

# British modern day society, values and norms

Family



This essay is going to look at the families in the Amish Society and British Modern Day Society. The essay will demonstrate understanding of their cultures, values, norms and inequalities.

The Amish society first originated in 1662 in Europe and the first Amish arrived in Pennsylvania in the 1730's to escape persecution in Europe. The Amish church started as a breakaway from the Anabaptists (adult baptizers) in Switzerland in 1693, led by Jakob Ammann. Frater, J. (2012) According to BBC Religions (2009) the Amish believe that the community is at the heart of their life and faith, and that the way to salvation is to live as a loving community apart from the world. Individualism is avoided.

The Amish have very strong religious values in their culture, part of their daily routine is to " pray up to seven times in one day, the first pray time being at around 3. 30 in a morning". (Living with the Amish, 2012) As a result of their devout beliefs they do not use electric, mobile phones or internet that would keep them in touch with the modern world. They do make allowances and some to use technology in the workplaces.

The Amish society believes in monogamy and forbid divorce, If one partner initiates divorce they may be excommunicated. The spouse and children are allowed to remain Amish however the spouse may not remarry until the previous partner dies. Hurst, C. (2010) Overall the Amish family structures are still very much of a nuclear one. There is no marriage outside of their society. Very unlike the British modern day society, where marriage has now moved forward, it's primary function is no longer to legitimize the children born to couples who are cohabitating, A contraceptive revolution now allows cohabitation and marriage without having children. Some 20% of women

today in British modern day society choose voluntary childlessness. Hakim, C. (2004) British modern day society does largely have nuclear families, although now family groups are more flexible with a wide range of diversity.

Such as reconstituted, same sex and single parent families, where in 2006, 23 per cent of children in Great Britain were living in lone parent families Firth (2010). Robert and Rhona Rapoport (1982) were the first British sociologists to point out that nuclear family households have become a minority in Britain and since they first wrote about diversity, nuclear families have continued to become a smaller proportion of all households in the UK. Although Robert Chester (1985) argues that he although there has been some growth in family diversity, he believes that the nuclear family remains the dominant family structure.(AS-Level Sociology p35) In addition parents no longer tend to have conjugal roles roles and working patterns have changed. Compared to the Amish who as Powell (2013) stated, Chores are clearly divided in the Amish home, they still have very segregated roles separated by gender and no egalitarian families.

The Amish family life is that of a simple one, they believe in living separate from non Amish and justify this belief with the quote from the bible " Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?" (II Corinthians 6: 14) Frater, J.(2012) Unlike in British modern day society the Amish do not own cars, they use what they call buggies to travel in, there has been very little march of progress from the Amish.

The Amish also use their dialect as another means to keep their society separate, although they can speak English, they are not comfortable with it

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and they feel speaking in their dialect provides a prudent way of keeping the world at bay while equally preserving their Amish identity (Kraybill, 2001) Wilkes (2008) wrote of a research carried out that said Britain has lost its "moral compass" with society blighted by selfishness, greed and family breakdown. In British modern day society the focus is very much around money and material goods, there is little religion ties or beliefs, unlike the Amish who live by the unwritten rules of the Ordnung. The Ordnung outlines the basics of their faith and although may vary slightly from community to community, it governs an unwritten code of behaviour.

The rules are mostly derived from the Bible but those which aren't are justified by the fact that they will cause a person to ultimately become worldly and thus breach the Biblical laws Frater, J.(2012) Religion Facts (2007) stated that the Ordnung governs everything from clothing and childbearing to occupational activities and how the weekend is spent.

The clothes that the 'Ordnung' governs the Amish to wear are distinctive but plain. Jonathan (2011) spoke of how the men had to wear their shirts with "3 buttons so they aren't not tempted to open it". Powell (2013) also tells us of the dress code set by the 'Ordnung' for woman it is stated that they and girls wear bonnets, long full dresses no higher than 6" above their ankles with capes over their shoulder.

They aren't allowed to wear any jewellery. This is a large contrast to men and women in British Modern Day society who can wear any clothes that they choose, and are hugely focused on brands. The Amish make their own distinctive clothes. They are also not allowed to cut their hair as it is seen as a natural thing given by god, they are to wear a bonnet to cover it. Men are

to wear trousers held up by suspenders, hats with brims of 3 inches. They must grow a beard once they are married but are not permitted to have a mustache.

Schooling is very important to those in British Modern Society," it shall be the duty of the local education authority for every area, so far as their powers extend, to continue towards the spiritual, mental and physical developments of the community" (1944 Education Act Part II, 7) Children in British modern day society start nursery from the age of 3 and are then in the education system now up until the age of 16. Igou (1994) wrote The Amish see many evils in the public schools, which is why they prefer their own private ones. Amish studies (2013) tells us how in 1972, the United States Supreme Court, in a case known as Wisconsin vs. Yoder, ruled that Amish children could end their formal schooling at the age of fourteen. This is when the Amish children join their parents in their roles working with the family, not for capitalism.

This essay shows that although the Amish Society and British modern day Society are very different, Winters (2013) argues that New research has revealed that the nation's values are far more positive and community centred than might be expected, and show that meaningful interpersonal relationships are still central in the lives of most Britons.