

## **The Amish have a distinctive and unique culture, do you agree?**

**By Lilli Belfield 10JTH**

The Amish culture has a very distinct and unique culture. It's rules, regulations, beliefs and take on life is very different to our norms. In this essay I will explore the Amish culture.

One of the things very central to an Amish life is their religion. Amish people have Christian beliefs and believe that living how god wants them to is essential. This way of life is called Gelassenheit. This is basically when they submit to god's guidance and serve others.

Another thing that is important to the Amish culture is the way the men and women have there own set roles. For example the women make the food and clothes where as the men do farm work and woodcraft. This separation of the jobs the men and women do is a old fashion idea and shows how the Amish live very much out of 21<sup>st</sup> century life.

A belief that is also is important to the Amish is that where as we live in a multicultural society the Amish live separately. The Amish believe that living separately is essential for salvation.

In the Amish culture rejection to violence is a norm. They believe that strife an jealousy have no place in their lives and people that don't oblige to their ways are often warned privately first then shunned after which (shunning being when you are forced to leave the community).

Something central to Amish values is Gelassenheit as well as being a huge part of the religious views this idea also explains why the Amish reject such things as jewellery, make-up, hair styling, showy dress (this includes the use of buttons and hooks) and flashy coloured fabric.

All these things are the norms of an Amish life. Comparing to our ideas, beliefs and views to the Amish's ideas, beliefs and views is quite a contrast and make theirs seem rather different and odd. There are many differences between the Amish culture and the British culture to which I belong.

For example where as in the Amish culture one thing very central to their lives is the love and commitment to religion where as in the British culture religion isn't such a big part of our lives for most people, our main commitments being to our families, work and etcetera.

Another thing that you can easily compare between the Amish culture and the British culture is that we have equal rights as men and women where as in the Amish culture the women are expected to cook and clean and the men do the labour work. These Amish views are considered to be old fashioned and sexiest to us where as in the Amish culture they are seen to be perfectly acceptable and normal. In our culture there is nothing wrong with a man being a chef or a women being a mechanic where as in the Amish culture this wouldn't be acceptable.

Rejection to violence in the Amish culture is a big thing where as in the British culture we try to condone it but it is still part of our everyday lives. People in the British culture are always getting murdered, stabbed etc. where as in the Amish culture this is almost unheard of. The deterrents for these in our societies are also different as in British culture we have such sanctions as being arrested, put in jail etc. where as in the Amish culture the simple punishment is to be shunned.

One of the most major contrasts between our cultures is the idea of Gelassenheit as in the British culture it is like wrong to be un-fashionable, to not wear jewellery and make-up, to not style your hair and to wear bright fabric where as in the Amish culture these things would be strictly looked down upon as they go against there idea of Gelassenheit, which basically means to give up any selfish idea and live how god wanted you to.

Both the British and Amish cultures have their strengths and weakness and they are both different in good and bad ways. There is no right or wrong way to live and neither the British nor the Amish can say they have got it right in my opinion they both have there highs and lows of being part of that culture.

From learning about the Amish I can say one of the things I think is good about there culture is how they work together and share I think this a strength as everyone gains from it rather than in the British culture everyone is more or less on there own.

A weakness of the Amish culture I would say is that they take the idea of Gelassenheit a bit too far in my opinion especially the idea of not having such as buttons on clothes and such as these are in my opinion useless rules, where as in the British culture we are free to have proper fasteners and such on our clothes.

One of the things I also like about the Amish culture is its negligence to violence as I don't think any culture needs violence to function. In my opinion British culture would be a lot better if violence wasn't an issue in everyday life for us.

A weakness in the Amish culture I think is the way they are so old fashion with women and men being majorly discriminated. Where as in our culture men and women have equal rights and have an equal place in society.

Now after finding out about the Amish cultures norms and deviants and finding out about their everyday lives and how they live compared to being part of the British culture I can say that there are aspects of their lives that I could relate to and would be quite happy to include in my life but there are such things that I find hard to relate to, understand, and would not want to be a part of.

After taking all things into consideration I wouldn't swap places to go into the Amish culture and way of life my reasons for this decision is that everyday things to me such as computers, clothes, television, electricity and most of all music has grown a custom to my life and I think it would be hard to be without them although if I was born into a Amish culture I think it might be quite a nice life although you don't have these things because you have never had them to know what it is like to be without them.

To conclude I think that the Amish culture is interesting, unique and distinctive and certainly different to our way of life.