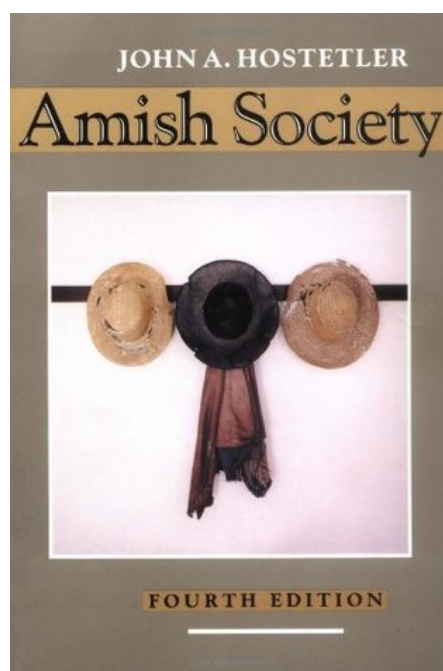




Amish Society

John A. Hostetler

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Highly acclaimed in previous editions—with more than 85,000 copies in print— this classic work by John Hostetler has been expanded and updated to reflect current research on Amish history and culture as well as the new concerns of Amish communities throughout North America. In this fourth edition of *Amish Society* Hostetler takes the reader inside Amish culture and explains the nature of Amish religious beliefs and ceremonies, community and family life, tensions with worldly values, and interactions with outsiders. He offers updated information on a variety of topics, including Amish population trends, land use and farming practices, and relations with the state.

Amish Society Details

Date : Published April 1st 1993 by Johns Hopkins University Press (first published May 1968)

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Author : John A. Hostetler

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From Reader Review Amish Society for online ebook

Nicollette says

This book was very resourceful to have a deeper look into the Amish life/ways of living.

Sumi says

The author grew up in an Old Order Amish family, so he is something of an authority in a personal sense. It covers just about every aspect of their lives as well as their origins and their struggles to preserve their way of life.

Rose says

This was written by a former Amishman who became a sociologist (He taught at Penn State). With both the background and the training, it's not surprising that it's compelling. (My one quibble is that it's a little rambling and repetitive). I had no idea that it was common for Amish teenage boys to go to Florida during the winter to be Bellboys in hotels.

Given that this was published in 1963, it has to be rather out of date, though I'd think less so for the Amish than for most groups, given their great resistance to change. For instance, there is no mention of the "Bikers and Buggies" scandals of the 1990s, but there are foreshadowings of unseemly relationships with outsiders, and wildness of teenagers. (I suspect that there just weren't any Bikers in Lancaster county in the 50s.)

Jill Crosby says

The definitive text on the Amish religion & culture. It's slightly dated, but meticulously documented.

Serena says

A fascinating and well structured book about the lives of the Amish. I am putting this one off for a little bit, as I'm going to begin reading the Anita Shreve book and I may be in over my head.

Emily says

This is **the** work on the Amish. I recently attended an academic conference on the Amish, and nearly every scholar referenced John Hostetler at least once. If you've read some of the (high-quality) books put out by The People's Place and would really like to know more, this is where to look.

BHodges says

A sympathetic and interesting approach to the Amish, covering the origin of the movement, its development, fragmenting, and adjustments to maintain distance from contemporary society. I liked it.

Gene Bales says

This work by a former member of the Amish community turned sociologist is a bit old (published in the 1960's), but an excellent introduction to the religious life of the Amish. While the Amish have always been a curiosity for many, I find much to admire about their life, certainly about the way they live out the message of Jesus.

At the same time, however, I found myself thinking a great deal about how my own experience of Catholicism back in the 50's and 60's was not all that different. I refer especially to the strong in-group mentality, and the resulting tensions with the "world". One of the strengths of the book is the clear outline of where the tensions are with the Amish and how they have come to cope. It is not surprising that sex and youth are a major issue, but it is unexpected (at least to me) that the desire for further education often led people out of the group.

Every religion, every denomination, must cope with boundaries--who's in and who's not--and the Amish have a fairly awful way of doing that--the custom of "shunning" people. But the curious thing is that this practice never seems to come up against the boundary-crossing that was the life and preaching of Jesus. And the Amish have introduced many other considerations into being a follower of Jesus that would seem to have only a tangential relation to anything. But there is a curious kind of wisdom to their extraordinary technological conservatism--they live out perfectly what it is to withdraw from the world as much as possible. Monks do the same thing, more or less.

But as the Benedictines often said, just when you thought you left the world behind it reappears inside your own community. Join the monastery and see the world, was the slogan (and that did have several meanings).

Christianity cannot be about withdrawing from the world. That rests on some kind of dualism. The Holy Spirit was supposed to be a gift for all to lead us outward, not inward. The Amish have much to fear, and in fact many Christians do as well. But faith is not founded on fear. A life lived in faith is a life lived with hope as one lives in the world.

Jane says

Oddly enough this is an unforgettable book & one that I'll never give away. It provides interesting information about the Amish. It's one that I will pick up every so often & turn to any page & whatever is there, is interesting!

Jennifer says

Very informative and thorough look at the Amish, their background, their customs and beliefs. Generally easy to read and well written. Sometimes verbose and repetitive, but it's easy enough to skim when that's arises.

Julie says

This is still the most respected volume ever written on Amish Society. It was my textbook when I was editing our magazine, "Heritage Country." I tried very hard not to make mistakes in print regarding Amish people and culture. I learned a lot more from experience than from books, though. Hostetler's book is full of excellent scholarship, and he himself was born Amish. For anyone who lives near Amish communities, it is a helpful, though somewhat heavy at times, compendium of topics regarding Amish life across America.

Mary says

I didn't finish this book but need to take it back to the library. It was very interesting though not a gripping novel but it starts the brain thinking and I enjoyed learning a bit more of the beginnings of the religion and the culture.

Patti says

We spent two days in Pennsylvania. I wanted so much to be Amish when I was a child. My great escape from the insanity of my household in the early years was to play in the backyard alone and pretend I was a "prairie girl." When we travelled to Pennsylvania in 1969, just before my parents divorced, I saw the Amish people and begged for my parents to leave me there as I was sure their life would be better than the one I was living. So began my interest and study of the Amish people. Our grandchildren believe I am Amish at heart. Anyway, this book is giving me plenty of new insight and information and I am thoroughly enjoying it.

This book was very informative and intriguing to me. Plenty to mull over and consider.

Kris says

It's not really this book's fault; I'm just not in much of a non-fiction mood, plus it's pretty outdated by now (though does that matter with the Amish?) so I quit reading it. It's well-written and informative though.

Keith says

Amish communities are growing in number and acceptance today. These societies become more and more interesting as the world becomes more and more complex. This is a good book for an overview on Amish

beginnings, beliefs, and lifestyle.

Kathy says

This is a very intriguing society. On the one hand it's awesome that they are able to be a people who don't use technology, but on the other they don't believe in knowledge for the sake of knowledge and they are hypocrites because they do use technology sometimes. They let others drive them around and some use tractors. I say if you're going to make a rule, stick to it. Don't pretend like you're not doing something. It's hard for me to decide if it's a life I could live. I like that they farm and that they don't learn stuff that's not practical, but I love to learn about stuff. I'm not quite sure why they don't allow pictures and real music. Kinda reminds me of "Big Love" and the polygamists. I don't think I could live without pictures and music.

Meg says

I have an obsession with the Amish community. The author of this book grew up Amish...but he does not share much from his experiences. The book is interesting and easy to read and comprehend. If you are only going to read one book about the Amish, I recommend the other book-- The Riddle of the Amish Culture, but this one is also good.

Amy says

I read this book just to learn about the Amish society. It was very interesting when talking specifically about their lifestyle and beliefs. The beginning chapters about their history and immigrating from Europe were less interesting, but I'm glad I spent time learning something instead of just reading for entertainment.

Linda says

After visiting Lancaster, PA and touring the Amish sites and Mennonite cultural center, I wanted to learn more about their society and how/why they stay so removed from modern life's issues and conveniences. This book is a sociological review of their history, their values, their difficulties, and their growth. I enjoyed it from this perspective. Sometimes it was difficult to keep focused, and there was repetition of key points throughout the narrative. However, it served my purpose - I learned what I wanted to learn.

Melanie Mole says

What this book doesn't cover about the Amish isn't worth knowing. I have never read a book with so many interesting facts about Amish life. The photographs are plentiful, and the knowledge base was far beyond my expectations. A bit heavy going at times though because of the small print. But overall very interesting though.
