

Putting Modern Life in Perspective

COLUMBINE: "Why?" or "Why Not?"



Columbine was not the first fatal shooting rampage in a public school, although it is the worst to date. The activated alarm at the Westside Middle School in Jonesboro, Arkansas became the signal for two boys to open fire on their schoolmates. Eleven-year-old Andrew Golden and thirteen-year-old Mitchell Johnson gunned down their classmates and teachers in a premeditated assault. Afterwards, President Clinton said, "We don't know now and we may never fully understand what could have driven two youths to deliberately shoot into a crowd."

Since the president made that statement our nation has witnessed a barrage of violence inflicted by adolescents. Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold entered the juvenile court rehabilitation program after being convicted of a felony in January 1998. They had cleared their records by participating in an anger-management seminar and community service program.

Klebold and Harris prowled through their school with guns and bombs on a killing spree that left fifteen people dead. Our nation responded in shock, disbelief, outrage, and with the expected and predictable explanations and blameshifts. Low self-esteem, cliques, guns, barbaric music, a violent entertainment subculture, organic psychosis, and the parents have all been blamed. An endless stream of empty statements has issued forth from every quarter of the country seeking to answer the question, HOW COULD A THING LIKE THIS HAPPEN?

I will not attempt to offer another simplistic explanation for this tragedy. However, a broad overview of life American-style 1999 may offer some clues.

No significant relationship necessarily exists between a man whose sperm fertilizes the female's egg. Conception is often viewed as an inconvenience which may be terminated at any time by any number of abortion providers. Once life begins, apart from miscarriage, it stands about a 50/50 change of being aborted by the person carrying the child.

Should the child be brought to term he enters the world with a high likelihood of never knowing who his father is. If he does know who his father is, he would be a part of a privileged minority if he has a meaningful relationship with him, instead of a negative one. If his father and mother are together, the statistics are against him in that his home is likely to be ripped apart by divorce.

If a child is fortunate enough to be born into an intact family with a female mother and a male father, there is a better than average chance the child will end up in daycare to be raised by hirelings, Big Bird, and a purple dinosaur. Shuffled from place to place, viewing endless hours of images shifting every 2 1/2 seconds on the television screen, the infant naturally feels unstable and insecure. With surrogate parents and electronic babysitters, the child learns that the world

is an uncertain and unsafe place where his ability to survive rests upon his becoming self-sufficient, trusting no one.

Coming of age, the child most likely will be sent to pre-school and then to a public school. Here children of every imaginable capability and incapability are mainstreamed together in one classroom. Here education is defined as helping the child discover himself/herself. Perhaps that's why the NEA (National Education Association) has a curriculum, beginning in the first grade, to teach children about homosexuality. The teacher's goal is primarily containment and socialization. The Ten Commandments cannot be posted. The child learns in school that he has all the rights and authority is a joke. He soon comes to realize that laziness is rewarded to nearly the same degree as diligence. He will be pushed forward whether he learns anything or not. Why should he seek for a level of proficiency, much less excellence, since the outcome is always the same, no matter what he does?

Early on the child is indoctrinated with the theory of evolution. The child comes to understand that he is the product of time and chance, a highly evolved animal that happens to share the planet with less complex life forms. He learns that creatures up and down the food chain are driven by urges, appetites, and instincts. Since he is an animal also, it's only natural to satisfy his urges and appetites. He may not be able to add and subtract, but he will be well instructed on how to multiply outside of marriage. He may lack skills in the ABC's but he will have a thorough understanding of STD's (sexually transmitted diseases). The more progressive schools will even supply the contraceptives for students wanting to put their newly acquired knowledge to use.

Seeing the meaning of life as self-gratification, the child matures in realizing that nothing is denied his pleasure-seeking nature, except smoking cigarettes! This is about the only immoral choice one can make in a day of permissiveness and tolerance like ours.

The child comprehends that all recorded history is wrong and must be re-written. All the world's ills have been caused by the domination of strong, white, European males who forced their culture on the peoples of the earth. As an American, the child is made to feel he is somehow responsible for all the world's past evils, yet intellectually knows that no one is responsible for anything. Revisionist historians have convinced him that his forefathers were all fiercely brutal to the always peaceful, nature-worshipping, native Americans.

It's O.K. to worship Mother Earth and one does homage by remaining childless. Anyone having more than two children should be convicted of environmental rape because he is depleting the limited resources of our hallowed planet. The child will know that one baby whale is more precious than any ten homo sapiens.

The driving force behind his teacher's sociology is that boys and girls are the same. All distinctions in roles and standards are the design of a patriarchal construct designed to demean and devalue women. In fact, the only true evil left is to have a remaining vestige of primeval conscience still intact whose convictions are biblically informed.

Should the child happen to be among the declining residue whose family still attends church on Sunday, it would be extremely unusual if his religious education did anything other than validate his religious beliefs, regardless of what those beliefs happen to be. The music, message, and manner of ministry will almost certainly parallel and compliment his self-absorption. He will never be challenged to turn his back on sin, self, pride, lust, and the world. Everything will be presented in a positive light and he will be promised blessing as long as he continues to stand for nothing. After all, the significance of religion is to make one's self feel good.

The President, with Bible under arm, attends the same kind of church he does. Bill Clinton's conduct teaches the child that morality is determined by individual choice and that moral boundaries don't exist. Lying under oath has no consequences and truthfulness may actually be counterproductive as one aspires to attain a position of leadership. Larry Flint, Barney Frank, and Ted Kennedy run to the President's defense and the majority of the American public is happy so long as the economy isn't damaged. Sex, of any sort, is nothing more than what pushing someone on a swing used to be.

Recognizing that the killing of the pre-born is a given, now Oregon votes on killing its aged. We call evil, good, and good, evil.

The destruction of moral absolutes explains why children have no moral compass. Given what the Scriptures teach concerning man's depravity, we should not be surprised at recent atrocities. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Ps. 9:17). The intelligent question that should be asked in relation to Columbine is not "Why?" The only reasonable question to ask is "Why not?"

—Harold Vaughan

Note: The idea for this article and a number of the statistics were gleaned from an article by Bill Cripe.