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The Amish nine patch quilt: the culture and art within Fliger, Janet A.

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Abstract:

Given my interest in the Amish and knowing that I wanted to create an artistic project, I decided on an Amish style quilt as my Master of Liberal Studies final creative project. There were many facets to this interdisciplinary project. I studied history as I read about the Amish and their reasons for coming to this country, their beginning settlements, their religious beliefs, and their lifestyle. One would not think that where an Amish person settles and their religious beliefs would have an effect on her quilt making. However, as we shall see, where an Amish woman lives, and even her particular church district, can influence all aspects of her quilt making. There are many different branches of the Amish. These differences are even reflected in their quilts. Historically, quilt making was not a part of Amish women's culture. It was not until the 1850s and 1860s that quilts began to show up at all in Amish inventories; prior to that time they used woolen blankets. Even in this time period the appearance of quilts in households was not common. I also incorporated anthropology and the study of culture in my project. I spent considerable time reading and studying about both Amish culture and Amish quilt culture in order to create a quilt that is representative of one to be found in an Indiana Amish community. Since Amish quilts can vary greatly from one area of the country to another, it was important both

the history of Amish quilts and, unquestionably, to have a strong grasp of the background and beliefs of different locales where the Amish people reside. To gain knowledge, I read Amish quilt books, history books, works of fiction about the Amish biographies, and many books and articles on different aspects of Amish culture. All readings were pieces of a puzzle that, when put together, allowed me to have a much greater grasp of the Amish as a whole group. Making my quilt also drew upon basic math skills I needed to use to figure out the quilt size, pattern sizes, and border sizes. Previously, when making quilts, I never gave any thought to these skills. I simply took the math problems involved in making with a grain of salt as something that everyone could do. However, I no longer believe this is the case. Without these most basic skills an individual probably could not make a

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