

(Mobile ebook) The Death of the Grown-Up: How America's Arrested Development Is Bringing Down Western Civilization

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Diana West


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"West writes with great flair. She has a columnist's talent for seizing arresting facts and locating the sort of outrageous incident guaranteed to make the blood boil." — *The New York Times*

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Diana West : The Death of the Grown-Up: How America's Arrested Development Is Bringing Down Western Civilization before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Death of the Grown-Up: How America's Arrested Development Is Bringing Down Western Civilization:

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. More truth here than most people can stand
By David Read
This is a book every American should read, but it is really two different books. The first book is about the sexualization of American youth culture, and thence of all popular American culture. The second book is about multiculturalism, and how it renders us completely defenseless in the face of a newly resurgent, culturally assertive and confident Islam. Both books are good, even if I'm not sure they belong under one cover.
The first book complains about the juvenalization of the mainstream culture, but I disagree with the author's thesis. The issue here is not juvenalization, but paganization and sexualization. A 1950s conception of a "grown-up" included notions of probity, sexual restraint, and circumspection that were essentially Christian in origin but had become a fixed part of the larger culture and hence were accepted by believer and non-believer alike. The Sexual Revolution overthrew the 1950s norms of grown-up behavior and replaced them with pagan ones. Diana West makes much of the mainstreaming of rock music, previously a fringe, juvenile form. Why is rock music so bad? Because rock music is far more immediately and crudely sexual than previous forms of American popular music, such as the standards, Tin Pan Alley, Broadway show tunes, or even Jazz (despite the fact that Jazz had its roots in the same segregated black nightclub scene that produced rock 'n roll). But why is it a problem for grown-up society to marinate in a crudely sexual sound track? The answer (which West never articulates) is that it is a problem for Christians who are trying to maintain Christian standards of sexual conduct. It is not a problem for pagans, nor for the post-Sexual Revolution pagan culture and conception of what it means to be a "grown-up."
The second book is about Islam, and the seeming inability or refusal of Western governing elites to speak truthfully about Islam, its gross incompatibility with Western freedoms, values, and modes of self-governance, and its utter un-reformability. West attributes this failure to speak truth about Islam to multiculturalism, and she's right. But what does this have to do with adulthood or being a "grown-up"? I don't know. Multiculturalism is a utopian ideology; it holds that as long as we will suspend our powers of judgment, discernment, discrimination, etc., and not say critical things about other cultures, religions, or the Other generally, nor value our own religion or cultural patrimony, then we will all live peace and harmony--wars, hatred, and human conflict will come to an end. I suppose that multiculturalism is "childish," but no more so than any other utopian ideology, including Nazism, communism, socialism, fascism, etc. And Diana West fails to mention the great safeguard against utopian ideology of all species: A Christian worldview that understands that human nature is fallen and human societies are simply not perfectible. No utopian ideology can succeed; therefore, none is worth the sacrifice of freedom and human dignity, and concentration of arbitrary power in the government, that is necessary to try to implement it. Multiculturalism cannot succeed, and hence is not worth the constant, demeaning lies necessary to uphold it.
The amount of truth that Diana West speaks about Islam is both bracing and enormously refreshing. One of my favorite columnists is Mark Steyn, who is not afraid to speak truth about Islam, but even Steyn doesn't dare say some of the things Diana West says. She's in rarefied air insofar as being willing to tell unwanted truths about Islam. She is a much needed corrective to the multi-culti lies about Islam that we hear from the media and government, lies that have become so degrading, insulting and demeaning. Even if you don't care about pop culture, you should still buy this book and read the last two chapters, about how multiculturalism render us defenseless against Islam.
A final Note: Shame on St. Martin's Press for publishing this book in a microscopic typeface!! If you're going to read this book, I recommend buying the kindle version, with adjustable font. Because, apparently out of desire to save money on paper, St. Martin's published the whole book in teeny-tiny, footnote-sized font, that one has to use a magnifying glass to read comfortably.
10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. The very foundation of what ails the present United States culture.
By Books n' music fan
Diana West puts her finger precisely on where America went off-course and how we are reaping the results of these misguided actions. She traces back to a day when there was no such thing as adolescence, only childhood transitioning in to adulthood. That we not only expect children could have a delayed childhood for a decade from their teens has spread in to what is now a 30+ year detour of men acting like boys and women like girls with all the downsides associated (political correctness, consumerism, me-me-me, government as parents) with that irresponsible and selfish state. She is dead on the money, 100%. I wonder about these detractors on ; perhaps she hit a bit too close to home slaying their sacred cows of relentless immaturity?
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Important Insight Into the 20th and 21st C American Psyche
By E. Wagner
Although, for me, *The Death of the Grownup* dragged a bit through the middle, I came away feeling it is a valuable and important read for anyone trying to understand why we are currently losing the war that Islam is waging against the West.
In *The Death of the Grownup*, author Diana West builds a convincing case for revolutionary change in Western thinking and behavior. She argues a widespread abdication of adult responsibilities and choices has seriously harmed the West, and she traces the negative impact the culture of what she calls "eternal adolescence" has had on Americans and, more broadly, on all of Western Civilization. West also explores underlying reasons for this dysfunction. Among several examples of the harmful effects of abdicating adult responsibility, West points to multiculturalism. She posits that instead of looking at the world through the eyes of an adult, who sees differences and makes value judgments, multiculturalists insist that all societies are equal, even though it's obvious that some are more healthy and desirable to live in than others. Says West, to be effective, adults must make decisions; not avoid them. Adults must make choices; not shield our eyes from politically incorrect differences. West ultimately argues that the culture of eternal adolescence is so deeply embedded

in the Western psyche that, unless we begin to nurture the prizing of virtues, or unchanging moral standards, as opposed to moral relativism, or values, which are malleable, we risk the loss of Western Civilization and its many achievements to a resurgent Islamic Civilization, relatively unchanged from its 6th century culture of Islamic supremacism, jihad and conquest.

"WHERE HAVE ALL THE GROWN-UPS GONE?" That is the provocative question Washington Times syndicated columnist Diana West asks as she looks at America today. Sadly, here's what she finds: It's difficult to tell the grown-ups from the children in a landscape littered with Baby Britneys, Moms Who Mosh, and Dads too "young" to call themselves "mister." Surveying this sorry scene, West makes a much larger statement about our place in the world: "No wonder we can't stop Islamic terrorism. We haven't put away our toys!" As far as West is concerned, grown-ups are extinct. The disease that killed them emerged in the fifties, was incubated in the sixties, and became an epidemic in the seventies, leaving behind a nation of eternal adolescents who can't say "no," a politically correct population that doesn't know right from wrong. The result of such indecisiveness is, ultimately, the end of Western civilization as we know it. This is because the inability to take on the grown-up role of gatekeeper influences more than whether a sixteen-year-old should attend a Marilyn Manson concert. It also fosters the dithering cultural relativism that arose from the "culture wars" in the eighties and which now undermines our efforts in the "real" culture war of the 21st centurythe war on terror. With insightful wit, Diana West takes readers on an odyssey through culture and politics, from the rise of rock n' roll to the rise of multiculturalism, from the loss of identity to the discovery of "diversity," from the emasculation of the heroic ideal to the "PC"-ing of "Mary Poppins," all the while building a compelling case against the childishness that is subverting the struggle against jihadist Islam in a mixed-up, post-9/11 world. With a new foreword for the paperback edition, "The Death of the Grown-up," is a bracing read from one of the most original voices on the American cultural scene.

From Publishers WeeklyWest, a Washington Times columnist with a hard-line conservative's interest in culture, sounds a dire alarm over an age she sees marked by the mainstreaming of countercultural behavior. An unprecedented reversal of priorities from parents to children has occurred since the 1950s, according to West, allowing for structural failures that permitted the behavioral revolutions of the 1960s to go forward unimpeded. To support her case, West draws on sources generally weighted to the right end of the political spectrum, like Robert Bork and Daniel Pipes. Her examination of the social repercussions of a new youth market would be better grounded within the context of the transformations in postwar American society, but she focuses instead on the negative aspects of these large and complex changes, without reflecting on her underlying assumptions. In her view, the prolonged adolescence of baby boomers has left America open to an insidious Islamization of culture via a misconceived political correctness that can't recognize the dehumanizing ideology of that religion. West, a vocal purveyor of distrust toward Islamic cultures, lays nothing less than the decline of Western civilization on the American counterculture, making her argument compelling only to those already in her corner. (Aug.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistWriting in the Washington Times and elsewhere, West has proven to be a caustic critic of contemporary popular culture as well as a hawkish detractor of Islam. With this book, she fleshes out her archconservative worldview by arguing that today's popular culture is complicit in the threat posed to America by Islamic terrorists, and that the 1960s counterculture is to blame. In rejecting time-honored notions of adulthood (read: modesty, self-discipline, respect for authority) in favor of decadence and inclusiveness, she argues, the baby boomers inaugurated a culture of perpetual adolescence that erodes Western cultural identity. Channeling Samuel Huntington, West claims that this erosion of identity renders us incapable of countering potentially existing threats with adequate resolve and harshness. Although its first chapters weave together some anecdotal musings about the rise of youth culture, readers primarily interested in historical analysis might do better elsewhere. Readers seeking a sweeping polemic against the cultural Left, however, will enjoy this jeremiad's fiery indignance and playfully cutting prose. Driscoll, Brendan West writes with great flair. She has a columnist's talent for seizing arresting facts and locating the sort of outrageous incident guaranteed to make the blood boil. The New York TimesA serious work by an author highly engaged with the world in which she lives. West deserves to be heard. New York Post