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The Influence of Religious Dogma on Perceptions of Modern Technology in the Mennonite Communities of Upper Barton Creek and Spanish Lookout in Belize

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Oral Presentation O12.1

**THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS DOGMA ON PERCEPTIONS OF MODERN
TECHNOLOGY IN THE MENNONITE COMMUNITIES OF UPPER BARTON
CREEK AND SPANISH LOOKOUT IN BELIZE**

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This study is an inquiry into how religious dogma influences social style amongst the two Mennonite communities of Upper Barton Creek and Spanish Lookout in Belize, and furthermore, investigates how this dogma molds religious convictions concerning the utilization of modern technology and the adoption of a modern lifestyle. The objectives of this study are threefold in scope: (1) to ascertain the differences in observable lifestyle between the communities of Barton Creek and Spanish Lookout, specifically how they differ socio-economically, (2) to determine the predominant beliefs concerning technology and modern lifestyle in each community and (3) how these convictions are rooted in the differing ideologies of Barton Creek and Spanish Lookout. Through observation and questioning members of each community from a comparative baseline of theological questions and topics, it becomes clear that the traditional and ascetic lifestyle of the Barton Creek Mennonites and the progressive and modern lifestyle of the Spanish Lookout Mennonites are related to contrasting notions of religious dogma that has evolved throughout their shared theological history.