

GOD WILL NOT PROVIDE: HASIDIC JEWS AND FRAUD

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Though uncommon, the occurrence of welfare fraud in Hasidic Judaism—a small, unassimilated sect of Judaism—is apparent because of these families’ tendency to be large and for the parents to be uneducated. These sociological characteristics may incentivize this group of people to look for alternative modes of gaining income, and therefore, rationalize some members’ participation in rings, as well as smaller-scale frauds.

These frauds cause substantial harm to the Hasidic community and society at-large. As long as these types of frauds occur, society may characterize all Hasidic Jews as responsible for this fraud, thus reflecting negatively on this generally moral and law-abiding group. Additionally, those individuals who commit welfare fraud palm onto

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the rest of society the responsibility of paying for welfare and the burdens of their crimes. Because of welfare fraud, the government may raise taxes to handle the overwhelming welfare requests, and the state bears the costs of prosecuting fraudulent defendants, as well as potentially housing them in jail.

Part I begins with a brief history of the Hasidic Jewish Community and their way of life in the United States. We shall see that this unassimilated community's sociological groundwork provides an incentive to participate in fraudulent activities. Part II provides an overview of some of the fraudulent activities taking place in the Hasidic community as well as related religions and cults. Lastly, Part III presents a solution to these problems. Society needs a different legal approach to curbing welfare fraud. Ultimately, the current laws unsuccessfully limit these activities, and laws aimed at religion will not pass constitutional muster. Therefore, a change in welfare laws is necessary.