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## Analysis of Amish Family-Based Education : Through the “Children’s Section” of Family Life Magazine

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## **Analysis of Amish Family-Based Education: Through the “Children’s Section” of *Family Life Magazine***

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### **1. Introduction**

Developed countries, such as Japan and the United States, are currently faced with many difficult social issues. On the other hand, the Amish people in the United States (Kraybill 1996; 2009; Sugihara 2001), who have maintained their own social systems for more than two centuries without modern conveniences such as automobiles and television enjoy stable human relationships and a sense of well-being. They rarely concern themselves with typical contemporary social issues such as crime, illicit drugs, and juvenile delinquency. The Amish seek well-being through all life domains, including family, school, community, and the workplace. The foundations of their lives are Amish views that value submission to the “Will of God,” obedience, modesty, and simplicity. In order to maintain social equality and high levels of welfare in their society and to hand these traditional Amish values down to the next generation, education plays an important role in socializing their children to become adults with these values fully internalized. In most industrialized societies, education typically starts at home from birth and continues until the age of five or six, after which schools and communities take over these

functions of education. Amish societies also provide education to children within the family, in schools, and across the community.

However, unlike many industrialized societies, the Amish regard family-based education to be equal to or even more important than school-based education. While school-based education in Amish society is offered for eight years, education in the home continues from birth well into adulthood. The model of Amish education, both at home and school, is essentially based on life-learning education (Fisher and Stahl 2004)<sup>1)</sup>. In other words, education that is embedded throughout daily life is instrumental in the teaching and reinforcing of Amish values. This is why they place so much significance on family-based education.

Since the mid-twentieth century, in accord with rapid changes in American society, Amish communities have established and maintained an eight-year school education system. As basic subjects, the 3Rs (reading, writing, and arithmetic) are taught in the schools. While other subjects such as health education and social studies (history and geography) are often provided, the acquisition of basic skills is emphasized in schools, and furthermore, applying this learning in their daily lives is encouraged. Education at home, on the other hand, plays a more influential role in their lives than school-based education. For Amish people, home is the place where they teach their children from early childhood how to be and act Amish. At home Amish parents are responsible for teaching their children through work. Fathers teach farming, and mothers teach household chores, such as cooking, washing, cleaning, and caring for younger siblings.

Our previous studies have focused on media in Amish school-based education because educational information is very important in their society, where television, radio, and most information are highly controlled. We previously investigated some unique characteristics of Amish school education by comparing their textbooks to American and Japanese counterparts (Oyabu, Ido and Sugihara 2001; 2002; Oyabu, Takamatsu and Sugihara 2003; 2007; Oyabu and Sugihara 2004).

Regarding education in the Amish home, work and discipline are united, which has an enormous impact on children. However, exploring the methods and content of this family-based education is difficult due to differences and diversity in Amish families (Hosteler 1993). To reduce this source of variability, the Amish magazine, *Family Life*, could be a valuable source of information for this study because most Amish households subscribe to it, and it is thought to be a source of teaching material in the home. The Children's Section of the magazine is specifically designed for children, so we regarded it as a central medium for Amish family-based education.

Hence, in this paper, we attempt to identify Amish values and how they are taught to children by analyzing articles in *Family Life* magazine. Furthermore, by investigating their family-based education, we attempt to deepen our understanding of how Amish build a foundation of well-being in their society.

## 2. Analysis

Articles in the Children's Section (360 articles in 49 issues, 1996-2002) were roughly

classified into two categories: reading and games. This study uses only the reading sections for the analysis. Based on classifications (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 1999a; 1999b; 1999c; 2001; 2002; Horie 1997; Morita 1992) of Japanese language and moral education, and American language education, and adding categories for the Bible and letters, respectively, we divided the articles into the following seven categories: novels/tales, verses/poems, histories/biographies/travel essays, fables/mythologies/folk tales, playwriting/scripts, the Bible, and letters. Each article was examined for the following characteristics: main child character's age, child character's actions, personae, story themes, and changes in the main character's emotions.

Following the Amish school system, we divided the child character's ages into four groups: 1-5 years-old (preschool); 6-10 years-old (lower grades); 11-13 years-old (higher grades); and 14 or more years old. Character actions were divided into the following six categories: "physiological acts" such as sleeping, eating, toileting, and bathing; "work" such as household chores and other work; "academic/cultural work" such as going to school, classroom lessons, school events, and reading; "consumption/savings" such as shopping and saving money; "leisure/play" such as playing, sports, television, and trips; "societal participation" such as community events, volunteering, and social welfare. Characters were classified into two categories: human beings and living creatures. Humans were further divided into: protagonists, family members, relatives, friends, and teachers; and living creatures were further divided into: horses/livestock and other creatures. Story themes were classified into the following four categories: "affection toward families/friends," "faith, life, and Amish values," "work," and "human growth/attitudes toward living." We examined changes in the following four types of characters' emotions as they moved through story plots: "sensory emotions," "vital emotions," "mental emotions," and "spiritual emotions."

### 3. Results and Discussion

In all, 49 issues of *Family Life* were published over 7 years from 1996 through 2002. Each issue had an average of 39 pages, about half of which were filled by Stories (average of 13.7 pages: 35.6%) and the Children's Section (average of 4.8 pages: 12.5%) (Sugihara and Oyabu: 2002). Stories was a reading section for adults, and the Children's Section was for children, with reading as its focus. Over the 7 years, a total of 360 articles were printed in the Children's Section. Two Children's Special issues were published, in September of 1996 and 2002, with about 36 articles each. The regular issues averaged about 4 articles each.

Of the 360 Children's Section articles, 282 (78.3%) were on reading (including poetry), and 78 (21.6%) were games, which demonstrated that reading-focused articles predominated the contents of this section. Thus, this study of the Children's Section focused on reading.

#### 3.1 Synopsis of Readings

The content categories of the reading articles (comprising about 80% of the Children's

**Table 1** Reading in Children's Section

Content Categories	Articles (%)
Novels/tales	240 (85.1)
Verses/poems	25 (8.9)
Bible	9 (3.2)
Histories/biographies/travel essays	4 (1.4)
Letters	3 (1.1)
Fables/mythologies/folk tales	1 (0.4)
Playwriting/scripts	0 (0.0)
Total	282 (100.0)

Section) are shown in Table 1, which demonstrates that “novels/tales” (240 articles: 85.1%) is the largest category, followed by “verses/poems” (25: 8.9%), and the “Bible” (9: 3.2%). There were no “play writing/scripts” articles. Thus, we determined that reading articles in the Children's Section were predominantly novels and tales, with story plotting around main characters.

Of the 282 reading articles, 239 (83.5%) specified the main characters' ages (Table 2), which spanned a wide range of ages from 1 to 15 years. The age range category from 1 to 5 was the largest, followed by 6 to 10, 11 to 13, and 14 years or older. This finding demonstrated that reading articles in the Children's Section targeted relatively young children.

Details of main characters' actions are shown in Table 2. We found that their actions were predominantly related to “leisure/play,” “work,” and “physiological acts,” followed by “academic/cultural work,” “consumption/savings,” and “societal participation.” Example plots for each category are as follows. A “leisure/play” story was about a main character who climbed up a tree despite a warning not to do so, then broke his neck, and realized that listening to warnings was important (“A Lesson for James”). A “work” story was about a boy who thought he hated washing dishes until he was told to do so by his mother, and then he found out he actually enjoyed it (“When Boys Wash the Dishes”). A “physiological acts” story was about a main character who was unable to sleep at night due to fear of the dark and later was relieved by her mother telling her that God was watching her even in darkness (“Nighttime Trouble”). An “academic/cultural work” story was about a main character who hated school work, school, and teachers, who was then helped by her cousin, a teacher, with her work, and finally realized she had not done her best and would work diligently from then on (“When Lovina Did Her Best”). A “consumption/savings” story was about a main character who set mousetraps to earn money, but he saw that his friend was more successful and became jealous. So he tried to throw away his friend's mousetrap in a river, but almost drowned instead, which led to self-reflection and a conclusion that he should not act badly (“George's Temptation”). For “societal participation,” many stories were about shopping in town. One story was about

**Table 2** Details of Readings <sup>a)</sup>

Leading character	Category		Articles (%)
Ages of the leading character	1-5 years old		121 (33.7)
	6-10 years old		58 (16.2)
	11-13 years old		40 (11.1)
	14 or more years old		20 (5.6)
	Others		43 (33.4)
Behavioral aspects of leading character <sup>b)</sup>	Leisure/play		200 (70.9)
	Work		195 (69.1)
	Physiological acts		183 (64.9)
	Academic/cultural work		63 (22.3)
	Consumption/savings		34 (12.1)
	Social participation		29 (10.3)
Characters <sup>b)</sup>	Human being	protagonists	282 (100.0)
		family members	256 (90.8)
		relatives	71 (25.2)
		friends	25 (8.9)
		teachers	12 (4.3)
	Living creatures	horses/livestock	75 (26.6)
		other creatures	69 (24.5)

a) % : the percentage to number of articles.

b) The articles may have plural aspects for characters.

a main character who helped the poor and found his heart warmed as result (“A Reward for Jacob”). As these example stories show, the readings are intended to motivate readers to learn and understand things through daily life events related to play and work.

Relationships between main characters’ ages and actions are shown in Table 3, which demonstrates that articles in three categories, “leisure/play,” “work,” and “physiological acts,” comprised more than 60% of the articles in all age groups. Particularly, in the 1-5 year-old group, the “leisure/play” category comprised one-third of the articles, followed by those in the “academic/cultural work” category. Only a few articles were about “consumption/savings” and “societal participation” in this age group. However, articles in the “leisure/play” and “work” categories declined in number as age increased, and stories about “academic/cultural work” and “societal participation” increased. These findings about article theme distribution across age categories suggest that themes are determined by age.

Other supporting characters beside main characters appear in these stories, such as family members, relatives, friends, and teachers (Table 2). Family members, in particular, appeared in 256 articles (90.8%). For example, one story was about a main character

who was told by her mother to bring cookies to a grumpy neighbor living alone. She reluctantly made the visit and then found that her kindness was so appreciated that she decided to do it again (“Rosanna’s Errand”). As in this story, many others (112 articles: 40%) had family members encouraging the main characters to do something in the community.

Other living creatures often appeared in the readings. Animals were found in 144 articles (51%), where we found interesting relationships between the main characters and dogs or cats. Dogs and cats were not treated as central to these stories, but were rather simply a part of life in the same way as family members or other non-main characters were often treated. An example story was about a main character who found a stray dog and then mentioned something to his father about a friend who was not nice to a dog. His father then praised him for his kindness to animals and gave him permission to keep the dog (“The New Puppy”). Another story was about a main character who found newborn kittens and wanted to hold them. She was told by her mother not to do so unless she decided to keep them, and she eventually realized, despite her temptations, that she was right to listen to her mother for the sake of the kittens (“Ann’s Kittens”). Because small animals and care taking of animals are a big part of Amish children’s lives, it may be natural to find animals frequently described in these readings.

### 3.2 Story Themes

As described in the previous section, the readings in the Children’s Section mostly depict how main characters notice, realize, and learn something through various actions related to play, work, and academic work. The themes of these articles were classified into four categories (Table 3): (1) “affection toward families/friends”; (2) “faith, life, and Amish values”; (3) “work”; and (4) “human growth/attitudes toward living.” Based on the frequency of articles within each category, “affection toward families/friends” appeared first (238 articles: 84.4%), followed by “faith, life, and Amish values” (167: 59.2%), “work” (79: 28.0%), and “human growth/attitudes toward living” (78: 27.7%). These findings suggest that the readings mostly stressed affection toward families and friends, faith, life, and Amish values. As examples of stories depicting “affection toward families/friends”, one was about a main character who had a 3 month-old sister with a hearing disability and asked her mother about the disability. The mother explained that the sister was loved by God regardless of the disability and made her swear to love her sister forever (“The Baby Who Could Hear”). A second example was about a main character who was frustrated about inconveniences caused by his physically weak brother, but when confronted by a fatal danger to his brother, he found himself ready to make sacrifices to help his brother (“A Glad Sacrifice”). The following are examples of stories about “faith, lives, and Amish values”: God’s enlightenment leads people to happiness (“God’s Answer to Prayer”); a main character whose sister passed away learned that death was not necessarily a misfortune but a special state of happiness with God (“My Special Sister”); and a main character who hated his name was taught, using an excerpt from the Bible, about the importance of being tenacious and was also encouraged to be thoughtful to others (“Jacques-a-Pack”). Two example stories about “work” were, first,

**Table 3** The Relationships Between Leading Character's Age, Behavioral Aspects and Themes (Articles and %)<sup>a)</sup>

		Sum <sup>b)</sup>	Age				
			1-5 years old	6-10 years old	11-13 years old	14 more years old	Others
Behavioral aspects of characters	Leisure/play		69(33.3)	38(24.7)	32(24.1)	15(21.4)	46(25.0)
	Work		61(29.5)	40(26.0)	29(21.8)	15(21.4)	50(27.2)
	Physiological acts		50(24.2)	41(26.6)	24(18.0)	16(22.9)	52(28.3)
	Academic/cultural work		11 (5.3)	24(15.5)	35(26.3)	15(21.4)	22(12.0)
	Consumption/savings		10 (4.8)	5 (3.2)	5 (3.8)	5 (7.1)	9 (4.9)
	Social participation		6 (2.9)	6 (3.9)	8 (6.0)	4 (5.7)	5 (2.7)
	Total			207(100.0)	154(100.0)	133(100.0)	70(100.0)
Themes	Affection toward families/friends	238(84.4)	49(58.3)	23(45.1)	16(41.0)	6(30.0)	144(42.4)
	Faith, life, and Amish values	167(59.2)	18(21.4)	16(30.8)	12(30.8)	6(30.0)	115(33.8)
	Work	79(28.0)	11(13.1)	7(13.7)	5(12.8)	5(25.0)	23 (6.8)
	Human growth/attitudes toward living	78(27.7)	6 (7.1)	5 (9.8)	6(15.4)	3(15.0)	58(17.1)
	Total			84(100.0)	51(100.0)	39(100.0)	20(100.0)

a) Articles may have plural aspects or themes.

b) % : the percentage to the number of articles.

about a main character who hated herding cows on hot days and who trained his dog to do it instead, repeatedly showing off and bragging about this trick to his friends. Suddenly his dog refused to cooperate, which made him reflect on his laziness (“Scotties Fetch the Cows”). Second, a main character who was always reluctant and lazy about his work and school was told about slaves by his father, with the intent of teaching him the importance of enjoying one’s work (“The Life of the Slave”). For “human growth/attitudes toward living,” one story was about a main character who had refused to eat her least favorite food and was told about an article about starving people around the world. She then realized how privileged her life was, which drove her to make more of an effort to eat all of her meals (“Thankful Betty”). Another story was about a main character engaged in mischief with his friends who was reprimanded by his teacher and father, and who finally learned to make good judgments (“The Courage to Say No”).

Results with respect to the relationship between the age of main characters and themes (Table 3) demonstrated that “affection toward families/friends” was the most frequently found theme at any age, followed by “faith, lives, and Amish values.” This finding revealed that the themes of stories for children in any age group were mostly



about the importance of affection, Amish values, and religious faith. However, stories related to “human growth/attitudes toward living” increased in frequency for the older than 11 year-old group, and stories related to “work” also increased in the 14 year or older age group, which revealed that themes were arranged in accordance with children’s ages. That is, stories were carefully matched and determined after considering the typical situations of their readers, along with their ages.

In sum, many stories in the reading section had family members and animals as supporting characters, which helped the main characters realize and learn important and essential things about home and the Amish community.

### 3.3 Emotions and Changes in Main Characters

As stated above, many stories in the Children’s Section depict changes in characters’ emotions and thoughts through experiences involving other people and animals, in an attempt to convey important messages to children. In this part of the study, we examined the emotions expressed by main characters and how these emotions changed as the plots advanced. We first sorted their emotions into four categories based on psychological classification: “sensory emotions,” “vital emotions,” “mental emotions,” and “spiritual emotions.” (Sorita ed. 1983) Each type of emotion had positive and negative valences. “Sensory emotions” refer to emotions accompanying the five senses, which in the positive direction represent comfortable feelings, and in the negative direction, unpleasantness and discomfort. “Vital emotions” refer to emotions expressing a holistic state of living and coherent sense of the body, which in the positive direction represent feeling healthy, safe, refreshed, pleasant, ordered, and vigorous, while in the negative direction, feeling tired, sick, unhealthy, and troubled. “Mental emotions” refer to emotions associated with the center of one’s ego, ego development, and mind that seek fulfillment, which in the positive direction is joyful, happy, gentle, innocent, bright, active, honest, and righteous, and in the negative direction, sad, suffering, shameful, lonely, weak, and selfish. “Spiritual emotions” refer to emotions inspired in the pursuit of personal and religious values, which in the positive direction represent peace, purity, felicity, and glory obtained through profound faith, and in the negative direction despair, dismay, solitude, self-denial, and a sense of doom. (Sorita ed. 1983)

Based on the above classifications, we examined the articles to identify the main characters’ emotions and any changes as the plots advance (Table 4). Results demonstrated that “mental emotions,” representing feelings such as joyfulness, sadness, pleasantness, were found in all stories (282 articles: 100.0%), followed by “vital emotions” (189: 67.0%). There were only a few stories depicting “sensory emotions” (43: 15.2%) and “spiritual emotions” (14: 5.0%). More than 80% of the “mental emotions” stories started with negative emotions, but they typically changed into positive emotions toward the end of the stories. In contrast, stories dealing with “vital emotions” had an almost even proportion of positive and negative feelings held by the main characters in the early portions of the plots. Negative “vital emotions” were typically described through unfortunate events such as injury, illness, or death, and most of these negative emotions did not turn positive by the end of the narratives. As an example of stories with

**Table 4** Changes in the Main Character's Emotion <sup>a)</sup>

	Articles (%) <sup>b)</sup>	Contents	Articles (%) <sup>c)</sup>
Sensory emotions	43 (15.2)	positive(no changes)	17 (39.5)
		positive→negative	3 (7.0)
		negative(no change)	16 (37.2)
		negative→positive	7 (16.3)
Vital emotions	189 (67.0)	positive(no changes)	51 (27.0)
		positive→negative	46 (24.3)
		negative(no change)	79 (41.8)
		negative→positive	13 (6.9)
Mental emotions	282 (100.0)	positive(no changes)	34 (12.1)
		positive→negative	4 (1.4)
		negative(no change)	3 (1.1)
		negative→positive	241 (85.5)
Spiritual emotions	14 (5.0)	positive(no changes)	14 (100.0)
		positive→negative	0 (0.0)
		negative(no change)	0 (0.0)
		negative→positive	0 (0.0)

a) Articles may have plural emotions.

b) % : the percentage to articles.

c) % : the percentage to each emotion.

negative emotions, one story was about a character who was playing a trick on his obese friend which led to the friend's death. The boy apologized deeply to God and his family, and his father told him to remember this incident for the rest of his life ("Eli's Lifelong Regret"). There were other similar stories with plots typically including an injury and a main character who swore that he would keep out of mischief ("A First Time" and "The Hardest Punishment"). These stories, through which negative emotions remained, still conveyed moral lessons. On the other hand, in stories with "spiritual emotions," no negative emotions were identified. Only positive emotions about God and faith were described in these stories, such as "God's Answer to Prayer," where God's enlightenment led people to happiness.

Relationships between story themes and changes in characters' emotions are shown in Table 5. Regarding stories depicting the negative to positive changes in "mental emotions," the proportion of stories with each theme was similar to that of all the articles. That is, regardless of theme, each story conveyed the importance of affection, interpersonal relationships, and lives through the evolution of negative emotions into positive emotions. Stories dealing with "vital emotions," which were typically related to illness and death, mostly depicted negative feelings, and they remained consistently negative until the end of the narratives. Nevertheless, as in stories with "mental emotions," stories with "vital emotions" also conveyed important messages about lives to readers.

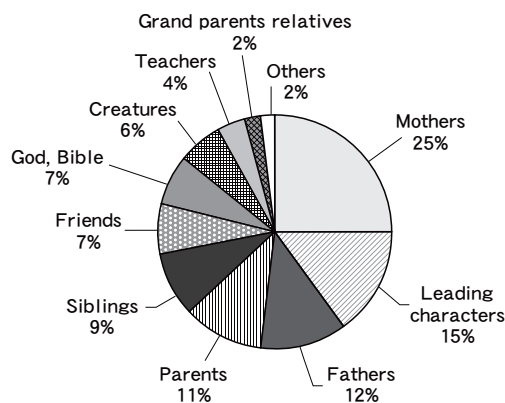
**Table 5** The relationships between story themes and changes in leading characters' emotions (articles and %) <sup>a)</sup>

Story themes	Mental emotions negative→positive	Vital emotions negative
Affection toward families/friends	113 (40.1)	39 (13.8)
Faith, life, and Amish values	67 (23.8)	23 (8.6)
Work	34 (12.1)	8 (2.8)
Human growth/attitudes toward living	27 (9.6)	9 (3.2)

a) % : the percentage to the number of each themes

### 3.4 Factors that Drove Changes in Emotions

As explained previously, the readings in the Children's Section typically described changes in the main characters' emotions as the plots advanced. Most of changes were in the negative to positive direction, after the main characters emerged from various transformative experiences. We examined factors that drive main characters' emotional changes in emotions. The results (Figure 1) demonstrated that changes in characters' emotions were mainly triggered by family members, such as mothers, fathers, and siblings. Mothers had the most influence on main characters, followed by fathers and parents (without specification of mothers or fathers). For example, as in one story about a character who envied other children's clothes and was taught by her mother about the importance of a strong sense of self ("Just Like Miriam"), many stories were about mothers guiding their children when faced with trouble. In contrast, fathers in these stories typically employed a more reproachful approach to discipline, as in a story about a character who was jealous of her sister receiving many gifts on her birthday. She pushed her sister from a wooden horse and was then scolded by her father and taught the

**Figure 1** Factors Facilitating changes in emotions

importance of waiting one's turn ("Marie's Birthday Gift"). Another story with a similar message was about two brothers who ate cake frosting despite an order not to and were then scolded by their father ("The Cake Without Frosting"). In the reading articles in the Children's Section, mothers typically listened to their children and supported them, and fathers typically scolded and punished children. These findings about the reading articles clearly revealed the family role structure of Amish families.

Siblings also facilitated emotional changes in the main characters. For example, one story was about a main character who was frustrated with all the chores she had to do because she was the oldest sister, and she was also irritated by disturbances made by her younger siblings. Finally, she yelled at them. But her mother told her all about the role of the older sister in the family, which persuaded her to become an affectionate sister ("Not a Bother"). As in this story, through various experiences with siblings, by the end of the story many main characters became aware of the responsibilities and roles of older siblings. These readings suggested that in Amish homes, where many siblings usually live together, parents use these stories to teach their children about the importance of helping and learning from each other.

After siblings, friends were identified as another driver of emotional changes in the main characters of the story, followed by God and the Bible. Interestingly, there were 15 articles (6%) containing living creatures as an important story driver, and the types of creatures were diverse: three articles each for dogs, cats, and birds; two articles with rabbits, and one article each for foxes, mice, and spiders. One story was about a main character who always left his kitten under a wagon, and one day he found the kitten had been killed by the wagon. He was filled with regret and learned the importance of life ("A Hard Lesson"). As in this story, main characters typically learn the importance of life and living from contact with close animals. These articles suggest that with their strong emphasis on harmonious living with nature, the Amish value close relationships with animals and the pleasures of learning from nature.

In addition, there were few stories (9 articles) containing teachers as an influential presence. While many stories (98 articles) had settings where the main characters attended schools, teachers did not appear to be significant drivers of action. Unlike family members, in these readings teachers were simply indirect supporters of the main characters as they learned about friendships and daily communication.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Using the Children's Section readings in the Amish magazine, *Family Life* — which is often used as teaching materials in Amish family-based education — this study identified Amish values and attitudes toward life and how they are taught to children, by analyzing articles that appear in every issue. Findings showed that the Children's Section readings were carefully designed to cultivate Amish values among their children. About 80% of the Children's Section articles were readings, and of those, about 85% were novels/tales. Many of the reading articles had main characters whose ages ranged from 1 to 5 and which were targeted at children in the lower grades. With "leisure/play" as a typical

topic, they conveyed the importance of Amish values through portrayals of affectionate relations between family members and friends. In many cases, the main characters' "mental emotions" were transformed from negative to positive over the course of the story.

Because the information in *Family Life* is produced by the Amish, for the relatively small Amish community, the volume of material is limited. However, their values are clearly reflected in most of the content. The Children's Section is specifically tailored for their children, who enjoy the information in every issue as an alternative to other mass media, such as television or radio. Amish children find in the pages of *Family Life* many stories with main characters their own ages, who share similar lives and difficulties. For example, one story was about a character who played in a rain puddle despite his parents' warning. After coming home thoroughly soaked, his parents punished him, which drove home the lesson that he should listen to his parents ("Carl Tells on Himself"). Another story was about a character who visited his grandfather, and he was not particularly nice to him. But seeing how kind his brothers were to their grandfather, he thought better of his behavior and finally showed more consideration and respect to the elder ("So Much to Remember"). By reading and engaging with the deep meaning of these stories, Amish children learn how to solve problems through interpersonal or human-nature relationships. They become aware of the importance of affection and the bonds between humans, and the value of a peaceful mind. Ultimately, they learn important Amish values such as submission and modesty. Accordingly, these readings and the lessons within them provide Amish children with insights into the significance of the close relationships between home and community, humble attitudes, and cooperation. In addition, the inclusion of a certain amount of illustrations in the reading section makes the stories easier to understand, even stories with relatively sophisticated topics such as Amish religious values. Thus, the Children's Section articles effectively facilitate family-based education for the Amish, who use the stories to convey values and identity to their children, ultimately with the aim helping them realize a state of peace and well-being.

## Note

- 1) The word "life-learning education" means that the most important thing children should learn is how human beings and animals, as well as plants, are born, spend time living their lives, and wane. Thus, it is the main idea for everyone to learn by life-long learning, which is not covered only by studying at schools.

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