The USA: Country of contrasts

Here are some more contrasts that you can find in the USA.

Almost anybody in the US can own a gun. One person in three owns at least one gun, and some own several: there are more guns in the country than there are people.
However there's a big anti-gun movement and many people regularly take to the streets to protest for stricter laws on gun control. Many others are worried about losing their right to own a gun. They say it can be useful for self-defense. This is one of the most discussed topics in the US. What do you think – do guns make a country less or more safe?

Most of the world's top technology companies and popular websites are American. From smartphones and tablets to smartwatches, virtual reality or driverless cars: every year there seems to be a new "next big thing" in technology – and US companies are often leading the way. But it's not all about high-tech. You can also see some very old-fashioned looking things: Old overhead power lines for example are still very common in the US.

The Amish hardly use any modern technology. About 300,000 members of this Christian group live in the US. They live a very simple and traditional life with strict gender roles: Women take care of the children and the home and the man is the head of the family. Homosexual relationships are not accepted and divorce doesn't exist. In mainstream society, things are different: Homosexual couples can get married and adopt children in the US since 2015. This decision was celebrated all over the country with colorful parades and parties. Pride parades have been taking place in the US since the 1970s. They promote an open society and equality.

Do you find the facts surprising? Compare them to where you live.

to own [əʊn] besitzen ○ **gun** [ɡʌn] Schusswaffe ○ **however** [haʊ'evə] jedoch ○ **regularly** ['reɡjələli] regelmäßig ○ **self-defense** [ˌself dɪ'fens] Selbstverteidigung ○ **driverless** ['draɪvələs] selbstfahrend ○ **overhead** ['əʊvehed] überirdisch ○ **power line** ['paʊə ˌlaɪn] Hochspannungsleitung ○ **gender role** ['dʒendə ˌrəʊl] Geschlechterrolle ○ **head of the family** [ˌhed ʌv ðə 'fæmli] Familienoberhaupt ○ **homosexual** [ˌhəʊmə'sekʃʊəl] homosexuell ○ **divorce** [dɪ'vɔːs] Scheidung ○ **dopt** [ə'dɒpt] adoptieren ○ **pride parade** ['praɪd pəˌreɪd] ○ **equality** [ɪ'kwɒləti] Gleichberechtigung