

# **Sociology 364: Amish Society**

**Elizabethtown College, Fall 2006**

## **Syllabus**

Time: Tuesday, 6:30–9:15 p.m.  
Room: Young Center Seminar Room  
Instructor: Donald B. Kraybill  
Office: Young Center

Office Hours: By appointment  
Office Phone: 1469 or 1470  
E-mail: kraybilld@etown.edu

[This syllabus may be changed at the discretion of the instructor any time during the semester]

### **Required Texts**

Kraybill, Donald B. *The Riddle of Amish Culture*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, rev.ed. 2001.

Kraybill, Donald B. *Guide for Instructors and Students to Riddle*. Private printing, 2001.  
(Purchase from instructor or access on instructor's public folder)

Thomas J. Meyers and Steven M. Nolt, *An Amish Patchwork*. Indiana University Press, 2005.

Kraybill, Donald B. *The Amish: Why They Enchant Us*. Herald Press, 2003.

Kraybill, Donald B and Marc Olshan. *The Amish Struggle with Modernity*. University Press of New England, 1994. (Purchase from instructor in class).

### **Course Description**

An introduction to the history, culture, and social organization of the Old Order Amish of North America with special focus on the Lancaster (PA) settlement. Sociological theories and models will be used to interpret and analyze Amish society. The course will accentuate the cultural and social differences between Amish society and modern life. Special attention will be paid to recent social changes among the Amish.

### **Course Objectives**

1. To become familiar with the historical roots of Amish society.
2. To understand the key features of Amish culture and social organization.
3. To grasp the analytical models that interpret and explain the survival of Amish society.
4. To appreciate how a socio-cultural-historical perspective explains some of the apparent incongruities and riddles of Amish culture.
5. To understand the cultural and structural adaptations that the Amish have negotiated with modernity.
6. To understand the components of social change in a traditional society.
7. To better understand modern society through the study of a tradition-oriented society.
8. To reflect on features of Amish society may be relevant for modern life.

**Course Requirements**

1. Attendance, participation in assigned activities, class discussion, presentation of research findings, field trip(s), and completion of assigned readings
2. Completion of quizzes
3. Preparation of two brief papers
4. Preparation of a research paper (includes a proposal and presentation in class)
5. Completion of a final exam

**Course Components and Grading Scheme**

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|--|-----|
| 1. Participation in class discussion and related assignments | 10% |
| 2. Quizzes   | 10% |
| 3. Brief Paper 1 & 2 (2 x 10%)                               | 20% |
| 4. Research Presentation                                     | 10% |
| 5. Research Paper  | 25% |
| 6. Final Exam  | 25% |

**Grading**

The five components when averaged together by their relative importance will generate a course grade based on the following scale:

90 – 100 pts	A	Excellent
80 – 89 pts	B	Good
70 – 79 pts	C	Average
60 – 69 pts	D	Poor
below 60 pts	F	Failing

A plus and minus grading system is used to make finer distinctions within each grade. For example:

- 70–72 = C-
- 73–76 = C
- 77–79 = C+

**Sample Grade Calculation**

Participation	85% x .10 =	8.5	pts	
Quizzes	75% x .10 =	7.5	pts	
Brief Paper 1 & 2 (2 x 10%)	90% x .20 =	18.0	pts	
Research Presentation	85% x .10 =	8.5	pts	
Research Paper	85% x .25 =	21.3	pts	
Final Exam	80% x .25 =	<u>20.0</u>	pts	
Total:		83.8	pts	Grade = B

### **Evaluation of Written Work**

Spelling, grammar, style, and appearance will be considered in determining the grade for all written work in the course! All papers (except in-class quizzes) must be typewritten. Late papers will be reduced by a letter grade unless you have obtained prior permission for an alternate date.

### **Examinations**

The final exam will consist of some short answer questions and a series of essay questions covering assigned readings and material presented in class. The essay questions will be randomly selected from a previously distributed list. Weekly quizzes will cover assigned material designated in the course calendar. A quiz may be a one page written assignment or a classroom quiz. Missed quizzes can not be made-up, but the lowest quiz will be dropped from the grade calculation.

### **Plagiarism and Cheating**

You are expected to follow the highest standards of academic integrity and honor. Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic integrity and according to College Policy could result in a course grade of F. See *College Catalog* (p. 262-264). Academic dishonesty is a serious issue and you will be held responsible for the full consequences of any violations. Academic integrity applies to exams, written work, use of internet resources, and any other information that you present as your own. Inappropriate use of the ideas or work of others without full acknowledgement is considered plagiarism. Please read and be familiar with the booklet *Academic Integrity at Elizabethtown College*. In this course, if you write “pledged” on your papers and exams, it will mean, “I have not used the work of others without acknowledgement. This solely represents my work.” I encourage you to “pledge” all of your papers and exams.

### **Class Attendance and Participation**

You are expected to attend class regularly, to be prepared to discuss the assigned material, to engage in class discussions, and to participate in assigned class activities. Poor attendance and poor participation will adversely affect the class participation component of your grade.

**Papers** All papers must be typed with 1.5 line spacing and 1.0 margins.

**Brief Paper I** (3 pages) Due: Sept 26, 2006  
A persuasive essay on “What Good Are the Amish?”

**Brief Paper II** (3 pages) Due: November 21, 2006  
A “Supreme Court Brief on Amish Education”

**Research Paper** (15–16 pages): Due: December 8, 2006  
A comparison of a selected feature of Amish life with modern society

### **Field Trips**

As a part of the course requirements, you are expected to participate in one or more field trips, which will be scheduled **outside** the regular class time. One of these may involve one full-day field trip, a worship service or both, and also an evening meal in an Amish home. The meal will cost about \$15.00. More details regarding the exact dates and plans will be announced in class.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

Any student whose disability falls within ADA guidelines should inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester of any special accommodations or equipment needs necessary to complete the requirements for this course. If you have a documented disability and need reasonable accommodations to fully participate in the course activities or meet course requirements, you must: 1) contact the Director of Disability Services, Shirley Deichert in the Center for Student Success, BSC 228 (361-1227), [deichesa@etown.edu](mailto:deichesa@etown.edu) and 2) meet with me, the instructor, within two weeks of receiving a copy of the accommodation letter from Disability Services to discuss your accommodation needs and their implementation.

### **Specifications for Papers**

#### **Citation Format:**

You may use any **standard** citation/style format (MLA, APA, CBE, Chicago) of your choice as long as you follow it **consistently** and indicate at the end of the paper which standard style you followed. You may also use the author/date style as found in *Riddle*.

#### **Brief Paper I**

##### **Persuasive Essay: “What Good Are the Amish”**

Length: 3 pages (typed, double spaced)

Due date: October 3, 2006

Organization: The paper should be organized around a thesis statement of your choice. Develop a persuasive argument and provide supporting evidence. Use at least five primary or secondary sources. Address one of the following issues:

1. What can moderns learn from the Amish?
2. What can the Amish teach us about the social roots of happiness and contentment?
3. What can the Amish teach us about balancing individual freedom and the common good?
4. With permission of the instructor you may select another topic, of your choice (e.g., “Why Amish schools are superior to American public schools” or “Why the Amish are a repressive society”).

**Brief Paper II**  
**Supreme Court Brief on Amish Education**

Length: 3 pages (typed, double spaced)

Due date: October 17, 2006

In class we will re-enact the 1972 U.S. Supreme Court Decision known as *Wisconsin vs. Yoder*. The case focuses on whether Amish students should be permitted to “drop out” of school after completing eighth grade or continue in school until they are 16 years old as required by law.

You will be divided into two groups: 1) Attorneys for the State of Wisconsin and, 2) Attorneys for the Amish. Several outsiders will be selected to serve as Supreme Court Justices. Students representing Wisconsin will prepare a one page legal brief (Quiz) that summarizes their argument of the State *against* the Amish. Students representing the Amish will prepare a one page legal brief (Quiz) that *supports* the Amish position. The following week Paper II is due. You may take either side of the issue in Paper II

**Research Paper**  
**Comparative Analysis of an Amish and Modern Practice**

Length: 15-18 pages (typed, double spaced)

Due date: December 8, 2006

Sources: The research paper should utilize at least 12 different sources, including primary source materials whenever possible. Internet sources must be approved by the instructor.

Organization:

1. Describe a particular aspect of Amish life (10-12 pages).
2. Describe the same aspect in modern culture (3 pages).
3. Compare the social consequences of the selected issue. The focus of this section of the paper should be on the social consequences of the differences, e.g., What difference do these differences make? So what? (3 pages).

Sample topics: schools, work, gender roles, funerals, healthcare, holidays, weddings, use of automobile, higher education, understanding of the self, diet, beliefs, values, mobility, bureaucracy, family size, use of tractors, use of electricity, dress, church leaders, use of meetinghouses, images of the Amish in mass media (novels, movies, popular culture), ex-Amish, sexual/domestic abuse, *Amish in the City*, etc. See *Guide* for more examples. Two or more students are discouraged from writing on the same topic, but may do so with the instructor’s permission.

A one-page proposal listing at least five sources is due September 26. The proposal should provide an overview of your topic and explain your methods of research. TWO COPIES of the first three pages of the paper and a listing of **ALL** reference sources is due October 31. You are expected to present a brief summary of your research findings in class.

## Resource Books on Reserve at High Library

- \*Dewalt, Mark. *Amish Education in the United States and Canada*. 2006
- Hostetler, John A. *Amish Society*. 1993. **289.7 H831a4**
- Hostetler, John A. and Huntington, Gertrude Enders. *Amish Children: Education in the Family, School, and Community*. 1992. **377.897 H831a2**
- Keim, Albert N. *Compulsory Education and the Amish: The Right Not to Be Modern*. 1975. **379.23 K27c**
- Kraybill, Donald B., ed., *The Amish and the State*. 2003. **322.1 Am517**
- Kraybill, Donald B. and Bowman, Carl F. *On the Backroad to Heaven: Old Order Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren*. 2001. **289.73 K91o**
- Kraybill, Donald B. and Hostetter, C. Nelson. *Anabaptist World USA*. 2001. **289.773 K91a**
- \*Kraybill, Donald B. and James Hurd. *Horse and Buggy Mennonites: Hoofbeats of Humility in a Postmodern World*. 2006
- \*Kraybill, Donald B. and Steve Nolt. *Amish Enterprise: From Plows to Profits*. 2004
- Kraybill, Donald B. and Olshan, Marc A., eds., *The Amish Struggle with Modernity*. 1994. **289.73 Am517**
- Pellman, Kenneth and Scott, Stephen. *Living Without Electricity*. 1990. **289.73 Sco429i**
- \*Peters, Shawn. *The Yoder Case*. 2003.
- Scott, Stephen. *The Amish Wedding and Other Special Occasions of the Old Order Communities*. 1988. **289.7 Sco429a**
- Scott, Stephen. *Plain Buggies: Amish, Mennonite, and Brethren Horse-Drawn Transportation*. 1981. **688.6 Sco429p**
- Scott, Stephen. *Why Do They Dress That Way?* 1986. **289.7 Sco429w**
- \*Shachtman, Tom, *Rumspringa: To Be or Not To Be Amish*. 2006
- Stoltzfus, Louise. *Amish Women: Lives and Stories*. 1994. **289.7 St876a**
- Weaver-Zercher, David. *The Amish in the American Imagination*. 2001. **289.773 W363a**
- \* **Will be placed on reserve as soon as it arrives in the library.**

**Fall 2006 Class Schedule**

<b>Aug 29</b>	Who Are the Anabaptists? Who Are the Amish?	
<b>Sept 7</b>	No Class [Thursday schedule of day and evening classes]	
12	An Overview of Amish Society	W=all; R=1; S=1
19	Amish Culture and the Challenge of Modernity	R=2; S=2
26	Symbols and Social Structure	R=3, 4; S=14
	<b>Paper I Due</b>	
<b>Oct 3</b>	Rituals of Redemption and Solidarity (Devil's Play Ground)	R=3, 4
	<b>Research Proposal Due</b>	
10	Socialization and Education (Wisconsin vs. Yoder debate)	R=7; S=5
	Public Lecture: <b>The Riddle of Amish Culture</b> (8 pm)	
12-15	Fall Break	
17	The Puzzles of Technology <b>Paper II Due</b>	R=8, 9
	Public Lecture: <b>How the Amish Tame Technology</b> (8 pm)	
24	Occupational Change	R=10, S=9, 10
	Public Lecture: <b>From Plows to Profits: The Rise of Amish Business</b> (8 pm)	
31	Public Relations, Politics, and Freedom of Religion	R=11, S=7
	<b>First Three Pages of Research Paper Due</b>	
	Public Lecture: <b>Bush Fever: The Amish &amp; the 2004 Election</b> (8 pm)	
<b>Nov 7</b>	Amish Diversity in Indiana (Ohio Video)	P=1 to 8, Afterword
14	Managing Social Change	R=12, S=3, 4
21	Our Common Riddles (Debate)	R= 13
23-26	Thanksgiving Break	
28	Research Presentations	
<b>Dec 5</b>	Research Presentations	
8	<b>Research Paper Due</b>	
12	Final Exam	

**Key to readings:** R=Riddle; S=Struggle; W=Why They Enchant; P=Patchwork