

Child psychology: views of pregnancy in european culture

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your first and (your Pregnancy in Europe When a 5-month pregnant Gwyneth Paltrow had a glass of Guinness, people everywhere disapproved and thought she did not care for her baby's health. (O'Reilly) These people believed that drinking alcohol during pregnancy is something very wrong because it harms the unborn baby. Unlike the rest of the world, European women are known for the different attitude they take when pregnant. First, pregnant women eat raw fish. Child-bearing women are warned against eating unpasteurized milk. Raw-milk cheese can be a source of listeria which harms the fetus. (Fletcher) Although this might be true for moist and unripened cheese, the same cannot be said for other raw-milk cheeses. Secondly, European women do drink wine and Guinness because they think it will help them produce breast milk. (Moskin) As with the Gwyneth incident, this practice has been frowned upon by other societies. This is the biggest and 'loudest' activity European women are known for doing while pregnant. This is because the baby's system cannot break down the alcohol the same speed as an adult's can. As such too much alcohol intake by the mother can cause abnormalities in the baby. European women contend that research has only to do with excessive alcohol drinking and not one or two glasses of wine. Moreover, they believe Guinness is high in iron. In contrast, Guinness only contains 3% less of the necessary daily iron intake for adults. (Collins) Lastly, there are a number of folklores that surround pregnancy in Europe. For example, the Welsh believe that hearing an owl brings a pregnant woman good luck. (Owls) In Germany, pregnant women cannot walk over a grave because her child will die. Another belief about pregnancy is how pregnant women are supposed to have a magical effect on the grain, making

it 'pregnant' as well. (Gimbutas) Of course, the most familiar pregnancy practice in Europe is drinking. Taking in a limited amount of alcohol while with child had been a common thing in Europe until recently when some Europeans started abstaining like Americans. (Graff)

Pregnancy is welcome in Europe as in any other country. The European Union grants privileges to pregnant women, with discrimination laws in place for employers who will dismiss or not hire women due to circumstances related to their pregnancy. Families accept the news of an upcoming child with happiness. Nevertheless, there are still some practices in European culture that are different from the rest of the world.

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