

*Economic Pragmatism: The Iowa Amish and the vision of communal coherence in late 20<sup>th</sup> century America.*

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The very mention of the word Amish conjures up an image of a quaint folk leading a secluded communal and pastoral existence. To many minds the Amish or Pennsylvania Dutch as they are popularly known, reside in and around Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The truth, however, is that the Amish, who continue to dress in a plain 19<sup>th</sup> century style and rely on horses for their work and transportation needs, and who on the surface at least, eschew the modern ways of the world surrounding their neatly tended farmsteads, are found in numerous colonies across the United States, Canada, central and South America. The Amish can be characterized as family based, ethnically and religiously homogenous, tending towards subsistence agriculture, inclined to technological development, innovators of agricultural techniques, having moderate to good levels of literacy, favoring early marriage, and enjoying a statistically insignificant divorce rate, high levels of fertility, low infant mortality, and long life spans. They do not participate in the political life of the surrounding community nor that of the society in which they find themselves, but instead adhere to a fundamental religious dogma which calls for a closed religious community presided over by the Bishop who in turn is assisted by a group of elders. This, at least, is the way things are supposed to be. The reality, though, is that it has been recognized for some time now that it is proving increasingly harder for the Amish to maintain their distinct way of life.

This paper will examine the attempt by members of one Amish community in southern Iowa to broaden their economic activities in an effort to maintain their religiously based communities. At the outset, one needs to understand that the long held perception of a cloistered life is a myth. The

Amish have managed to push their communal strictures to the limit. At the same time it is apparent to some outside observers and many Amish themselves that it is a daunting task at best to attempt to maintain their cultural homogeneity in an economy dominated by sweeping technological and social changes.<sup>1</sup> The Amish frequent many of the same discount and grocery stores as their “other world neighbors,” they avail themselves of modern means of transportation to travel great distances to visit relatives or to attend funerals and weddings, and in the winter some, especially the elderly, spend the harsher months in Florida as do their “English” counterparts. Within Amish communities there are signs of strife and contradictions, especially when it involves the “Ordnung” or religious standards. The conflicts that arise have their genesis not in theological questions but are tied to efforts to cling to old customs. It might seem to some that by sanctifying old customs the Amish are formalizing the wrong things.<sup>2</sup> One could argue that they are wedded to an impossible exegesis given the modernizing influences of the surrounding world. Yet outsiders continue to think of them as a people imbued with a stern religious ethos. This, though, is part of a mythos, which evokes a golden age, which exists less as past fact than future promise leading to blurred secular and religious understandings. In essence the Amish community of faith should be viewed as an ideological mode rather than a theological reality.

Still the Amish have had and continue to have champions such as Walter Kollmorgen and John A. Hostetler. In 1942 Kollmorgen hailed the Amish as the most stable community in America and praised them in particular for their ability to withstand the destabilizing effects of technology and urbanization.<sup>3</sup> Hostetler underscored Kollmorgen’s optimism when he argued that the Amish serve as a model for rural stability.<sup>4</sup> And while they were ignorant of economic theory their agrarian principles were sound.<sup>5</sup>

Regardless of perceived stability structural problems do exist and compounding the problem is the fact that there is a variance of customs across church districts. Irving Gingerich an Amish

transplant from an Indiana community, for example, had to learn to get along without a bicycle. In Indiana he had been employed by a Mobile Home Construction enterprise staffed and supervised by Amish workers. Gingerich rode a bicycle to work every day, but in his new church district in Drakesville, Iowa bicycles are not allowed.<sup>6</sup> Many young in the Drakesville community speak of “going modern” when the old generation dies out. Some are less patient and move up the ladder to join nearby Mennonite congregations. Indeed, there are frequent departures, and sometimes whole families make the transition from being Amish to becoming Mennonites.<sup>7</sup> The latter have long ago opted for the adoption of modern technology in farming and conveniences in their personal lives. This proves to be enticing for some who are eager to adopt modern technology while retaining their Anabaptist connections.

Those who attempt to adhere to the strict standards of the old order Amish, though, face problems other than the seductive allure of modernity. Among these is the population density, not only within their respective communities, but also in the world around them. Amish farmers, much like their “English” counterparts are affected by market prices, fuel costs, and the lack of productive land. The upshot is that the Amish are having a hard time making ends meet by relying on farming as a primary means of income. Many have attempted to supplant their income by developing a cottage industry utilizing family labor. The result, though, is that farming is now providing a secondary income for many Amish families. Old timers such as Rob Schlabach, an Amish farmer from Millersburg Ohio, view this trend with dismay and argue that it is not a good thing to have fathers leaving the home for 9 or more hours a day.<sup>8</sup> He fears in particular the tendency of some Amish enterprises to become industrialized and lose their smallness which, Schlabach fears, will lead to a weekend mentality of, as he calls it “Saturdays of for fun.” According to Schlabach this pursuit of material possessions while neglecting spiritual growth is a threat to the plain simple faith of the Amish because it strikes at the core values of “thriftiness, humility, simplicity and church order.”<sup>9</sup> The Amish need, so Schlabach insists, “honest God

fearing couples who want to live and work with their children, maintaining simplicity and contentment rather than planning on how to build a small business empire and become a millionaire or be able to take life as easy as is possible and permissible for an Amish man!”<sup>10</sup> This kind of mentality represents a potentially dangerous individualism that will tear at the very fabric of Amish society. These seeming transgressions, however, are symptoms rather than the cause of the problem. Greater reflection should point up that the culprit is human nature itself. It is Man’s desire for material improvement, and an instinctive dislike of restraint, whether of one’s personal conduct or ones freedom of thought or ones conscience that will undermine the foundations of the Amish Community of faith.

One of the earliest Amish settlers in Drakesville, Iowa and a good example of an attempt at establishing a diversified cottage industry is Menno Kuhns. He and his family migrated to Iowa from Missouri during the early 1970s. He was one of the earliest to contract carpenter services to outsiders. His primary income, though, was derived from his dairy herd. At any rate, while he was employed away from home his family pursued other entrepreneurial interests. His wife baked goods, which she would sell on Saturday mornings in Ottumwa, Iowa. Daughter Barbara, a schoolteacher dressed chickens, and son John built buggies in his father’s shop. Menno Kuhns’ earliest projects took him to Ormanville, some 13 miles away but within time he provided services in Ottumwa and ultimately some distance beyond Ottumwa. For each project he would hire a number of young Amish carpenters and within time “English” drivers to deliver him to the site. His reputation grew and over the years many of his customers hired him for additional projects. He frequently brought along one or two of his sons, among them Jacob who, along with his brother in law, has since established a contracting “business.” Menno’s son Herman and his brother in law Herman Gingerich ran a sawmill approximately 4 miles southeast of Drakesville. Whenever possible Menno Kuhns, expressing the Amish devotion to mutual aid, would purchase lumber for the projects he was working on from the sawmill operated by his son and son in law.

The number of Amish contractors has grown since Menno Kuhns first offered his services in the early 1980s. Among these are his son Jacob and a number of his erstwhile apprentices. In the early days the names of those offering construction services was spread by word of mouth, today one need only drive through Amish country to see the billboard for Mid-West Truss, an Amish owned and operated pre-fabrication shop, or the modest sign advertising the services of Yutz Construction, Yoder Glasss and Windows, E &N Woodworking, Yoder Builders, Gingerich Trenching, and Mast Vinyl Windows. The latter lists a telephone number in the shopper advertisement, which when called is answered by an answering machine.<sup>11</sup>

Gingerich trenching serves as a distributor for Chimtek, a high temperature masonry chimney system. Mast Vinyl Windows in addition to installing custom built vinyl windows also serves as a distributor for Little Giant Folding and Extension Ladders.<sup>12</sup>

As noted earlier a number of Amish saw mills have been in operation around Drakesville over the years and to run these requires the use of forbidden equipment. Forklifts are one such item and to get around the church restrictions governing the ownership of self-propelled rubber tired equipment the Amish frequently take on a non-Amish partner who “owns” and operates the equipment. Herman Kuhns had acquired a forklift for the mill, but when church elders rebuked him for the purchase he hired an outsider and “transferred” ownership of the equipment to him. While it was not a de jure transaction, the elders of the church nevertheless appeared to be satisfied with the “apparent” transfer. In another sawmill, about 5 miles southwest of Drakesville the owner of the mill solved the problem of technology by mounting a crane on a flatbed railroad car running on a length of track. A winch on either end of the track pulls the contraption forward or backward. Similar, though more sophisticated is the equipment utilized by the sawmill west of Drakesville. The difference between the self-propelled forklift and the railroad car assembly is that the latter runs on steel wheels and is moved by a stationary motor. The crane is attached to

the car and therefore immobile. In many church districts stationary motors are permitted, but self-propelled vehicles and wheels with rubber tires are not. The Amish have developed a penchant for technological innovation in order to circumvent the finer points of church law.<sup>13</sup>

As some Amish entrepreneurs seek to take advantage of contracting and related opportunities, others try their hand at retail and specialty businesses, such as Drakesville Fabrics, Grabers, Yoder Quilts and Crafts or Fox River Buggies. In these endeavors they serve not only the needs of their respective communities, but those of the “English” as well. Drakesville Fabrics was established by Elizabeth Kuhns in 1997. The store offers fabrics, toys, shoes, mittens, bibles, thread, vitamins, and the like. Her husband, who has retired from the contracting business, and her daughter Mary, frequently assist Elizabeth Kuhns. When asked about how others in the Amish community reacted to her family’s success, Mary admitted that the Amish had their problems with jealousy and the like, but said that they were human too.<sup>14</sup>

Lavern Graber, whose establishment is dubbed by some Amish as a mini Wal-Mart, sells dry goods, can goods, some perishables, and hardware items. The perishable are kept in a refrigerator powered by a gasoline engine. The electronic cash register on the front counter is powered by a solar panel mounted on the roof of his establishment. Skylights provide interior lighting, as in other Amish establishments. Graber caters to Amish and “English” clientele with some coming from as far as 30 miles away. Like many other Amish businesses he advertises in the Wapello County Shopper. It should be noted that the Wapello County Shopper serves Wapello County, Iowa, and more important there are no Amish farms or homes located in Wapello County. The upshot is that those likely to respond to his advertisement are non-Amish customers. He keeps his prices below those of his competitors in Ottumwa and notes that his stock turns over in about a week’s time. The reason that he is able to keep his prices low is that the goods he purchases were part of a cargo damaged in truck or railroad accidents. The quality of the merchandise,

though, is not at issue. Graber prefers to work near his home and recently noted that Schlabach had it right when he cautioned against becoming too worldly. Though he conceded that it was difficult to remain within the community when so much of the income comes from without.<sup>15</sup> His father, an elder in his church and one of the only Amish in the Drakesville area able to read High German makes custom furniture. There are two other furniture businesses in the area and both cater to outsiders. Their products include interior furniture, outside furniture, and small outbuildings. E & N Woodworking south of Drakesville offers an array of outdoor furniture. T-Corner Woodworking owned by Irving Gingerich located northeast of Drakesville offers a selection of curio cabinets, dining room tables and chairs, hutches, bedroom furniture, end, coffee, and sofa tables; clocks, hall trees; lazy susans; quilt racks, wall hangings, children's rocking chairs, glider rockers and much more. The owner advertises regularly in the Wapello County Shopper to reach as broad an audience as possible. Moreover, the contents of the add change from one edition to the next to reflect current in stock items.

One ought to note that not everything sold in the T-Corner establishment is crafted by the owner or his employees. Indeed, a good many items, especially the curio cabinets are factory produced items and offered for sale in the establishment. While this may not mean much to an outsider, there is a rule among the Amish that they are to sell only those items they produce themselves. Menno Kuhns stated this back in 1984 when he noted that a neighbor was selling Muscatine melons at a roadside stand. The problem, as Kuhns viewed it at the time, was that the melons had been purchased from growers in Muscatine, to be sure an entire truckload had been acquired. This was vexing to some in the Amish community since the impression given by the young man selling the melons was that they were grown on an Amish farm. He never claimed that he had grown them, but the fact that he failed to make mention of their origin caused some to have grave concerns.<sup>16</sup> The fact of the matter is that most Amish storeowners sell items that they do not produce but acquire from wholesalers. A scrutiny of the shelves at Drakesville Fabrics and the

Graber store, just to mention a few, will show that the overwhelming majority of the items sold are mass produced in non-Amish factories and also available in stores in nearby cities.

Perhaps the most extreme examples of teaming up with outsiders are those of Ori Helmuth an Amish farmer who for a time ran a chicken feeding operation and Titus Wagler whose enterprises have taken him far beyond his community and the state of Iowa. The former arrived at an agreement with a chicken processing company under which the company provided the equipment, facilities, electricity, and the chickens, while the farmer provides the labor for the operation. Technically he did not own the modern conveniences but it shows just one more example of how the Amish will find ways around church restrictions to make a profit.

The case of Titus Wagler, however, is unusual not just in that his enterprise extends beyond the borders of the state but also the reason that it has developed in the way that it has. At the same time his success reinforces that the Amish go into business to maintain their way of life and that through it all they are devoted to mutual aid. Indeed, it points up the willingness of his neighbors in the Drakesville community and Amish communities in other states to stand ready to help him get on his feet after having become paralyzed while diving into a farm pond. He is an example of the quintessential Amish entrepreneur and shows a great deal of knowledge and business acumen. As a way to become self-sufficient he began to get involved in direct marketing ventures. He began modestly by selling Buckley's Cough Syrup, which he imported from Canada. Next he took on a line of fire extinguishers. Though before he would settle on any one brand of extinguisher he set out to ascertain that the extinguisher had a U.L. listing and a rating of at least 10 BC. Ultimately he opted to market a product produced by the Amerex Company. Initially he had considered selling Halon extinguishers, because, as he put it "They are very good...they are dependable, efficient, and effective."<sup>17</sup> The only drawback was the price, which he said amounted to "about 8 times as much as a comparable powder extinguisher."<sup>18</sup> When he searched for a less

costly product he discovered the Amerex extinguisher, “a quality product [with] a U.L [listing]” and a guarantee [which] sold for \$55.00.<sup>19</sup> The price was not too high and he would still be able to make a nice profit. Besides, customers would be getting a lot more for their money because the Amerex extinguisher is refillable.

He set up meetings at various homesteads near Drakesville, and then in other states. At these meetings he sold to Amish and non-Amish alike. Each time he set up a meeting he would also take along a supply of Buckley’s cough syrup. Fire extinguisher sales went so well that he rose to the rank of direct distributor with Amerex. He subsequently added Meadowfresh, a group of products sold under a multi-level marketing plan, to his repertoire. Meadowfresh is a dried whey powder used for making a drink resembling milk, though it is lower in cholesterol than milk. It can also be used in baking. Meadowfresh also produces Sassy Six, a fruit drink made of 6 different juices. Wagler says that is “the real stuff, better than anything else on the market.”<sup>20</sup> Another product he chose to market is a battery fencer imported from New Zealand. He chose to market the fencer because, as he put it, they “have some definite advantages over those made in the U.S....they have a lower voltage and thus less likely to short out...But they deliver a much stronger shock...One time is enough for most animals, they don’t test them the second time...The other advantage is that they will kill weeds that grow up against the wire, without shorting out the shock.”<sup>21</sup> He developed such a good reputation for being able to sell his products that sales representatives from a number of companies have attempted to convince him to take on their product line on the basis that his reputation was a guarantee for sales. Though Wagler is careful about which product he chooses to market.<sup>22</sup>

Holding closer to the ideal of selling homegrown products are two green houses, L & L southeast of Drakesville, and Gingerich Strawberry Farm & Greenhouse operated by Herman Gingerich southwest of Drakesville. The latter business was established in 1992 and has enjoyed

considerable success. It is particularly popular with non-Amish customers, and in an effort to reach as broad a clientele as possible he advertises in local papers in spring and summer. Recently Gingerich added two new greenhouses and a customer services area. While the business has done well, Gingerich, who is quite innovative but shuns modern conveniences, maintains a modest demeanor when discussing the growth of his enterprise. He continues to farm and has no plans to expand beyond the seasonal services he provides. Though recently he has added a line of hand crafted, old style, hickory furniture, among the items he sells are rockers, tables, and flower stands. He enjoys the fact that he can work at home and have the whole family involved. This, to his thinking, is the way it should be among the Amish and he is concerned about the expansion of some enterprises that take the men away from the home for longer and longer periods of time. As he states it, "hard work brings rewards in the end."<sup>23</sup> His wife echoes these sentiments insisting that the "secret to Amish success is hard work, family, and lots of help"<sup>24</sup> Menno Kuhns also laments the changes taking place, he worries in particular about what the future holds for his grandchildren. He says that it will be hard for them to make it as a community of faith in a world that is fast encroaching on them<sup>25</sup>

It is difficult at best for the Amish to find a way to adapt to modern life because of the internal and external factors bringing about change. To survive economically they have had to make a number of adjustments, and then, too, they find themselves, time and time again, at odds, especially over such issues as education, with the overarching state structure in their determination to maintain an independent way of life. Moreover they are not exempt from paying taxes nor are they exempt from charging sales taxes for the goods and services they provide.

While the intrusion by state regulatory bodies has not been welcome, the impact of governmental regulations has had some beneficent effects. State authorities, for example, required that phones be installed in every Amish schoolhouse. There was little, if any protest, at what might otherwise

be seen as a challenge to their autonomy. As it is, members of the community quite happily make use of the phones in the schools. The use of the telephone is indeed, a paradox. The Amish who will not allow phones in their homes because that would be too convenient know how to make use of the phone quite easily. Moreover, as noted earlier, some Amish enterprises have telephone listings in area directories. These are primarily construction related businesses and the argument could be made that in dealing with the factories they represent, or doing business with non-Amish customers, or perhaps providing easy access for Amish contractors on a job site, many of whom have cell phones available, the telephone is essential.

The proliferation of cell phones among the Amish has been a cause for concern to church leaders for some time. Menno Kuhns reluctantly admitted that a number of Amish carpenters made use of cell phones, though he was quick to point out that the phones belonged to the drivers who take the crews to the contract sites.<sup>26</sup> The Amish are not allowed to own automobiles and therefore hire outsiders to take them to the job site and to haul material for the various jobs they perform. At any rate it is not quite certain as to whether the Amish contractor or the driver is the actual owner of the phone. For a long time the Amish made use of the phones belonging to their customers in order to call suppliers and to contact prospective customers, but the need to limit the use of customer phones, so the argument goes, led to the acquisition of cell phones. Yet talk in and around Drakesville has it that approximately six months ago the Bishop of one Amish church district forbade the use of cell phones. Though a clerk at the Drakesville convenience store insisted that some young Amish have not abandoned its use.<sup>27</sup> Elizabeth Kuhns noted that there were some young Amish men who thought they needed cell phones but that it was all in their heads. She sees absolutely no use for cell phones, musing that people don't need to be in that kind of hurry. She added that she grew up without cell phones and did not see a need for them.<sup>28</sup> It is not possible at the moment to ascertain the degree to which cell phones are still registered to any of the Amish in the Drakesville area, but one can state with certainty that the cell phone is

never far away when their drivers are nearby. Jacob Kuhns recently stated that they are really an essential item when running a crew. Though he would not divulge who really owns the “verboten item” other than that the drivers bring them along.<sup>29</sup>

There can be no doubt that the Amish have become dependent on modern conveniences to earn a living. It could be argued that at times, speed, as it is among the English, is of the essence. Yet it contradicts the premise upon which their communities are based, that of hard manual labor and earning a living from the sweat of one’s brow. There are instances, though in which the Amish farmer has had to adapt modern methods to meet state regulatory or industry wide standards.

Dairy farmers, for example, have had to modify their operations to meet both the standards of the dairy industry and state regulators. This called for installing equipment that made it possible to cool milk, which required the installations of compressors. The electricity to run the compressors is provided by diesel generators. Once in place the generators and compressors, it was happily discovered, could be used to run air powered tools and the like. Indeed, the use of power tools has become commonplace among the Amish. Rather than cut lumber by hand, for example, they utilize table saws powered by gasoline motors or when working for the outsiders, they will quite happily make use of their electric tools and electricity. In some instances they have acquired battery-operated tools. The argument is that they are not hooked up to electric lines. Yet they are motor driven and in some cases more convenient than those requiring an external power source. The Amish are quite innovative in finding ways to get around their religious restrictions.

Years ago an Amish crew worked in the Ormanville area. One evening they happened into an old outbuilding on the property where they were employed. They noticed some old tools, including an anvil and the attendant blacksmith equipment, a manual corn planter, hand saws, and a scythe with a broken handle. When the property owner inquired as to whether the Amish knew of someone in their community who could fashion a new handle for the scythe they laughed, saying

that no one uses that kind of stuff in their community anymore. The upshot is that customer's tools were sorely outmoded when compared to the tools used by the Amish. It is, for example, commonplace to see gasoline engine powered mowers and rotary tillers in use among the Amish, but no electricity to the house! At any rate, when the Amish showed up for work at the Ormanville location, there was always one or two in the crew who scrounged for old motors to fix up. And they wanted them for free! It proved to be an embarrassment for the leader of the crew who would sternly rebuke them for begging again. Though one of the boys asked for something quite different one evening, he had seen a lilac bush and inquired if he could have some to take home to his wife.<sup>30</sup>

As noted earlier the Amish are not allowed to utilize self-propelled vehicles but they are allowed to utilize motors that are stationary or mounted on horse-drawn equipment. A look around most Amish farms will reveal tractor and other types of engines modified to run grain augers, feed grinders, combines and the like. A casual glance into the house will reveal refrigerators and washing machines powered by gasoline or kerosene engines. The Amish, have in fact become as dependent on fossil fuels as their "English" neighbors. When the price of fuel increases from time to time operating costs increase for Amish the same as they do for the English. Moreover, those engaged in retail operations see an increase in the cost of goods sold. The evidence clearly shows that the Amish are intricately connected to the economic life of the society from which they seek to remain apart.

In conclusion, one can argue that the Amish, using the analogy of Plato's cave, are far from trapped in a psychic prison. Instead, they have become rather ingenious at lending the appearance of being a modest, self-sufficient folk, adhering to established norms when the reality is that without the kinds of technological modifications mentioned earlier, as well as their interaction with the outside world, they would find it difficult to survive. Amish communities are in a state of flux and

transformation, and because of their economic activities they are challenged by a growing number of paradoxes. Economic expansion, it must be understood, is not an attempt to modify the basic communal structure, but rather an attempt to preserve it. The result, some might say, is modernization for the sake of preservation.<sup>31</sup> In the larger sense the intended consequences of economic expansion are directed at ensuring communal coherence but the unintended consequence of daily contact with the “English” counteracts the positive consequences as individuals begin to establish networks outside of the community and more importantly become acclimated to and reliant on the use of modern technology. While conducting research for this paper the author visited the Bloomfield, Iowa Public Library in search of material on the Amish in the surrounding area. Upon entering the library the author encountered three Amish patrons, one of these was working at a computer. The Librarian noted that lots of Amish patrons made use of the computers and that one of her regulars has informed her about phone programs on the internet where one could call for 30 seconds at no cost. He stated that one can say a lot of things in 30 seconds. She also noted that some of her Amish patrons are quite capable when it comes to using computers and that a few have even taught her things about surfing the net. The result of this expanded contact with the English, as Kraybill and Nolt point out, is that the “broader consumer culture is making inroads among the Amish.”<sup>32</sup> It will remain to be seen whether the 21st century Amish can withstand the encroachment and destabilizing effects of technology and urbanization in the same way their forbears were able to do. The greatest challenge, perhaps, to communal coherence is the persistence of a seventeenth century ideology in a dynamic world. In attempting to stay change the Amish are attempting the impossible. They cannot escape the influences of the technological changes sweeping society, and while attempting to preserve their way of life through their various economic ventures the Amish find themselves submerged in a sea of change.

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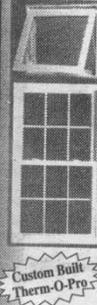
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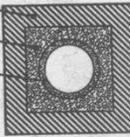
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April 11, 2001, Wapello County Shopper

<sup>1</sup> See for example Donald Kraybill and Marc Olshan, *The Amish Struggle With Modernity*, (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1994).

<sup>2</sup> This point of view was already set forth in 1896 by Daniel Kaufman in "Our Iowa Field," *Herald of Truth*, July 15, 1986, p. 275.

<sup>3</sup> Walter M. Kollmorgen, "Culture of a Contemporary Community: The Old Order Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 1942).

<sup>4</sup> John A Hostetler, "Toward A New Interpretation of Sectarian Life in America," *Pennsylvania Dutchman*, June 15, 1951.

<sup>5</sup> John Hostetler, *Amish Life*, (Herald Press, 1952) pp. 1-2, 7; see also John A. Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 4th ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

<sup>6</sup> The owner of T Corner woodworking recounts that while in Indiana he rode his bicycle to work. He is one of the most outspoken members of the Drakesville Amish community and is often very critical of their unwillingness to move closer to a modern way of life.

<sup>7</sup> Some years ago, after a lengthy battle with church elders about using self-propelled equipment at his sawmill, Herman Kuhns, his wife, and children left Iowa for Missouri and the Amish church for the Mennonite church.

<sup>8</sup> *Plain Interests*, January 2001, p1.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> See for example the Wapello County Shopper, April 11, 2001.

<sup>12</sup> Wapell County Shopper, April 11, 2001.

<sup>13</sup> This characteristic of Amish communities in other places, see for instance Jerry Useem, "The Virtue of Necessity," *Inc.*, (Dec. '96) p. 80-82.

<sup>14</sup> Interview Mary Yutzy, Feb 7, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Laverne Graber, February 7, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.

<sup>16</sup> Conversation with Menno Kuhns August 1984. The author reminded Menno Kuhns of this conversation recently. The latter did admit that one could lie by omission and that this is not something the Amish would approve of.

<sup>17</sup> David L. Wagler, *Through Deep Waters*, (Bloomfield, Ia.: Titus Wagler, 1985) p. 185.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* p. 186.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* p. 193.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* p. 197.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 201-205.

<sup>23</sup> Interview Herman Gingerich, March 9, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.

<sup>24</sup> Interview with Mrs. Herman Gingerich, March 7, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.

<sup>25</sup> Interview Menno Kuhns, March 9, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.

<sup>26</sup> Interview Menno Kuhns, March 9, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.

<sup>27</sup> During discussions with the Postmaster of Drakesville and the clerk at the convenience store on April 13, 2001, the discussion centered around phones, the use of answering services, and cell phones. Both were knowledgeable in general terms about phone usage but could not provide detailed information about specific individuals using phone services of one kind or another.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Elizabeth Kuhns, April 14, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Jacob Kuhns, April 14, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.

<sup>30</sup> This happened in 1983 and 1984 when Menno Kuhns and his crew were doing some work on the Mahaffey place near Ormanville. During this time they made use of the electric tools owned by the family and the telephone to set up contracts with other customers.

<sup>31</sup> The concept of Modernization Theory is not being employed in the Ontological/Existential sense but rather speaks to the utilization of modern methods of production, communication, and doing business.

<sup>32</sup> Kraybill, Donald B.; Nolt, Steven M., *Amish Enterprise: From Plows to Profits* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).

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*Oral interviews*

- Interview with Herman Gingerich, March 9, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.
- Interview with Mrs. Herman Gingerich, March 7, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.
- Interview with Menno Kuhns, March 9, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.
- Interview with Mary Yutzky, Feb 7, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.
- Interview with Laverne Graber, February 7, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.
- Interview with Elizabeth Kuhns, April 14, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.
- Interview with Jacob Kuhns, April 14, 2001, Drakesville, Iowa.