

**Review: David G. Meyers, *The American Paradox, Spiritual Hunger in an Age on Plenty*, Yale Nota Bene, Newhaven, CT, 2000**

Pages: 414

**Things Are Bad and Will Only Worsen**

Written at the turn of the century, this catalogues the shocking decline in civilisation since the early 20<sup>th</sup>C, particularly from the sexual revolution of the 1960s.

Focusing on marriage and the family, the number of social ills created from their destruction has been legion: crime; depression; poverty; and insecurity.

Economically, many are unable to even consider having a family, and the never-married are a growing portion of society, a clear indicator of collapse.

There are many pearls of secular wisdom, e.g.:

-“A rising tide won’t lift sunken boats!”

-“A man who can barely support himself will not look to taking a wife and having children.”

-“Love makes the time pass and time makes love pass.”

-“Viewing violence desensitises one to cruelty.”

Some statistics will truly shock the reader: by the end of elementary school, the average child has seen 8,000 TV murders and 100,000 violent acts!

Written by a secularist, the chapter on faith, as well as false Evolutionary dogma throughout should be marked and discounted accordingly.

Fast forward to 2024 and one can understand how much closer Western ‘society’ is circling the drain.

\*\*\*

## **Foreword (pp. ix-x)**

## **Preface (pp. xi-xv)**

### **I) The Best of Times, the Worst of Times (pp. 1-12)**

In 1850, only 1% reached age 65.

Gandhi warned of seven social sins: politics without principle; wealth without work; commerce without morality; pleasure without conscience; education without character; science without humanity; and worship without sacrifice.

### **II) The Sexual Swing (pp. 13-35)**

Only a third believed Bill Clinton’s Lewinsky lie, yet two-thirds said it was irrelevant anyway.

Half of U.S. pregnancies are “unintended”.

Only 10% of cohabitations last more than five years. Partners are more self-sufficient and suspicious of each others motives and commitment.

In 1996, 70% of black babies were born of single mothers.

1960 was the beginning of separating sex from marriage.

### **III) The Past and Future of Marriage (pp. 36-59)**

10% of married people have had an affair!

As of writing, the average age for males to marry was 26.7 years, and since 1960, unmarried U.S. adults increased from 25% to 41%.

“Why gamble on entanglements of fragile relationships?”

In 1972, only 23% of never-married adults described their lives as “very happy”.

Increased employment of women is the major factor in higher divorce rates.

#### **IV) America's Children (pp. 60-97)**

Stepfathers and boyfriends are more often child abusers than biological fathers. They are also more easily irritated by alien children.

30% of child abusers were abused themselves.

When a mother remarries, father-contact reduces; some men don't even try.

Divorce is associated with lower discipline, play, physical care, and emotional development.

~80% of divorcees remarry.

#### **V) Violence (pp. 98-125)**

7% of youths commit 80% of violent offenses.

*Deindividuation* and *group polarisation* are powerful psychological effects for committing crime when youths congregate

#### **VI) Money and Misery (pp. 126-160)**

Students behave more selfishly after taking economics courses.

A rising tide won't lift sunken boats!

A man who can barely support himself will not look to taking a wife and having children.

After 3-4 months, 75% of babies sleep through the night allowing the

parents more rest.

The family wage has been eroded so that a labouring young man can no longer afford a family.

## **VII) Individualism and Community (pp. 161-194)**

Americans, followed by Australians, are the most individualistic.

Choices are fewer under collectivism.

“Depression is a creature of maximal self.”

The freedom of divorce adds to the other spouse’s insecurity.

Divorce rates peak after four years.

“Love makes the time pass and time makes love pass.”

## **VIII) Media, Minds, and the Public Good (pp. 195-234)**

By the end of elementary school, the average child has seen 8,000 TV murders and 100,000 violent acts!

Viewing violence desensitises one to cruelty.

Children under 8 have trouble discerning commercials from reality.

## **IX) Educating for a Moral Compass (pp. 235-256)**

“Character is higher than intellect.”

“Victorianism as closely allied with Protestantism.”

A Character Counts Coalition 1992 conference established the six pillars of character as:

1. Trustworthy
2. Respect

3. Responsible
4. Fair
5. Caring
6. Good citizen

**X) Faith and Society (pp. 256-291)**

**Epilogue (pp. 292-295)**