gelassenheit*, as described by Kraybill (1989, 2001), include personality, symbols, structure, values, and ritual. The Amish personality is to be reserved and calm. She or he is not to be boastful, proud, loud, bombastic, or vain. Modesty is extremely important. The Amish value structure is marked by similar traits. Values of simplicity, submission, humility, and obedience (to the Lord) are highly coveted (Kraybill 2001). One should avoid being “worldly” and sophisticated because this is the way of outsiders (the English). Many symbols convey these ideas of humility, simplicity, and lack of worldliness including homemade clothing, which is very “plain,” the use of horses instead of motorized transportation and engine powered farm equipment, and their “Pennsylvania Dutch” dialect. Many religious practices can be linked to early Swiss Brethren and Anabaptist ancestors. They believe in the

washing of feet, kneeling (before God), adult baptism, confession, and, perhaps the most controversial and misunderstood practice, “shunning” social avoidance as proscribed by the *Meidung* (Hostetler 1993).

The belief in adult baptism deserves a special mention at this time given the aforementioned discussion. The Amish believe in this because they maintain that person should decide for him or herself regarding obedience to God and living a life among the Amish. Baptism typically occurs during the teen years following a period of experimentation and exposure to the “world” during *Rumspringa* (which is discussed below). Thus, a child, while raised Amish, does not become Amish until she or he consciously decides to do so. If a person professes their faith, is baptized, and becomes Amish and then leaves the Amish world, they run the very real risk of excommunication. If, however, the individual does not wish to be baptized and then leave the Amish excommunication is not likely.

The social and geographical organization of Old Order Amish naturally centers on religion and family (Hostetler 1993; Kraybill 2001). These can be understood by analyzing the Amish “settlement” and other unique aspects of social organization. A settlement is a large geographic area consisting of numerous smaller groups of Amish. There are three very large settlements, in order of their size, in the United States—these are the Holmes County area of Ohio, Lancaster County area of Pennsylvania, and the Shipshewana, Indiana area settlement. Amish are represented in 24 states and in Ontario, Canada totaling nearly 180,000 people in 250 settlements (Kraybill 2001:14). There are many more, smaller settlements in numerous states around the country including those in the southern states of Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, Virginia, Florida, North Carolina, Texas, and Mississippi (Kraybill 2001). Smaller settlements are often created due to migration of Amish families to seek farmland or to begin new settlements resulting from conflicts over various aspects of *Gelassenheit*.

Each large settlement is made up of several “church districts.” As Kraybill (2001:92) notes, “The church district is the social and ceremonial unit of the Amish world.” These districts are geographical sections of the settlement overseen by Amish clergy. The location of an Amish family’s residence dictates their church district based on the collection of Old Order Amish congregations called an affiliation (Kraybill 2001). “The church district is a congregation, a ceremonial unit encompassing a specific geographic area within a settlement” (Hostetler 1993:92) while the “affiliation” “. . . is a group of church districts that have common discipline and that commune together” (Hostetler 1993:93).

Each district has a bishop, two ministers (or three), and a deacon. These male members of a church district are the spiritual team of the district and have varying roles. Sometimes a bishop will preside over two districts that make it possible for him to attend home-based church services in bordering districts between “off Sundays”<sup>2</sup> (Kraybill 2001:92). It is the primary role of the district clergy to tend to their flock and to enforce the rules of the district or its *Ordnung*. The strictness of the *Ordnung* can vary from church district to church district as different bishops may have different interpretations of church doctrine and how it should be applied to its members. The geographic structure of Amish life is reflected in several additional principles within one dimension of *Gelassenheit* by being small, informal, local and decentralized (Kraybill 2001:31).

#### *The Importance of a Rural Agrarian Lifestyle*

The Old Order Amish place a high degree of emphasis on the rural agrarian lifestyle (Hostetler 1955, 1964, 1993; Thompson 1984). Farming is considered an honorable vocation and toiling the land brings the Amish male closer to one of God’s creations—earth. Working the land also reinforces the tradition of Old Order Amish—being good farmers—and also conveys the message of self-sufficiency, independence, and the desire to perpetuate the farming trade to future generations. Farming is deeply entrenched in the cultural ethos of the Amish beginning with the practices of their ancestors in Europe.

Several issues have befallen the Amish farmer in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries—namely dwindling farmland and rising prices for land. This has forced some Amish to gravitate to other occupations to support families should they not wish to migrate. Ideally, these occupations should be “related” in some way to agriculture (Hostetler 1993); however, there are many instances of the Amish starting woodworking cottage industries, working as carpenters, or holding positions in the manufacturing fields. The latter, manufacturing, has found many Amish employed in the mobile home and recreational vehicle industries in the Shipshewana settlement. If the Amish venture out of their communities for work, which is becoming more common, contact between Amish and non Amish naturally increases.

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<sup>2</sup>Church districts have formal church services every other Sunday and other types of services in the meantime. This allows a bishop to preside over two districts.

*Dealing with Modernization and Social Change*

The Old Order Amish are continually negotiating with the larger culture and society regarding modernization and social change (Hostetler 1964; Kraybill 1989). It is inevitable that a subculture that attempts to live by many 19<sup>th</sup> century (and earlier) edicts will be confronted with modernity and its influences. These influences are seen in several Amish subcultural arenas such as the family, childrearing and farming. Negotiating modernity with the Old Order Amish world is filled with many challenges given how influential the larger “worldly” culture can be for this group. The Amish reject many modern conveniences of the larger culture, yet allow some of them to enter under specific circumstances.

For instance, telephones are forbidden in Amish homes but “phone shanties” can be found in rural areas of Amish settlements so phones would be available in case of “emergencies.” The ownership of automobiles is also forbidden yet a small industry of “Amish Taxis” (sometimes referred to by the derogatory slang “Amish Haulers”) serve Amish settlements to ferry Amish persons to stores for groceries and other needs along with taking Amish from settlement to settlement to visit friends and relatives or to attend important events such as weddings and funerals. The Amish are also forbidden to be connected to a common electrical grid; however, electricity and its use is not foreign the Amish since electricity is sometimes generated for various purposes via gasoline engines.

While these examples might perplex the reader, they make sense within the Amish world and mindset. For instance, having a telephone in one’s home would not only be too worldly but it would also demonstrate too much “connectedness” to the larger culture. The same is true for electricity from a common grid—the electrical line from the road to the home would “connect” the Amish home to the larger society that they do not want while they also recognize the need for the generation of electricity, at times, for such instances such as powering milking machines. As Kraybill (2001) aptly notes, there are instances when the Amish will allow some modernity to creep into their subculture. When it is allowed, however, it is always coupled with a degree of explanation from the Amish religious leadership to make the formerly prohibited addition consistent with theology.

*The Amish and the Justice Systems*

The Amish are often very law abiding citizens who respect the law (Hostetler 1993; Kraybill 1989, 2001). They have a respect for one part of the law in particular because, in part, the criminal law reflects basic tenets of the *Ten Commandments* and the social proscriptions against interpersonal violence and property offenses found

therein along with values and beliefs steeped in Amish cultural heritage. The Amish have had more experience with the civil law given a variety of conflicts experienced with the larger culture over education, vehicle laws for buggy and wagon transportation, the motion picture industry, the exchange of goods and services between Amish and non Amish, and the imposition of *Meidung*. Given the increasing contact found between the Amish and the non Amish, coupled with an ever-changing umbrella society, the Amish will undoubtedly encounter ever more potential conflict.

The general pattern of Amish involvement in the civil law is that of a distant participant. When controversial issues confront the Amish and these issues must be addressed by the civil law and courts, the Amish are often very marginal participants or certain individuals and/or groups take on their cause. There have been exceptions to such marginal participation with one case in point being the issue of compulsory education, up to a certain age, for their children. This issue, erupting in the late 1930s, was one that the Amish confronted directly with the aid of legal counsel resulting in court action.

For the most part, however, seeking court-ordered remedy is rare for the Amish. The Amish will, however, use attorneys for various legal documents such as wills and real estate transactions, seeking the services of an attorney to sue can be reason for excommunication (Kraybill 2001:265). As an alternative, an Amish male might ask a person to sign a "confessed judgment" which is a statement from the person doing business with the Amish male promising to pay for all services in full. This document is then filed with the local courts but is typically only used if the Amish person feels, before the transaction, that the person may not pay for goods or services (Kraybill 2001:272).

The Amish interaction with the criminal justice system is even more difficult to understand and describe. A key to understanding the Amish attitude toward the criminal justice system is best summed up by Kraybill (2001:272) when he writes, "The Amish are taught to bear abuse and suffer insult rather than to fight injustice through legal means." Central to this attitude is the Amish history with persecution and abuse. One only needs to be exposed to a small amount of early Amish history to understand how they might view themselves as victims of crime. There are several key elements to understanding this attitude more deeply. First, the Amish have experienced perceived poor treatment during many different points in their history. Persecution and abuse by others toward the Amish has been prevalent throughout their history. Such poor treatment is chronicled in the *Martyrs Mirror* and is taught in Amish households. Second, seeking assistance from representatives

of the criminal justice system violates their principle of maintaining “separateness” from the larger culture. While the Amish respect the criminal law, they are not eager participants within it because they prefer to remain distinct. Third, the Amish believe that the criminal justice system is created by man and man is not the final arbiter of poor treatment toward others. In the Amish mind, God and God’s will prevail and those who have sinned through the commission of crimes will be dealt with by this ultimate authority. Should an Amish person participate in the criminal justice process, she or he is not submitting to this supreme authority. Fourth, the Amish place a heavy emphasis on forgiveness of the transgressions of others toward them. Should someone violate the Amish by violent or property crime, it is their [the Amish] role to forgive the person for what they have done. Such forgiveness does not typically involve criminal justice system participation. Fifth, the Amish are required to reject violence. This tenant has at least two dimensions. One dimension is the social proscription against self-defense and the other is the rejection of the violent behavior of others that can take the form of turning the other cheek. Taken together, these key principles in understanding the Amish stance regarding the criminal justice system are all consistent with the strong social mores and norms found within *Galessenheit*.

#### VICTIMIZATION AND THE OLD ORDER AMISH

The Amish, like anyone else, are sometimes the victims of crime whether they are property or violent offenses. There have been cases reported in the news media of hate crimes against the Amish occurring in Wisconsin along with a rash of Amish barn burnings in Pennsylvania. However, the best-known case of Amish victimization came in the fall of 2006 with the West Nickel Mines school shooting (Kraybill, Holt and Weaver-Zercher 2007; Ruth 2007). More can be learned of the Amish response to victimization and tragedy from this case than can be learned about general Amish victimization given this case was an isolated case and the perpetrator did not appear to have any particular animosity toward the Amish as a group. However, and as Kraybill et al. (2007) point out, this was not the first time Amish have been killed by non-Amish and the Amish are no strangers to tragedy.

Some argue that the Amish are rarely the victims of crime (Kraybill 1989), but such a position is difficult to establish for at least two reasons. When one examines the larger population, victimization occurs at different rates for different social and demographic groups of people. It is a social fact that some groups experience more victimization than others. A second reason such a stance is difficult to establish is the simple fact that so much Amish victimization is unknown. Within the larger

society, lower level offenses are much more prevalent than more serious crimes. There is no rational reason to think differently about the Amish and their victimization patterns. The Amish, overall, are unlikely to report personal victimizations and, as a result, the Amish dark figure of crime often remains unknown. The reluctance to report is likely a combination of low-level criminal victimization coupled with the social prohibitions against reporting crimes that could result in Amish involvement with the “government” and its criminal justice system. As Hostetler (1993:355) writes, “No one will ever know how many crimes are smothered in silence.” Thus, we may never know how many low level offenses such as harassment, intimidation, and vandalism are perpetrated against the Amish within American society.

### *Amish Victimization Experiences*

Perhaps the first scholarly account of crimes against Amish was published by Joe Wittmer in 1971. His article, “Cultural Violence and Twentieth Century Progress” appeared in *Practical Anthropology*. Since this original work, several other authors have related information regarding incidents of Amish victimization (Byers and Crider 2002; Byers, Crider and Biggers 1999; Kephart and Zellner 1994; Kraybill et al. 2007). Wittmer has an interesting vantage point on the Amish subculture since he, as well as John Hostetler (his work is discussed above), were raised by Amish families. Wittmer discusses the importance of Amish tradition and faith because of the pervasive reality of poor treatment when he writes, “Amish youth are constantly inculcated into a sense of martyrdom and realize the very real possibility of suffering at the hands of ‘nonbelievers.’ Parents vividly relate stories from the martyr book regarding the terrible sufferings of their forebears. There is a pervasive tendency among all Amish to distrust the ‘outsider’” (Wittmer 1971:148). This quotation speaks volumes regarding the Amish attitude toward ill treatment, what the Amish might expect from those outside the sect, and the separation from the larger culture that is such a pervasive desire among the Amish. Wittmer devotes an entire section of his article to the topic of “Cultural Violence” against the Amish. In this section, he relates several anecdotes and examples of such treatment. As he notes (Wittmer 1971:152),

The Old Order Amish come under continual harassment as they drive along the road in their open buggies. It is especially popular for non-Amish youth to yell ‘bushhog’ or to ‘baa’ like a goat at the bearded Amish male. These name calling incidents bring about a large amount of undue stress on the Amish as such cases cause an upheaval in the Amish community and are discussed time and time again.

This type of treatment has been relayed by others in research on non-Amish offenders (Byers and Crider 2002; Byers et al. 1999). In this research, which will be discussed in more detail below, name calling with the intent of intimidation and harassment are not uncommon types of offenses when youth engage in anti-Amish hate crime. This is sometimes coupled with other types of behavior such as "...turning out livestock, upsetting outdoor toilets, and burning corn and wheat shocks" (Wittmer 1971:152). Byers et al. (1999) and Byers and Crider (2002) uncovered very similar types of activities. Similar stories and examples were also relayed to Byers and Crider during a focus group held at the Menno-Hof Center in Shipshewana in the late 1990s.<sup>3</sup>

Poor treatment, however, does not stop with name calling. Wittmer (1971:152) goes on to state:

It is especially popular to harass the young Amish men and their girlfriends as they travel along in their horse-drawn buggies. Many of these young couples have been seriously injured as the horse bolted and ran away after being frightened by a firecracker tossed by a passing motorist. It is also popular to 'egg' or 'stone' the Amish buggies and a young Amish boy was recently killed (March 1969) in Indiana when struck by a rock thrown from a passing car.

The young Amish boy killed in 1969 as related by Wittmer is not the last of such incidents. On August 31, 1979, a highly publicized, and similar, case occurred in Adams County, Indiana. The case involved the death of Adeline Schwartz (Kraybill et al. 2007). Adeline was the eight-month-old child of Mr. and Mrs. Levi Schwartz near Berne, Indiana. On the August evening in question, the Schwartz's

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<sup>3</sup>This focus group was attended by political leaders, law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, advocates for the Amish and Amish leaders themselves. At one particular moment during the focus group, a participant made light of his prior involvement in such activities. The Menno-Hof Center is an educational and cultural center which was created to inform tourists of Amish, Mennonite and Anabaptist ways with the specific intent of providing a counter-balance to the extensive tourism in the area. The Center has an interactive display of Amish history. Included in this tour is a torture chamber to educate visitors about the Amish history of persecution and it also includes a brief slide show of a truck full of youth harassing an Amish family in a buggy.

and their other children were traveling home from a friend's home when they were confronted by a red pickup truck carrying four non-Amish youth—two in the cab and two in the bed of the truck. The youth in the bed of the truck, Lynn Rich (age 18) and Kevin Rehm (age 19) threw pieces of clay field tile at the buggy. One projectile hit Adeline in the head. Upon arriving home, the Schwartz family realized that Adeline was dead. They called the police from a neighbor's phone and the youth were quickly arrested. The two youth in the cab of the truck were Linn Burkhardt (age 18) and Scott Thomas Wilkins (age 19). When arrested the youth stated that they were out to get some "Clapes"—a derogatory term for the Amish in the area.

After a police investigation, the youth were all charged with Reckless Homicide. A special judge from Fort Wayne, Indiana was seated in Adams County to preside over the trials of the youth. The initial legal proceedings became known as the "Amish Trials." The trials for the two who allegedly threw the tiles were set first. Once the jury was empaneled, there was a surprise turn of events. After consultation with the judge, the prosecution and defense agreed to a plea agreement in which the two youth—Rehm and Rich—pleaded guilty in late June of 1980 to "aiding and abetting a reckless homicide." The plea agreement was spurred by the realization that it could not be shown which youth had thrown the deadly projectile since both had thrown several. Facing up to eight years in prison, Rehm and Rich were each given five year suspended prison sentences, five years of probation, a fine of \$5,000 each, and were ordered to pay restitution for medical expenses to the Schwartz family. A third youth involved in the incident, Linn Burkhardt, pled guilty to Reckless Homicide in mid August of 1980. Burkhardt received a three year suspended prison sentence, three years of probation, and same \$5,000 monetary fine as the previous two offenders. The final youth, Thomas Wilkins, pled guilty in late December of 1980 to Criminal Recklessness and was given a two year suspended prison term, two years of probation, and a \$2,000 fine.

The Schwartz victims, namely Adeline, and the subsequent legal proceedings were watched very closely near Berne and afar. Many letters were received from non-Amish by local authorities in Adams County calling for the harsh treatment of the youth. This did not occur given the seriousness of the event and subsequent charges. However, the outcome was satisfactory to the Schwartz family. The father, Levi Schwartz, was quoted in the Fort Wayne, Indiana *News-Sentinel*, after the first two youth were sentenced, as saying, 'We are glad that it's over, or partly over, and now perhaps we can put the tragedy behind us. . . . Now if they violate probation and go to jail, it won't be our fault' (Haynes 1980). This quotation is important for at

least two key reasons. First, it demonstrates the desire and ability of the Amish to move on and heal. Second, it speaks volumes of the Amish subcultural ideology of responsibility and self-imposed blame for persecution. In saying, it would not be there fault if the suspended sentence were imposed, Mr. Schwartz was conveying the Amish belief that the defendant's fate was not in the hands of the Schwartz family.

The author of this article was given a personal glimpse into the Amish world where the Schwartz family lives and the power of forgiveness among the Old Order Amish. During one of several visits to the homes of the Old Order Amish in one Midwestern settlement, we had the opportunity to speak with an Amish Deacon about his views of crimes against the Amish and the social consequences of such events.

The setting of our talk was quintessential Amish in nature. We approached the home in our car and immediately saw a buggy, several barns and a modest house. Although this Deacon had returned a postcard indicating he was willing to speak with us, we were nonetheless nervous about speaking with this man while trying our best not to feel like intruders. The walk to the door was, as one can imagine, a long one with many thoughts and anxieties. We knocked on the back door of the house since this was the entrance most commonly used. Our host greeted us at the door without any fanfare and offered his hand in friendship and an open invitation to come in for a visit.

Upon entering the home, one could immediately smell the kerosene that fueled the lights and a heater in the center of the room. Since it was near dusk, the room was not well lit but we could still see several Amish children peering through a doorway leading to an adjacent room. They looked at us with curiosity and caution but a smile from both of us soon relieved any tension. We began our meeting with the Deacon with some small talk, mostly centering on my colleague's relationship with the area since he was a local "English" native. This also helped to break down many barriers.

The moment came in the conversation when the topic of victimization toward the Amish was raised. The Deacon was, to our surprise, very open and honest about his experiences and his perceptions. He did, however, appear to choose his words carefully since he was apparently concerned with giving us the right impression of the Amish way of viewing such events. He indicated to us that while he had not experienced any direct victimization, he was aware of incidents in the area and Amish residents who had been victimized.

One case served as the centerpiece of our conversation – the 1979 Schwartz victimization. We were particularly interested in this case since a made for television movie was made about the incident. It was called, *A Stoning in Fulham County*. The case was of interest to us for several reasons. First, it was particularly heinous. Second, we had a research associate who had a relative in the truck at the time. Third, the case occurred in the very county where we sat talking with the Deacon. He freely relayed the details of the event in a somber and reverent tone. It was evident from his description that the case brought great sorrow to the Amish community there.

Among our notepads and other materials brought to the meeting, we also had a copy of the Amish Directory for the settlement. Amish settlements of any size typically have a directory of the Old Order Amish living in the area. The directory organizes families by Amish church district. When he saw that we had a copy of the directory, he asked if he could leaf through it for us. We obliged.

It was not long before he located the family whose child was taken from them that August night in 1979. With much care to detail, he showed us the family name in the directory and all of the family members listed. He then said, "Look here." He was pointing to the little girl's name killed that night. It was a poignant moment for us and the feelings in the room were palpable as we all sat and looked at each other wondering what to say next.

I decided to inquire further by asking how the family was doing these many years later. The Deacon said they were doing fine. In fact, he said, "one of the boys now works with the father." Confused, I asked if he was referring to the father of the little girl and one boy in the truck. He replied affirmatively. He relayed that the father of the victim and one of her assailants were not enemies and had developed a very special relationship over the years.

He stopped short of calling the relationship a "friendship" but it was clear they had developed a level of mutual respect. In his subtle manner, the Deacon was giving us a lesson in the power of forgiveness among the Old Order Amish. This was a lesson we would never forget.

Preying on Amish does not end with harassment leading to and not leading to bodily injury or death. Sometimes the Amish are targeted for burglary and even robbery. Wittmer (1971) states that *The Budget* (an Amish news circular) featured several stories of the Amish being burglarized and robbed at gunpoint while riding

in buggies through rural areas.<sup>4</sup> Beginning in January of 1996, there were also reports of a rash of armed robberies of Amish riding bicycles in the Nappanee, Indiana area. This area is on the far west end of the large Shipshewana Settlement. Newspaper reports from the *South Bend Tribune* suggested that some fifteen Amish were known to have been robbed. However, many more cases may have gone unreported. Knowing that the Amish often carry cash, the assailants would drive by the Amish men riding their bicycles, club them (sometimes with tire irons) causing the men to stop, and then rob them. There were arrests. These included Jonathan Pickerl of South Bend, Indiana along with Eric Stevenson, Roger Briscoe, Jennifer Krull, and William Neiswender—all of Nappanee, Indiana. In numerous newspaper accounts at the time, local criminal justice authorities, while clearly understanding the Amish stance on victimization and involvement with the criminal justice system, were very frustrated over a lack of participation in both reporting and cooperation with prosecution.<sup>5</sup> It was reported that the Amish did not wish to pursue prosecution, were perceived as “easy prey, were “forgiving,” and wished to leave justice to God. For those who understand the Amish as a religious subculture, such responses should not be surprising.

#### *Offenders of the Amish*

The theme of the Amish being easy prey for potential perpetrators was illustrated in the research of Byers et al. (1999) and Byers and Crider (2002) and as reported by Friesen and Friesen (1996). In these studies, the authors interviewed non-Amish youth, mostly Mennonite and all between the ages of 14 and 17 at the time of their crimes, who had engaged in anti-Amish hate crime as harassment and intimidation. Both works outlined the types of activities these youth perpetrated. Throwing projectiles at Amish buggies was common. Eggs, firecrackers, and bags

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<sup>4</sup>The author has had similar stories related to him as having appeared in *The Budget*.

<sup>5</sup>A similar series of robberies occurred nearer to the city of Shipshewana a few years after these events. Some of the same issues were encountered that occurred in the Nappanee cases. In particular robbery did not follow this pattern, however. After being robbed, one particular Amish gentleman decided he would “mark” the car so it would be easier to locate the perpetrators by taking his buggy and scraping a mark alongside the car at the buggy wheel hub level. While this could be lauded as “clever” by outsiders, the author was part of conversations with Amish and non-Amish close to the sect who felt the action was foolish and dangerous.

of flour were particular favorites. When bags of flour were thrown at buggies, this was called “flouring a buggy.” Throwing objects was always done from a moving motor vehicle. The subjects were also inclined to use their cars to swerve at buggies and Amish bicyclists and pedestrians. If the Amish moved to avoid them, this was defined as “fun.” An extra jolt of fun was derived from the Amish buggy, bicycle or pedestrian ending up in the ditch beside the road. Most of what these youth did to the Amish was often spontaneous. However, there were two incidents relayed to us that took quite a bit of planning and premeditation. The first involved videotaping the Amish one afternoon. The youth, piled in a large car, took a video camera and scoured the countryside looking for Amish families to videotape. The youth knew the Amish did not wish to have their images taken in this fashion and seeing the Amish men, women and children cower and duck for cover to avoid the recording gave the boys great delight.

Another event also took quite a bit of planning—perhaps even more. In this second activity, one of the boy’s fathers had a chicken farm. A group of these youth went to the farm and acquired an old-fashioned fire extinguisher. This extinguisher was much like the hand-held sprayers one can purchase in just about any farm store. The youth painstakingly placed a screen over the vessel opening, place chicken droppings on the screen, and then poured water over the droppings. This produced a chicken manure liquid for the extinguisher. They then took the device and spent the better part of an afternoon driving by Amish in buggies and spraying the Amish with the liquid. Such cruel and senseless acts of delinquency were common for the group.

What were the motivations for such behavior? What were some reasons for targeting the Amish? In the Byers et al. (1999) research, the authors examined the Sykes and Matza Techniques of Neutralization theory. From the statements made by the individuals in extensive interviews held with the youth after the incidents, several neutralization techniques were tested. While there was evidence for the subjects using all five techniques—denial of responsibility, denial of injury, denial of the victim, condemnation of the condemners, and appeal to higher loyalties—two techniques were favored by these individuals. The two favored techniques were “denial of the victim” and “denial of injury” (Byers et al. 1999). Such neutralizations, in verbal accounts, were used by the youth to create social and psychological distance between themselves and their victims.

With denial of the victim, the victim’s social status of being a victim is called into question by the perpetrator. In using this neutralization, the youth were suggesting that the victim did not deserve to possess a “victim status.” The social

psychology of prejudice is clear on the dehumanizing effects of such perceptions, and the youth in the study demonstrated the technique well and truly believed in it. In denying victim status, the youth reported that the Amish were not equal to others. "Others" would include the youth interviewed in the study. The Amish were perceived as so different, backward, and peculiar that denying them victimhood was elementary. Terms such as "stupid," "dirty," "dumb," and "hypocritical" were common themes in their descriptions of Amish victims of "clapping." A few of the youth even went as far as to suggest that they had a "unique" understanding of the Amish that others did not have which gave them (the youth) a particularly insightful perception of how the Amish "really were" – which of course was very different from what the typical American or even fellow citizen in their communities might think.

The youth were also keen on using the "denial of injury" neutralization technique. With this technique, the true pain and suffering experienced by the victim is minimized greatly. The old adage of youth "sowing a few wild oats" and doing no harm fits this technique. Many subjects believed that their adolescent activities were nothing more than pranks and their primary motivation was "just to have fun." There was no question for the researchers that they victimized the Amish more for "fun" and less for revenge, and they viewed their crimes as typical adolescent mischief that produced no real harm. It was also interesting that the youth often relayed the idea that the Amish should be accustomed to such treatment, because they had always been treated badly. Perhaps they knew of this history given the Mennonite roots of several of these individuals. For the Mennonite subjects, the Amish were an embarrassment and individuals who deserved ill treatment.

Besides a study of neutralization techniques, the researchers also examined some primary elements of motivation found in the criminal incidents themselves using routine activity theory (Byers and Crider 2002). Routine activity theory maintains that three elements must coexist for a criminal incident to occur. These are a motivated offender, a suitable target, and a lack of capable guardians.

The subjects shared many reasons for being motivated to harass and intimidate the Amish. Going out "clapping" was, in part, a remedy for boredom in and around a small rural farming community. With little else to do, clapping seemed to them to be a reasonable activity to break the monotony of rural daily adolescent life. It was also an opportunity to "cruise" around in cars with their friendship group and to drink beer. Clapping also served as a bonding activity with other members of the group. Engaging in Amish harassment and intimidation made them feel closer as

the result of shared risk taking, and it also gave them something to talk and reminisce about for many years to come.

The suitability of targeting the Amish was also clearly articulated by the interviewees. They shared that it was easy to target the Amish because of how readily identifiable they were in public. The typical Amish costume, coupled with their primary means of transportation, made the Amish highly visible targets. Their slow-moving vehicles made them easy prey. The youth also knew that the Amish were not going to have telephones or cell phones that could be used to call for immediate assistance. Even if the Amish had phone availability, the youth also knew that it would be unlikely for the typical Amish person to use it to call for help. The subjects also knew that they needed to keep their offenses "low level" as harassment and intimidation better to assure that their victims would not contact authorities. These elements served the perpetrators in defining the Amish as suitable targets.

Finally, the youth also depended on the lack of capable guardians. Most of the clapping activity was done in isolated rural areas with any people around other than the perpetrators and their victims. This served them well since it would have been unlikely for the youth to have witnesses to their activities or to have the police nearby. Even if the youth were seen by a passerby, they reasoned that it would have been unlikely for a citizen to report the incident to the police. A key reason for this was the fact that much clapping activity, like the 1979 case, was conducted at night with little visibility that is typical of rural, unlit areas. The reader may find it interesting that most of the youth interviewed in the two studies (Byers et al. 1999; Byers and Crider 2002) were well aware of the 1979 case yet this did not deter their behavior nor did they, except one young man, demonstrate remorse for their recent actions.

#### OFFENDING AND THE OLD ORDER AMISH

While the Old Order Amish have had more experience with victimization, there is some evidence of offending within the sect but it more than likely occurs among Amish youth before they join the church (Friesen and Friesen 1996). Such offending can come as youth rebellion and rowdiness that evolves into minor offenses during *Rumspringa*, domestic violence, and some drug offenses. Such instances are more than likely very rare but deserve attention here given the nature of the Amish subculture and their views of deviance.

*Rumspringa and Offending*

*Rumspringa* is a time in during Amish adolescence when youth are allowed to experiment and experience the larger world around them. This period begins at age 16 and as has been noted, “Amish youth anticipate their sixteenth birthday with great excitement” (Kraybill 2001:145). The term means the “running around” period and is marked by a lack of jurisdiction from the church or parents since they are neither in nor out of the church. Its origins come, in part, from the German word *Raum* meaning outdoor space (Shachtman 2006:10). The purpose of *Rumspringa* is to allow the youth raised by an Amish family and community to experience the larger, more modern, culture in the hopes that the youth will conclude that the non-Amish way of life is not as virtuous as that of the Amish and, as a result, the youth will profess their faith, be married, and commit to the Amish way of life. When a youth elects to be baptized into the Amish faith is the day this journey begins. Most Amish youth do opt to stay and are baptized. In a way, the cards are stacked against the Amish youth in his or her ability to live a non-Amish existence since all the person has known is the Amish way of life. In spite of this, the period of *Rumspringa* and the ability of the Amish person to become a member of the faith or not conveys that the individual has a choice (Kraybill 2001).

*Rumspringa* probably creates more problems within Old Order Amish society than it causes the larger culture. During this period, neither the Church District nor the parents have a complete hold over the child, because she or he is excused from the *Ordnung* that only comes with adult baptism. There is also no social control possible from the school as a social institution since the youth will have completed his/her period of compulsory education. As a result, *Rumspringa* is a time when church leaders and parents must often accept the behaviors of their youth. They do not necessarily “approve” of the behaviors exhibited by their youth, but acceptance is almost expected since the tradition was created to allow the youth the experience that which they have not yet had the opportunity to experience and the possibility of the Amish youth to become “English” is a very real threat (Hostetler 1993:363).

At the onset of *Rumspringa*, the Amish youth typically joins a “gang” of other Amish youth (Hostetler 1993; Kraybill 2001). The term “gang” has a very different meaning in the Amish context as it does not carry the negative connotations found in the larger society. “Gangs” of youth, who sometimes have nicknames, are social groupings of Amish youth who spend time together. Most of their behavior is innocuous such as wearing non-Amish clothing, obtaining a driver’s license, buying a car or truck, or acquiring employment with a non-Amish person. In a few instances, however, the Amish youth rebel too much, bending the parameters too

far, and their behavior can become very similar to other, non-Amish, youth. It is at this point when the Amish youth in Rumspringa may find themselves extremely far from the life they have grown so accustomed. In the book *Rumspringa: To Be or Not to Be Amish* author Tom Shachtman (2006) relates an account of Amish youth living a world away from their parents:

Beer is the liquid of choice, but there are also bottles of rum and vodka. . . . In one corner of the party, joints of marijuana are passed around, as are pipes of crank (crystal methamphetamine). Lines of cocaine are exchanged for money. A handful of the partygoers are seriously addicted, while others are trying drugs for the first time (8-9).

This Amish youth party scene occurred in northern Indiana within the Shipshewana settlement area and is, admittedly, an extreme example of what can occur during *Rumspringa*. Like most adolescents in America today, Amish youth enjoy the freedom from parental control and the constraints they feel from such supervision. However, and as others have pointed out, the Amish youth can experience more dangers and potential pitfalls from their social experimentation given their sheltered existence up to this point of being unleashed (Shachtman 2006).

Sometimes Rumspringa can lead to Amish youth dabbling in other forms of delinquency—such as fighting or vandalism—but these are often very rare. The Hostetler (1993) quote from above is applicable here as well suggesting that much of what may occur is hidden from public view. However, the case of Amish youth in the Lancaster Settlement area purchasing drugs from the Pagan motorcycle gang in the 1990s did make national news as reported by the *Associated Press*. Stories have also been reported in other venues such as the Amish *Country News* about Amish youth selling drugs at youth gatherings. The newsworthiness of this behavior likely has more to do with the Amish youth purchasers having associations with such an extreme criminal element than anything else. Such a cultural gulf, whether it is Amish youth dealing with motorcycle gang members or selling drugs to fellow teens, as indicated in these instances is so vast that the news media often report on these events. However, though some Amish youth partake in illegal drug behavior the vast majority doubtfully participate.

### *Domestic Violence*

Domestic violence can come in many forms such as child abuse, spouse abuse, sexual exploitation, and elder abuse. The Amish, like any other social grouping within society, are not immune to violence in the home. However, how domestic

violence is defined among the Amish is very important in understanding Amish behavior. Elder abuse is likely nonexistent in Amish society. As a person grows old within the Amish subculture, there comes the belief in the individual's wisdom. Spouse abuse is also likely rare given the spiritual partnership entered into by the married Amish. Child abuse and child sexual abuse, however, may be a different issue. If one defines child abuse, as the states often define it, then Amish raised children may, at times, be victims. Amish families are often strict with their children. When a child openly engages in rebellion, such behavior will be dealt with swiftness and certainty. As Hostetler (1993:160) notes, when describing possible reactions to overt youth misbehavior, "... 'smackings' are sure to follow either with the palm of the hand, a switch, a razor strap, or a buggy whip." Depending on the degree of these 'smackings,' some might fall into the realm of child maltreatment. Knowledge of such instances by officials and potential interveners is always a serious issue when addressing the needs of the Amish victim. This is especially problematic when it comes to the possible Amish child victim given their limited contact with the outside world.

#### A MODEL OF JUSTICE SUITED TO THE OLD ORDER AMISH: RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

##### *The Traditional Criminal Justice System*

The traditional model of criminal justice is adversarial. The "state" or "people," as represented by a prosecutor or district attorney, bring a case against an individual as a violation against the citizens of the jurisdiction. The role of the victim, until the last quarter century, was limited or small sometimes feeling as though they were left out of the process. The prosecution and defense often negotiate a plea agreement that may or may not have the victim's needs as a central issue. Even with the advent of the victim's rights movement, and the subsequent proliferation of victim advocates and the passage of enabling victim rights legislation in all states, the basic structure of the American criminal justice system remains focused on adversarial justice with the victim serving in a peripheral role. In theory, Restorative Justice, on the other hand, allows more ownership and victim involvement. The main impetus of this alternative justice model is to create a partnership among the community, the victim, and the offender to restore relationships and heal all involved in the aftermath of a crime.

*Restorative Justice Philosophy*

The philosophy of restorative justice is very different from the traditional model of justice that has its origins in English common law. Restorative justice views crime as an offense not only against the “community” of people living in a particular geographic area. It also views crime as an affront to the victim. The community and victim are two important pieces of the restorative justice model; however, there is one additional key player. This is the offender. The three-way approach to justice within this model takes into account the harm caused by the offender, the pain experienced by the victim, and the impact the offender’s actions have had on both the community and the victim. The goal of restorative justice is to repair the harm to the community and the victim caused by the offender’s action. The reparation can come in a variety of forms including, but not limited to, apologies, forgiveness, restitution, victim-offender reconciliation, and punishment for the offender.<sup>6</sup> Given the Amish subcultural emphasis on the importance of human relationships and the power of forgiveness, restorative justice is well suited to the Amish value structure.

*The Applicability of Restorative Justice to Amish Victimization*

A variety of religious organizations have advocated restorative justice. Perhaps most notable among these is the Mennonite Central Committee (M.C.C.) which has been an advocate of restorative justice and did so under the leadership of Howard Zehr who was director of the M.C.C.’s U.S. Office of Criminal Justice (Van Ness and Strong 1997). Given the shared Anabaptist religious heritage of the Mennonites and the Amish, the use of restorative justice, or at least its proposal, among Amish would be a valuable alternative to the traditional form of criminal justice that is so eagerly avoided by the Amish.

Restorative justice has many points, elements and propositions that make it adaptable to the Amish subculture and given an alternative between the traditional criminal justice response to a case and a restorative response, the latter might seem more palatable. Given the Amish desire to forgive, and that forgiveness is an important element of restorative justice, a restorative model may find utility among Amish victims. The Amish value for forgiveness might best be illustrated in the public’s eye considering the West Nickel Mines Amish school shooting incident in

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<sup>6</sup>It would be difficult to share the entire history and philosophy of restorative justice given its complexity. However, there are a number of valuable sources on this topic by such individuals as Howard Zehr, Mark Umbreit, Gordon Bazemore, among others.

2006 (Kraybill et al. 2007; Ruth 2007) and many opportunities have been missed before this incident to employ restorative justice. In the aftermath of West Nickel Mines, Amish family members sought each other out to provide comfort and reached out to the family of the perpetrator with the hand of forgiveness. This example illustrates the Amish desire to seek the comfort from others during grief and to extend themselves to those connected to the perpetrator of a heinous crime. Such willingness to reach out to others in the aftermath of tragedy is necessary for restorative justice to be operational and effective. There may be problems in using the restorative framework with the Amish given the desire to remain separate and distinct in their responses to victimization. However, if an Amish family is victimized, and the crime is serious, the restorative framework could be beneficial if employed. In such instances, the Amish could teach the non-Amish about the power of forgiveness and reconciliation that could serve as a healing process for the Amish victim.

A key element to promoting the use of restorative justice with Amish victims and families would be to create a convincing argument for its use. The Amish, by their nature, wish to remain separate and distinct. A restorative justice model would necessarily involve some objective third party working with a restoration program. Thus, a significant obstacle to the use of this approach with the Amish is enfranchising them in the process. Another obstacle is the willingness of the perpetrator to participate. However, this might be less of an issue than encouraging Amish participation given their subcultural values and sense of the importance of community and relationship homeostasis. The final obstacle is having a program in place that could orchestrate restoration through victim-offender reconciliation.

A potentially fruitful avenue for the creation of a program palatable to the Amish could involve relationships comfortable to the Amish. A program serving the Amish would need to have Amish participants in creation and advisory roles. These individuals could be less traditional Amish, or even conservative Mennonites, who have positive personal relationships with Old Order Amish. Individuals such as these could help to bridge the Old Order Amish to restorative justice programs and provide convincing arguments that the philosophical foundations behind such efforts are consistent with Anabaptist values. Finally, it would be very important that a restorative justice program geared toward Amish participation not be housed or sponsored by the "state" in any way such as connected to a law enforcement or prosecutorial agency. To be most effective, the program would need to be some type of independent not-for-profit preferably sponsored by a church or religious organization—perhaps even Mennonite. A restorative justice program designed to

serve Amish victims could be fruitful and a way to connect these victims with those who they might not otherwise have the opportunity to face within a restorative setting.

#### FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS FOR OLD ORDER AMISH CRIME AND JUSTICE STUDIES

The Amish are a difficult sect to study social scientifically; however, some have successfully done so such as Jerry Savells' (1988) study of Old Order Amish using traditional social scientific methods such as survey research and interviews. Savells collected interview data from more than 100 Amish families in Amish communities in Indiana, Ohio, Iowa, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee. The primary purpose of his research was to shed light on the social and economic acculturation among old order Amish. Of particular interest here is the sampling and data collection methods employed. Savells used a stratified random sampling approach using Amish directories and interviewed Amish family members using a structured questionnaire. The use of Amish directories is very valuable in drawing a representative sample among Amish settlement residents. However, one may find that such directories are only found in larger settlement areas. More important, however, Savells demonstrated that one can successfully use traditional social scientific methods with Amish respondents.

Savells' work allows future researchers to employ similar methods to study the Amish on a variety of topics. In terms of criminal justice and criminological topics, several could be studied using similar methods. One could study victimization among the Amish similar to that of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). Using similar sampling and interview methods, researchers could obtain information on Amish experiences with crime that are undoubtedly not reported to the police. One could also study Amish views on a variety of crime and justice issues much like is done annually by the General Social Survey (GSS). Much of what is known is often assumed knowledge possessed by the Amish given what is understood of their religious and subcultural ways. Attitudinal surveys would allow the researcher to verify such perceptions. Finally, one could employ qualitative research methods like those of William E. Thompson in his study of Old Order Amish in Kansas and Oklahoma (1984). Thompson used participant observation in the complete observer role with full disclosure of his intentions to study the rural traditions of the Amish. Thompson's approach is important and illustrative. One should be careful in using any observer role with the Amish that does not involve

full disclosure. A researcher will likely obtain more information with complete openness and honesty when studying the Amish qualitatively or quantitatively.

Whether one is qualitatively or quantitatively oriented, there are some additional, and fruitful, areas of scholarship on the Amish and Amish-related topics. McGuigan and Scholl (2007) conducted a study of non-Amish and their attitudes toward the Amish based on the effect of social contact. More research of this nature, which was conducted in Pennsylvania, needs to be completed and replicated in a variety of other settings. Related to this type of research, additional original research and replication studies of those who commit crimes against the Amish are also needed.

To date, only a few studies have been completed which examine such behavior and much more understanding of these criminal behaviors is needed along with the companion understanding of the role of positive and negative contact as key factors for anti-Amish victimization. Along with victimization studies that focus on offenders, much more research is needed on Amish youth who are passing through *Rumspringa*. *Rumspringa* is a very important period in the life of the Amish youth and deserves additional attention. Although there has been some study of this period, notably that of Tom Schachtman with his book *Rumspringa* (2006), much more attention needs to be given to this important rite of passage, the activities youth engage in, and their consequences. A final area of future research could be studies of the Amish perceptions of the principles of restorative justice. Studying the Amish views of the various propositions could set important groundwork for the integration of the restorative justice in the Amish subculture.

Whatever research one might initiate and undertake should be carried out deliberately and with caution. Despite the topic or the method, it is vital for the individual studying the Amish, and those who might affect the Amish, to approach research subjects with care. The Amish, while not necessarily always distrustful of outsiders, may have a difficult time understanding the value of their research participation. One must, when using Amish research subjects, be very patient. Patience is also important when attempting to study others whose behavior might affect the Amish. In particular, if one is studying individuals who have committed crimes against the Amish all of the normal assurances of confidentiality must be afforded to them.

## CONCLUSION

The Amish, as a subcultural group, are steeped in very interesting history that can give us a glimpse into today's Amish society. An understanding of the Old

Order Amish helps us to develop a clear picture of their views on crime, victimization, and justice. With this understanding, we can better research the Amish and serve their needs when confronted with crime. With this information we can also better study those who commit crimes against the Amish. Moreover, with a better understanding of Anabaptist history we can more fully understand the Amish stance regarding contemporary justice systems and perhaps offer alternatives to them as a group.

This article began with a discussion of Amish history that gives the reader insight into the Amish mindset and ideology. It is through an understanding of the Amish way that we can understand the often perceived complicated ways of this sect. Discussion then turned to Amish and their perceptions of the American civil and criminal justice systems. With an understanding of these perceptions, we can better acquaint ourselves with the typical responses found among the Amish to legal intervention. What might appear to the outsider as an irrational response to justice systems attempting to assist the Amish, becomes more understandable when we examine the Amish history and subculture. Attention is also given to Amish victimization experiences and those who offend the Amish. The Amish, as has been shown, can be victims of crime. Certain individuals find enjoyment in perpetrating such victimization. Focus is then directed to the rare instances of crimes committed by the Amish. Although rare in frequency, such conduct can create serious problems within Amish settlements. The topic of restorative justice is also examined. Restorative justice may serve as a potential alternative for the Amish who are victimized by serious crime and experience pressure by the traditional criminal justice system to participate in the justice process. With these areas in mind, the article focuses on some areas of possible future research. Those interested in studying the Amish and those who commit crimes against the Amish may find some fruitful areas for future study.

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