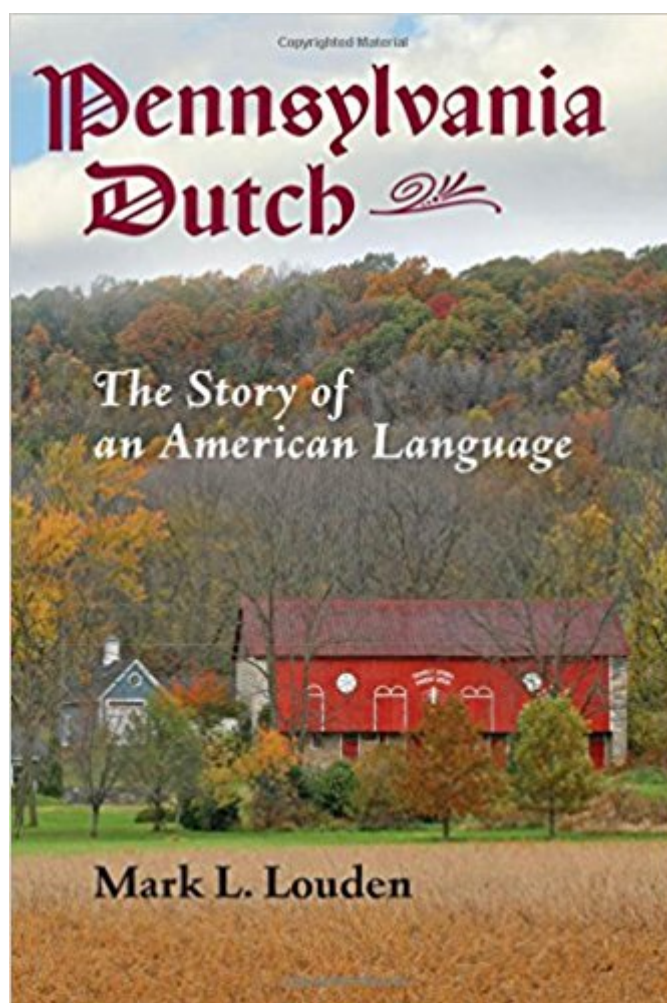


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# Pennsylvania Dutch: The Story Of An American Language (Young Center Books In Anabaptist And Pietist Studies)



## Synopsis

While most world languages spoken by minority populations are in serious danger of becoming extinct, Pennsylvania Dutch is thriving. In fact, the number of Pennsylvania Dutch speakers is growing exponentially, although it is spoken by less than one-tenth of one percent of the United States population and has remained for the most part an oral vernacular without official recognition or support. A true sociolinguistic wonder, Pennsylvania Dutch has been spoken continuously since the late eighteenth century, even though it has never been "refreshed" by later waves of immigration from abroad. In this probing study, Mark L. Loudon, himself a fluent speaker of Pennsylvania Dutch, provides readers with a close look at the place of the language in the life and culture of two major subgroups of speakers: the "Fancy Dutch," whose ancestors were affiliated mainly with Lutheran and German Reformed churches, and conservative Anabaptist sectarians known as the "Plain people" — the Old Order Amish and Mennonites. Drawing on scholarly literature, three decades of fieldwork, and ample historical documents — most of which have never before been made accessible to English-speaking readers — this is the first book to offer a comprehensive look at this unlikely linguistic success story.

## Book Information

Series: Young Center Books in Anabaptist and Pietist Studies

Hardcover: 504 pages

Publisher: Johns Hopkins University Press; 1st Ed. edition (January 20, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1421418282

ISBN-13: 978-1421418285

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.4 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #755,241 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #45 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Denominations & Sects > Mennonite](#) #355 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Denominations & Sects > Amish](#) #1968 in [Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Linguistics](#)

## Customer Reviews

"Mark L. Loudon is the foremost scholar of Pennsylvania Dutch. A significant contribution to linguistic, sociolinguistic, historical, and anthropological scholarship, his book is extensively

researched, accessible, and filled with a wealth of language examples that will appeal to a wide audience." (Karen Johnson-Weiner, SUNY Potsdam, coauthor of *The Amish*) "[Pennsylvania Dutch] is written in a very accessible style and provides good information about the Pennsylvania Dutch language." (Canadian Mennonite) "Louden captures the spirit of the folk-cultural narrative and remains engaging, accessible and entertaining to a wide range of audiences." (Pennsylvania Heritage) "Mark Louden, author of *Pennsylvania Dutch: The Story of an American Language*, surely has written the definitive guide to the subject." (Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society) "Indeed, this is a one-of-a-kind, exceptionally valuable book... So, scrape your pennies together, and go buy this book-before it's sold out!" (Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage) "Louden's interdisciplinary work, sweeping as it does through centuries of history and across a vast continent, draws on three decades of study into the language's evolution and social history." (Mennonite World Review) "Louden successfully weaves a complex tapestry that provides an exhaustive historical account of this language and its speakers and is easily accessible to multiple audiences. Upon finishing this work the scholar is left curious as to what the future holds for Pennsylvania Dutch and its legacy." (H-Net Reviews) "This book is the first attempt at researching and synthesizing the historical, cultural, and linguistic development of Pennsylvania Dutch across all the communities that speak it. It is a bold and broad goal. I'm happy to say that Louden has set the highest standard for any subsequent attempts... It is wonderful story to follow from 1683 to the present." (Journal of Amish and Plain Anabaptist Studies) "*Pennsylvania Dutch: The Story of an American Language* is a splendid addition to the discipline of linguistics and, more specifically, to the field of Pennsylvania Dutch language and culture. A language this remarkable thanks to its Old Order speakers, it is one of only a few heritage languages in America that is not endangered and deserves a first-rate book, and this is it. It will likely be unsurpassed for years to come." (Communal Societies.....)"Compiling the most in-depth treatment of Pennsylvania Dutch is no small task, yet Louden achieves this feat. The book is accessible to academics within and outside of Pennsylvania Dutch studies, as well as to speakers of the language who want to know more about it." (Journal of Germanic Linguistics) "It [Pennsylvania Dutch] uses a wealth of sources, pamphlets, letters, poems, and newspaper articles... it is a great resource." (The Mennonite Quarterly) "This book abounds in marvelous historical and cultural details, together with language examples and linguistic curiosities that are sure to delight." (The Journal of American History) "*Pennsylvania Dutch* is an enlightening, educational and enjoyable read, mostly due to the skill of the author." (Journal of Mennonite Studies)

Mark L. Loudon is a professor of Germanic linguistics and codirector of the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The book "Pennsylvania Dutch: The Story of an American Language" by Mark L. Loudon is very interesting and gave me a thorough understanding of the Pennsylvania Dutch language around my hometown area of Lititz, PA.

I got this book for my husband and he said he thought it was very 'gut'!

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