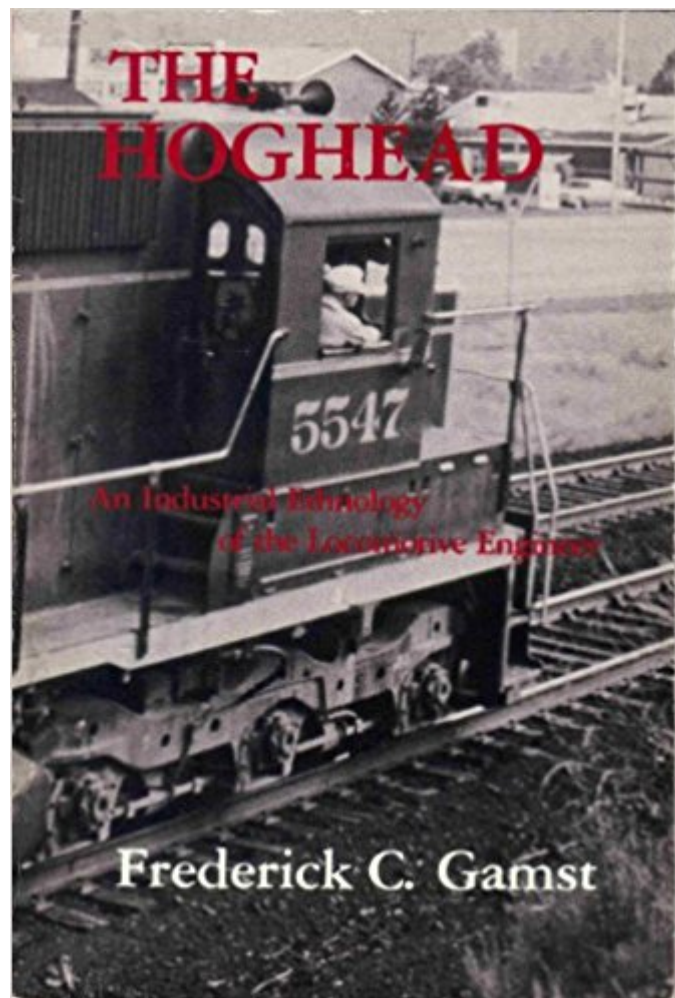




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Hoghead: Industrial Ethnology Of The Locomotive Engineer (Case Study In Cultural Anthropology)



Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is as far as I know, the ONLY serious study concerning what railroad work entails and how railroaders become enculturated into their crafts. It is written specifically from the perspective of the Locomotive Engineer (Engine Driver, for those of you living outside the USA). Author Frederick Gamst writes in his preface that he conducted his research between 1955 and 1961, during 6 1/2 years employment in engine service, as well as fieldwork between 1970 and 1975. Gamst refers to the individuals, unions, and companies by fictitious names in this book to protect privacy, also undoubtedly not to discourage participation in the future. The railroad he worked for and later further researched is fictitiously called the "Central City and Urbana Railroad". According to other works by Gamst I have read, it appears to have been the Western Division of the Southern Pacific. For those with no experience whatsoever in Anthropology or Sociology, don't despair! Dr. Gamst explains the importance and meaning of industrial ethnology as well as he explains railroad terms, customs, and behaviors. Chapters include: 1. Introduction (Scope of the Book, In the Rail World, Industrial Ethnology) 2. The Railroad and its Setting (Development of the railroads and the United States, Railroads in Contemporary American Society, The Geographical Setting of the CC & U) 3. Hiring Out (Enculturating the Railroader, Becoming a Student, Examining the Diesel-Electric, Learning the Craft, Flattening Wheels, Learning, A Retrospection) 4. Operating and Other Rules (The Book of Rules, Scope of Rules, Local Additions to Rules, Rules as Ideal and Actual Patterns, Examinations

on Rules, Rules, a Retrospection5. Freight Train, Freight Train, Goes So Slow (The call is out, Bean time conversation, In the register room, Leaving Town, The Man in Charge, The Delayer)6. On the High Iron (Running to Cementon, Picking up Cars, Radioing Ahead, Hotboxes, "It was on this grade...", Down the Hill, Setting Out)7. The Home Terminal (Heading home, Arriving at Urbana Terminal, Mileage, other good, and protection of good, Off The Job)8. Future Trends for the Hoghead (Railroad growth in a developed country, rail demographics, The hoghead is a Lady, Energeticlimits to Growth, Technological Development, Diversification, Nationalization, and Regulation)*References & GlossaryWhile 25 years down the line, a few of the things Gamst discusses are outdated, as a Railroad Conductor who has worked in both freight and passenger service, many more things discussed here are still relevant. There is still pride in our craft, and we still hire out, get quits, go to beans, spot cars, pull cars, make set-outs and pick-ups...On a personal level, this volume (and several of his other published works) was an inspiration and help to me during my senior year in College when I did a study on railroad occupational subculture, and needed ideas for structuring my project and conducting interviews with railroad employees. Gamst has in essence provided a template for further research on our subculture, offering a well thought out and planned work which clarifies what makes a Rail, a Rail.

Fred Gamst worked with my father many years ago, so I was a little familiar in part with the culture of the railroader, but this really digs into the culture and sub culture of the railroad environment.

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