The *Dawdyhaus*

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Abstract: This qualitative case study of two Amish families, one from Delaware and one from Pennsylvania, offers a glimpse of life in the *Dawdyhaus*, the residence of Amish grandparents after they become what mainstream society calls "empty nesters." Many older folks in mainstream society live in long-term care facilities that may be adequate for their basic needs, yet in many cases are far away from family members. The loss of family-based psychosocial support can have negative effects on the well-being of these individuals.

In collectivist cultures such as the Amish and other Plain Anabaptist communities, the good of the community is the focus, and the family is viewed as a microcosm of that larger collectivist culture. In these communities, members often remain in the home in which they raised their children or move into a small dwelling—nearby or attached to the main, larger dwelling, which is occupied by the family of one of their adult children—as they age. This small dwelling is known as the Dawdyhaus. The desire of aging family members to move into a Dawdyhaus and the assumption of greater household responsibilities by adult children is not forced; it is accompanied by a yielding, a submission, and a grace. Among the Amish and other Plain Anabaptist communities, this sense of yielding is referred to as *Gelassenheit*. This article posits the Dawdyhaus not as a noun referring to a space but as a verb in terms of daily living.

This study adopted a "go-along" method of inquiry to gain insights into the experiences of older family members living in Dawdyhauses (Alexander et al., 2020; Carpiano, 2009; Kusenbach, 2003).

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Public health professionals work within communities of people, taking a comprehensive look at the impact of the biological, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual needs and well-being of those communities. They look at and study the various determinants of health in a given area that lead to and guide health-related behaviors (i.e., those actions that will influence health, disability, and mortality; Glanz et al., 1997; Skolnik, 2021).

In 1900, the average life expectancy globally for all races and all genders was about 47.3 years. By 2019, the average for the general population increased to 78.8 years (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022). Because of advances in health care and medicine over the last two centuries, life expectancy has greatly increased, despite susceptibility to various diseases. Pharmacological advances in treatment and surgical interventions have contributed to increased life expectancy, and many elderly adults are living healthier lives well into their 80s and 90s.

However, about one-third of those who live past the age of 70 will live with a disability (Cutler, 2003).

In the United States, there are variations by gender and among various ethnic groups and races, but, on average, life expectancy has increased each decade. In 2009, there were 39.6 million people over the age of 65. In 2012, that number increased to about 43.1 million people, and by 2022 those 65 and older in the U.S. exceeded 57.8 million. By 2040, there will be approximately 78.3 million people over the age of 65 and by 2060, this number will increase to 88.8 million (Administration for Community Living, 2024).

Globally, by 2050 there will be an estimated 2 billion people who live to be at least 60 years of age, including 32 million who will reach the age of 100 years (Iecovich, 2014). This increase in life expectancy will have a profound impact on health care in the United States and most other countries because of the substantial number of elderly persons and the fact that U.S. families are having fewer children to care for their aging parents.

Individualistic Society

The United States is often described as a very individualistic society and culture. Youth is valued over old age. Personal achievements and independence are valued (Sobo & Loustaunau, 2010). Adults who work do so to support only themselves and their immediate family, and lifestyles place an emphasis on education, wealth, and success. However, there are many small cultures and communities within the United States that value a more collectivist type of society. In these groups and communities, the sense of self is based on a sense of interdependence; that is, the common good and well-being of the community is the emphasis, and education is attained by doing and/or working (Nickerson, 2021). Success and well-being are still important in these cultures, but there is less emphasis on individual and personal achievements.

Culture and Tradition

One of the classic works in anthropology was written by Ruth Benedict (1934). In it, she describes culture as patterns of human behavior exhibited by one group of people that differ or are distinctive in some way from the patterns of another group. Culture can also be defined as a shared set of values, knowledge, beliefs, norms, and behaviors practiced in a society, and groups of people within that society (Sobo & Loustaunau, 2010). Traditions are patterns of behavior that are guided by a group's cultural beliefs. These beliefs are what a culture "deems to be true or false" and right or wrong (Sobo & Loustaunau, 2010, p. 3).

Traditions are sets of human behaviors that are intricately tied to various cultural contexts, such as social structure. Traditions withstand tests of time and modern life and are deeply valued for their meaning and the ways they connect and guide human behaviors, and they are often difficult to change (Kraybill, 2001, p. 49; Kraybill et al., 2013, pp. 69–70, 113–114; Hostetler, 1993, pp. 10, 83). Hence, traditions hold fast to what is considered important to a specific group of people.

For the Amish and other Plain Anabaptist peoples, religion and community are so intertwined that they are better understood as ethnographically based religious communities than as

denominations (Hostetler, 1993, pp. 4–6; Kraybill et al., 2013, pp. 59–76). All aspects of this sense of community are strongly influenced by religious beliefs that are guided by the *Ordnung*. These deeply held values based in cultural religious traditions (Kraybill 2001, p. 49) are profoundly spiritual for each Amish person because they relate to the family, the church, and the community.

Social Structure and the Ordnung

Human behaviors are influenced by the social context (i.e., social structure) in which people live, work, and worship. From a social psychological perspective, people's thoughts, behaviors, and actions are formed within that social structure (McLeod, 2007). Aristotle (2013) wrote that humans are biologically social animals. The social structures that people create and by which they live are based on the codes and rules they construct (Kraybill et al., 2013; McLeod, 2007). In Amish and other Plain Anabaptist communities, these codes and rules reflect their religious beliefs.

Ordnung is the German word for "order," or "divine order," and "moral code" (Hostetler, 1993; Kraybill et al., 2013, pp. 41–42). The Ordnung, whether written or unwritten, spells out what is expected from members of the Amish or other Plain Anabaptist church groups, separating the mainstream, worldly, sinful, and wrongful behaviors from what is right (Hostetler, 1993). This set of "generally agreed upon rules that govern each individual community" (Holmes & Block, 2014, p. 373) began developing with the founding of the Anabaptist movement in the sixteenth century and has continuously evolved ever since. It serves to guide and direct group members in their everyday lives and can be observed in dress style, modes of transportation, and overall way of living (Hostetler, 1993; Kraybill, et al., 2013). This code of morality is reflected in everything from the church hierarchy to the physical appearance of members' homes, and it helps to distinguish the Amish subculture as being in the world, but not of the world. All Amish who are baptized agree to obey the Ordnung and, if it is "not agreed upon, the community is not at peace with itself" (Holmes & Block, 2014, p. 373).

Among the Amish, social structure is patriarchal. Men serve as the church bishops and church elders, and the husband is the head of the household. This structure is "legitimated" by religious beliefs, customs, and culture (Kraybill et al., 2013, p. 193).

A gender division of labor is evident in the order of relationships in the church and household and, to a considerable extent, in the division of labor within an Amish community. Men and boys often work on the farm or in other family businesses, and women and girls tend to the home life with children, laundry, gardening, cooking, and sewing. Although this is a simplistic view of what females and males are expected to do, it is generally true to varying degrees in every Amish and Plain Anabaptist community.

Additionally, there is a responsibility matrix in the order of this social structure whereby the children are accountable to their parents, and the wife is accountable to her husband and he to her. The husband is accountable to the church elders (bishop, ministers, deacons) and ultimately to God. This matrix is based on a shared, collective belief in scriptural meanings and cultural religious traditions that is intertwined throughout the Ordnung and where a combination of faith, religion,

and customs are all interconnected culturally to guide a person's life. In large part, the Ordnung provides a communal way for managing behavior (Hostetler 1993; Kraybill et al., 2013, p. 69).

Gelassenheit

The Ordnung of every church district lays out the code of living for the Amish in that district. In a metaphorical sense, it is like a book whose pages are bound. The behaviors of the people and of the church, the community, and the family are held together with invisible threads of grace and obedience through Gelassenheit.

Gelassenheit is authentic service to one another based on *Gemeinschaft,* which in German means a "sense of we-ness" (Hostetler, 1993, p. 9). For the Amish, it is a quiet resignation, steadfastness, obedience, silence of the soul, and a yielding to one another. It is finding satisfaction in service to others through the community, obedience, enactment of various social roles, modesty in dress, and many other ways, which can be observed in behaviors (Kraybill, 2001).

Collectivist Cultures and Behaviors

In collectivist cultures such as the Amish, the good of the church community is the focus and the family is a microcosm of the church community. Child rearing takes place over the first couple of decades of a child's life. After their children are grown, working, and married, the parents may choose to move out of the main dwelling where they raised their children and into a smaller dwelling that is attached to or is near the main dwelling, while one of their adult children and their family move into the main dwelling.

Home Life

In the United States, most people live individualistic lifestyles and reside in single family homes, townhomes, and apartments in cities, suburbs, and towns. Although they may know their neighbors, they likely are not members of their extended family, and interactions are probably infrequent and surface level. Those who live in rural areas may place more value in knowing and interacting with their neighbors simply because rural locations can be isolating.

The ties that bind Amish communities together are their church and their common beliefs. These communities are often made up of extended families who chose to live near one another, either on the same acreage or within walking, buggy, or biking distance.

The Dawdyhaus

Dawdyhaus is the Pennsylvania Dutch word for "grandparent house." The word *Dawdi* (also spelled *Daadi*, *Dowdy*, *Daudy*, and various other ways) comes from a "Palantine German word that means father or grandfather" (M. Louden, personal communication, June 2023). A Dawdyhaus can be attached to the main family dwelling or it can be a separate structure within a few hundred yards of it. There can be multiple Dawdyhauses on a property, representing many years of constructing new dwelling places for a generation or more of older family members from both sides of a married couple's family. These homes generally reflect the style and design of the main

houses, which can be different from one Amish community to the next, depending on the Amish church group and its Ordnung. For example, in the Reedsville and Belleville areas of central Pennsylvania, Nebraska Amish homes, including the Dawdyhauses, have blue doors. In Delaware, Amish homes, including the Dawdyhauses, usually have white siding.

Other characteristics of Amish dwellings, including Dawdyhauses, also reflect the church group to which the family belongs. For example, the homes of more conservative groups have outhouses, while the homes of more progressive groups have indoor plumbing. Most Amish homes do not use electricity. Telephones are located in shanties (small structures on the property but away from the main house and the Dawdyhaus), or in a box on the porch, or in a shed. Some Amish groups use solar panels to power their phones.

The homes observed for this project had either wood-burning cookstoves or gas-powered stoves and ovens. The Nebraska Amish family used an icehouse outside the home for refrigeration; the family in the Dover settlement used a propane-powered refrigerator. Depending on the community, propane, oil, or batteries power the interior lighting.

Methods

This project's main research activities occurred during the summer of 2016 in Belleville, Pennsylvania, and in 2017 and 2018 in Dover, Delaware.

A modified go-along method, also known as the walk-along method (Alexander et al., 2020; Carpiano 2009; Kusenbach, 2003), was used to conduct the interviews. This method of qualitative research entails simply being with those people who might be of research interest and experiencing and understanding their interactions with one other within the social context in which they live, work, and recreate. In this example, the context refers to the "relational perspective of place and space" as it affects health and well-being (Carpiano, 2009, p. 263). The place or locality component of this type of qualitative methodology incorporates "the where" in terms of "place and space" (Alexander et al., 2020, p. 51) for the interview, with the research participants having a shared partnership in the research work. This allows for the natural flow of conversation and for relationships to develop while the researcher is taking notes and creating transcripts that reflect the conversations and experiences. For the purposes of anonymity and protection of human subjects, all names in this article are pseudonyms. The families interviewed for this project were approached differently because they are from different Amish groups.

I began with the Nebraska Amish of Reedsville, Pennsylvania. I got to know the Troyer and Bontrager families in May 2016 on a short trip to the Belleville, Pennsylvania, livestock auction and flea market. I met Leona Troyer and Maddie Bontrager, her adult daughter, at their booth where they sell handmade quilts, table runners, homemade canned jams and relishes, and soaps.

After visiting them every Wednesday for several months, Leona invited me to ask her all sorts of questions. After several more visits, I asked her and her daughter if I could interview them for this study. Over the course of that summer, I met with them each Wednesday in Belleville, sitting next to Leona on a chair she provided for me. On one of those visits, I asked Leona if I could visit her in her home. She smiled and told me, "[If] you can find it, you can come for a visit."

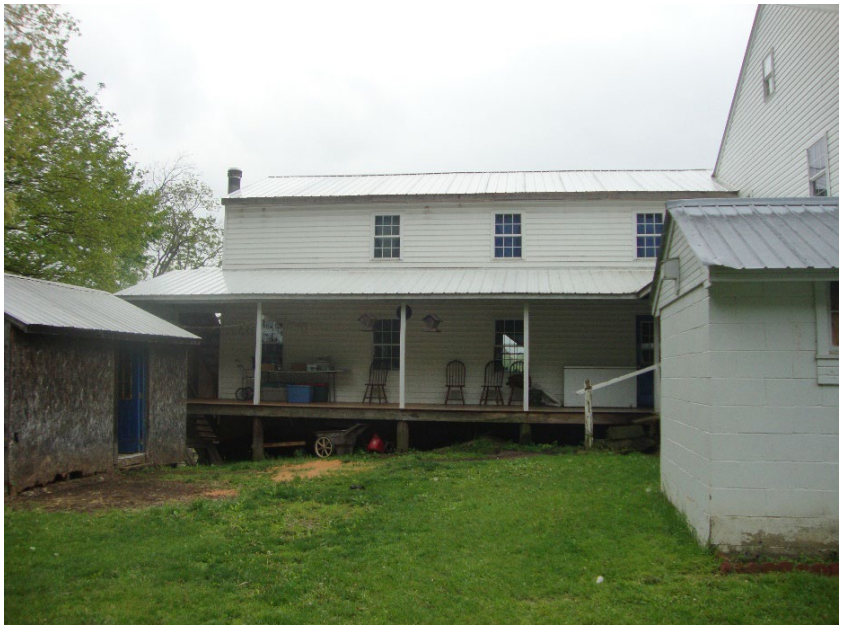
I visited Leona and Maddie multiple times that summer, both at their homes and at the livestock auction. Using the go-along method of qualitative inquiry, I assembled a series of open-ended questions. I asked if it was okay to write their answers down in a notebook. I also asked permission to photograph their home and the surrounding farm area, and they gave me verbal permission as long as I did not photograph them or other family members.

The second family I interviewed was Aaron and Emma Hochstetler, who live in the Dover, Delaware, Amish church district. A non-Amish nurse midwife who had served this community for over 30 years directed me to the Hochstetlers, and, after finding their mailing address, I wrote a letter to Emma, introducing myself and giving a brief background on what I was researching along with my phone number. Over a month later, Emma called me, and in May 2017, when our schedules finally coincided, she invited me to meet them in their home for an afternoon. I asked Emma and Aaron the same type of open-ended questions I had asked Leona and her family in Pennsylvania. In the go-along methodology, questions are loosely determined and based on moment-to-moment experiences and the contextual settings in which the questions are asked (Alexander et al., 2020). For this study, the basic demographic questions included how the couples met, when they married, and the number of children and grandchildren they have; all other questions followed the go-along method.

Both families provided verbal permission to participate in this project. All my questions and their responses were recorded in field notes and verified with each family for clarity and accuracy. The photos of their homes and farms were taken with their permission.

Field Notes and Findings

Leona and Noah Troyer, Reedsville, Pennsylvania



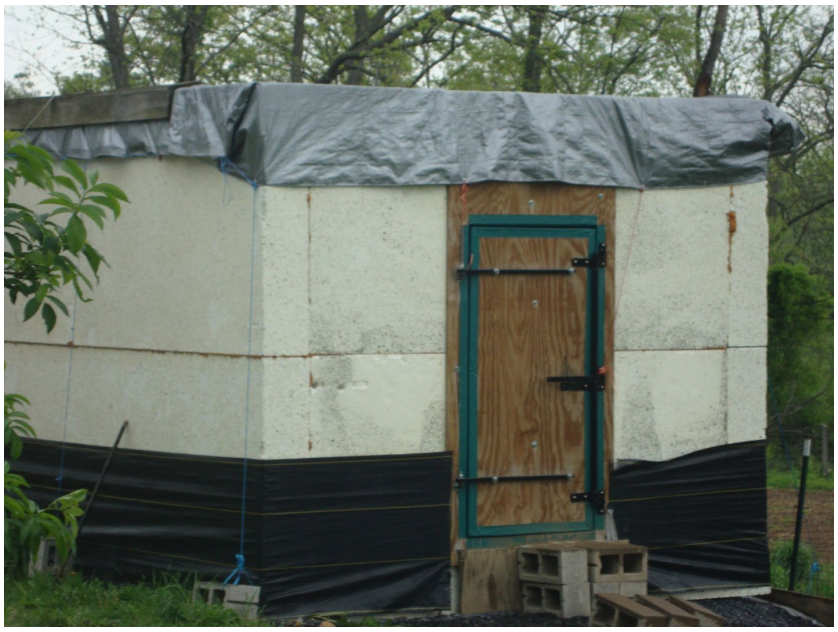
The Dawdyhaus of Leona and Noah Troyer. (Photo courtesy of the author)

Noah and Leona Troyer met one summer after Noah took a train to Ohio and stayed at his uncle's home while working there. Noah happened to attend a singing in Wayne County, Ohio (which is part of the Greater Holmes County settlement), where he met Leona. Leona was born in Ohio in 1948 and Noah was born in 1941 in Reedsville, Pennsylvania. Leona came from Swartzentruber Amish roots in the Sam Troyer group. Noah came from the Nebraska Amish in Belleville, Pennsylvania.

When Noah expressed his desire to marry Leona after courting that summer, her father did not want her to marry him. In Leona's words, her father said it was a "step down" and "lower" since Noah had Nebraska Amish roots. Nonetheless, they married in 1970 and settled in Reedsville. Noah indicated that, as a married couple, they initially lived at his parent's place, a 100-acre farm "across the field" from where he grew up, pointing to the back window and the vast field beyond. His parents moved there when he was a child, and the property that his family owned and where his current house is built has been in his family for at least 100 years. Leona and Noah had eight children—six girls (including one set of twins) and two boys—and, at the time of my original research, 36 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. The farm they live on consists of 30 acres of land and includes a sawmill. The main house, which Noah built for his family, was constructed in 1974 and then remodeled several years later after a fire. The Dawdyhaus was built in 1999.

The Nebraska Amish are an Old Order group whose lifestyle many would consider very rustic and primitive and even plainer than other Amish groups. Their homes have no electricity or running water, and they use outhouses. Leona and Noah's Dawdyhaus, although physically connected to the main family home, can only be entered from the outside; there is no inside door that connects the two homes. Leona and Noah raised their eight children in the main home, and they moved into the Dawdyhaus in 1999, the year it was built. Noah and Leona's oldest daughter, Maddie, and her husband, Jeremy, and their children have lived in the main house for many years. (Some of Maddie and Jeremy's seven children are now adults themselves, and several live in a settlement in Maine.) When I asked how they decided which adult child would live in the main home, Noah replied that it is the "eldest daughter, of course."

The main living area in the Dawdyhaus can be described as a great room that includes a kitchen. There is a cookstove and several tables for quilting and sewing, along with a couple of rocking chairs, wooden chairs, and a desk, with a few Bibles and oil lamps. There were no actual decorations, but the rocking chairs and the other chairs have coverings in what Leona called "Amish colors." The back porch includes an outside cookstove to use during the summer months, and an icehouse had been partially built into a small hill on the property. The structure is encased in Styrofoam, covered with tarp-like material, and has a large metal door. Maddie explained that they make ice in the winter and store it in this large, insulated, and almost cave-like walk-in icehouse, which they only open when they need to retrieve food or ingredients. The families also rent freezer space in Belleville.



Icehouse shared by the Troyer and Bontrager households. (Photo courtesy of the author)

The great room in Noah and Leona's Dawdyhaus. (Photo courtesy of the author)

On Wednesdays, they set up their booth at the livestock auction. They leave their home around 4:30 a.m. and travel by horse-and-buggy to Belleville, a seven-mile trip that takes at least an hour. They are there until 1:00 or 2:00 p.m.; when the crowd dwindles, they pack up and begin the trip home.

The Belleville livestock auction attracts people from all over the Kishacoquillas Valley, along with visitors from outside the area. The auction is conducted inside the main building. On the

outside grounds, there is a flea market of sorts, with many non-Amish vendors and various Amish groups selling fried pies, moon pies, cookies, cakes, homemade breads, and other baked goods.

I would sit and chat with Leona and her daughter, and Leona's younger grandchildren would stay with us or go out to the market for treats. When they were ready to leave, I would help them pack up, put unsold items in the plastic tubs and bins, and carry them to their buggy. Leona often would give me a jar of homemade dandelion jelly or Maddie would give me some homemade lye soap for laundry stains or a hand-crocheted dishcloth as a gift for helping them.

Spending time with Leona and Maddie every Wednesday at their booth allowed me to get to know them as people with lives that were happy, yet also touched with sorrow. One day, Leona told me in almost a whisper that she lost one of her sons, Michael, when he was in his teens; he drowned in a river while fishing. She told me that she painfully misses him despite how long ago this happened.

I learned quickly to be careful what I ask. On one of my visits to Leona and Noah's home, I mentioned the use of gas-powered mowers among the Delaware Amish. I received a very loud, stern, and angry reaction from Noah, who stated, "My grandson lives in a Maine community of black car Mennonites. Their bishops have allowed them to use those gas-powered tools, so he can never step foot in this house again."

I visited Leona and Maddie on multiple occasions since the summer of 2016. I gave them many rides into town to the bank, hardware store, and clinic. Each time I visited, I was welcomed with warmth, love, and kindness. We continued to remain in touch, and Leona's letters to me often began with "Greetings and love from above" and ended with "Love, Leona Troyer." In 2020, she sent me a letter with the death notice of her other son, Jonathan, who passed away from his injuries after falling off a roof during a construction job. Leona's health declined with age, as did Noah's. That was evident when I visited them in the summer of 2022. Leona used a wheelchair because of chronic pain and other health problems. She was still quilting, and she told me that when she got married, "I used to quilt for 15 cents a yard and I would make two quilts per week."

Sadly, Maddie called to let me know that, after an illness of several weeks, Leona died in July 2023, and then Noah died in February 2024. I continue to be in contact with Maddie, and the next time I am in Belleville, I plan to go with her to the cemetery where her parents now rest.

Emma and Aaron Hochstetler, Dover, Delaware

Emma invited me to her home on May 8, 2017. I was greeted at the door to their Dawdyhaus and invited into the living room. There was ample seating between a sofa and a small recliner and the recliner that Aaron, Emma's husband, was sitting in.

The Dawdyhaus of Emma and Aaron Hochstetler. (Photo courtesy of the author)

The living room in Aaron and Emma's home. (Photo courtesy of the author)

I explained that when I was growing up in Pennsylvania, my family took many day trips and camping trips to the Lancaster and Honey Brook areas. I told them that on these Saturday family drives in Lancaster County, we would see Amish people driving their buggies, kids playing outside, and Amish-style clothes hanging out to dry on the clotheslines. I would tell my father that I wanted to be Amish. He would laugh and tell me that I would not like waking up at 4:00 a.m. to milk cows. I then explained that, during high school, I worked on weekends at the local farmers market in Boothwyn, Pennsylvania, at a non-Amish booth crafting leather boots. Most of the other businesses were owned and operated by Amish people.

Emma and Aaron chuckled a bit and then Aaron said to me, "Oh, heck, why don't you just stay here for the week while I go up to New Holland to work." I was thrilled. They told me that they raised all 13 of their children on this 122-acre property. Aaron stated that "it was a very productive dairy farm at one point" but they no longer have any of the cows they once had. Dairy farming is no longer profitable because the dairy market is commercial now.

They now rent their acreage to several non-Amish farmers. At the time of this interview, their eldest daughter, Ruth, and her husband, Mark, lived in the main house where Emma and Aaron had raised their own family. Aaron told me he did not grow up in that house, but their family has owned "this 122 acres of land as far back as I can recall." He also stated, "My parents had a house over there where I grew up. I have other siblings who also lived on these 122 acres beyond those trees you see." Aaron also noted that he is the driver for the Amish funerals in the community, and that he has been doing this for several decades. It means a great deal to him to serve as the driver, although, he said, "I guess someday I will let someone else start doing this."

Aaron and Emma asked me about my family, and I explained that my parents and my sister are deceased, but I have two brothers who live nearby. Aaron gave me a copy of the *Lancaster Amish Business Directory*. He and Emma told me that when they travel, they like to shop in Amish- and Mennonite-owned stores to support those businesses, and they gave me the specific businesses I should visit the next time I go to Lancaster.

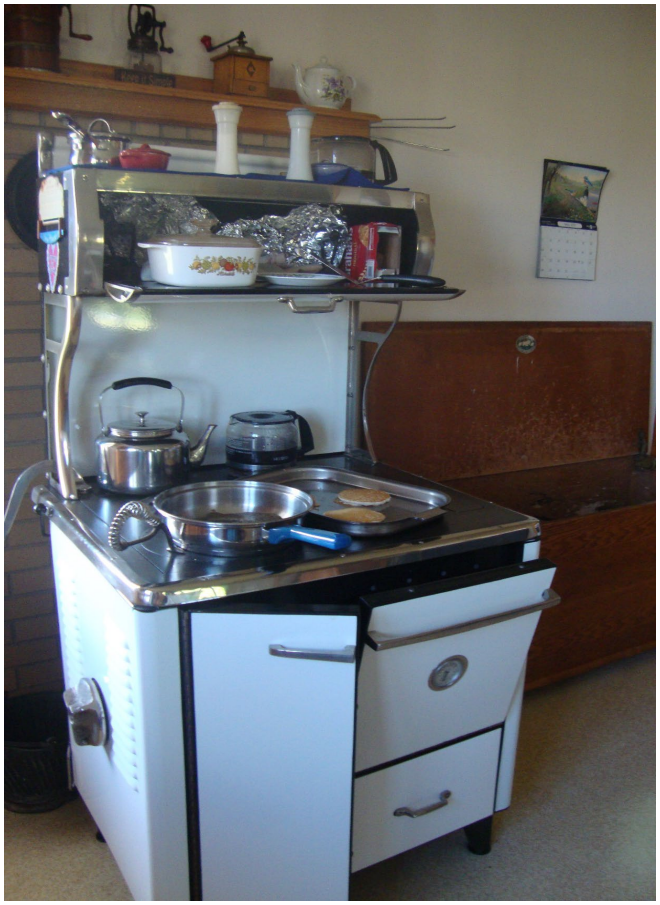
Aaron then excused himself to go outside and tinker in the barn, and I continued to visit with Emma and helped her with the dishes. I asked her for a suitable time to come back to stay while Aaron was going to be in Pennsylvania, and she said, "Come by tomorrow afternoon since it is not a church Sunday." The next afternoon, my brother Andrew dropped me off at their house.

Emma was waiting for me, and she showed me upstairs to the room I would stay in for the next five days. It was large, with two double beds topped with beautiful quilts. The full bathroom was in the small hallway and another room with two more beds was on the opposite side. Emma explained that they wanted to have enough sleeping space for guests and family when they visit. She also explained that she and Aaron had moved into the Dawdyhaus permanently after their last two children married and Aaron's parents needed care. They moved Aaron's parents, "Grandpa and Grandma," into the Dawdyhaus, where they could easily take care of them. Aaron's mother died in 1980 at the age of 72, and Aaron's father died in September 1982. After they passed away, Aaron and Emma moved Emma's parents into the same Dawdyhaus. Emma's father died from complications of a broken hip and a subsequent heart attack in 1999, and her mother died in November 2000 of a "broken heart." As Emma observed, the Dawdys were taking care of the Dawdys.

Emma went on to state that "now that the former Dawdys are deceased, [we] have all this extra space." She and I went back downstairs, and she showed me the rest of the house, including where she and Aaron sleep, the downstairs bathroom, her sewing room, and the enclosed porch. We talked about her health issues and hand pain and the use of herbal medicine and burdock leaves for burns and wounds. She showed me a small container of burn salve that is made of burdock leaves and told me, "So many non-Amish doctors now understand the benefits of burdock leaves to treat

burns." Suddenly, the door opened and in came her daughter Ruth and Emily, one of her granddaughters. They had ridden their bikes from the main house to the Dawdyhaus to see who the guest was. They talked about picking the rhubarb growing in the front garden, and Emma said I could help them pick it in the morning. The rhubarb would be sold on Tuesday at the farmers market at Spence's Bazaar in Dover.

That evening, I helped Emma prepare dinner. She has two stoves in her kitchen: a wood-burning cookstove and a propane gas stove. She prefers the cookstove over the gas stove, although the gas stove is more convenient. Her grandkids make sure she and Aaron have plenty of chopped wood for the cookstove and the wood-burning stove they use for heat in the living room. They have a refrigerator operated by propane gas and a wringer washing machine.



Emma's cookstove. (Photo courtesy of the author)

Emma told me she does the laundry on Mondays. Her daughter and granddaughters usually help with this but since I was here, I could help her instead. After supper, Emma and I cleaned up the kitchen and then took a short walk down the lane to the shanty so she could check her phone messages. Around dusk, Aaron lit the propane lanterns in the kitchen, and we played several games of Mexican train with dominoes.

Aaron, who referred to Emma as "Mama," turned to her at one point and said, "Mama, I am headed to bed so let's say our prayers." Emma motioned for me to come into the living room, and Aaron read a Bible passage and then told us to kneel and pray quietly. Afterwards, Emma and I put the game pieces away, and she gave me a flashlight to head upstairs.

I was up at 5:30 a.m. and could already hear voices downstairs. I quickly dressed and went down, where I helped make coffee in an automatic coffee maker on a propane camping stove. I also helped Emma make bacon, eggs, and toast for breakfast. After we said a silent prayer, the three of us proceeded to eat. Aaron talked about moving some horses from one location to another for the Mel Hoover sale while he was up in New Holland. Emma talked about picking rhubarb later in the morning. Then Aaron stood up, filled his thermos with hot coffee, and picked up the cloth sack of food Emma had prepared for his trip. She reminded him to make sure he had all his heart medications. Then a car horn beeped, and he said, "My ride is here." Emma and I drank another cup of coffee and chatted before we did the morning dishes. Then she went into the living room to have her devotional time, telling me that I could join her or go upstairs if I wanted to.

Around 7:30 a.m., Ruth and Emily came by and we began to pick rhubarb. While in the garden, Emma pointed out the hummingbird feeders that Aaron had made for her. She showed me how she wanted the rhubarb picked and put into the baskets. After we picked all we could, Emma and I ate a snack and then began the laundry. She showed me how to wash it and then put it through the rollers to squeeze out the excess water. Then we hung it outside on the line to dry.

Around noon, Emma and I prepared a light lunch of soup and sandwiches. I asked her about taking photos, and she said I could take whatever I wanted to as long as I did not photograph her. After we ate, I asked about her cape dresses, which are hand-sewn and include an extra layer of fabric over the bodice area for enhanced modesty. She took me to her room and opened the closet so I could see them. She showed me how they are pinned together because, in her church group, buttons are not permitted on dresses. She also showed me her head coverings and her sewing area.

Later, she told me a great deal about her family. She was born in 1939, and Aaron was born in 1938. They are the two oldest people in the Dover settlement. She also told me that they were married in 1959 and have 13 children, who live in Dover, Kentucky, and Virginia. She explained that she came from a family of 13 children and that Aaron also came from a family with 13 children. She went on to say that she was not born in Delaware but in Wayne County, Ohio. Her family moved to Delaware when she was 13. Her father saw too much "modernization going on in Ohio" and, since his brother and sister had already moved to the Dover community and liked the area, her family moved here as well. She told me she was named after her grandmother "Emma, who lived until she was 96 years old."

I asked about the adjustments of moving into the Dawdyhaus. She said that at first they were both reluctant, but that she really likes it now because the main house was just "too big anymore." But Aaron has kept to his regular daily schedule, getting up early as he did when he had the dairy farm, which was a full-time business.

During the next few days, Emma shared copies of three Amish periodicals: *Family Life, The Budget*, and *Die Botschaft*. It occurred to me that non-Amish people tend to think of social media

as the use of cell phones, text messaging, and online sites, but these periodicals are also social media, just a different form of technology, so to speak. The Amish and other Plain Anabaptist groups have many newsletters and magazines that function as social media resources, such as the ones Emma showed me. All contain stories, social happenings such as marriages, births, deaths, illnesses, and other news of people who live in various Anabaptist communities across the United States and abroad. One issue of *The Budget* included a beautiful expression of Gelassenheit. A recently widowed Amish woman was struggling with her loss and very depressed. The person who wrote to *The Budget* about this situation asked readers to not only pray for her, but to send her cards and letters to lift her spirits and to let her know that others were praying and thinking about her. In this way, *The Budget* functions like other forms of social media used today.

The following day, after our devotions and breakfast, I noticed an electric typewriter on the porch. I asked Emma about it, and she told me it was battery operated, just like her table fans. Then she caught me off guard by saying, "If you need to charge your cell phone, you can do so in the barn…we have a battery-operated charger in the barn."

Emma was eager to tell me about various aspects and events in her life. She showed me an article about the French fashion models who were photographed on their property in the 1990s. It came about when a French modeling agency, wanting to conduct a photo shoot on an Amish farm, contacted the Delaware Chamber of Commerce, who then reached out to Emma and Aaron to see if the agency could use their farm for the photo shoot. Emma and Aaron agreed. The photos were taken near the main family house since Emma, Aaron, and their growing family were living there at that time. The photo shoot seemed to bring up many wonderful memories for Emma as she explained how delightful it was to be a part of it.

As the week went on, Emma and I took walks up to the main house. She showed me the inside of the phone shanty as well as the inside of the main house, which was big and spacious, with a large great room and a fireplace. The kitchen had green curtains and lots of hand-carpentered cabinets, along with a large wooden dining table with many chairs around it.

Outside, Emma showed me lilies she had planted many years ago as well as the huge tank that provides water to the main house, and she pointed out the two other Dawdyhauses on the property (one was rented to a non-Amish man, and one was vacant at the time). She explained how the water tank operates and that it provides the water for the sinks in the house and for the plumbing system for the toilets. The tank is air-powered with a compression device and has a large dowel hanging on its side that rises as the water in the tank goes down. We walked into the barn that once housed the cows. It is vacant now, and Emma said that it is "bittersweet to see it this way."

Emma and I shared a great deal of our personal lives with each other. I asked if all her children have remained in the Amish faith, and she said two daughters have not, but all of the others have. She told me that one of her daughters was pregnant at the same time that she herself, in her early forties, was pregnant with her and Aaron's last child. This daughter had married a non-Amish man, and he did not treat their son very well. Emma, Aaron, and the rest of the family have been part of this grandson's life and, as an adult, he returned to his mother's Amish roots, was baptized, and

became Amish in order to raise his family as his mother was raised. Emma told me that she and her daughter still speak and see one another since the Dover Amish do not practice shunning.

On Friday, I swept and dusted for Emma and removed the linens from the bed I had slept on. We said our morning prayers and devotions and had coffee and eggs for breakfast. She showed me her irons and described how she heats them to iron clothes. When she was raising her children, ironing was a huge chore because of the size of her family, but now her granddaughters help her with it. I told her how much I enjoyed being there for the week and that my brother would pick me up around 11:00 a.m. She said that Aaron would be back later that afternoon.

I have returned to Emma and Aaron's home on many occasions for afternoon or daylong visits. In October 2019, I arranged with them to attend the annual Apple Grove School quilt auction that takes place every fall and benefits the Delaware Amish community's parochial schools. I met them at their house, and we drove to the auction for the day. Aaron went off, and Emma and I walked all over the auction together. Later, as we sat and watched the auctioneers sell the quilts, Emma pointed out the people to whom she was related. From her comments—"That's my second cousin by marriage," "I'm her great aunt," etc.—it seemed as though she was related to every other person we saw. I suppose when you have 13 children, and many of those children have at least six children, the number of relatives increases exponentially. At the time of the initial interview, Emma stated that they have 85 grandchildren and 112 great-grandchildren.

Discussion

The main method of inquiry for this project was the go-along method (Alexander et al., 2020; Carpiano, 2009; Kusenbach, 2003). This method incorporates the emic experiences of the interviewees using personal narratives, open-ended questions, and photographs (Merleau-Ponty, 2018/1945), and it allows for a natural flow of conversation and dialogue. In this study of the experiences of the occupants in the space known as the Dawdyhaus and their extended family, friends, and community, the go-along method provided a way to describe and illustrate how the Amish treat their elderly and how the older persons' connections within the community are sustained.

This methodology helped me understand the biological, biographical, psychological, sociological, cultural, and spiritual components of people's lives and how these components influence their lifestyles and behaviors. In her research, Margarethe Kusenbach (2003, p. 266) uses the themes of life's experiences to understand how people engage with their environments, how a person's biology and the places they live are linked, and how this influences the social architecture that affects patterns of behavior.

Kusenbach (2003) studied human perceptions, which are influenced by values that cause people to behave in certain ways. This in turn affects how social interactions impact others and how these have a reciprocal impact on how people interact within their environments. Kusenbach also looked at the influences of biography and place and how these social constructs take the physical dimensions of place and space and infuse them with cultural norms and values. These give us an understanding of what a community is, and its relative social architecture provides

insight into how community members live and interact with one another. Although Kusenbach's themes have been applied in many metropolitan and urban settings, in this study, they were used in the rural setting of the religious subculture of the Amish.

One of the themes Kusenbach (2003) identifies is how a person's perceptions influence and have an impact on their values and guide their day-to-day life. This theme is evident in the way both the Troyer and the Hochstetler families live according to the values and beliefs of their Anabaptist faith and the specific guidelines provided by their church's Ordnung. It is also evident in the architecture or blueprint provided by the affiliation to which they belong, their wholistic manner of living, and the kinds of technology that are allowed by their church group. Although both families interviewed for this study refer to themselves as Old Order Amish, their values and their use of home appliances are quite different yet still cross over into mainstream society. Both Leona and Noah's Dawdyhaus and their daughter Maddie's home have wood-burning stoves for cooking, the two households share an icehouse on the property, and they also rent space in an electricity-powered freezer in town. Aaron and Emma have a wood-burning cookstove in their kitchen along with a natural-gas stove and a refrigerator. They and their daughter Ruth's family share a gas-powered freezer. Their use of batteries to power a typewriter along with their battery charger taught me about the balance of being in the world yet not completely of the world. Both families use wringer-type washing machines, although they have different models. In this aspect of their lives, these families showed how to maintain that balance, guided by church values and the Ordnung yet also benefiting from more modern-day lifestyle applications.

Another theme, according to Kusenbach (2003, p. 471), is "spatial practices" and how people engage in their environments. I observed how each of these families lives in an Amish community of like-minded others. The Amish concept of aging is an ecological approach to aging in place (Iecovich, 2014), whereby most older people live within the same area where they raised their families. This provides a keen sense of emotional and psychological support as well as a sense of normalcy and comfort. In general, social relationships are paramount to healthy aging across the lifespan. For the Amish, this social ecology or social space becomes a reinforcing factor and an accountability factor in their lives and is reinforced by following the Ordnung. This is observed in the many kinds of distinctive technologies adapted to conform with their church Ordnung and in their social life, especially their extended family connections. For example, while I was at Emma and Aaron's home, their daughter Ruth and granddaughter Emily came down from the main house to see who the new visitor was. Additionally, these social connections are greatly enhanced outside of their respective communities through reading and contributing to *Family Life, The Budget*, *Die Botschaft*, and other periodicals.

Kusenbach's (2003) theme of biography can be applied to understanding the kinship and family ties that are paramount in Amish families and communities. The Amish have extensive multi-bonded social networks that connect generations. These networks are not only biological but also related to physical space and how people live in familiar places and with others like themselves. These common and shared places help to reinforce values and knowledge about beliefs. Such communities can be referred to as intentional communities (Grinde et al., 2018) that have shared

religious practices and values, along with cultural, biological, environmental, and biographical connections through church affiliation, the family, and generational bonds.

The fourth theme is the "social architecture," the manner in which people interact with one another based on gender, hierarchy, values, and social norms in their environments (Kusenbach, 2003). The specific social architecture of a group of people supports the other themes regarding the values and knowledge of people who live in a community. Those shared values help to keep the community knowledge and values alive and well in this quickly changing modern world.

Both families live on family land that has spanned multiple generations and is in communities that have existed for over 100 years. The Nebraska Amish have been in the Kishacoquillas Valley since 1881 (Hostetler, 1993; Kauffman, 1991; Kraybill et al., 2013, p. 141). In Delaware, the first Old Order Amish man, Jacob Miller, began the Dover Amish community in 1915 (Clark, 1988). Both Amish groups moved out of other geographical areas because many families and bishops saw too much modernization and wanted to maintain their religious and cultural values. These values clearly contribute to the social architecture in which these families live.

Each family member, including each child, has roles and responsibilities. Although there is some division of labor, it remains fluid. An example of this is clothes washing and cooking, which generally falls on women and girls. However, in a recent phone conversation with Maddie about wash day, she told me that her youngest daughter, Noni, and her son Caleb were doing the laundry. I asked if Caleb liked doing the laundry with his sister. Maddie replied that Noni told Caleb, "You need to learn to do the wash because you never know when someday you might have to do it yourself. And the same goes for cooking."

The fifth and final theme that Kusenbach (2003) says the go-along method is well-suited to explore is the social relationships and patterns of interactions among people and their environments. The Amish have extensive social networks and families that foster a sense of belonging where people stay connected with one another in a deep way. These are the emotional and psychological dimensions (Iecovich, 2014) that are pervasive in their intergenerational bonds to one another. On several occasions while I was visiting Leona and Noah, Maddie and her children came into the Dawdyhaus to see who was visiting. The atmosphere was loud and energetic with smiles, handshakes, and many hugs.

During the week I spent with Emma and Aaron, their granddaughters and oldest daughter came down to the Dawdyhaus to see who was spending time with Emma. These relationships and forms of interactions are evident in the way both Old Order families in this study live among family members. The doors to their homes are open for their adult children and their grandchildren to come through at any moment and, reciprocally, for the grandparents themselves to head to the main house. In addition to family members dropping in, Emma had various non-Amish customers stop by to see about buying one of the puppies she raised. These interactions were very cordial, and one older woman that Emma knew had coffee with us in the kitchen.

All these social relationships are connected through the scope and dimensions of Amish culture, faith, and beliefs (Kraybill et al., 2013). The social relationships and the dimensions of life, culture and religion are deeply rooted in the Ordnung and in the woven threads of Gelassenheit

and faith. The Dawdyhaus as a noun is just a house, but as a verb, it is a home filled with laughter, voices, lives, and intertwined generations, an extension of Gelassenheit and "selfless service" (Kraybill et al., 2013) to one another. This is evidenced in the lives, interactions, and voices of loved ones that extend throughout several generations. There is both the accepted yielding of roles between aging family members and adult children, and the day-to-day flow of relationships. These precepts are connected and guided by their faith. It is their faith that influences their values and thus their behaviors at multiple levels of life, from how their homes are physically used, the degree of modernization that each group allows, their styles of dress, and their types of buggies. It is their faith that lays the foundation for their social interactions with one another as well as with the non-Amish community. And it is their faith that allows for a life that yields to age and youth, old and young, health and sickness, living and dying.

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