Old Order Amish are a secluded religious group that began in Switzerland in 1693 from Swiss and Alsatian Anabaptists who immigrated to the United States from the Palatine region of Germany, leaving no Amish in Europe. A 2008 study suggested the Amish population had increased to 227,000 and in 2010 a study suggested their population had grown by 10 percent in the past two years to 249,000, with increasing movement to the western states. While most Americans have had a birthrate too low to maintain the population since the early 1970s, the Amish continue to have 6–7 children while benefiting from the decrease in infant and maternal mortality in the 20th century. Some studies claim that between 1992 and 2013, the Amish population increased by 120% while the US population increased by only 23%. These estimates of Amish population growth cite a "doubling time" but do not substantiate the source from which the estimate was derived. A precise counting of children and adults would be near impossible but the current study provides a calculation of "doubling time" based on the net change in the number of Amish households from hundreds of Amish settlements over the last five years. Information of the number of households in an Amish settlement provides the mean to calculate a more scientifically established and statistically precise doubling time number. Assuming a constant rate of change, doubling time is the logarithmic value for the number 2 (doubling), divided by the logarithmic value for the value derived from the number of households at time 2 divided by the number of households at time 1. Or, using the "rule of 70", the natural log value of 2 divided by the rate of change. This finds the doubling time for the Amish population in the US to be 21.03 years.

Inarguably, the most important demographic feature of the Old Order Amish over the past century is population increase. The social forces that drive this increase are large families, a

high rate of retention through baptism of daughters and sons into the Amish faith, and little attrition or switching to non-Amish church groups among baptized adults.

The purpose of this poster presentation is to report the time it takes the Amish population to double in size and to provide a more scientific suggestion of how to calculate doubling time. Doubling time allows for a systematic and empirically sound study of population dynamics in different societies and subcultures.

This study attempts to document population increase through the use of the demographic concept of doubling time. It uses an estimate developed from five years of end-of-year statistics on the number of households in over 500 Amish settlements published in *The Diary*, a monthly Amish publication. Based on this these statistics the doubling time for the Amish is 21.3 years.

According to the United Nations 2012 population report, the 5-year average percentage of change in the Canadian population was +1.129 and for the United States it was +0.923. Assuming these rates are constant the doubling time for Canada and the United States are 61.47 years and 75.44 years, respectfully. With the Amish doubling time being 21.3 years it is indeed difficult to find any single country or single group who has a doubling time lower than the Old Order Amish.