

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis



Faculty of Letters and Arts
Department of English

**Magister in
American Civilization**

*The American Middle Class Family Moral Values
in Turmoil
1950 _ 1980*

Submitted By: *Khinèche Soumèya*

Board of Examiners:

Chairwoman: *DR. R. Yacine, Maître de Conférence, University of Oran.*

Supervisor: *PR. A. Bahous, University of Mostaganem.*

Examiners: A: *DR. Z. Bouhadiba, Maître de Conférence, University of Oran.*
B: *DR. A. Neddar, Maître de Conférence, University of Mostaganem.*

Academic year
2008 - 2009

Acknowledgments

I am so grateful to my Supervisor Prof. A. Bahous for his constant and invaluable assistance as well as patience.

I would also like to thank my family that helped me overcome every moment when weariness was all around me.

Finally, I further wish to thank the examiners for having accepted to access my project.

***Abstract**

Historically as well as sociologically speaking, people in general and societies in particular, have always diverged from their very existence. They kept living with a series of socio-ideological disagreements perpetuating the spirit of individual antagonism and inter-generational conflicts spreading overwhelmingly within a multi-racial as well as cultural society.

America of the fifties, or some may call it Post-War America was one of the most important periods. It was on the eve of a salient transitory phase, moving thus, from an era of upheavals including: *isolation, World War One, Great Depression, World War Two* and *the Cold War*, to an era known as being *the embodiment of the American Dream*.

American middle class citizens then, embraced both full material prosperity and spiritual oneness. As a nascent nation, it brilliantly came to impose_ via its tremendous economic growth, rising social contentment and technological advance_ its military strength, industrial might as well as, religious entrenchment. Being an Extremely _ethnic and generational_ diverse country, a controversial phenomenon spurt to foster the generational gap in general and family values conflicts in particular. Families for instance were already drawn by the extended absence of fathers, who served in World War Two as well as technological advance. That phenomenon, that turned moral values upside down, helped erode the social and cultural stigma attached to the aged, involving: *good manners, moral values, virtues and all the ideals* which the Founding Fathers had almost perfectly shaped, for the sake of the coming American generations. In short, moral erosion left the door open to a current of permissiveness and immoral tolerance during the sixties, heavily enhanced by a so-called sense of modernity. That phenomenon was vehicled by an extravagant young population who adhered to principles in total contradiction with those of their parents. It was an unstable, unbalanced and ultra-tolerant society.

However, the firm support to social values along with Christian morals of a conservative movement nominated *the Religious Right*, proved nevertheless during the seventies to fifty percent control the situation. They came out with a new religious, social and political agenda to get rid of the seeds of permissiveness that were a real threat to the basic traditional Christian moral values. *The Religious Right* engaged in local battles to restore: school- prayers, text-books, contents concerning evolution. And led a moral fight against: taxation of private Christian schools, pornography, feminist and gay movements, abortion, etc.

Actually, to save a contemporary American middle class family _that seemed lacking the elementary precept well-structured into one major concept know as *the social and family ethical code*_ a spirit of *duty* should be commonly shared by the members of the American society in general and family in particular, as an ethos that realizes true conventional welfare and moral goodness.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgment

Abstract

Table of Contents

Introduction..... 1

Part One: The Moral Duty and the American Middle Class Family Moral Values

During the Fifties.....4

1. *Family Moral Values, Virtues and Ethics*.....5
2. *Kant's Moral Duty and the Middle Class American Family*.....20
3. *The Bible: A Moral Impetus to Family Values*.....40

Part Two: The American Counter-Cultural Revolution; A Social and Family Moral

Unrest during the Sixties.....50

1. *Social and Family Moral Instability*.....51
2. *Key Factors to Social and Family Moral Decline*.....64
 - Religious Decline and the Atheist Trend*.....64
 - The Burst of Racial Segregation*.....69
 - The Hippie Trend and the LGBT*.....74
 - Social and Family Negativism to a Lost War Named Vietnam*.....89
3. *The American Dream Converted*.....91

Part Three: Did the Religious Right Revive a New Ethical Code to Save the Middle

Class Family during the Seventies?.....93

1. *The Aftermath of the Counter-Culture*.....94
2. *The Religious Right: Back to a New Educational and Religious Traditionalism*.....105
3. *Solutions in Perspectives: Back to a Modern Kantian Morality*.....126
4. *How Middle Class American Family Moral Values Ought to Be*.....134

Conclusion.....137

Bibliography.....138

*** Introduction**

Admittedly, America has till the present day been the only country that during five centuries successfully triumphed where other countries have not for much longer. It knew how to preserve its social prestige and cultural heritage that its settlers brought from the four quarters of the world. Americans have distinctly been moved away from the rest of the nations' ideals to live hopefully and realize what they already missed actualizing in their home lands. From the one hand, technologically as well as scientifically they proved to have reached their aim in several fields as in science, literature, art, education, psychology, etc. And from the other one, the wide range of ethnic groups, in other words multi-racial dominance enriched its cultural potential. A truly big triumph heavily influenced by deeply rooted morals and steadfast Christian thinking of the *Founding Fathers*. The *values* and *virtues* they brought helped them become the most powerful nation nowadays in other terms, an almost perfect realization of the *American Dream*. They were imbued with entrenched Protestants rules of piety and self-reliant personality. The mainstream American identity symbolized the integrity of a social community within other social communities.

Now, from the mid twentieth century till the late seventies the moral identity of the American society in general and middle class family in particular witnessed a successive dualist upsurge of spiritual conservatism and moral permissiveness. Strict religious moral conducts as well as a total liberal attitude were at the head of a real war of ideology and social unrest. It was America's most turbulent decades. Actually, the reason for such turmoil was initially *the post war transitional phase* where the words social stability and unity were mixed with the words social extravagance and unsubordination. So, in the light of that people are inclined to ask themselves the following questions: *to what extent social permissiveness _ embodied in trends like the like the hippies, the LGBT, the atheists, etc of the sixties_ came to alter the sacredness of the middle class American family morality that was supposedly be based on entrenched Protestantism and fixed moral values? Moreover, in case of the upsurge of*

ultra-tolerance within the mainstream American families who was going to be mostly hit by? And finally, in such a deadlock what will eventually be the best moral remedy to a seemingly unlimited gangrene that involved a family moral crisis before becoming a social one? In short, I will try to discuss, analyse, asses and above all revive a historical dilemma that impact still seems influencing the coming American generations.

Divided into three major chapters, the following research project morale would be to show to what extent a nation like the United States of America had almost drifted away. Moreover, how it failed to idealize the *Founding Fathers'* original American Dream, that cornerstone was and still remains "*traditional Christian morality*".

The first chapter will be partly covering the etymological side of *family moral values* as well as virtues and ethics. The issue will eventually transmit *Kant's* key moral precept known to be *the Categorical Imperative* seeking the universality of *moral duty* based on *practical reason* and void of selfish traits for the sake of a safe and sound family as well as society. However, I will mostly study how the majority of the middle class families had brilliantly succeeded to embody the concept of *moral duty* and *the holiest religious precepts* that the *Bible ordered*, despite the fact that racial segregation was prevalent and most of fathers suffered post-war trauma.

In the second chapter, the social events will remove the middle class family unit and morals. The major part will be around the burst of the *counterculture* and its negative impacts on the middle class American family values. It was also a decade of public action and rebellion against the conservative norms where *Kantian thoughts* seemed nevertheless more authoritative than lenient. Throughtout the study, it will be pointed out that most middle class youth had opted for liberalism over conservatism calling for a total autonomy of the individual. Their aim was to get rid of the bounds of a so-called conservative society and despotic government. Among the revolutionary middle class movements were the anti-segregationists, the LGBT, hippie, atheists as well as the anti-war organizations. To some extent, some actual issues had both negative and affirmative impacts on the majority of the young American population.

From the one hand, they turned the Christian ethos upside down and made of the moral principle of the family as well as society an old-fashioned trend. Their target was common, in other words to rebel against the established authority be it parental or governmental, which left them struggle within an uncertain state of mind if not contradictory. Nevertheless, from the other one they united to condemn the *Vietnam War* where most of them died in vain.

Throughout the third chapter, the context of situation will be reversed. Otherwise the true protest will shift in favour of religious fundamentalists instead of tolerant liberals. And the question that crosses one's mind would be *how the contemporary middle class American family could morally survive to a counter-culture that seemed never ending?* Fortunately, according to history a slight category of Americans still clung to their traditional Christian beliefs and *Kant's categorical imperative* named *moral duty*. A great deal of them belonged to a renowned fundamentalist movement denominated *the Religious Right* with a massive participation of a remaining faithful *middle class American family*, both entrenched about moral values. For them, it was high time to save a nation in decline and bring about moral solutions via a drastic ethical change based on a typically *Kantian morality*. Globally, re-instil moral values within the social order for the betterment of the American middle class family as a top priority.

Consequently, family values *should* outstrip social differences. In the sense that, family itself is supposed to be the major constituent of any society. So, if it improves society will do and if it declines morality will vanish. However, a family *ought to* be morally as well as religiously imbued with a high sense of deep consciousness for the sake of a stable and prosperous social atmosphere.

Chapter One

The Moral Duty and the Middle Class American Family Moral Values during the Fifties

1. Family Moral Values, Virtues and Ethics

Admittedly, a family is known to be the basic building block and a fundamental unit in the organization of a society. It is also meant to be the pillar as well as the very cradle of any civilisation leading either to its social convergence or divergence. A family is sacred and crucial in the sense that with the positive support of the society gives birth to renowned if not authoritative persons who thrive and foster both their family and societal state for the sake of improvement. For instance, the father works hard to serve and brings happiness to his family by providing them all conveniences including: nourishment, clothing, learning and education, etc. And in the same line of thought, government task which is more general and thus more complex, willing to supply the citizens with what is essential to their social welfare, so long as the issues of life security, work, shelter, education and the like are concerned.

From an etymological point of view, the word *family* comes from the Latin word *familia* that means *household*, more precisely *servants* or *descendants* from a common ancestor. And from *1667 on*, the word *familia* included parents and children, more often under the heading of the father as *a patriarch* that is supposed to be the pillar of the family. In a great majority, *a family* shares the same social values that mostly comprise religious principles and common rules of conducts.

With regard to the word *moral*, it also derives from the Latin word *moralis* meaning *custom*. Generally, *moral* implies a unification and conformity to established codes and principles, as the members of a society or family do conform to a universal dogma that unifies them *_family and society_* under one established authority namely, the moral maxims that forbids the acts of stealing, swindling, killing, etc. However, *morality* that comes from *moralitas* refers to a set of criteria, including: manner, character and behaviour as concepts that guide man's actions positively such as the notions of rightfulness, goodness, truth, etc. The sense of *family morals* could be incomplete when coming to their evaluation. *Values* therefore, give their ethical meaning a high sense of worthiness and esteem. *Values* indeed, encompass a set of

social principles and standards held or accepted by an individual, a class or a society. A quality that combined with family morals alters the negative behaviour of family's perception of the world's view of wrongfulness and badness. Indeed, they determine the precepts often learned and sometimes innate which accompany family members throughout their whole existence. As the value of parental love and respect that children should perceive as a reverence. With regard now to *the middle class*, America from the mid twentieth century on, has genuinely acknowledged that the middle class was known as the main social stratification of the nation, which put all the American citizens on the same footing.

Up to a point, *the moral precepts* are not mere instructions, they are deeper and rooted in family's conception of the rules of life highly dominated by both an internal and external authority. That dominion as a matter of fact, could not be but following strictness and conformity to *a universal moral law*. The foremost goal of this latter would be to unify the society in general and family in particular under one major motto: *unification, duty and happiness*. Much the same like *Kant, Bentham* and other renowned philosophers who pointed them out when studying the laws of moral values as guidance to duty but freedom of man at once.

For some, *moral values* mean conventional principles for others, it implies codes of behaviour taught by the Christ *Jesus*, both, socially shared. For those who believe in the divine message, see in *moral* a gift bestowed by God, a kind of divine approbation. The *Intuitionists* for instance, supported the idea that *goodness* and *rightness* are God given precepts, an ability that only man could receive apart from the rest of the living creatures. Religion brings man with a basis for moral standards, as an English Lord affirmed in *Jennifer Trusted* book, "*Moral Principles and Social Values*": (1965) that moral and religion are inextricably joined. While others, adhere to their self-made principles heavily influenced by pragmatic rules. As a matter of fact, they don't believe in the existence of a moral divinity and see in man's moral a human nature, tradition and choice. In addition to that, moral values are subject to regular changes from a

community to another if not from one society to another, as it evolves through time. Since, the British philosopher *David Hume (1711-1776)* refused to rely on Christianity he went to say that moral judgments are quite independent and that good takes shape in virtue, which is philosophically man-made. However, it keeps reflecting the salient values, interests and outlook of the dominant social class that involves in this case of study *the middle class American family from 1950 till 1980*. Globally, to get a good moral and ethical balance and eventually a harmony between what is conventional and divine at once, the family principles should be common if not homogeneous for the well-being of their moral familiar union in particular and social welfare in general. In some cases, family moral values would be degrading and reluctant but in other ones, it would come to a level of a high perception of the world's ethics, as in *virtue*.

As stated so far, a category of people has always adhered to the principle that moral values along with virtue and ethics were and still remain social man-made principles. However, the other group has authenticated that they forever derive from divine imperatives. Now, what would be better is to join both of them making of society an emblem of spiritual and material institutions.

In retrospect, once born man is supposed to be void of every moral standard, education and rules of life. He is at any time of his childhood ready to acquire a specific learning and education, that once assimilated he could face the world's events. For instance, he would be able to judge people and himself, do what fits the family moral codes for the general well-being of the society, evaluate what is wrong and right, treat people with respect and dignity, etc. And once adult, if the aim of this latter would be to better his moral values to a point that he could control both the internal and external authorities, further learning and deeper precepts would be called to his behavioural value to forge within himself a strong and long lasting self- personality. He inevitably steps to a very superior stage of moral behaviour more defined to be called *the state of virtue and ethics*.

This state as part of a category of people denotes high moral competences. Indeed, *virtue* that comes from *virtus* that is to say *manliness* means in itself *excellence in moral values*, the highest rank of good education as well as excellence in manners. As *Aristotle* argued that virtues are good habits that we acquire, which regulate our emotions. To illustrate with, in response to our natural feelings of *fear* we *ought* in most of the cases to develop the virtue of *courage* that helps outdo danger. However otherwise, the individual would develop a *vice* known as *cowardice*. Theologically speaking, it implies a set of religious ideals for both men and women. With regard to men, it encompasses: *manliness, courage, strength* and *force*. For women only *chastity* is involved. Moreover, it could cover further higher qualities such as: *faithfulness, charity, benevolence, altruism, hospitality, self-esteem, obedience, rightfulness, honour, dignity, integrity, prudence, respect, devotion, affection, equality, civility, discipline, pacifism, free will, right, duty*, etc.

Discipline as being an important virtue, holds on to the import of instruction as the basic teacher discipline relationship. It derives from the Latin *disciplina*, from *discipulus* that is *disciple*. It represents a transitional form of reinforcement perspective. Sometimes it implies the administration of *physical punishment*, as when a child disobeys his parents by lying, stealing or cheating for instance and that their reaction would be to scold him. This behaviour for *Humanists* is morally inhuman and deeply *shocking*. The moral perspective of discipline is effective when a personal authority figure yields to the established authority figure such as children should obey their parents or pupils their teachers. To eat on time for all the family members is a discipline. To study and revise the homework given by the teacher is a discipline. To not lie, cheat or steal is a discipline. To believe that the parents are the symbol of respect and love that children should refer to is also and forever a discipline.

Obedience is just the outcome of discipline. It traditionally implies compliance and conformity or dutiful submission to the will of another. As children ought to obey their parents or a good Christian who should yield to the divine order. Discipline and

obedience almost call for the same moral perspectives. And as discipline, obedience stands for motives that respectively involve: a pious discipline and lawful submission to a particular doctrine that calls for strict moral values. Children should obey their parents when they order them to come home on time, or study to succeed, or behave righteously to gain people's respect and integrity. *Respect* also adheres to every one's duty as one ought to respect the parental authority as well as, we ought to respect each other whatever the social rank, sex or age.

Righteousness is a mark of high wisdom denoting a morally sage demeanour. In the *Judeo-Christian* spiritual tradition, a righteous individual is piously conformed to the law in terms of religious devotion as prayer, fasting or the act of charity. The moral sense of righteousness is well-illustrated in Christ's terms of New Testament Scripture when he stated that:

*Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*¹

And in *Deuteronomy* (25: 1):

*If there is a controversy between men and they come into judgement that the judges may judge them, then they shall justify the righteous and condemn the wicked.*²

Parents should be righteous towards their children concerning the right to nourishment to study and be fair-minded in the share of inheritance. And children towards their parents by being frank about their acts whatever the consequences, or simply love them strongly and fairly, which is as a matter of fact a poetic justice.

Equality now as righteousness would be an important factor with regard to family as well as civil equity. Deriving from the Latin *aequalitas* that is *equal* and from *aequalis even*, it has got a double connotation. *One* that perspective would be that all men are created equal in the state of nature and thus should be treated equally with a refrain from exploiting the others. As it was well illustrated in the *American*

¹ John E. Lamuth, "*The Ultimate Guide to Family Moral Values; a Grand Unified Theory of Ethics and Morality*", 2005. p. 125.

² The Holy Bible, "*The Old and New Testament*", 1984. p. 148.

Declaration of Independence (1776) and firmly supported by the *Founding Fathers'* words:

*We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.*³

Fortunately, during the modern age the egalitarian perspective is still wordily present in "*The United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights*" (1948) which states that:

*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.*⁴

Concerning parents' role, their mission *should be to* instil their kids the same moral values, learning, education, or even buy them the same clothes or enrol them in the same institution. It would be fair for them to treat their kids equally from both a subjective and objective angle, which refers to some of the natural rights that any man owes.

The other one puts forward a social objective that makes all citizens enjoy an equal protection under one common national law as stated *John Locke* "*That all men are equally free under the natural law and therefore fully deserving of the same natural right*"⁵ as the equality of gender, sex and race. Whereas, social inequality affirmed *Jean Jacque Rousseau* was "*the pressures stemming from a stratified social order*"⁶ as in racial segregation and social class marginalisation.

Honour is another virtuous precept that underlines a great respect and a high public regard. An upright quality that sole purpose would be to respect traditions and civic codes of honour, namely reciprocal rights and duties governing for instance, a particular profession, trade or simply a promise given keeping loyal to one's commitment. If the father for instance, gives his son a *promise* to attend a football

³ George Brown Tindall with David E. Shi, "*America; A narrative History*", 1992.pp. 1248-1249.

⁴ John E. Lamuth, op.cit. p. 57.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

match, then he forgets because he got a job to do, so the opinion of the child would be that his father was not sincere enough and *honourable* to keep his promise whatever the factors.

Coming now to the value and virtue of *civility* or the *rules of civility*_ that according to *Kerby Anderson* are ultimately the rules of morality_ are rooted in *Biblical morality*. It involves almost all the moral qualities: integrity, respect, freedom, love, compassion, pacifism, etc, the refinement of a polite society. Traditionally however, it is defined as a controversy and chivalry within a moral civic context that unfortunately still carries on nowadays. Although praising openness to equality it proved to advocate hostility and extremism in some societies.

America for instance, has always been the most welcoming nation in the world calling for peace, love and equality. Moreover, it succeeded though with recurrent wars and battles to outdo ethnic, religious and cultural disagreements during centuries. But the period extending from *1950* till *1980*, seemed to know a renewed ethnic spite that lost all kinds of manners and moral values. Beginning with *racism* that was one of the most crucial and overwhelming phenomenon then, living an upsurge of racial segregation. It caused the division of thousands of middle class family members. Even the nation got divided between those who favoured Afro-American marginalization, and those advocating reconciliation, peace as well as unification of racial spirit. Racism destroyed the emblem of the American Dream, that first objective was freedom and equality. It also swept the sense of brotherhood and friendship that seemed to be but forgotten basic precepts. Biblically speaking, everyone should love, respect and treat the other as he or she would have been treated, even if it seems controversial in most of the cases as it will be explained later on .

Prudence, for instance means a sound judgement. Its modern spelling derives from the Latin *prodens* denoting *wisdom* and *foresight*. As it implies a deep spiritual insight into our moral duties and means towards their fulfilment. It is also a key factor in the moral development of the individual conscience according to *Aristotle*. And the

most allied to practical reason according to *Kant*, a key motivation behind all virtuous acts that core element is *reason*.

Justice refers to *laws* loaded with *fairness* and *equality*. It derives from the Latin *justitia* from *jus* the *law*. Notably, symbolises *law*, *order* and *custom* as one philosopher defined it to be the constant and firm willingness to render every man his due. Justice releases the accused if this latter is innocent and condemns the guilty if the charges are quite evident. The sentencing phase for the condemned focuses on the moral rehabilitation of the individual, a factor that aims to avoid any personal quest for retribution. So judges ought to honour their judicial mission for the individual as well as general social welfare. Similar to what has been discussed so far, equal distribution of interests and goods for the social well-being are primarily crucial. And the law is present to adhere to the meaning of *right* and *duty*.

A *law* is made to run a whole society by calling citizens to social duties in return to rights therefore, people should unanimously yield to it as a salient part of the general moral code of any society. Any law embodies *moral precepts* that added to the individual personal values set a harmonious universality of moral values. In case there is an objection to the principles established as the acts of stealing, swindling, assaulting, killing, conjugal violence, serious cases of family depressions or even incest, the law intervenes with a set of entrenched and imperative rules that operate within the heart of the society as well as the family unit itself.

Temperance as traditionally defined sets a *restraint* or *moderation* in the indulgence of the appetites. Its modern spelling however, derives from the Latin *temperantia* that means *moderation* from the Latin root *tempos* meaning *extent* or *measure*. On the whole, to moderate one's personal temptations as to not be greedy that renders us slaves of our passions. For *Plato* in his masterpiece "*The Republic*", temperance is defined to be the rational restraint of the physical appetites mainly food, drink and sexual indulgence. In his dialogue *Law* intimated that temperance aspires to the likeness of God, as *fasting* being a holy sacrament professed by some of the

Christian families and communities looking for the pursuit of the virtuous lifestyle. Unfortunately, the over-consumption of alcoholic products within the American families in peculiar brought further violence and turpitude that came to ruin a lot of homes. As the father pretending to be the family bread winner, loses his time drinking in the pubs instead of taking advantage of his wife and children. Consequently, he would come to lose not only his job, but family as such destabilizing the universal moral course. Pretending that wine was the *water of life* referring to Christ's teachings most Christians take it for granted till exceeding the limits set for the so-called name of *Jesus*.

For *Socrates* and *Plato* ethics was an issue of primary importance and *virtue* was nothing but *knowledge*. Their primary ideology was to lead a good life by doing what is *right* even in the face of universal opposition. Following their precepts if one knows *the good* he will always do the good and if there is wrong there is good. Moreover, if people lack virtue in other words, morality, love or any ethical idea they cannot be trusted to do what is right.

To illustrate with, each of the terms used previously denotes both a literal and spiritual specificity. *Faith* as being the first theological virtue comes from the Latin *fides* that represents the *supreme emblem of spiritual worship* and *devotion*. It eventually guides a whole family's inner and outer moral precepts during its life course. Following the *New Testament* scriptures, the *Christ* implored via his disciples to trust in the divine power of *the Lord* under form of a series of imperatives that is to say, commands or in a Biblical term *Commandments*. As being a large extent of religion, faith spurs people's spiritual and moral nature infusing them with a divine sense of inspiration along with *devotion* that has a close affiliation to faith encompassing a strong piety and attachment to divine commands.

Piety in turn, targets a universal sphere of religious influence. Coming from the Latin *pious* it denotes a sense of *devotion* or *duty* to one's obligations primarily in a *religious context*. Religiously, it is observed to be a crucial factor for maintaining the

favour and *blessing of God*. Christians claim it to be their very spiritual foundation highly exalted, loaded with morality and virtue much like priests, archbishops, nuns, etc.

With regard to both *charity*, which is a Latin word *caritas* that means, *dearness* and *affection* as well as *benevolence* from *benevolentia* in other words, *good will* both denote a disposition toward *graciousness* or *generosity* in both *word* and *deed*. And Christian religion gives them a great deal of importance to the point that they are regarded as dutiful obligations for every good Christian. It enables them to be generous and thus cooperate positively with the needy bestowing them money, food, cloths and the like. As some of the benevolent American communities namely, institutions that sought and still seek to improve the human conditions through charitable works and public education. Thus, it confirms grand humanitarian perspectives, a noble inspiration encouraged throughout ages in times of tribulation as well as a shield against misery. As it was the case from the fifties till the eighties in the United States of America.

In the same line of thought but in another context of situation *hospitality* represents a segment of charity that appeals to *kindness* and *generosity* towards *strangers* and a welcome spirit towards *guests*. The term comes from the Latin *hospes* that means *a stranger* or *guest*. It is granted as a duty by the host that still nowadays remains an enduring worldwide charitable precept. In the Bible, *Jesus Christ* directed his apostles to take nothing for the journey expecting for sure to be welcomed. As stated in *Matthew (10: 11)*:

*Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave.*⁷

And in *Luke (10: 5-8)* stated:

When you enter a house, first say, 'peace to this house' Stay in that house eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to

⁷ The Holy Bible, op.cit, p. 724.

*house. When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you.*⁸

For the apostles it was so virtuous that a cup of water would be meritorious when offered sincerely. Yet, to reach the *supreme charitable devotion 'altruism'* that opposes all aspects of selfishness and egoism one should act primarily for the best interest of the other before his own. Coming from the Latin word *alter* that means *the other* altruism “denotes a theory of conduct wherein actions targeting the happiness of others possess the greatest moral value”, as claimed John E. Lamuth in his book ‘*The Ultimate Guide to Family Values; A Grand Unified Theory of Ethics and Morality*’. It overrides, charity and benevolence, besides it represents the highest form of religious impulse as cited by the Bible in *Matthew (7: 12)* as being *the Golden Rule*:

*In everything do to others what you would have them do to you.*⁹

In other words, treat the others as you treat yourself. In this case of study, parents and children are called to regard each other not as subjects and masters but as close friends or simply brothers and sisters keeping mutual and sincere respect.

Love being a Humanistic virtue is represented as the Latin *copido* that means *desire* and *passion*. Love is also attributed to the *ideal of marriage* and deeper again to the divine salvation a steadfast sense of *loyalty to God*. For spouses, it not only implies sexual passion but concerning true Christian believers transcends that desire idealizing chastity for women and manhood for men. With regard to the family, love is the objective that rallies around all its members without exception. Indeed, man is born with love mainly that of his parents and children he is endowed with it. A feeling deeply rooted into his heart as well as moral conscience no one could deny it. *Devotion* in turn, is traditionally defined as a *strong piety* or *attachment*. The term comes from the Latin *devover* from *de* which is *away* and *vover* to *vow*. It has a close affiliation to *faith* that is particular to the Roman Catholic tradition of the devotional as in prayer and

⁸ Ibid, p. 722.

⁹ Ibid.

worship an exalted sense of divine bountifulness. *Virtue* is central to every moral action besides the fact that it emerges from within social traditions that:

*Refer to a set of customs, beliefs or practices taught, memorised and passed down from generation to generation without writing, i.e. transferred orally.*¹⁰

For Christians, *traditions* mean religious denomination and church bodies as the *Lutheran traditions* during the sixteenth century seen as ancient crucial and unalterable. Still for spiritualists, go to church would be to get closer to God's blessing which is viewed as prior to any other moral precept. While for *rationalists*, the prime objective of sharing weekly church meetings is to learn basic moral principles that the Bible calls for implying commands, prohibitions and instructions. They went on affirming that religious people are regarded as *common people* who need their myths and illusions to overcome their daily life situations contrary to the *elite* that can dispense with them. However, one philosopher stated that at the beginning was not the *word* but the *act* and:

*It emerges originally as an imperative behavioural code wired into our visceral systems long before it is reflected as an idea in our minds.*¹¹

So, *traditions* are regarded as the very foundation on which the community is built and transmitted from one generation to another avoiding its backsliding. In family traditions are sacred in the sense that they command morally its members to act in a way and forbid them acting in other ways. The Sunday mass for Christian families has always been regarded as a weekly imperative that entails preaching religious songs, etc. To assemble around the table for breakfast, lunch or dinner for example would be traditionally a duty that preserves the union of the family and sustains the principle of moral values. In the second chapter of this research project, the erosion of traditional moral values will be well-illustrated via spiritual vulnerability and disdain in most of the middle class social as well as family contexts.

¹⁰ "Tradition", <http://en/Wikipedia/Org/Wiki/Tradition>. pp. 1-4.

¹¹ Lee Harris, "The Future of Tradition; Transmitting the Visceral Ethical Code of Civilisation", 2007. pp. 1-25.

As virtue *ethics* that comes from *ethica* involves a *moral philosophy* studying the *values* and *customs* of a *person* or a *group*. And as virtue and moral values, ethics advocates the concepts of *right* and *wrong*, *good* and *bad*, and *false*, etc. It is divided into three major fields: *Meta-Ethics*, *Normative-Ethics* and *Applied-Ethics*. *The first* branch determines the *origin of moral values*, where do they come from? Are they eternal truths as *Plato* stated as spiritual objects and eternal laws deriving directly from God's imperatives? Or social conventions overwhelmingly man-made? It involves issues like: polygamy, homosexuality, human sacrifice, etc that at first place hit the family before society.

The second branch is more practical than spiritual. It puts forward the principle of *moral standards* that direct man to judge what is right or wrong, good or bad, the good conduct that one ought to acquire and the duty that one ought to follow as well as the consequences of all those factors on man's behaviour. *The last one* determines *the use of ethical values* when studying controversial issues as: abortion, racism, capital punishment, nuclear war, homosexuality, drugs addiction, the right of the elderly, social welfare rights, etc. Additionally, moral philosophy implies in major part the idea of *moral judgement* that intentionally forges the right purpose of the individual based on personal soundness. Some philosophers such as *the Intuitionists* believed that man has got an innate moral capacity that enables him to make moral judgments. Thus one should not judge people according to their *consequential act* but by their *intended consequences* as one philosopher said:

*When a moral value is in question, we are concerned not with the action which we see, but with the inner principles which we cannot see.*¹²

They went on affirming that people intuitively know what is wrong and right, but in a situation given they would be inclined to be mostly influenced by the others' judgments since they both share the same social convictions namely when rational debates involve in such as the issues of independence, personal emotions, a judicial

¹² Jennifer Trusted, "*Moral Principles and Social Values*", 1984. p. 91.

decision, abortion, etc. Initially, a moral judgment appeals to moral principles and social conventions. In this same context, dealing with the first branch of ethics *psychological basis* is the key motivation of our moral judgment and conduct. For some, to be moral involves the awareness of the individual of basic moral standards, such as do not steal or do not kill. For others, it is to avoid punishment, to gain praise, to attain happiness, to be dignified or simply to fit in with society. For instance, with regard to *psychological altruism* the British philosopher *Joseph Butler* during the eighteenth century argued that all people have an inherent psychological capacity to show benevolence to others. In a sense, man's action is instinctively motivated by benevolence and not *egoism* that meant for *Hobbes* experiencing intentional power over the others.

For most of the Christian community ethics ultimately guides them to actions dependant on *religious beliefs* and *practical reason* that both transcend all kinds of subjectivity. In other words, man should be stoic about his feelings that driving force enhancing his conduct would be *reason* only neither passion nor desire since reason itself is concerned with how we *ought* to behave not the consequences of our behaviour. And if people adopt practical reason in an extended sense, they would come to acquire a deeper understanding of moral judgements and values. Therefore, for some philosophers the best life for man is the one lived with than without moral principles.

Another criterion would be held to be basic to everyone's way of behaving that is *right*. From the one hand, no one could deny the fact that man is endowed with unalienable rights that are natural to all human beings involving: the right to *life*, *freedom* and partially *happiness* as sustained and adhered by the *Founding Fathers*. Children for instance_ as being the future and reason for living of each society_ have a universally acknowledged right to nourishment, shelter, protection and education from their parents. From the other one, all individuals living in a society as citizens are called to have some legal rights set by society itself as: the right to study, vote, elect, and get a lawyer in case of charge. Indeed, rights as being legal and moral entitlements to do or

refrain from doing something or to obtain or refrain from obtaining an action, thing or recognition in civil society often:

*Serve as rules of interaction between people; they place constraints and obligations upon the actions of the individuals or groups.... For instance, if one has got a right to life, this means that others do not have the liberty to murder him or her.*¹³

However, no one could expect to have *rights* without being prepared to have *duties* mostly when living in a social group that appeal to harmony deriving from a conformity to moral principles and social codes. *Duty* being in major part the responsibility of every one stimulates a sense of general interest of obedience, respect and care for the others as well as the development of family and social harmony. To fail to achieve one's ideal is on no account immoral but to fail in what one *ought* to do that's to say *duty* for oneself or for the general interest would relatively be immoral. It is mostly a moral obligation and virtue that involves a total yield to the conventional moral codes of both family and society.

From a theological point of view, the foremost duty that is crucial to any Christian would be the duty towards God in the first place that implies the spiritual belief in His existence and Commandments. Then comes the classical codes of conduct that associate the family and social duties. Now from a conventional angle, everyone *ought* to comply with the general moral codes which help develop social responsibilities, individual effectiveness and family bonds.

From a practical point of view, duty rises from a moral need based on reason as perceived by the German philosopher *Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)*. He was and is still regarded as the most influential thinkers as well as the last major philosopher of enlightenment both Europe and America have ever met. Besides, he used to be a firm Christian believer. Adding that morality itself derives from moral duty in other words imperative for everyone. But unfortunately, this was not the case for all the philosophers.

¹³ "Right", <http://en/Wikipedia/Org/Wiki/Right>. 2007. pp. 1-5.

2. Kant's Moral Duty and the Middle Class American Family

Ethically speaking, some theorists and philosophers diverged when coming to analyze the hows and whys of moral values. The *Existentialist Friedrich Nietzsche* well-known throughout *the nineteenth* century was completely nihilistic. He alleged that *ethics and morality were big lies*, insupportable besides they were exclusively *man's invention*. Even religion was characterised by its emptiness and nothingness, since he was an *anti-Christ*. His so noble spirit would not embrace the traditional ethical traits. He was on the contrary marked by the *Nazi* trend that forged within himself the existence of badness, egoism and self-centredness as being the nature of man that he is supposed to impose on others. Thus, altruism although being a noble maxim would be non-existent for him. Moreover, good and bad actions are surpassed by nobility and fame that have an ultimate control over moral values.

The Utilitarianism *Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832)* and *John Stuart Mill (1806-1873)* dealt with the moral issues from a practical approach. They both advocated the concept of *social reform*. Indeed, they used to be highly influenced by both the outcomes of the Industrial Revolution in Europe and the slave business in America, which both made of the *exploitation* of child labour, the dangerous working conditions, long hours for low wages, etc a chief objective of *utility* that according to them should be equally proportioned between all the social segments. Since people are products of the environment if this latter is improved morally people will improve as well and a happy society will be realized. They based their theory on man's action rather than on the consequences of his action. Their motto would be "*the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people*" that is what really mattered for them, focusing on feelings and disdaining rationality. If people desire things they should precede through right

actions that maximize utility as in politics as well as business where cooperation remains the cornerstone of true achievement. In other terms, a somehow exalted cooperative principle to a relative common good. It is also presumed to be a positive utility that is defined to bring pleasure rather than pain. Their moral philosophy centred on true assumption of goodness and badness since in their point of view human nature is governed by two major motivations: *seeking pleasure* and *avoiding pain*. To sum up, they stressed on the principle that good is happiness and happiness is pleasure, despite the fact that its consequences could bring but pain and desolation and the background of their thought was the Industrial Revolution. They advocated goodness as a duty that centred on material pleasure alone. As in America of the *fifties* that most citizens enjoyed material prosperity, yet social disorder and lack of moral duty were still overly prevalent. However, in some cases seeking pleasure could not avoid pain. To illustrate with, taking drugs would be a wonderful experimentation on the spot however afterwards, the addicted persons would face disastrous repercussions that could alter their behaviour as: turning schizophrenic, stalling, assaulting, they come till killing to satisfy their need and at the end some of them give away. It was certainly a good experience for the addicted but unfortunately ending with chaos.

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) a French philosopher, novelist, language theorist and advocate of enlightenment was in major part the foremost influential force in *The Declaration of Independence*. He put forward the maxims of *love, liberty and total autonomy of the individual*. His central conception of morality and ethics thus was *liberty* and the idea of *social contract*. He is known by his famous sentence “*man is born free but everywhere is in chain*” bound socially by a conventional rule of conduct. He believed in man’s right to freedom whereas he could not adhere to the evidence that right and liberties were divine approbations. Following his basic perspectives, man’ self lies in the existence of a society since he is supposed to be a member of it, a kind of social contract that he is bound to. Although, according to his pragmatic vision of the world’s ethics man is born completely self-sufficient and self-governing. However, he still affirmed that:

*The right and liberties that social human beings get derived ultimately from a general social agreement.*¹⁴, he said.

Pragmatism in almost the same line of thought excluded metaphysics and gave much more importance to *empirical knowledge*. That trend was advocated by *Charles Pierce (1839-1914)* and popularized by *William James (1842-1910)*. Following their purely *practical approach* truth comes from a determined action and ethics cannot be theoretically proved as in benevolence, charity, obedience, civility, etc. Still for pragmatic members like *John Dewey (1859-1952)* a good conduct is based on *intelligence* excluding religion and metaphysical life from his conceptual perceptions of the world's moral. *Goodness* in his viewpoint could be realised only as a response to requirements of life that could eventually bring the individual happiness, satisfaction and desire. He further denied the existence of an ultimate goodness in other terms, a *divine authority*. He even opposed *Kant* in his ultimate quest to bring to the light the *moral imperatives* stating that:

*A moral principle is not a command to act or forbear acting in a given way: it is a tool for analysing a special situation, the right or wrong being determined by the situation in its entirety, and not the rule as such.*¹⁵

For *Pragmatic* even *science* in another context develops to improve a society according to specific values which are neither imperative nor divine. Their spiritual dismissal actually converged with the previous views that culminated in the shared idea backing the material conception of the world's ethic rather than the divinely spiritual one.

With regard to *moral relativism* man's values are determined by the society he grows up in and there are *no universal values*. *Moral values* are simply *customs* or *conventions* that vary from culture to culture. That is to say, they are relative to the rules of the society one belongs to.

¹⁴ Richard Hooker, "*The European Enlightenment; Jean Jacques Rousseau*", 1996. pp. 1-4.

¹⁵ Essentials of Unification of Thought_ The Head_ Wing Thought, "*IV. Appraisal of Traditional Theories of Ethics from the Viewpoint of the Unification Theory of Ethics*", 2007. pp. 1-6.

Now coming to the *self-interest theory* human beings are always and everywhere selfish. And as *selfishness* is opposite to morality even if there are moral values one is incapable to live up to them. In a general sense, some philosophers and theorists converge stating that ethics and moral values are a matter of achieving one's *duty* and fulfilling our obligations. As *E. Kant* argued favouring objectivity and general moral conduct of a community to subjectivity and personal morality. To illustrate with, if any one of us wants to get a good job then he or she *ought* to go to college. He thus submitted man's natural egoism to the universal moral code. In a more defined sense, he adhered to the theory of *the fundamental law of morality* that yield to a *practical reason* known to be the *Categorical Imperative*. He is concerned with the *motivation* that is to say *action* not with the *result*. His aim was the universability of the moral law on the condition that happiness would be realised via good actions as he put:

*Act so that the maxim - purpose- of thy will can always at the same time hold good as the principle of universal legislation...asserting that; The inner moral law that presses as to action, was a voice of duty.... Duty, thou sublime and mighty name that dost embrace nothing..., insinuating but requirest submission..., but merely holdest forth a law which of itself finds entrance into the mind....*¹⁶

In his master piece "*Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals (1785)*" he enumerated three formulations of the *categorical imperative*. In the first one (*Formula of Universal Law*) the moral imperative yields to universal order. Often called *universalizability test*, it requires from the agent rationality between the action and the motivation without contradiction for the general well-being. For instance, as to donate a specific amount of money to a needy person. So, the action is the donation and the motivation is to relief as well as to improve his or her living conditions. The second formulation (*Formula of the End in Itself*) appeals to the rational being to treat himself, herself or the other as an *end* never as a mere instrument. In other words treat and be treated with dignity and respect not otherwise. As, to bring children with a good

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 1.

education that magnifies their talents and behaviour spreading happiness and welfare in the family if not in the whole society.

The third one (*Formula of Autonomy*) calls for our principles to act in a way that it serves the universal law being *autonomous* members in the realm of nature. As to legislate laws for a general social harmony and tranquillity, according to the conventional moral values.

Admittedly, morality for him is the equivalent of moral duty. As he illustrated in his edition "*Critique of Practical reason*" (1787) where he affirmed that a true moral law would be a moral obligation known as the *categorical imperative* deriving directly from the concept of duty established by a *practical reason*. In other terms, one *ought* to do something unconditionally a form of order that our personal *will* should adhere to. *Reason* would be the basic motivation that absolves both *internal* and *external authorities*.

In this particular case, the *internal* and *external authorities* encompass all the factors either inner or outer ones including emotions and desires that are to influence man's conduct. Concerning the *internal authority*, the concept involves the case when one gives in to his or her deepest desire of smoking, drinking alcohol, stalling, lying, cheating and the like. Whereas with regard to the *external one*, one has got a direct relationship with the outer influences that alter his or her whole inner perspectives of goodness as to:

- Yield to a friend's negative advice.
- Reject the parental authority because a friend of ours told us to do so, pretending that it is not a state of servitude, submission or dictatorship even if the parents were the main issue.
- Rebel against the traditional and Christian values adopting tolerance and permissiveness as being modern precepts.

- Diverge with the notion of right, moral judgment, law and justice in case of bribe.

Reason in all the preceding cases gives our *will* an order that establishes the standard of goodness, obedience and most of all respect that every one owes to every one in a universal context of unification. Moreover, he stressed on the maxims of *freedom* and *free will* that comes from the Latin *liberum arbitrium* literally meaning *free decision* that every one should seize with determination. Turning the individual free enough to govern his or her self- judgments, emotions and desires that most of the time push them to be subjective rather than objective. In its *Humanitarian* sense, the doctrine of *free will* originally was devised to defend against the argument that *God* has the power to prevent the occurrence of evil in the world. So, according to this *free will* defence, God allows mankind to be tempted by evil in order to freely elect or resist or yield to it. And the best example would be *Adam* and *Eve*, the very first persons the Lord created to populate the earth. Referring to the book of *Genesis*, they both lived a carefree existence in their Garden Paradise immune to death, suffering and disease. However, through the evil influence of devil, they were attempted to disobey God's main directive to never eat of the fruit from the tree of good and evil, the devil had cruelly deluded Eve into believing she could become the equal of God by partaking the forbidden fruit. For their mutual sin, Adam and Eve were forever banished from Paradise becoming thus mortal beings. Their banishment was not due only to devil's negative influence but rather because they were not yet rationally well prepared to face his temptations. That is why, *free will* is on no account contradictory with the spirit of duty affirmed Kant. Adding that a man who is purely rational becomes automatically a moral being and would thus freely choose the good relying on the principle of autonomy of pure will. But simultaneously, brings about the notion of an inner moral obligation named *duty*. Indeed, what he wanted to reach was the total autonomy of the individual to oust the negative aspects of behaviour substituting them by a true moral conduct. Morality is rooted in human freedom and to act freely is to act according to rational principles.

He further corroborated with the moral duty that we have towards ourselves firstly then towards the others. Besides, respect the other one and treat him or her as an *end* that is to say, with dignity never as a mere instrument. Moral duty is a means to actualise true welfare, goodness and virtue as the act of charity that foremost perspective is to be applied universally. His objective was to restore human beings in contrast to *Bentham* whose aim was to restore social environment. Unfortunately, the social perspective of this latter gave birth later on to the American Anti-Communism during the fifties that took the shape of a moral trend for the sake of restoring a sound and Christian environment. However, the Anti-Communism ideology went on the wrong direction namely, violent and illegal inquisitions that mainly touched the American middle class stratum. *Kant's* perspective indeed was to postulate the *unification of thoughts* principle in the light of a universal ethical code of conduct. In other words, why not all members of a community or a society along with their personal moral code get unified or yield to a common rule of behaviour under an established standard of goodness that joins both spiritual and material aspects without eventually being tempted to too idealize the social objective that core element is materialism.

For *Hobbes* once living in a social group the majority of people decides to conform to certain social rules and moral codes and incur duties to take advantage of rights. They are living thus a social contract based on established laws including codes of behaviour for the sole purpose of keeping tranquillity and welfare shared by the unanimity. He affirmed that *it would be better living in a world with than without moral values*. As it will be the case in this research project that aim would be to bring to light the overwhelming phenomenon of *nuclear family values conflict* and the *concept of moral duty* that was in a great majority dominant throughout the fifties, sixties and seventies in the United States of America.

Obviously, what is not new is that America has never been of a common social stock. It has on the contrary, always been known by its multi-racial and cultural

diversity starting from settlement till nowadays. Many countries since the sixteenth century entered the race competition such as: England, France, Spain, Scotland, Finland, Italy, etc and America knew how to keep its unity within its ethnic and cultural diversity during nearly five centuries. Yet, what is crucial to this study is not the context of the communities living together but rather the state of the American family unit's moral values _ precisely the middle class one_ with regard to that anarchic and disproportioned ethnic evolution.

As mentioned so far, the family had always been the basic building block of society's institutions and the very foundation of Christianity. It weaves the very fabric of cultural values, affirmed a critic and *Aristotle* adding that “*a family is older than a state*”. That is to say, it is in itself a society with its own rights and duties. So, if it improves morally society would improve and if it declines morally society would do so.

*If the home fails, the country is doomed. The break down of home life and influence will mark the break down of the nation. The stability of the family unit is linked with the prosperity and well-being of the nation.*¹⁷

Said *Abington Fishburn* stating that the family was the embodiment of the American Dream itself that connoted and still connotes moral values most Americans have been committed to. More than that, family has always been directing its members to the unification of thoughts and souls, to the oneness of principles and perspectives that most Americans shared after World War Two. Moreover, following the *Conservatives'* ideology:

*Only families can offer long-term emotional stability and commitment that child rearing requires. Only families can ensure reproduction and the proper socialization of children.... Families provide an emotional and sexual support system for married couples, who need a shelter against buffets of a hostile world. Without the family, we predict the breakdown of moral values and an upsurge of social anarchy.... It is a bastion of traditional values and a training ground for society's institutions.*¹⁸

¹⁷ Janet Fishburn, “*Chapter One; The Church in Domestic Captivity*”, 1991. pp. 1-12.

¹⁸ Wendy Mc Elroy, “*Marriage and the Family; An Ideological Battleground*”, 1996. pp. 1-15.

The family coordinates between every spiritual and material segment of the ethical universe. In another sense, its ethical know-how helps associate all what is material like the house, car, money to what is spiritual. How to adapt the house for instance, to the value of sheltering, uniting all family members under one common roof, having a common meal, sharing all kinds of private discussions, celebrating the best moments of their lives as births, weddings, successes, etc. That is what the material meaning of the house means spiritually. And not to make of the house a means to acquire and gain much more money then spend fabulous amounts of it playing and betting. It is just an example of what an American family in particular and the American society in general would achieve if it would have comprised almost all the moral faculties a real American should be supposed to possess.

America of the fifties however was one of the most important periods. It was a new age of post-war generation and technology. In other terms, a *transitory phase* that helped promote America's status-quo to a state of military and economic might. Thanks to the *Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944* known as the *GI Bill of Rights* under which \$13 billion were spent for veterans on education, vocational training, medical treatment, unemployment insurance and loans for building houses or going into business. Furthermore, with the *GI Bill* Government had globally held a support system for young rising families enjoying post-war industrial and technological benefits allowing them an increase in the number of people without even a high school diploma. Besides, authorities paid 90% of the cost of highways that opened up suburbia to young families and provided unionized blue-collar jobs for new migrants to the cities. All to flourish both the economic and social conditions. Consequently, divorce and homicide rather fell and the birth rates rose besides:

*(The Gross National Product); (G.N.P) doubled between 1945 and 1960.... America produced and consumed two thirds of the world's goods. For instance, in 1945 it took 310 hours to make a car; in 1960 only 150 hours.*¹⁹

¹⁹ George Brown Tindall with David E. Shi, op.cit. p. 1260.

Furthermore, with a return of 15 million soldiers to their daily lives,

*American post-war society witnessed a baby-boom era, that peaked in 1957..., and between 1945 and 1960, America's total population grew by some 40 million an increase of almost 30%. The homeowners increased by 50% between 1945 and 1960.... Their new homes filled up with the latest appliances_ refrigerators, washing- machines, sewing-machines, vacuum cleaners, freezers, electric mixers, carving knives, shoe polishers, etc.*²⁰

It was an era of full stability and prosperity said some:

*By 1955, 31 of the 44 million Americans owned their own homes and 87% had television.*²¹

And

*During 1950's and 1960's, 97% of the urban and suburban population increased. Twenty million left the land for the cities between 1940 and 1970. But during the 1950's, suburbs grew six times faster than cities.*²²

An almost perfect realization of the *American Dream* embracing thus its basic elements that used to be: *family stability, a renewed faith, a rising standard of living and unlimited career opportunities* as the *Christian Century* proclaimed in 1955 that:

*Suburbia is now a dominant social group in American life.*²³, since; *by 1950, 60% of the population enjoyed a **middle class** standard of living, defined as annual family incomes of \$3,000 to \$10,000.*²⁴

Another salient factor aroused within the sociological and economic sectors a social unrest. As one sociologist declared sustaining the *Marxist theory* that women's decline was the nuclear family of the 1950's and capitalism destroyed woman's status. Moreover, "*once the women entered the work force, they became equal to men*"²⁵, said *Karl Marks*. Unfortunately, it was not the case of *the feminists* who presumed that industrialization made women economically independent and free from the rein of men.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 1161.

²¹ Lorri Glover, "*The Myth of Better Times; America's Real Family Values*", 1998. pp. 1-3.

²² George Brown Tindall with David E. Shi, op.cit. pp. 1266.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid, p. 1269.

²⁵ Mc Elory, op.cit. p. 5.

Yet, the case study that one is intended to target at first is the issue of *marriage*. As a matter of fact, it has always been known to be a sacred tradition the main essence of life. Literally speaking, it is a public affair under the control of the state blessed by the church. However generally, it is regarded as a *trans-generational duty*, imbued with a reliable *visceral code* that entails a strict behavioural system transmitted from generation to generation. It prevents the backsliding of societies to a lower state.

Biblically speaking now, marriage has forever been regarded as an *indissoluble foundation* referring to the Christ sacrificial love for the church as described in *Ephesians (5: 21-33)*:

*Submit to one another out of reverence to the Christ. Wives submit to your husbands as to the Lord. The husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church.... Husbands love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, to make her holy. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For this reason, man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh.*²⁶

Love as stated so far as being a major theological and humanistic virtue seemed to be highly perceived in a couple as both a *self-sacrifice* and *equal regard*, that both appealed to a dutiful submission of spouses. *Frances Willard* an evangelical leader of the *Women's Christian Temperance Union* of the seventieth century had a close state of mind concerning the ideal of marital equal regard much the same like during the fifties. She had a Christ-centred family ideal that focused on the idea of the joining regards of both partners. According to her religious viewpoint, spouses should eventually share: the equal culture and education, the nurture of children in other terms, belonging to the same social class as well as, honour mothering and fathering. And forced marriage is ideally coerced for, it is an obstacle to marriage and family value. *Love* that is one of the theological cardinal values is above all a covenant that had no boundaries or could be broken. A sort of dutiful fidelity without return that *Kant* regarded previously as an imperative

²⁶ The Holy Bible, op.cit. p. 871.

perspective and ideal of a quality shared by the parents. The post-war middle class American family was on no account similar to the one of the sixties. It emerged just after World War Two as the ideal family the symbol of the era that encompassed a father, mother and children. Taking advantage of the technological as well as the military and economic boom that preceded the war, the family enjoyed more material than spiritual perspectives indeed:

*The United States of America were the industrial and military powerhouse of the world. The economy was booming.... Its citizens enjoyed superior wages (15×the rest of the world's average), and 35% increase in its standard of living.*²⁷

There used to be an almost cultural homogeneity of the middle class American society. Sharing the same moral codes and values imbued with a protestant Christianity at home, work place, church and school. However, the factor that partially destabilized the family as well as the society seemed to primarily be the material principle along with the *Laissez-Faire Capitalism* apart from a category that spirituality meant steadfast religious precepts.

Materialism that was and still is a sort of an exalted pleasure seeking real life opportunities caused the misfortune of many middle class couples. It pushed them to over-emphasise their jobs at the expense of their kids neglecting somehow, their authoritative and educational parental role chiefly being *childrearing*.

Admittedly, the father spent unlimited hours working besides the fact that women entered the workforce being thus the equal of men causing:

- A constant desire for materialism opposing a gradual declining desire for spirituality and ethical values_ concerning a special class of individuals.
- The increasing instability of marriages_ though lower compared with the sixties_ but still present on account of the over-competitiveness that at the same time favoured an overly ambition of work that left the spouses less

²⁷ Nicolas Klar, “Essay; *The 1980’s-Return to Conservatism*”, 2006. pp. 1-10.

careful and indifferent toward each other. As a consequence, it gave birth to issues like: divorce, single-parent families and step-parenting.

- ▶ Childrearing became in turn a burden for the busy parents favouring money over children interests. Becoming difficult to combine work and family, some of them had chosen day-care centres and sitters to simplify their parental mission living their kids at the expense of their inside and outside emotions as well as temptations.

As a matter of fact, all the previous factors _ mainly the last one _ added further distress, confusion and instability within the family unit. And the first to take it all was the child, precisely his *psychological* and *moral* sides.

Actually, *children* are supposed to be the gift of God that strengthens the bonds of marriage. However, during that era much more strictness in the most part of middle class American families was more prevalent than tolerance and permissiveness although prosperity was all around. But unfortunately, the remaining category still lacked the basic human values heavily influenced by the growth of materialism and competitiveness then.

Yet in retrospect, when studying the moral structure of a family one is primarily inclined to analyse and evaluate the child's demeanour mainly starting from his or her early age. Concerning the middle class American children during the fifties, most of them were lucky enough to acquire a stable as well as a uniformed Christian education that core elements were obedience, respect and a good moral conduct. Logically speaking, a child is supposed to be the heir of a good education, moral values, traditions and learning from the parents and his or her role would be to assume them brilliantly. Once adult, the child would be able to improve them adding the further stock of education and knowledge he or she has acquired perpetuating moral and technological advance. So, the only condition that would make the child safer and more advantageous to gain those qualities would be to create a peaceful social atmosphere achieved by both parents and society. More than that recognizes the extent of problems

being including children's atypical and asocial behaviour by getting rid of their non-moral common attitudes substituting the negative aspects of their behaviour by more wholesome and positive ones.

A child is supposed to be similar to a white page once born, void of every moral and rational sense besides being unfamiliar to the unknown. The first step of his or her life would be to have a direct recourse to the parents' support and education that most of the times do conform to the general rule of family conduct. *Parents'* role according to *Cormac Burke* is salient in the sense that they *ought to*:

*Teach their children gradually about the origins of life in accordance with their mentality and capacity to understand.... This can also be an important step in strengthening the friendship between parents and children, preventing a separation in the early moments of their moral lives.*²⁸

Logically, parents frame the very moral conscience of their kids in other terms they are supposed to be the foremost to instil them the basic moral elements. Statistically, 97% of a child shaped personality is formed by his parents. In most of the cases, spouses at least until adolescence bred their children with the ideals of *respect* and *obedience* towards themselves, their parents as well as towards the others. Such *virtues* were fundamental elements in a child's demeanour a deeply rooted precept within his or her principles of moral conduct. Besides, the secondary moral elements including: the ideals of *helpfulness*, kindness, benevolence, truth, *sincerity* etc that helped forge children to become what is known to be *a moral element* in both family and social contexts. Moreover, for the sake of bestowing them a sound education spouses were highly imbued with qualities like: *self-sacrifice*, *affection* and most of all fortitude that spurred their parental mission.

Biblically speaking, a child is gift bestowed by God. And as a present, the sole role of parents in this particular case for *Cormac Burke* would be to:

²⁸ Burke Cormac, "*Covenanted Happiness; Parents, Children and the Rules of Life*", 1999. pp. 1-17.

*Form their children conscience, so that they have standards, so that they know the rules, so that they can distinguish between right and wrong. And by forming their will, so that they can fight.*²⁹

However, though overwhelmingly busy some of middle class parents during the fifties instilled their children the basic moral elements. A duty that appealed and still appeals to a child's right to require that kind of moral education. To illustrate with, children who received a good education mainly after the age of ten were saved emotionally and were able to face any kind of vicissitude during their life course. But children under ten were more probably to have no emotional defences and their feelings less developed. That is why, it would have been unbearable to endorse or incite children at that age to watch violent movies, play violent games, associate with violent persons or by chance fall on the father beating his wife before their very eyes. It consequently, makes them once adolescent desensitized to *mayhem* giving them an immoral permission to beat, steal or even kill to satisfy their negative behaviour. Parents' role was to give the maximum of regard to their kids to avoid them violence and brutality at adulthood.

To illustrate with, the *segregation phenomenon* that was overwhelmingly prevalent then altered the basic moral precepts of many children and adolescents marking the supremacy of the white race over the coloured one. Considering them as inferior beings_ by virtue of their origins_ white middle class children made of the virtues of *respect, freedom* and mainly *civility* a moral obstacle to *equality* that adults instilled them beforehand. *Stephen Carter* an American writer affirmed in his book "*Civility*" that in the post-war era:

*The actions and sacrifices of every one are signals of respect for our fellow citizens, making them as full equals, both before the law and before God. Rules of civility are thus rules of morality; it is morally proper to treat our fellow citizens with respect and morally improper not to. Our crisis of civility is part of a larger crisis of morality.*³⁰

²⁹ Ibid, p.1.

³⁰ Stephen Carter, "*Civility, Manners, Morals and the Etiquette of Democracy*", 1998. pp. 1-11.

Schools, in the same line of thought used to have the secondary role in strengthening children moral values and teachers secondary parents. As a matter of fact, they used to study in the best schools, have the best teachers although some critics observed:

*A lack of schools and child- care facilities.... Five million 'war-widows' ran their homes.... While millions of older married women went to work in war industries, which led to an upsurge in the divorce rate, and rates of juvenile delinquency, unwed pregnancy, and truancy rose.*³¹

Statistically, juvenile delinquency increased to 280.000 by 1950 and swelled to 700.000 by 1958. Moreover, crime rates increased to 13% in 1959 whereas in 1955 it came to reach 24%, 69% higher than a decade earlier and 128% greater than the rate in 1940. Some sociologists claimed that crime rates in the United States increased 100% in major cities since 1951. Robbery as well as burglary signalled in 1955 the respective rates of 24% and 29%. Unfortunately, the fifties were much more prosperity for some than union for all. The middle class_ since it was the most prevalent one_ showed a partial refusal to the spirit of sociability, in all domains. Actually, the most striking event to have marked the starting point of merciless, open *civil rights'* rebellion and of the erosion of moral standards.

In the field of public education, children suffered the long lasting racial conflict of their parents enduring situations and learning a style of conduct they would not have even lived. Most historians called it *The Second Reconstruction* as reverend *Martin Luther King.Jr (1929-1968)* affirmed when he said that:

*Racism is still found in varying degrees in our churches and schools, just as it haunts our cities and suburbs. The combined influences of racial discrimination and social isolation...continue to make the plight of many African-Americans and other people of color Chicago's greatest shame.*³²

³¹ Steven Mintz, *"A Social History of American Family Life; Does the American Family Have a History?"*, 1988. pp. 1-8.

³² Francis George Cardinal, *"OMI; Dwell in love; A Pastoral Letter on Racism"*, 2000-2007. pp. 1-5.

Civility being in major part an ultimate guide to the rules of morality_ implying refinement in manners_ called for a total acknowledgment of equality, value, respect, integrity, freedom and dignity towards the others. The year 1954 indeed, was the beginning of the end of civility for the Afro-Americans at least until the eighties when the spirit of equality restarted to mature in most of the American middle class demeanour. The most striking conflict involved the case *Brown vs. Board of Education Topeka, Kansas*, where *Linda Brown* an Afro-American girl had been denied of entrance on account of colour being obliged to go a mile further to an Afro-American school. It aroused a salient tension within the society as a whole adding much more division than union since:

*During the same decade, more than \$75 million of public funds were being spent every year in Southern states on education institutions that did not admit Blacks, for; whites kept their white schools white and black schools black.*³³

Segregation started to gain ground in most of the middle class social spirit that adhered to principles contrary to the conventional moral code of behaviour and that should adopt civility and equality as sacred precepts. Although preaching justice, equality and liberty Americans seemed to act otherwise in a way that stimulated social unrest, spreading division, marginalisation and disorder within both American families and society. Afro-Americans were morally harassed and physically assaulted in the streets, their work places, restaurants, cinema, even in churches, where whites preached the so-called good speeches. However, thanks to the spirit of social convention, chief justice *Earl Warren (1953-1969)* of California a conservative and fervent political activist had a social conscience as well as a little sense of liberalism. Head of the *American Supreme Court* he declared unanimously that:

*In the field of public education the doctrine separate but equal has no place.*³⁴

³³ Leon Friedman, *"The Civil Rights Leaders"*, 1968. pp. 133-136.

³⁴ George Brown Tindall with David E. Shi, op.cit., p. 1311.

He courageously outlawed segregation in the public schools since for him this latter had no basis in the constitution and thus should be banned in all public schools of the United States. But the lesson was not enough clear for the Southern protagonists who in response to the decision set held a massive resistance to the Federal Legislation. Under the name of *Southern Manifesto* in 1956, Southern members of the Congress denounced the Court's decision a clear abuse of judicial power. Thus, the crisis reached almost all the public schools, for during the same year not a single child attended schools with whites. Such hostility instilled further disdain and contempt in the spirits of a middle class child and pupil who viewed the Afro-Americans as an inferior class instead of being, an equal segment of the American society.

Morally speaking, segregation was not the only handicap to the continuity and fulfilment of Christian traditionalism. Both *Darwinism* known as the *theory of Evolution*, besides *the history of Creation* were taking serious proportions within the educational field altering man's religious convictions. The theory of evolution in the Bible for instance had been replaced by the Darwinian Theory which pretended that men were descendant of apes. Even the history of creation put forward the renowned theory of *the Big Bang*. This later was more a scientific conviction than a divine one in the sense that the universe had come into being via a notorious chemical explosion, creating billion of stars and galaxies among them the earth rather than a divine creation. Distorting thus the theory of man's evolution in his values and nobility as depicted by the Bible, which had always spiritually conceded that God created man on his image as well as the very history of creation. Because of the preceding theories many children ran atheist and sceptic about their origins and the existence of God. They were no more imbued with rooted old religious and moral precepts their parents instilled them. Fortunately, some middle class families kept on adopting Christianity as their prime and last religious dogma reminding their children of the importance of what they had always believed as categorical and firm, implying in major part the conviction of their Christian principles.

Now, back to another issue tackled previously that destabilized part of the nuclear middle class family that of materialism and over-competitiveness giving birth to a societal phenomenon known to be *divorce*. Divorce, being a legal end of former united elements globally meaning marriage, had broken homes as well as social classes among them the middle class one. Indeed, the rising standard of living, renewed faith and unlimited career opportunities that most Americans enjoyed did not prevent their thirst for running over prosperity and competitiveness even at the expense of the others. Sometimes, causing a ruined family unit. It is proved that the absence of one of the parents further disrupts the psychological, biological and educational development of children. Some social critics went to state that the pain of parental divorce was more difficult for a child to overcome than the death of a parent. Fortunately, the fifties did not notice a high level of divorce rate for instance there used to be:

From 1950 to 1955; (23.10%), a total of 380.000 persons. From 1955 to 1960; (24.62%), a total of 377.000 persons, a slight decrease because of the Cold War and Korean War.³⁵

Besides the fact that, some couples followed regular therapeutic sessions on account of the post-war trauma that most of the American soldiers suffered from. Sometimes, it unfortunately had negative repercussions on their progeny who were victimized by their psychological sequels. But in other cases, the trauma was so serious that the children suffered twice till undergoing physical treatments. Actually, physical violence has always been a matter of a moral weakness since the father who deliberately brutalized his children is considered as a violent element, threatening not only his family but again the whole society. Callousness and sternness in most of the American families were substituted by leniency and indulgence both shaped by an established discipline. Despite the fact that most suffered post-war sequels nevertheless, renewed faith encompassing true Christian rules saved partly the American society's rooted moral values. For *Lorry Glover*_ American sociologist_ prosperity, stability and happiness were big lies since:

³⁵ Lee David, *"Before the Court Ruled- Where They Really the Good Old Days?".* 2006. pp. 1-9.

*Over 30% of kids lived in poverty in the 50%, and fully 50% of black families lived below the poverty line. Even among natives-born whites only 33% of families could make it on the breadwinner salary.*³⁶

Those statistics showed that a salient contradiction standing between those who viewed the fifties as the fulfilment of the American Dream and those living in an overwhelming nightmare. Indeed, America was in two ways affected by modernity and tradition that deeply altered both the well-established and rising new-generations. Some saw in the American Dream an open window to a present and future hope of a prosperous and uniformed life. Others deliberately accused the American Dream of being the reason for social unrest. However, what happened during the fifties was merely a matter of social criticism caused by the transitional phase of the Second World War including technological advance as well as flourishing economic and military strengths. Together they created spiritual and material divergences within the American social order as a whole that only religion would restore union and peace.

³⁶ Lorry Glover, op.cit. p. 1.

3. The Bible: a Moral Impetus to Family Values

From a *religious* point of view, middle class American families during the fifties had been known for their conservatism more than during the earlier or next decades. Indeed, *The Bible* was considered as the central element of the American identity from the date of settlement till nowadays, since the name of God has been mentioned several times by *the Founding Fathers* mainly in *the Declaration of Independence*. Furthermore, their moral standards were based upon the Bible to the point that *Madison* claimed that the future of the American civilization was based upon the *Ten Commandments*. *Etymologically* speaking, the word *Bible* has got an Anglo-Latin origin *Biblia Sacra* that means *Holy Books* referred to as being the words of *God* sent to *Hebrew* and *Christian people*. Some theologians called them *Canonical collections*. The *Holy Book* is divided into two major parts: *the Old Testament* more defined to be *The Hebrew Bible* or *The Torah* that consists of 39 books and *the New Testament* as *The Christian Bible* that contains 27 books. Both, centre on the lives and teachings of the prophets *Moses* and *Jesus* a kind of religious leading light to man's moral life. Moreover, they highlight the real history of prophets and the world creation that generally, all Christian communities have always believed in as being the basic message *The Christ* pointed as a moral force.

Just after World War Two, Americans were on the move, for the post war era witnessed a massive renewal of religious participation because of two main reasons. *The first one* involved the *Cold War* as being a strong impetus behind the awakening

*Since Communists are anti-God, urged the FBI director John Edgar Hoover, encourage your child to be active in the church.*³⁷

The Korean and the Cold Wars had both a social and religious impacts on the middle class American family. Most of them feared that Communism would take roots in the United States annihilating and uprooting Christianity from the hearts as well as souls of the Americans. Politically, *Joseph Mc McCarthy* a Republican Senator of Wisconsin led a ruthless exploitation more defined as *The Inquisition* against the *Russian Communists* in the early fifties under the name of *Witch Hunt*. At the beginning, many Americans viewed him as the saviour of Christianity but later on they realized that it was a trick to his re-election. However, his misuse of religion let the middle class families had a negative opinion of him realizing at last how a renowned political leader would use religion as a means to justify his political fame. He cheated them till creating internal family conflicts about the future of Christianity in the United States.

The second one simply encompassed *the religious comeback* within the American families since *Times* announced in 1954:

*The Christian faith is back in the center of things.... Sales of the Bibles soared during the Post-War era, and books, movies and songs with religious themes were stunning commercial successes.*³⁸

Even President *Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-1961)* fostered an urgent come back to God as well as Christianity by:

The recognition of the Supreme Being...that is the most basic expression of Americanism. Without God, there could be no American form of government, nor an American way of life,

³⁷ George Brown Tindall with David E. Shi, op.cit. p. 1272.

³⁸ Ibid, p. 1273.

adding about himself to be: “*the most intensely religious man I know.*”³⁹

Furthermore, Congress gave birth to the pledge of allegiance in 1954 *One nation under God* and the following year the statement *In God we trust* mandatory on all American currency. Moreover, media and benevolent people crossed the country with the slogan “*Bring the whole family to church*” or “*Family that prays together stays together*”. They catered to the new car culture by performing services at *Drive-in theatres* to re-instil the real moral values Americans needed to face the new era of materialism that to some extent, reached a total selfishness. In the same context, *the Protestant Council of New York City* explained that their message would be to:

*Promote love, joy, courage, hope, faith, trust and goodwill. Generally, avoid condemnation, criticism, controversy.... In a very real sense, we are selling religion, the good news of the Gospel.*⁴⁰

Reverend *Norman Vincent Peale* then, was the holder of the good news and sticking to his tradition of positive thinking. The major *part* of the American population saw in him *Mr feel-good theology*. He was renowned throughout the fifties with his best-seller “*The Power of Positive Thinking*”. He came to knock at the conscience of every American and heal all their depressing negative and tired thoughts substituting them by *faith, enthusiasm* and *joy*. The reverend triumphed in a period when most Americans suffered Post-War psychological depressions while enjoying material success. His methods were *tranquilizers* and *God’s words* to give them peace of mind and soul. He also stressed on the fact that as long as they believed in *God, The American Dream* and *themselves* life was for the best. His credo “*Stop worrying and start living*”. In almost the same line of thought, *David Reisman* in *the Lonely Crowd* (1950) dealt with the new American society from both spiritual and material perspectives. He portrayed two salient American personalities that used to be *The Other-Directed Type* and *the Inner-Directed Type*.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

In *the first one*, people were more concerned with the fact of being liked than being independent. That is to say, embody another personality that suited the others including the boss more than a personality that suited him, her or the universal moral values. Much like in the workplaces where employees were always smiling, glad handing and trying to please the boss as the sociologist *C. Wright Mills* stated in his book: *White Collar Society (1956)* that:

When white collar people get jobs, they sell not only their time and energy, but personalities as well. ⁴¹

He thus, attacked modernization in the sense that instead of manipulating machines, industry, the new corporate culture and the new way of thinking manipulated workers as well as families' work ethics.

The second one, stuck to the moral precepts rooted in the strong minded-parents personality that encompassed: *traditional ethic of piety, fixed values and self-reliant personality* as a binder to family values. Indeed, those values resided in family, work and religious domains. Nevertheless, family has always been considered as the foremost segment upon which society is supposed to be built. In a deeper sense, the well-being of the society then, depended on the well-being of the family unit.

Obviously, most of the middle class families during the fifties seemed holding tight to their religious ideals. In the sense that they had an entrenched perception of the world's ethics giving more priority to the *ecumenical principle* that sought world wide Christian unity, including the salient role of family unit than to the *Cartesian principle* that looked for materialism, interests as well as competitiveness. *Cormac Burke* gave a great deal of importance to man's *consciousness* since thanks to it virtues like affection, *self-sacrifice* and fortitude were regarded as crucial elements recommended by the parents to forge children personality. He globally, proved how to raise a true Christian child asking exclusively the parents:

⁴¹ Ibid.

*Let your children see that you are trying to live in accordance with your faith. Do not let yourselves be deceived: they see everything from their earliest years, and they judge everything. Let them see that God is not only on your lips but also in your deeds, that you are trying to be loyal and sincere, and that you love each other and you really love them too. This is how you will best contribute to making your children become true Christians, men and women of integrity capable of facing all life's situations with an open spirit.*⁴²

Generally, the sole purpose of any Christian parents was to guide their children towards *God's love and salvation*, believing in His existence and stressing on the fact that He was initially *good* not bad. God endowed man with a precious gift that is *conscience*, which is man's ally and supposed to distinguish him from the rest of the creatures. So, most of them were *grateful* and avoided being *ungrateful*. Admittedly, Christian family morality rests upon two maxims: *love* and *fear*. *First*, love God as being the supreme source of man's spiritual happiness as well as, moral support during his whole life, which spurs him to be morally ready to accept what he is, what he ought to be and how he ought to behave towards himself and towards the others. *Second, fear* His *moral commands* that are under the form of a divine authorized plan underlining, how a husband ought to behave towards his wife and the like as well as, children towards their parents, and how to manage those imperatives in a social context. Biblically, called *The Ten Commandments* or *Decalogue*, are known to be a list of religious and moral imperatives written by God and then given to *Moses* on *Mount Sinai* in the form of two stone tablets. Written in both, *Exodus* (20: 2-14) and *Deuteronomy* (5: 6-18) they constitute an entrenched discipline involving the following authoritative precepts:

I am the Lord your God.

You shall not make of yourself an idol.

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

⁴² Ibid, p. 1279.

Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

Honour your father and mother.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour.

*You shall not covet your neighbour's house and wife.*⁴³

Chronologically, *the first* commandment *I am the Lord your God* puts forward the principle of divinity and the relationship between God and humans. That is to say, how a good Christian could reach the virtuous maxim that of *faith* without being tempted via external influences to associate or show scepticism towards His majesty as well as His omnipotence. Indeed this commandment is to believe in the existence of God as well as His influence on events in the world. It prohibits the belief in or worship of any additional deities. *The second one you shall not make of yourself an idol* initially prohibits the construction or fashioning of idols at the image of beasts, fish, birds, people, etc and worshipping them. *The third one you shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God* commands man to never take the name of God in a vain, pointless or insincere oath. In other cases, God aimed at prohibiting the misappropriation of religious language for the sake of power and fame or participating in occult practices and blaspheming against places or people that are holy to God. In *The fourth one remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy* God recommends Jewish to labour during six days of the week and cease all activity during the seventh day declaring its greatness and holiness. It represents the seventh day where the Lord considered as a day off for Him and for the Jewish as well. *The fifth* commandment *honour your father and mother* emphasizes on the family and involves a *categorical obligation* of *obedience* that children owe to their parents. However, the obligation to honour one's parents is an

⁴³ The Holy Bible, op.cit. pp. 56/134.

obligation that one owes first to God, then fulfils the obligation through one's actions towards one's parents. In the Bible, more precisely New Testament Scriptures in the book of *Ephesians (6: 1-4)* God clearly set the duty of children towards their parents and vice versa stating:

Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honour your father and mother' _ which is the first commandment with a promise _ that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth. Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instructions of the Lord. ⁴⁴

Parents and children should collaborate to the betterment of their family relationships by clinging steadfastly to their religious and moral convictions that favour the concepts of *love, self-sacrifice* and *equal regard*, with reverence for and obedience to the previous both authorities. *The sixth one You shall not murder* implies the right of the individual to life and the duty of the other to respect his life. That forbids taking away of our own life or the life of our neighbour unjustly, since murdering a human being is a capital sin except in self-defence or times of war. In some American states, to execute criminals is recognized when necessary to preserve the safety of the citizens. Nevertheless, other methods like incarceration or rehabilitation are increasingly available for protecting society. For Catholics along with many Protestants, abortion has always been considered as being sinful and a violation of this commandment. *The seventh you shall not commit adultery* is regarded as the breaking down of the holy bond between husband and wife, a great sacrilege that includes lust as well. It aims at warning the spouses not to have extra-marital affairs and rather be loyal towards each other for it is regarded as one of the seven deadly sins and that any of them would be severely reprimanded by God for his or her action. Even *divorce* is considered as a state of adultery since still according to the New Testament Scriptures in *Matthew (19; 3-9)* asking *Jesus Christ*:

Some Pharisees came to him to test him about Moses and the certificate of divorce: he replied Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard.... I tell you that any one

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 872.

*who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness and marries another woman commits adultery.*⁴⁵

The eight you shall not steal implies not only the fact of stealing as a capital offence but could also mean *Do no kidnap* for even man is a precious property. *The ninth you shall not give false testimony against your neighbour* warns man not to bear false witness or unchaste thoughts, words or actions against any individual in a court of law or other proceeding without categorical proofs. In the *last commandment you shall not covet your neighbour's house and wife* God forbids to anyone to desire and plan obtaining what He has given to another.

God was absolutely strict when He ordered Moses and his nation to carry out *the Ten Commandments* that a priory would come to shape in the future man's demeanour. In the sense that they have always represented the principle of *moral law* binding on Christian and Jewish people including faith, *justice, righteousness* and *duty*, every Christian should embody as the most holist religious precepts applying them in any situation he or she faces as long as they live. The commandments emphasize on the inner guidance of the believer. So, the law is fulfilled not merely by avoiding what is prohibited but by carrying out what the Lord urges upon their conscience with what is right and not otherwise.

Till the present day, the United States of America have always witnessed an ongoing dispute concerning the posting of the Ten Commandments on public property. For the liberals, the commandments violate the establishment clause of the First Amendment of the United States' Constitution that has forever given the American citizen the freedom of worship. Moreover, the rulers saw in religion in general and the Ten Commandments in particular a barrier to each individual free exercise of conscience, property and most of all life. They conceived that it was for the good and safety of the American society not to approbate the expansion of any religion even if it would involve *Christianity*. In fact, those supporting the public display of the Ten Commandments have always claimed that they were not necessarily religious but might

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 732.

also represent the moral and legal foundation of both family and society. Others went to argue that prohibiting the public practice of religion would be a violation of the first amendment freedom of religion. And a slight category of people have merely pointed out that the state ought to be neutral on the subject of religion. Besides, allow people to find their own faith_ since America has always been a multi-racial and cultural nation_ rather than have the state appear to endorse any particular belief.

In the same line of thought, *John Foster Dulles* a former United States Secretary during the *Eisenhower* years affirmed that *Faith* and *family* were the American identity itself. Furthermore, one philosopher asserted that there was one well-integrated system of values in American society that roots were and remained *religion*. *Walt Withman Rostow* another key figure of the fifties professor of economic history at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, scholar and Dean of Yale Law School debated the American identity within family context. According to him, Americans have fashioned national unity out of protestant values and dreams of the eighteenth century enlightenments.

Even *churches* played a crucial role in the achievement of spirituality within American families. They helped perpetuating the concept of the American Dream by teaching the ideals of *the Christian home* and *Christian citizenship*. Unfortunately, it was not until the changing family had become an undeniable reality in the sixties that the once normative *family pew* ethos began to disintegrate however, overwhelmingly prevalent during the previous decade. At that time, most conservatives and liberal churches firmly believed in as well as sustained the principle of the Christian family ideals. Church was and still remains the source of moral inspiration, ensuring moral stability as well as national morality via family unity. Mainly after World War Two, when the American family re-united resuming a normal life by going to the church every Sunday morning, sitting on the first pew and praying for Lord salvation. Even children went to Sunday School and church. *Protestant Sunday Ritual University* chapels overflowed on Sunday mornings. Over 25% of church membership increased

from 1950 to 1959. Going to church was a form of high standard of civility as well as mark of good Christian citizens to stand in the mainline Protestant church. For *Cardinal Francis George* to dwell in God's love was a universal sacrament of salvation and unity in diversity was his motto. Church thus symbolized:

*The womb in which a new world can gestate and be born.... The church is a place of encounter, of racial dialogue and intellectual collaboration. In a context of mutual respect born of love, the church offers the gifts that transform the world and bring salvation in this life and the next.*⁴⁶

He utterly condemned the social conflicts America was struggling claiming that:

*Maintaining current patterns of ethnic, cultural, racial and economic isolation and hostility tarnishes our call as a church Consciously changing these patterns returns us to our fundamental identity as a community called to universal communion with God and with one another. Adding; Ethnic, cultural and racial diversities are gifts from God to the human race.*⁴⁷

Even the *Religious Right* had its roots since the fifties. They thought it was the beginning of a strong growth in conservative denomination under several church denominations. For instance:

- ▶ The denomination of the *Assemblies of God* added 2.000 congregations and grew in membership 18%.
- ▶ The church of *Nazarene* experienced 37% growth.
- ▶ While *Southern Baptists* added 4.000 new congregations and grew 28% in membership.

yet, according to what has already been stated so far, what seems pretty true would surely be the authenticity of the *American Dream* that part of the middle class family knew how to preserve and manage holding thus to two major principles *religion* and *moral values*. Unfortunately, the state of the middle class family of the fifties was short-lived. The sixties on the other hand, embraced a cultural revolution which seeds

⁴⁶ Cardinal Francis George, op.cit., pp. 1-4.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p.1.

were already implanted in the so-called sound and flourishing post-war American society.

Chapter Two

The American Counter-Cultural Revolution; A Social and Family Moral Unrest during the Sixties

1. Social and Family Moral Instability

In any social order, when people face a special situation they are not accustomed to they initially either tend to be indifferent and carry on living with their own ideological precepts or rebel against the established order till win the case. Morally speaking, it involves the *duty* of everyone towards the other since in this issue moral duty comes in conflict with moral autonomy. As a matter of fact, the generation who grew up in the sixties was quite different from that that grew up in the fifties but the formers' interests were well-implanted in the fifties. The word *counterculture* is initially a sociological word used to describe the values and norms of behaviour of a cultural group or subculture that run counter to those of the social mainstream of the day. It expressed the ethos, aspirations and dreams of a specific population, as in this case of study that involves the *American social revolution of the sixties*. To illustrate with: *Rock' n' roll music, Beat movement, sexual revolution, the Vietnam War, race relations, women's rights, traditional modes of authority, experimentation with psychedelic drugs as well as public disillusionment* that rebelled against the predominantly materialist interpretation of the *American Dream*, were all key elements that either called for the restructuring or the eradication of the American middle class social, economic, political and religious ideologies. However, to understand the sixties one has got to understand the fifties, which shed light on the mentality of the Beats generation in general and the middle class family moral values in particular in all fields.

Contrary to the sixties, the fifties witnessed a high fidelity to traditional values. In the sense that, fathers who came back from the Second World War got married and went to college on the *GI Bill* where they obeyed their teachers the way they obeyed their drill sergeants. They went to church, arrived at work promptly at 8:00 and got on with the kind of democracy they had mad the world safe for besides, they raised their children on the moral they had learned under the Second World War. Unfortunately, the moral and realistic aspects of the fifties were now highly challenged. Instead of looking for a uniform framework that used to be widely present during the

years of prosperity, the rebellious generation of the next decade sought to break down the framework and emphasised on the multivalence of their acts and performances. They indeed tried to challenge both the social and political orders indeed, they preferred subjectivity to objectivity. It was an era of rebellion and self-creation looking for the original precepts of modernism, which tended to deeply affect the middle class family moral perceptions. It was a mostly outlawed generation with values in a total opposition to the value and culture established. As a matter of fact, the sixties' generation was nothing but the one of the baby- boomers, which matured during that decade becoming more conscious and tending to transcend both social as well as political order creating a new liberated stance for society that core issues used to be: racial segregation, gay and feminist's movements, Vietnam War, poverty, etc.

Moreover, Americans saw the sixties as a period of public action, a rebellion against the conservative norms of the time and an era that looked for social liberalism shaped by a cultural revolution that altered both family and national morality. Themes like_ premarital or extramarital intercourse, homosexuality, inter-racial marriages, divorce, abortion, children born out of wedlock, hippies, feminist, gay and lesbian movements, students' revolt, etc_ used to be unquestionable during the fifties however, overwhelmingly prevalent during the sixties. Being called *the first spoiled generation*, they got interested in what happened outside their doorsteps something that could not take place before because of the high and steady sense of modesty. Therefore, what one would be tempted to perceive would be that the previous external factors had historically altered the course of most of the middle class family moral values? *The traditional family* was now in danger and threatened by the liberal social, political as well as economic upheavals.

From a sociological perspective, one cannot speak of society without speaking about *family* being an indissoluble and crucial segment of it, family has additionally its own rights, duties and codes of conduct. At that time, it was increasingly under pressure be it social, cultural, economic or political. The oneness of moral principles was under

constant alteration for the middle class family moral values started to erode heavily influenced by both multi-racial and cultural aspects. For instance, the great cases in divorce, out-of-wedlock births, parental disobedience, marital infidelity, single-parenting and the like happened during the sixties to illustrate with:

*The percentage of children living in a single-parent home has trebled since 1960, to reach nearly a third of all families with children.*⁴⁸

As the main political streams then converged about family status putting:

*Both liberals and conservatives agree that the root of our social problems lies in the disintegration of the family as an instrument of moral and social control.*⁴⁹

The role of family has forever been of a major importance. The family was the basic constituent of society including marriage that regulates sexual morality and secures children social and psychological conditions. However, it seemed destabilized as well as disunited in time where America was enduring both cultural and political conflicts. In that turbulent period instead of being obviously authoritative *parental authority* however began to loose ground. From the moment they matured, the baby-boomers' generation realized that the world they are living in was full of lies, betrayal and above all, *disillusionment* due _ accordingly _ to both parents' rooted-silence of the fifties, besides government abusive power over public and foreign affairs. The very signs of parental rebellion indeed, started to emerge from within home looking at their parents as being coward and old-fashioned. Most of the middle class adolescents were driving little by little away from the ruling of their patriarch. It was no longer possible for them to: come back home on time for dinner or accept solely to achieve their parents' dream concerning the choice of their studies or whether to enrol or not in the military service or even to have the choice to choose their partners. Adolescents saw now in the sixties a moral release. Unchained from the traditional conservatism of the fifties they viewed their time as an era of openness, transparency and challenge, that implacably would save them from the overwhelming social repression. They had come

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 98.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 103.

to declare openly that parental authority was nothing but *a tiresome duty*. Moreover, they denied having any connection with the previous generations seeking to preserve the idealist and utopian world they themselves built for, their conceptions of the notions of moral values were mostly vague and void of all social dimensions. In retrospect, they were brought up in an environment that pictured a flourishing economic and social status. They were spoiled but well-educated during the fifties. For some of them, a big quarry would be in perspective thanks to social welfare programs-mainly concerning the middle class. For others, on account of phenomena like racial segregation, poverty, gay and feminists' movements' marginalization the conception of the *American Dream* became mythical if not utopian. Unfortunately, government treason reshaped the intended perspectives of most of the spoiled generation, which as claimed had previously a high confidence in the rulers of the nation. Disillusioned, they ran immoral, tolerant as well as further selfish launching an assault on moral and traditional Christian values, turning thus the dream of their parents and nation to a resident moral panic threatening the future of both the societal values and interests of a whole country. Even parents were being disengaged from their sacred union as spouses.

In other terms, *divorces* started to take a great proportion within middle class American families for statistically:

From 1960 to 1965 divorce rate reached almost 25.80%, a total of 395.000. From 1965 to 1970 it reached 26.65%, a total of 479.000.
⁵⁰

Fortunately, for thousands of women it was a blessing. Divorce freed them from the sufferings of an abusive and dysfunctional relationship thanks to the liberal movement of the sixties. However, it was not the point of view of all then as one sociologist declared that:

Marriage has disappeared as a cultural ideal. A 'culture' or 'ideology' of liberation and self-fulfilment originating in the 1960's and sustained by the liberal elite has spread throughout the society leading to the disintegration of the two- parent family and

⁵⁰ David Lee, op.cit. p. 5.

*the desertation of their children by vast numbers of men. Single parenthood, or 'fatherlessness'...in the inner cities , the suburbs or through divorce or out-of-wedlock births is a tragedy for children, and a catastrophe for the rest of the society , that leads to a series of social problems: poverty, crime, violence, delinquency, drug and alcohol abuse, school failure, teenage pregnancy, welfare dependency.*⁵¹

Originally, divorce has always been the very cause of all social conflicts. It opens up to the worst phenomena that victimize children and mothers at the first place as it used to be during the liberal years. It broke down the present and future life of both family and society. Wives and children endured physical violence from the patriarch and sexual infidelity was currently spread within spouses. *David Reisman* an American sociologist declared that:

*The decreasing rate of fertility and births from 1227 in 1957 to 1000 in 1975 per women ages from 15-44, divorce rate rose 150% between 1960 to 1975.*⁵²

Furthermore:

*Half of all marriages ended in divorce; twice the rate in 1966.... The children in ten were born out of wedlock.... 20% of women between the ages of 30 and 34 have not married and over a quarter have had no children compared to 6% and 8% in 1970.*⁵³

From one day to the next, kids found themselves impoverished, uneducated, void of parental affection, which stimulated school failure and violence. The state of family unit now was being uncertain, insecure, doubtful, chaotic and fragmented since:

- Adolescents were being indifferent to the family identity.
- Instability in the lives of the couples was rapidly accompanied by increasing divorce rates.
- The home was no longer a refuge of harmony, serenity, understanding and communication it became instead a site of generational confrontation between

⁵¹ Arlene Skolnick, *Family Values; the Sequel*, 1997. pp. 1-17.

⁵² C. Allan Carlson, *The Family and Homeland Security; Lessons from the Cold War Years*, 2003. pp. 1-19.

⁵³ Steven Mintz, op.cit., p. 1.

members of different ages and genders that had personal ideologies and social affiliations.

- Instead of being perceived as an intimacy sanctuary and shelter of moral stability, which develops child's capacity to exercise self-control with respect and modesty, parents relinquished their roles as educators
- The notion of the nuclear family *nest* was being destructed with the liberation of the women for with their massive participation in the work force day-care centres became second homes and nurses second mothers for children.

Consequently, the child dual socialization turned illogical besides join two distinct environments was going uncertain. Childrearing in the United States then was threatened by the irresponsibility of the parents overtaken by what they presumed worthy of living such as materialism and competitiveness. They discharged themselves from their sacred mission that comprised help their kids develop the capacity to exercise self-control or teach them basic social comportment such as: table manners, greeting rituals, narration of daily events, etc.

Here is a table that sets differences between the fifties and sixties families:

<u>Sixties Families</u>	<u>Fifties Families</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child-centred parent focused on the needs of the child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents-centred parents looked to child lifestyle, goals, social gratification.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared parenting, working mothers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idealization of mother as only legitimate caretaker.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormy adolescence to Establish autonomy and separate identity from the parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More peaceful adolescence with less need to establish separate residence.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace and home are often the same. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharp distinction between home and workplace.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractual love. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romantic love.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brain work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manual labour.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbolic conflicts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical conflicts.

Here is an acknowledgment of *Paul DI Duca*, an American man who used to be an unhappy teenager during the sixties. He kept an image of a harsh man deaf of his generation a casualty of the Second World War. Paul reported that his brothers depicted their father as a stern and violent man who doled out clouts and used his belt on them. However, added that he never hit him but he never shared any emotion with him either. The patriarch as his fellow soldiers suffered deep psychological trauma that could not vanish at once. He could not stand the transition from a conservative towards a permissive era. His personality and perception of the world he was living in were in quite a contradiction with his ideal world shaped with rudeness and extreme conservatism. Paul's father deliberately mistreated his wife as well as his children. Full

of meanness and insults towards them let Paul hate him much more. Indeed, he could not accept their new emerging liberate identity and refused to acknowledge that the world had changed. He still stuck to his pre-war image when he could still hear and had his physical strength with his ideologies of racism as well as sexism. The intended aim of Paul however was to escape his father's harshness that mostly lacked affection, understanding, concern, kindness and moral support. Consequently, *Di Duca* failed where other fathers succeeded in the education of their children. Paul contrary to his father wanted to love and be loved. He missed a great chapter of his life struggling to gain even a piece of consideration from him. Twenty years later, Paul claimed being a father, a teacher, an elder brother and a close friend. He eventually, succeeded when other fathers failed as he pointed out that:

*I'm the father now but I'm also a counsellor and when I counsel other men, it's not the particulars of our lives we share but the huge gaps we try to help fill for each other. We slowly learn to share feelings, to trust each others...and hopefully carry this learning back to our other relationships with our children.*⁵⁴

As, a philosopher said affirmed that It is not flesh and blood but heart which makes us fathers and sons.

John Tosh, another adolescent who once a father started re-appraising the values and experiences a priory instilled by his own father. As a retired Army officer, John's father seen as most of the fathers who lived the eventful moments of the Second World War eventually portrayed a strict and distant fatherly authority figure. He, as claimed reflected a rigid notion of fatherhood.

*My father..., said John...sent me to my room, or stopped pocket-money, or inflicted a stringing blow on my outstretched palm. Discourtesy towards my mother was stamped on hard. Almost more than a punishment, I dreaded his displeasure.... I knew that there was a moral line over which my father stood guard, but I didn't know exactly where the line was drawn or when I might be crossing it.*⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Achilles Heel Collective, "*Father Figures*", 1990. pp. 1-9.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 4.

What the father was looking for, was simply a matter of inner moral but stern education for his kids and more precisely his sons for, he expected more from them than from his daughters. He continuously reprimanded them as if to remind mostly the boys that life codes were not that easy ruling and that affection alone was not enough to shape a strong and manly education of a young boy. Indeed, he was seldom exchanging words with them and having a natural discussion revealed to be very rare but as he pointed out:

*Once I was old enough to talk to him as one adult to another, I encountered some one who seemed almost completely untouched by conventional styles of men's conversation. There was no egoism about him, no competitiveness or desire to score points, no aggression.... He was never opinionated, and hardly ever judgmental, despite strongly – hard beliefs in religion and politic. He showed instead a genuinely other-centred curiosity. His listening was not passive but receptive. His response was likely to be one of compassion for other people's troubles and weaknesses, and a tolerance of their views. By the end I think that I loved him for his tenderness more than any other quality.*⁵⁶

Moreover, John was attending day-schools experience with a few gifted teachers who did not beat or bully him. He still missed his father's education though terribly afraid of his strictness. He needed as any child of his age his protection valuing the parental home as a refuge from the drabness and loneliness of school. Once adult now, the son could not reach the strict character of his father full of an unreformed reactionary of the old school. It became clearly difficult for a man like John to reconcile his present sense of his father's character with his childhood memories. He realized later how an emotional man used to be his father behind his stern education and the older he got the more directly he showed his love for his son. In his letters for instance, John's father usually signed *your affectionate parents* implying an indirect deep regard towards his son.

Always in the same line of thought, John declared that his father was not the kind who reproached his son the total lack of interest in the Army. His mother on the

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 5.

other hand was more considerate towards his professional career. Nevertheless, John still pictured the fathers' role as the shield that forever protected its property as an utmost precious good ending his short fatherly story by stressing that:

*Gentleness, affection and sensitivity form part of people's endowment as young children.... Yet somehow in my father they were not destroyed by a distant father, a hidebound public school, and twenty five years of life in an army mess. I don't pretend to understand how he kept true to himself through those experiences, and I doubt if I ever will, since family and friends of his generation are dead and he left no personal papers. But I draw great comfort from his demonstration.... And in that regard I hope he and I share more than the same two names.*⁵⁷

Yet in most of the cases, the sixties teenagers suffered of the treatment of their fathers for two main reasons. The first one concerned the father himself, who in the midst of his family life missed a great chapter in the education of his kids. That attitude was prevalent because_ as most of sociologists claimed_ a great number of them suffered post-war trauma, which had a negative repercussion on childrearing. The fathers instilled their children a more or less stern education on account of what they formerly endured under the commands of their chief-sergeants. Moreover, thanks to the traditional Christian and conservative notions they bore from their fathers to finally come intact to their progeny who viewed them as a moral burden. The second one involved the kid who during an era of tolerance felt himself trapped in the web of the parental authority figure_ as most adolescents claimed to be_ weaved by an overwhelming old-fashioned moral ethic. Thus, in the first context of situation the victims were the children and in the second one were the parents mainly the fathers.

Unfortunately, parental disagreements and an unhappy childhood were not the only factors of divorce in fact other reasons for such decline were at issue:

*Careerist mothers, absent fathers, single- parents, and unwed parents.... And as early as 1960 a third of married middle class women were working part- or full - time.*⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 6.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p; 1.

Women indeed, entered the work force partially for two main reasons. The first one was due to the fact of being single mothers and divorced now the only alternative would be to find a job that would feed the hungry mouths waiting for them at home. Second, once free most of them_ mainly, feminists_ preached their full right of independency from both husband and marriage who mostly conceived marriage as a legalized prostitution and family as being a kind of slavery or more accurately a prison. They generalized their conception of macho man that some stated to be the evil himself over the overwhelming fatherly image and family value of most of the middle class American families. The principle of marriage was kicked away. Empty of meaning families broke up more frequently. There were no longer committed fathers or mothers, children's lives were being devastated and ruined.

So, traditional family and conventional morality became now a kind of fascism and an attack on those values could be but legitimate. For, the real old moral values were replaced by the values of those who used to be once on the margin of the society. The middle class family was now captured besides the fact that the moral codes of the American society were profoundly subverted and weakened. On account of the counter-cultural revolution, every individual became his or her moral authority and no one had the right to say anyone else's lifestyle was wrong or inferior. Consequently, relations between parents and children, teachers and pupils, men and women were utterly transformed. Selfishness became a virtue and real duty involved the total submission to the new established authority that core target was to favour individual autonomy over the old conventional one. Issues like: sexual revolution, abusive parents, child abandonment, divorce, hippies and so on became normal. However, those advocating mainstream values such as: fidelity, civility, chastity, or duty found them promoting something illegitimate and old-fashioned.

From an educational viewpoint, the principle of a full equality raised within children an obsession of personal freedom creating a *child-centred* education. If one goes back through time, he or she would have noticed that America's foremost

principle was *religious*, applied either in people's daily life situations or in an educational target. Indeed, lessons like: the Christ's life, Columbus discovery or the great technological inventions taught children about the moral values they might have been following, such as: hard work or work ethics, integrity, perseverance, compassion, obedience to parents, respect for other's rights, self-control, individual responsibility, fidelity in marriage, etc. Even parents came to teach their kids the Judeo-Christian values. Religious precepts have forever been crucial to the betterment of the American society since one during the sixties said that:

*I have come to the conclusion that it is impossible to have a moral community or nations without faith in God, because without it everything comes down to me and me alone is meaningless.... Today, Americans have stopped acting in terms of their own moral ethical religious beliefs and principles. They stopped acting on what they knew was right.... However, moral societies are the only ones that work..., great moral societies, built upon faith in God, honour, trust and the law blossom....*⁵⁹

During the sixties however, many school authorities seemed to have contempt for religion and traditional moral values forcing children to endure years of *values classification* classes that objective was to teach them that all moral values were subjective and meaningless. In other words, to favour the present living feelings of a child over people's moral considerations. For many sociologists then, traditional family as well as Judeo-Christian values had been diminished from children text books for, no one mentioned issues like: marriage, wedding, husband or wife, they simply defined the family as a group of people that is all. Moreover, the reason why *values classification* programs differed radically from traditional moral codes was because it claimed that children did not need established values to make moral choices. More precisely, since all values were subjective so the real one was good if the work or the result of the work was good too. They did not care about the intention or the action.

Even moral judgment was excluded from their program. There was no moral difference between, mercy and murder, honesty and theft, sexual consent and rape,

⁵⁹ Noel Hornor, "*Society's Slide into Sexual Immorality*", 1997. pp. 1-8.

loyalty and treachery, or fidelity and adultery. What really mattered for the values classification was the child's self-gratification and feelings of the moment and no sign of moral absolute would be found around. That so-called educational program destroyed and corrupted children at the deepest levels. For instance, teachers of that period just set the facts of lying, stealing or murdering claiming to be wrong but the solution or the remedy to the illness was not yet reached. The finality was that teachers taught their pupils to satisfy their momentary desires yet, rejecting all morality established. Much like Bentham with his principle of maximizing utility that motto was "*the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people*" looking for pleasure at first place whatever the consequences of the action.

Consequently, the new values classification program was not only a sort of social decay but an assault on the traditional Judeo-Christian moral values that though forged from the very American settlement gone, if not vanished in one decade. Furthermore, even Darwinism which gained much more ground than ever removed the least Christian moral precept that the child used to proudly elate during the precedent decade. More children were running atheists and lost all religiosity as well as sense of morality. They perceived in God and parents dictators and for some of them God was a sort of an illusive guru whose aim was to keep people under his constant influence, depriving them from their spiritual autonomy. Nevertheless, what was the degree of sociability of religion, then?

2. Key Factors to Social and Family Moral Decline

2.1 Religious Decline and the Atheist Trend

While America was undergoing a moral emancipation, it conversed in a generational battle over religious values. Unlike the previous period of steady religious activities, the sixties was a period of a rather religious chaos. A young person was no longer now holding to the holy beliefs and precepts of Christianity. America now had been given a new pagan-like religion that God used to be the hippies counter culture. Children and adolescents who had been taught to respect their parents under values like: *respect, discipline, obedience, self-esteem*, etc were then behaving in a way that suited more their *self* than the previous mainstream. Middle class families were less and less attending Sunday church meetings_ mainly youth. The only values that were worthy of living used to be: *running after money, competitiveness, permissiveness and tolerance* and most of all *the nascent phenomenon of individual selfishness and social egoism*. Society had been corrupted at a large scale. The virtues and values that old-minded parents were calling to vanished at once in the dawn of the counter culture revolution.

The existence of God for instance, was now old-fashioned. TV and the new technological techniques of advertisement as well as public shows, documentaries and movies made them perceive the divine imperatives as a kind of bondage. They felt that they were trapped in a story riddled with lies. Most of the baby-boomers resigned to religious precepts that they thought sooner or later come to enslave them under pre-established rules they really despised. God was made for the weak-minded individuals that constantly needed moral relief much like *F. Nietzsche's* approach of morality and religion. Rules of piety depended on a presumed new age of liberalism and so-called egalitarianism. Sophistication and modernism replaced social ideals such as: conservatism and classicism. The pleasure to attend together_ parents and children_ in a church assembly was utopian parents were from one side and children from another. Family meetings faded away, mother and daughter or father and son relationships

revealed to be intolerable for misunderstanding always prevailed. They diverged in time and ideology. What was tolerable in the fifties was no longer during the sixties. They extrapolated the sense of freedom making of it their key maxim and moral confident. Behaving that way, the youth trend turned self-centred and inevitably sceptic if not atheist.

Consequently, another revolutionary current raised in America of the sixties to sow ignorance as well as agnosticism within the salient majority of the middle class family and society. Although, asleep during the previous decade_ thanks to the overwhelming religious revival_ the mostly called *Atheists* found a favourable environment via the so-called modernism and moral freedom to spur people to believe only in what they thought rational and pragmatic.

As defined in the dictionary the word atheist means *a person that does not believe in the existence of a god or gods*. For them, life is just material not spiritual. Their sceptic perceptions with regard to religion let them define it as following:

*Faith, the existence of God and religious doctrines are neither founded upon nor defended by logic, reason, evidence or science.... It is then an unreliable guide to reality or means for acquiring knowledge.*⁶⁰

According to their way of perceiving the theists' world, God, religion and the Bible did not save America from the scourge of violence and delinquency of the fifties, sixties and seventies. Besides, the upsurge of crimes occurred well-before the Supreme Court decision that banned prayer and Bible reading from nation's public schools in 1963. In *The Colliers 1961 Year Book*, the author noticed that crime increased over 11% for the first nine months of 1960 and added: *Little wonder our world reputation is as notorious for crime as it is famous for its technology*⁶¹. Moreover:

In the year 1962, America's incarceration rate of 119.8 adults for every 100.000 persons in the population was the highest

⁶⁰ Austin Cline, "*Antagonism and Atheism; Atheism 101: Introduction to Atheism & Atheists*", 2007.pp. 1-2.

⁶¹ Ibid.

*commitment rate in the world. And crime rates had surpassed population growth at a ratio of about 5 to 1 in 1963 over the previous five years.*⁶²

Some would come to ask why that collective turmoil within the American social order about religion. The answer was not only the counter-cultural current but the case *Murray vs. Curlett* including the turning point that took the American society, in spite of the United Supreme Court's decision banning school prayer in the four quarters of the country. The decision was adopted on *June 17, 1963* where:

*The System Court of the United States kicked reverential Bible reading and prayer recitation out of the nation's public schools.... Which upheld our first Amendment right to freedom from religious ceremonies.*⁶³

What really happened then advocated at the same time the right to the freedom of worship and the sweeping of religious precepts not only from the books but from the hearts. The case involved the middle class protagonist *Madalyn Murray*, a fervent atheist who entered her son in the public school of Baltimore, Maryland. This latter not professing Christianity found himself in the hallway while his school mates prayed nearly in *1959*. Consequently, the mother started legal proceedings that culminated in the U.S. Supreme Court decision on school prayer in *Murray vs. Curlett*. According to their accounts, during the whole four years the Murrays suffered both physical and psychological harassments. The freedom of religion gave them the right to raise their complaint to the Supreme Court managing to hold all the aces. For most atheists then, the established rules violated their rights in that it threatened their religious liberty and subjected their freedom of conscience to the rule of the majority.

William Murray the father of the little boy wrote to the Court commissioned of Baltimore City as well as to *John N. Curlett* president of the Board of Education the following statements:

Once again, we are called upon to consider the scope of the provision of the first Amendment to the U.S Constitution which

⁶² Ibid, p. 2.

⁶³ American Atheists, "*School Prayer Decision*", 2006. pp. 1-22.

declares that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.... We hold that the practices at issue at the laws requiring them are unconstitutional under the Establishment Clause, as applied to the States through the fourteenth Amendment. ⁶⁴

In this respect, what John advanced was in quite accordance with the First Amendment but without deference for the traditional Christian America of the *good old days*. Yet, on the one hand that historical event had nevertheless confirmed that freedom of worship was indispensable in a country whose people came from the four quarters of the world and brought with them a diversity of religious opinions. However, in view of that situation and relying on the previous elements atheists spurned any religious support claiming a total separation of religious activities and civil authority. They clung steadfastly to their pragmatic convictions to the point that they viewed the Bible as worthy of study for its literary and historic qualities not otherwise. On the other hand _ mostly Christian_ the middle class American family as a fervent advocate of Christianity and conservatism came to openly condemn that judicial decision. Some went on saying that even if the authorities banned religion from schools it could not ban it or uproot it from the hearts of million of believers. *The Articles of Confederation, the Declaration of Independence, the Oath of the President, or even the child who before going to bed earnestly prays God in duty bound that the supreme lawgiver of the universe would guide him or her into every measure which may be worthy of his blessing as one stated that:*

The history of man is inseparable from the history of religion.... And we are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being.... The fact that the Founding Fathers believed devotedly that there was a God and that the unalienable rights of man were rooted in Him is clearly evidenced in their writings, from the Mayflower Contract to the Constitution itself. This background is evidenced today in our public life through the continuance in our oaths of office from Presidency to the Alderman of the final supplication; "so help me God". Likewise each House of the Congress provides through its Chaplin an opening prayer and the sessions of this Court one declared open by the crier

⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 4.

*in a short ceremony, the final phrase of which invokes the grace of God.*⁶⁵

Deep in them atheists knew that they were a slight minority of non-believers who struggled to get an unexpected right at the expense of a salient majority of believers. Whether to sit or not in the hallway of the school while the majority was praying was not an excuse for such a social upheaval. What *the Murrays* did was morally improper in the face of a so-called born Christian population, that put_ from its very time it set foot on the American soil_ religious principles before personal convictions.

As a result, their moral indulgence and so-called open spirit of modernism let the American mainstream work for moral ignorance and disdain towards their Christian traditions instead of working for the whole social welfare. Everywhere, it seemed that traditional institutions and notions of morality were coming under attack mainly when it came to deal with an issue like *racial segregation*.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 5.

2.2 The Burst of Racial Segregation

One could not deny the fact that during the history of the American moral values, most of the time the multi-racial American community lacked the crucial rules of civility, which goes back to the time of slavery. Actually, the tension between cultural pluralism and national unity became a serious problem in the sixties and the ideological challenge fostered further racial segmentation. Historically, Afro-Americans have always been blamed of being *black* pretending that as a devilish stigma they were forever banished from the overwhelmingly white society. Middle class American family was the very first social structure to undergo internal conflicts altering the deeply rooted family relationships. As defined in the first chapter, family values comprise the virtue of *equality* and *freedom* that had been corrupted during the sixties on account of the lack of *civility*. Racial phenomenon had not only changed the position of the middle class family but also their hearts. Being depersonalized and insensitive to racism they started launching a moral attack on the Afro-Americans that from the mid sixties on joined the middle class category. To illustrate with, in the early sixties in *Greensboro, North Carolina* four African American students were not admitted in a college because they demanded service in a lunch counter and thus they were not served. Being not admitted, the whole Afro-American student community organized *the student Sit-Ins*. It was a racial manifestation that took the shape of a revolution at the end in almost all the Southern states. Most of the *Civil Rights Movements* were advocating the ideologies of non-violence and social integration. Their prime objective was to peacefully share and reintegrate: the right to vote, to sit at lunch counters, to go to white churches, cinemas, restaurants, stop discrimination at workplaces, etc.

Up to a point, thanks to the eruption of the *Civil Rights Movements* both American society and government became less disinterested towards inter-racial conflicts. Yet, for the majority of the American population then, the civil rights trend yielded to legal rights humanly constructed created by society, enforced by government. They often targeted principles involving precepts like: individual freedom, justice, as

well as equality of genders. In this part of history and in the field of politics, *civil rights* implied the involvement of every American citizen in general and family member in particular in social actions rejecting social decay. That decay was seemingly serious to the point where in *Atlanta* and other cities both black and white schools were bombed.

In response to that intentional mayhem, *Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr* the most prominent civil right figure had launched a series of non-violent demonstrations in *Birmingham, Alabama*. He focused on gaining Federal enforcement and new legislation by provoking racists to display their violence in public showing their real face to the world. He was outstandingly eloquent when he delivered one of the most memorable public speeches of the century including his famous sentence '*I have a dream*' standing in front of the *Lincoln's Status*. Some observed that it marked America by its historical march on *Washington D.C* on *August 28, 1963* advocating freedom, since over *200.000*, blacks and whites took part in the mega-manifestation.

Face to that upsurge of racial civil war, the matter was not only at a local scale but rather at a national one including in major part the American middle class. And the disintegration of the American family unit was basically due to racial issue that caused their disunity and misunderstanding. For instance, inter-racial marriages were observed as a sinful action though interracial marriages have never violated neither the laws of God nor the laws of nature, from the moment that the basic function of a marriage relationship has always been the procreation of the human race. The white race was being considered as the supreme one so it would be illusory to get along with it considering it as its equal. In other terms, the *WASP* kept the idea that the Afro-American community has never stopped being slaves being constantly under their reign and influence. At schools, white teachers always looked at them as an underprivileged class and often played the card of favouritism between the pupils. At home, kids were not allowed to mix with Afro-Americans, which aroused somewhere verbal arguments or to some extent physical quarrels between parents and children. Sometimes, children came to blame their parents for not being sincere and honest about what they already

taught them about the holiness of moral values. As to illustrate with, man is not allowed to marginalize, mistreat or disdain his or her fellow citizen on the basis of colour. Contrary to that immoral demeanour, some did refer to the Bible to uproot the devilish idea of segregation from the heart of their fellow citizens citing as a key reference the following verse of the *Matthew (22: 34)* and *Luke (10: 25-27)* about God and the neighbour:

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself.*⁶⁶

Biblically, human beings have forever been common. No trace of racial discrimination or superiority is mentioned in. On the contrary, ethnic, cultural and racial differences have been a gift from God to man, in short *the unity in diversity*. That is why God warned him to overcome his weakness for his strength is in his loyalty to God then to himself as He observed in *Romans (12: 21)*:

*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with God.*⁶⁷

God know the vulnerability of man's nature. That is why, He endowed him with a moral conscience not to judge people for the colour of their skin or for their social position but rather for the persons they are as well as their social values as established American citizens. And to put in mind that Afro-Americans were and still are the whites' forever neighbours.

The generation of the sixties, precisely the middle class family proved to go too far with regard to virtues and moral values. Whites were the good and black the bad. Capitalism and competitiveness overwhelmed the American state of mind with selfishness, disdain and indifference. Fortunately, there used to be a slight category of people that succeeded to turn the war process to peace process.

For instance, in a different situation like in television too much violence brought them a false image of a so-called policeman who in his role of protector of

⁶⁶ The Holy Bible, op.cit, pp. 736/ 773.

⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 845.

lives as well as properties was beating an Afro-American till death. Sometimes parents sometimes children did ask one another the questions: why behaving that way? How could a Christian community adhere to those negative principles that the Founding Fathers considered as morally improper? Moreover, pretending to be good Christians how could they override a divine imperative given that they would be severely punished for not fulfilling the sacred obligation that comprised *freedom, equality and justice*?

Indeed, selfishness had swept away every seed of morality and sense of civility that had_ apart from their superficial brotherly behaviour towards the Afro- Americans_ always been but deceptive and hypocritical. But no one could lie to him or herself about his or her own feelings of resentment that mostly whites has always born with them since settlement. Thus, racism had stirred up anger, violence and discord perpetuating the spirit of individual antagonism and intergenerational conflicts spreading overwhelmingly within a multi-racial and cultural American society.

Yet, from a cultural and social viewpoint the Afro-American community was now regarded as part of the classical middle class American white community sharing the same rights as well as duties. As a matter of fact, what gave the Afro-Americans that social status was nothing but the firm support of the government that provided all its consideration and aid via a set of legal legislations. Thanks to conscious political leaders America got almost united after being for a long time segmented.

Racism was not the only factor of social unbalance. Indeed, *adolescents* and *adults* of the greatest families of the middle class category a priori turned violent and delinquent towards the established moral order. *Drug addiction* and *Frankness about sex* were the two major factors for the counter-cultural revolution of the sixties. Contrary to the adolescents who used to imitate their parents to the point that they went till idolizing them during the fifties, in the sixties however they rather fled the fact to be associated to their reserved personality as well as their high sense of morality. They did not want to resemble them in their common conservative traits that according to them _ showed a wide range of idleness and religiosity _ most of them used to even be afraid to

be identified to their parents as such. The collective hysteria of excess of liberty lasted at the most ten years, at least until a new Christian conservative social and political stream almost found a remedy to the gangrene of behavioural extravagance comprising above all adolescents.

In another context of situation, since society and family are inter-related segments of the universal order and that family in question is regarded as the sole medium for the transmission of *the visceral code* and *family values*, it morally seemed undergoing an erosion of ethical principles, namely traditional virtues and religious precepts. One would eventually be inclined to think that although it has always been the most religiously oriented society in the Western hemisphere American identity, nevertheless knew from that era on an extravagance in the conception, perception and achievement of its ideologies. Historically speaking, the socialization of the baby-boomers generation to fit into the established order was something hard to achieve if not coming close to being a fiction. And what socially made it impossible was the authoritarian principle of both American society and government. As a matter of fact, via their overriding regime they derived the general public opinion from a state of traditional conservatism towards a state of liberal morality a collapse of law and order as in the *hippie trend*.

2.3 The Hippie Counterculture and the LGBT

Comparing to the fifties, where teenagers viewed any kind of personal relationship with their parents with a high sense of modesty those of the sixties indeed, found it unusual and intolerable. To talk about their sexuality revealed to be impossible with their parents in the fifties but in the next decade it was just a matter of lack of moral principles that fostered further permissiveness. The lack of communication between parents and children about issues like sexuality, wars, drugs..._ due to the mutual code of respect during the fifties_ led in the sixties to their excessive depreciation.

Indeed, *permissiveness* used to be a current issue and popular to the point that some renowned social trends identified as *the Hippies* or *Flower Children* embodied a lifestyle totally opposite to the good old one. Their motto was *peace* and *love* or more frankly *make love instead of making war*. It was a real religion and dominant sub-culture. Admittedly, the *hippie* subculture was originally a youth movement that began in the United States during the sixties. It expended from *New York* to *San Francisco* and spread around the world. The word *hippie* derives from *hipster* meaning *jazz slang* or utterly free and rootless that underlined their rebellion against the parental authority in major part. They initially used to describe *beatniks* who inherited the countercultural values of *the beats* as well as *Bohemian* generations that started flourishing during the late fifties. They created in the sixties their own community, slogan and social rules and embraced an era of sexual as well as drug revolution.

The *hippies* deliberately caused the erosion of traditional moral values substituting them by a spirit of rebellion, permissiveness and an above all a sense of idealism, which will be treated later on. The kids who formerly had everything_ thanks to the rapidly growing economy_ now wanted more but were prepared to give less in terms of *obedience* and *hard work*. To illustrate with:

*By 1964, the rebellion against the 1,000 year-old culture of inculcated obedience to superiors broke out on the Berkeley campus and then spread elsewhere. To the astonishment of parents teachers, and bureaucrats, kids no longer obeyed orders.... The children of the professional class took to dress like beggars and, at the university, to enrolling in basket-weaving instead of economics, which drove their parents wild. These trends culminated at Woodstock, where the counter-culture composed of free sex, drugs, and opposition to the Vietnam War reached its peak.*⁶⁸

That attitude had consequently led that trend to a rejection of the traditional cultural norms including the abstraction from all social, religious and sexual controls that inevitably had devastating consequences which turned out to be long lasting that further caused:

*Venereal disease, illegitimacy, teenage pregnancy, abortion, child abuse, one-parent families, single person households, drug abuse, high-school dropouts, teenage suicide, violent crime, and homicide all increased dramatically after 1960.*⁶⁹

The quality of life in all the big cities began visibly to deteriorate and words like: *dishonour, shame* and *sin* disappeared from the vocabulary. The so-called modernization and tolerance opened up to a serious backsliding in standards of social, sexual and educational behaviour precisely among the young. They were perceiving the future of their society as the pursuit of individual happiness and the establishment of a more democratic and egalitarian era. As a matter of fact, there was a massive democratization of the power of all authority figures_ family and society_ challenging all kinds of the authority being that of the father in the family or the tyrant in the state.

They initially targeted the government despotism and mismanagement of both internal and external public policies including in major part *the Vietnam War (1959-1975)*. Later on, they allied around them the youth population of the middle class families. It was a real *culture wars*. Indeed, it was not just a sexual revolution or a fervent protest against the war but the hippie rebellion involved much more than

⁶⁸ Laurence Stone, "*Family Values in Historical Perspectives; the Tanner Lectures on Human Values*", 1994. pp. 67-110.

⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 88.

obvious issues. The crucial matters alluded to: parental authority rebellion, racial marginalization, feminists and gay rights, the right to abort, contraception, disarmament, peace throughout the world and most of all an unlimited moral liberty. They identified themselves as a class that aimed to create a new kind of society rejecting any engagement with the mainstream.

The hippie culture embodied a new genre of psychedelic rock music, since the artists who best exemplified that era used to be: *Jefferson Airplane, The Grateful dead, Jimi Hendrix, The Doors, The Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin* and the king *Elvis Presley* who was utterly accused of being the troublemaker of a whole youth population as well as the eraser of the American Christian traditionalism. The conservative middle class families pictured them all_ along with the hippies_ as preaching coarseness, permissiveness and violence without valuing their own traditional and cultural Christian heritage. They degraded their values to the point that even sex that was a sacred means for procreation turned unexpectedly to be a way to get satisfaction that some qualified to be funny only. They denominated it as *the power of love*.

Frankness about sex was the foremost goal of the sexual revolution, mainly because it was a means to get pleasure no more. Most of the middle class young generation now was viewing women as a tool to get satisfaction not to get children. Though the Bible viewed any legal sexual relationship as being holy and sacred for the sake of having descendants. The assumption that every thing was moving in a wholly different direction than before. Furthermore, the sense of modesty, respect shame obedience, etc used to be values and virtues that seemed to vanish and sweep away the good old days. For instance, getting pregnant out of marriage was absolutely unthinkable during the fifties at least, in the middle class conservative families which honoured the commitment. However, the sixties used to be the cradle of single-parenthood, divorce, premarital sex, out of wedlock births and adultery. The holiness of sexual intercourses of the spouses from the one hand and adolescents from the other

one was converted to the point of being considered as physical slavery and moral submission. Men and women came to believe that sex out of marriage was morally acceptable as long as people cared about each other even if they were not engaged to each other. They adopted a *new morality* and became *the mainstream* since permissive values within sexual behaviour spread within a remarkable short time to some of the highly educated American young and old middle class category. Sexual promiscuousness, premarital sexual experiments, the unlimited use of contraceptives and widespread resort to abortion made the abandonment of newborn babies to welfare agencies a customary procedure. Whereas, marriage was a temporary convenience, divorce a common place, chastity a joke and fidelity a symbol of backwardness. Basically, they professed no moral values since according to them *permissiveness* centred mainly on the question of sex that inevitably generated a large mass of irresponsible people. They went with the idea that nothing was to be held as sacred and that nothing merited absolute respect. Those new ideals enjoyed widespread approval. That is how was the state of mind of the hippie movement.

Statistically, by 1969 the college campus had become accepting of what had earlier been called *casual sex*. Two out of three students surveyed found nothing morally troubling about it. Americans non-marital birth rates had increased by almost 30% from 1960 as *Cormac Burke* stated:

Sex is a noble and God-given reality that finds its proper expression in married love.... Sex which can be integrated into man's most noble power of love can also...be one of the most brutal and violent expressions.... It is a divine gift, a sacred function by which human love is, in marriage, given a unique expression of union that associates it with God's creativity...for the sake of love and procreation.

He added:

A man is free not when he is not ruled by external laws, but when he rules himself, when he is master of himself and these people do not rule themselves, they are ruled by their passions. And the slavery that comes from within is worse than any slavery imposed

*from outside..., we have the rights which God Has given us, no more.*⁷⁰

Admittedly, one should have a clear cut opinion about sexual permissiveness. For the sake of social welfare no one has got the right to degrade him or herself. People have never been supposed to be disconnected pieces living in a disconnected world. What each of us does is or lets him or her become has an effect for good or bad on those around him or her. That is why to degrade someone is in some way to offend the rest of humanity just as it is to offend God. And the main conclusion to that matter would be that any one needs his or her own *practical moral point*, in other terms to be his or her own censor. *Reason* is to play the role of *an arbiter* that *accepts* what complies with a priori the conventional moral codes of conduct and *ban categorically* what simply opposes those precepts. So, *self-censorship* is simply one expression of *self-control* and self-control is essential for *individual* and *social freedom*.

In retrospect, that youth movement became an established social group by 1965 and expanded to other countries before it declined in the mid 1970. Their age varied from 15 to 25 and purposes were inconceivable. One of their most influential leaders *Abbie Hoffman* directed them to:

- Reject established institutions.
- Criticize middle class moral values.
- Oppose nuclear weapon and the Vietnam War.
- Embrace sexual liberation.
- Rebel against the parental authority.
- Promote and legalize psychedelic drugs as: heroin, cannabis (marijuana), cocaine, amphetamines, LSD, etc to expand their consciousness and escape from the world gone crazy. Their slogan '*God is dead*'.
- Abolish money.
- Incite students to run schools.

⁷⁰ Burke Cormac, "*Covenanted Happiness; Chapter 11; The Family and the Permissive Society*", 1999. pp. 1-15.

The *LSD* for instance, as a very high psychedelic drug played a crucial role in destabilizing moral and physical aptitudes of the American youth and became a major component of the 1960's counterculture. To escape however the conservative social and political norms young people used the *LSD* also called *Lysergic acid diethylamide* as a means to escape both parental and governmental authorities. They indeed, used it as a tool to supplement various practices for transcendence including meditation. But, it had both a physical and psychological aftershock. *Physically*, it caused the addicted many troubles as: urine contractions, hypothermia, fever, elevated levels of blood sugar, increase of heart rate, jaw clenching, perspiration, pupil-dilation, saliva production, mucus production, sleeplessness, euphoria, hyperreflexia, tremors, nausea and weakness, genetic damage or developmental abnormalities in foetus and hepatitis.

It even brought cancer and some researchers affirmed that its headaches or secondary effects as *worse than natural childbirth or even amputation without anesthetic*. It means that it caused them an extremely painful disorder. Moreover, changes in auditory and visual perceptions were typical. Visual effects included the illusion of movement of static surfaces like objects moving. Users commonly reported that the inanimate world appears to animate in an unexplained way. Besides, the distortion of sounds that seemed mixing which made it harder to discern. And the only voice they heard was that of their thought overwhelmingly intensified by the sound of music.

Spiritually now it came to:

- Catalyze intense spiritual experiences.
- Make them believe that they were wondering without being aware of their actions leading in most of the time to high physical injuries.
- Consider it as a religious sacrament or a powerful tool to access to their Divine.
- Impaired temporarily their ability to make sensible judgments and understand common dangers.

- Have recurrent flashbacks that caused them distress. This syndrome is called *Hallucinogen Persisting Perception Disorder (HPPD)*.

That is why hundreds of families disintegrated along with the young population living behind only desolation, misfortune and despair instead of understanding and love. They gathered around them countless of people presuming to be the prophets and saviours of humanity. The hippies invaded all the fields: literature, art, music, movie, it came to alter the American middle class internal way of life. The principle was common, their world was lawless and without boundaries. They advocated traditional spiritual values but in terms of freedom of speech and consciousness not as a submission to the established social order, creating a new sense of community. Their real family comprised the members of their community not their parents, brothers or sisters. With a specific way of clothing and long hair, beards, blue jeans, tie-dyed shirts, sandals, long skirts, no make up, braless most of them were being inspired by the clothing of Native Americans. Travelling became an extension of friendship. In 1969 for instance, over 400.000 young people went on their way to *Woodstock* in *New York*. It was a festival of *rock* with plenty of Marijuana. All the best rock and roll musicians were playing there. It got a lot of media coverage and became the symbol of counter culture. The festival gave the 1968 generation a unique identity that even today many want to identify with it. They were known for their slogan '*sex, drug and rock'n' roll*' whereby they became popular spurring another liberal movement known as the *LGBT*.

Unfortunately, the radical change of the sexual habits within the hippies brought important consequences in the personal relationship. Indeed, the *homosexual love* was no more considered as an absolute taboo. They were denominated "*Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and transgender community*" or commonly abbreviated as the *LGBT* community. Prior to the sixties, the prevailing public attitude towards homosexuality considered as a moral failing that should be punished, contrary to the renowned psychologist *Sigmund Freud* who publicly expressed his opinion that homosexuality

was perfectly a normal condition for some people. Historically, the transgender phenomenon was typically subsumed into *Bohemian culture*, which seeds go back to the time during World War two. Million of American men and women were uprooted from their homes and relocated in large port cities such as New York City and San Francisco. Being anonymous in the large urban landscape and separated from shaming societal figures, many who otherwise would have spent their lives were exposed to nascent gay culture. When the war ended many of those people chose to permanently settle in New York and San Francisco and live more openly gay lives. At that time, a genuine gay culture began to take root with its own style, attitude, and behaviour.

On the outset of the sixties, openly gay political organizations such as *The Mattachine Society* were formerly protesting abusive treatment towards gay people who were regarded as persons in need of psychological treatments. Moreover, they challenged the entrenched idea that homosexuality was an aberrant condition and thus calling for decriminalization of homosexuality for being an isolated, solitary and victimized segment of the society. The watershed event in the American gay rights movement was the *1969 Stonewall* riots in New York City. Consequently, gays and lesbians began adopting the militant protest tactics used by anti-war and Black Power radicals to confront anti-gay ideologies that rose within both religious current and the middle class a real moral unrest. They viewed that trend as a decline of moral laws if not a social thorn, decay and gangrene that altered the whole American identity at a dizzy pace. Homosexuals for the sake of being for ever together deliberately decided to get married. And in front of such situation, men and women of religion highly contested their irrational as well as provocative way of *free love*. Among the contestants *Reverend Abbazio* who named gay and lesbian marriages as *civil wrongs* instead of *civil rights*. To begin with, the Reverend born a grudge against them for not having hold tight to their traditional Christian and moral values. Mainly, when they reversed the sacred principle of marriage from the traditional couple of man and a woman to the so-called liberal one that encompassed two men or two women. To back up his saying, he referred to some verses from the Bible as in *Leviticus (18:22)* of the *Old Testament*:

Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable.
⁷¹

Besides, in the *New Testament* he added in *1 Corinthians* (6: 9-10):

*Do you know that the wicked will not inherit the Kingdom of god? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor the drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the Kingdom of God.*⁷²

What Reverend Abbazio wanted to reach via the holy verses he cited was that the concept of gay marriage contradicted traditional religious and family values and sinful in God's eyes. Since as Christians, a traditional marriage is a forever morality that concerns the present time but also the future and the effects of their recent decisions on the ones of tomorrow. Moreover, the Bible views marriage between a man and a woman to be a sacrament to God. And that changing the definition of who can get married or what marriage is would be an affront to God. As a consequence, many adolescents brought their parents nothing but unhappiness when they admitted that they were either gay or lesbian. For them, both their parents and the law should respect their right to form families whether without fathers or without mothers and that parenthood should not rest exclusively on biology. That social upheaval was indeed nothing but a trans-generational trend which held an abusive use of concepts like *unlimited freedom* and *permissiveness*. The heterosexual relationship still affirmed Abbazio was a complementary scope that God planned for humanity and not to follow this natural proceeding would break *the traditional societal unit of the family*.

Consequently, the former reserved personality they inherited from the teachings of their parents and the holy Bible faded away. Values as: *altruism, respect, obedience* and the like of good manners vanished. The sense of family ties and values was not among their social schedule. They deliberately caused the social division and family discord of a whole nation if not later on the whole world as well. Their excessive spirit

⁷¹ Jenna Adolph's Interview with Reverend Abbazio, "*Gay Marriages_ Civil Right or Civil Wrong?*" 2006. pp. 1-4.

⁷² Ibid.

of tolerance was heavily adopted by the American society at large scale breaking down the conventional social moral code. In short, an assault on Christian traditional values. The reason why the American society in general and family in particular were both undergoing a constant moral fragmentation was peculiarly on account of the *adolescents' revolt* against the emblem of the family unit. They adopted a provocative attitude highly proved by increasing number of home escapes of teenagers and the creation of a style of alternative life. Among their other reactions:

- Ran home earlier because of the puritan and the cultural preclusion of the parents that was partially the base of almost *90.000* escapes certified by the *FBI*.
- Disobeyed and rebelled against the patriarchal authority figure and violence replaced kindness. Moreover, juvenile delinquency increased with the experience of *narcotics*, which gave them the feelings of transcendence. *Timothy Leary* for instance a teacher of the *Harvard University* was expelled from the teaching order for he delivered to the students *LSD* during the lessons to bring them a so-called release and ecstasy.
- Started stealing, lying, cheating and under the effect of powerful hallucinogen went till assaulting or more killing to either get satisfied or get what they missed.
- Rejected what used to be their sacred and holy traditional Christian precepts.
- Substituted the Bible for rock and *VIP* magazines.
- Ran school since it was_ according to them_ an old-fashioned institution.
- Deliberately played with their feelings using the slogan of *free love* via sexual intercourse as a game, which brought them to act anarchically causing a high rate of illegitimate pregnancies as well as transmitted diseases. In an extremely puritan society it aroused a real scandal and increased the resentment of the whole middle class in *opposing vices to virtues*.
- Considered premarital sexual relationship as a moral action, mainly in *1960* when the *Food and drug Administration* had approved the use of *contraceptive*

pills. Its large diffusion of a system of prevention of pregnancy freed the girls from the so-called terrors of the fifties. The rate of sexual activities of the adolescents came to exceed that of the birth rates.

- Ran universities and began to take shape of a political trend that called the attention of government.
- Went with their trans-liberal spirit till make of crimes and murders a second school.
- Protested against the *Vietnam War* which they presumed to be *a lost war*.
- With the collective spirit of equality most of them adhered to movements like: the Civil Right, feminists, gay and lesbian Movements.

And *Parents*:

- Were continuously in disagreement on account of the future of their kids.
- Made of marital infidelity a common place.
- Considered single parenting as fashionable.
- Encountered marital violence due either to their abusive consumption of liquors, drugs, or simply the euphoria of immoral tolerance that allowed them over step their marital contract as well as their divine covenant.
- With woman's liberation movement most mothers found their tranquillity outside home than within.
- Some were so lenient with their children that they adopted their new alternative lifestyle of family extravagance.
- Diverged in personal ideologies with regard to the sudden military intervention of the American troops in the South of Vietnam.
- As a conclusion to the preceding elements they got apart, in other words divorced for the so-called best of their moral tranquillity. They did not care

about the psychological and financial state of their children who consequently ran tolerant to the point of being callous.

Even women turned independent. The reason for such a revolution went to the time during and after World War Two when family necessity was transformed into national duty. The women had to replace men in factories and offices and just after the war the weak sex had been gratuitously overthrown. Though, largely frustrated from the return to the civil life a great category of women thanks to the improved conditions were allowed to achieve university degrees equal if not superior to that of men. But still, gender marginalization was felt since the middle salary of women was between 59 and 65% of that of the man within the same office.

There used to be two distinguishable categories of women. The first one though seen in the traditional role of housewives and mothers had a desperate need for money to meet the daily family requirements and thus, her job had become more a necessity than a desire for freedom. The second kind was the one that caused a crucial turning point in the female life course concerning their wrongful perception of their freedom. They were denominated *The Feminist Movement* commonly under the leadership of the *LGBT* community. They launched a new phase of female protest on a national level a sort of a powerful women's right crusade which aggressively challenged the cult of domesticity. Moreover, they came to attack the happy housewives who thought them trapped. Their goals were common freedom of thoughts and behaviour. A small group of spirited activists under the leadership of the fervent activist *Betty Friedan (1921-2006)* founded *the National Organization for Women (NOW)*. The movement grew rapidly. Its immediate objective was the end of discrimination in the work place on the basis of sex, to legalize abortion and obtain federal and state support for child-care centres.

Betty Friedan on top of being a fervent feminist activist was also a writer known via her master piece "*the Feminine Mystique*" in (1963) to have been the first to start the *second wave of feminism*. She raised an ideological war against patriarchy

asking for an autonomous course and full equality between sexes. In “*the Feminine Mystique*” she portrayed the American middle class home as *a comfortable concentration camp* where women suffocated in an atmosphere of mindless consumption and affluent banality. She deduced that women were victims of their false identity as well as false belief of their husband and children loosing their identity among the Post-War middle class suburban community. Mainly, with the new technological and economic boom that were supposed to free them from the traditional role of housewives giving them a chance to keep their jobs while being ideal housekeepers. As a matter of fact, she depicted the roles of women in general and mothers in particular, in industrial societies mainly the full-time homemaker role almost deemed stifling. She even came to mention her terror at being alone connecting between female role as a worker while being a family housewife having the impression of being socially trapped. Her book became a best seller a strong impetus for the second wave of feminism spurring forward the women’s movement. Some critics observed that she was famously abrasive with her aggressive sense of rhetoric rallying around her a multitude of so-called frustrated and trapped women. With her literary feat she changed the course of history. Almost supper aggressive and lunatic she rocked the world and turned the hierarchical authority upside-down. Besides the fact that she permanently transformed the social fabric of the United States and countries around the world ever since.

Most of the feminists despised patriarchal role and adhered to the family ideals. They were for imperative egalitarian relationship of love, justice and shared responsibility within family as well as society. Most of them viewed:

- The family and housekeeping as a kind of slavery and prison.
- Marriage as the agency that maintained the traditional pattern of men’s power over women being officially considered as a legalized prostitution.
- Heterosexual intercourse a rape.
- Men as enemies while being the favourite social class.

- Female reproductive organs as problematic and degrading.
- Pregnancy as an ordeal.
- Children as hindrance to the development of a woman's full potential.

They deemphasised the role of biology in family formation accusing deliberately childbearing and rearing as an obstacle to women's achievements. Even abortion was legal in their opinion. Feminists were being desensitized to female role in family. Women were no longer enslaved by domesticity in their viewpoint since industrialization made them economically independent and thus free from the reign of men. They warned against the danger of patriarchal violence in middle class American families. *Feminists* connected the reconstruction of the family with the reformation of society targeting the government at the first place to provide them the rights they deserved.

With regard to domestic violence they viewed it as a crime. It occurred affirmed some of them when women were supposed to be at home safe and behind locked doors shielded from strangers. Yet, statistics indicated that women were more likely to be assaulted by a loved one than by a stranger besides the fact that domestic assault was casually more violent than streets attacks. Women were according to them safe no where and from no one. The gender feminist *Leonore Walker* director of the *Domestic Violence Institute* defined an assaulted woman as following:

*A woman who is repeatedly subjected to any forceful physical of psychological behaviour by a man in order to coerce her to do something he wants.*⁷³

For *Catherine McKinnon* the state viewed the world from the male perspective and used its power to protect his interests as a gender class. The feminists' women did not need state control but total liberalism. Their slogan was "*the personal is personal*", except the *theologian feminists* who stressed on the fact that both Christian and Jewish traditions were crucial to empower family moral values despite the domination of male. They also called for the centrality of motherhood since patriarchy was a chief problem

⁷³ Wendy Mc Elory, op.cit., p. 10.

in a family life. Family was the fundamental basis for moral education. Moreover, children were regarded as the concern of not only parents but society as a whole. Most of religious feminists converged when dealing with the family and its Biblical holiness stating:

*The first sacred covenant was marriage that brings husband and wife into mutual love.... Then, comes the other sacred covenants, the embodied affections and investments of mother and father when children are born. The importance of extended families, the communities of tradition in church and synagogue which teach and support families. The contractual duties and supports of states and market. And finally, the deep grounding of individuals and families in the goodness of God, a goodness that makes us all worthy and deserving of care.*⁷⁴

Afro-American feminists also took part in the movement. Like *Bell Hooks* and *Patricia Hill Collins* who struggled for individual equality as well as against racism, classicism and sexism mainly at workplace.

Statistically, some socialists argued that the chief essence that destroyed women's status was capitalism. Since, once she entered the workforce she became the equal of men. It was unfortunately not the view of the feminist trend that deliberately blamed the capitalist regime of sustaining the male class rather than to be just and fair with both classes. Their prime objective was to disintegrate and break the emblem of family unit involving traditional Christian precepts therefore half of all marriages ended in divorce:

*Twice the rate in 1960..., three children in ten were born out-of-wedlock ..., 20% of women between the ages of 30 and 34 have not married ..., and over a quarter have had no children..., compared to 6% and 8% in 1970. And as early as 1960, a third of married middle class women were working part or full-time.*⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Don S. Browning, "From Cultural War to Common Ground; Religion and the American Family Debate", 1997. p. 189.

⁷⁵ Steven Mintz, op.cit., p. 1.

2.4 Social and Family Negativism to the Lost War Named Vietnam

In retrospect, fortunately the only action where: *Afro-Americans, hippies, atheists, gay, lesbian and feminists movements* converged was the issue of the *Vietnam War*. Though disillusioned they dared condemn the government positions that most of the time used to be unfair and spurious towards it. They were all as a shield against government unfairness and disillusionment. With the collective approbation the middle class family and the activist movements came to convince the public opinion and the government to be realistic assuming that it was a *lost war*. Renowned persons acknowledged that the war divided not only the country between *Republicans* and *Democrats* but also old and young, parents and children.

Its consequence was a real division at home. Families fractured, children run communists, dodgers left the country and public opinion turned against the war. Children for instance, adopted an ideology of *self-sufficiency* and *existentialism*. According to them, since government was looking for its own interest they were free enough to judge that they were the only responsible for their actions. Besides the fact, that they were free to choose their development and destiny. The war thus, altered their religious convictions and social perceptions. Even their parents were excluded from their life choices and perspectives. Parents could no longer control the actions of their children either at home or outside home. Apart from their positive position in the war and dazzled by the current of *freedom* and *autonomy* the American adolescents:

- Forgot who they were.
- What was the reason for which America gained_ during the war of *Independence*_ both supremacy and glory?
- Who was the guilty and who was the victim?

- What would be their reward at the end?
- And once they had realized how they did behave how would they get rid of the titanic burden they born for one decade that of *the countercultural revolution*?

To face such challenge, America needed not only material support but also moral and social one. What authorities were being afraid of happened. They fought *communism* abroad and they found it at home. The young Americans felt in the same trap as that of their parents in the fifties. As president *Lyndon B. Johnson* declared in 1968 that:

*Our country is in a great danger, we have an explosive situation in Vietnam.... That could go up at any moment. We have troubles that could be very deadly here at home, right here in this nation's capital.*⁷⁶

In retrospect, during the sixties the American moral values were in a high degree of turmoil living a decade of outburst of social violence, disruption and both social and economic failure. In view of such a situation, both public and governmental authorities would have collaborated to bring people welfare, common good, protect personal dignity and stop the business of sex under the emblem of *the renaissance and restructuring of moral values*. In short, to heal a civilization in decay.

⁷⁶ John Christensen, “*The War That Won't Go Away*”, 2000. pp. 1-5.

3. The American Dream Converted

Unfortunately, the American Dream created a society devoted to wealth and the exploitation of the fellow citizen. In the sense that patriotism, Americanism and religious transcendentalism that characterised the preceding decade was abhorred by the young people who looked for a new ideology not a rebuilt one.

Government's commitment and achievements in that regard were not in vain for what it brought was worthwhile. Historical persons like *Kennedy* and *Johnson* favoured the general interests at the private one. They saw in the American middle class a present and future basis of national unity as well as the cradle of a civilized society that core element was family. Without this latter, the country's moral values were doomed to collapse. Both presidents firmly believed in and conceptualized the spirituality along with the concreteness of the American Dream.

To lead a comfortable free life for instance was no longer utopian for some as the value judgment of the under-classes which became almost disinterested. Step by step, the majority of the middle class families reintegrated the spirit of real values that used to be somehow missed. *Charity, benevolence* and, *altruism* were no longer ignored virtues now. *Love, dignity, honour* and *integrity* were part of the general daily life activities along with *equality* and most of all *civility*. *Obedience, discipline, respect* were the chief concern of children, pupils and students after being on the boil during the sixties. However, *duty* and *faith* were the new denominations of every American citizen.

To reintegrate morally the mainstream was not an easy task then. Even if they came to alter the collective behaviour of the majority they could not succeed to do so with the others. The mainstream was not yet convinced that a white supremacy of four

centuries could vanish overnight. It took them years to overcome that spirit of racial superiority. With regard to the internal family affairs kids were overtaken by the trend of over-liberalism and thought was the embodiment of the American Dream. The parental authority was old-fashioned. Teachers who inspired them authority and respect were now valueless besides they put aside their holy and precious Christian traditions. They turned the concept of the American Dream upside down substituting liberalism for conservatism. That movement destabilized the middle class ranking.

Even though the American Dream was under conversion during a whole decade through a mostly disillusioned, violent and ultra- liberal society, nevertheless hope was still leaving in the hearts and actions of a considerable number of traditionalist, conservative as well as nationalist conscientious category of both middle class society and family members. They showed an outstanding social manifestation during the next decade for:

*The youth revolt (1958-1976); the feminist revolution (1965-1979); lesbian and gay movements (1968).... Youth movement of hippies and anti-war activists led by young men that embraced peace, cooperation non- materialism and non-competitiveness. Feminism began to reach its zenith in the years of 1966 to 1970 that used to term patriarchy as a social and political system that accords power to certain males. But the counter revolution from the Religious Right swiftly followed which was well organized and very successful.*⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Celeste Newbrough, “Clowning Reproductive Rights and the Gender Revolution”, 1997. pp. 1-16.

Chapter Three

***Did the American Religious Right Revive a New
Ethical Code to Save the Middle Class Family
during the Seventies?***

1. The Aftermath of the Counter-Culture

Historically, the sixties were not the glory of the American conservative mainstream perspectives. Contrary to the fifties that used to be almost full of religiosity, the sixties seemed confused and determined at once. From the one hand, they came to reinsert the basic values of freedom and self-determination via the *Vietnam War* and *civil rights movements* but from the other one, they showed disinterestedness and unworthiness towards their own social cornerstone that is *family moral values*.

They were confused in the sense that the rush of the new moral current corrupted their personality as well as their social status. The prevalence of autonomy enhanced their vision of an ideal world. This latter dwelled in their high sense of social illusion, spiritual commitment and cultural attachment. They over-estimated their personality of a spoiled baby-boomers' generation who had the power to overcome all kinds of ordeals at whatever degree. In most of the cases, it involved whether or not to go back to what had for a long time been their parents ally that is re-instil the traditional moral values or adopt the mainstream new permissive moral. Whereas, determination had been well-illustrated in their actions and in their, a priory entrenched conception of an utterly free ruled world within a pluralistic context. They elevated the spirit of Communism as well as dysfunctional family moral structure to a state of social veneration. In short, it was a civilization in decay.

The family for instance, was a kind of a war-like residence. No proper discussion would be held between father and son or mother and daughter otherwise a serious tension would have broken out. No longer family intimacy, close or mutual affinity for each other was being elaborated. Most historians noticed a massive erosion of the rooted-ethical ethos that was formerly a tribute to the Founding Fathers. They were further alarmed when face to that social upheaval felt powerless and helpless to bring concrete elements of social stability as well as unification of thought. To honour such memory the only thing left was to make the American Dream_ that the sixties

generation felt to achieve_ reintegrate its initial standard of *a conservative Christian family and society*. But that after the American both social and family orders were being subject to ups and downs.

What was predicable by most of social scholars happened. *The atheist trend, the LGBT along with the hippie and Civil Rights' movements* utterly altered the mainstream perceptions of the ideal world. Those streams instilled within most of the middle class society and more precisely family the following modernization and emancipation drawbacks:

- Dismissal of traditional moral values.
- Higher divorce rate.
- Increased pre-marital sex:

*Non-marital sexual activity among teenagers had increased sharply. Women ages from 15 to 44, recalled their first pre-marital sexual experience. About 40% of the females who were 18 years old in 1970 said that they had had sex by that age. 55% of males aged 18 years old had had sex in 1970, and 64% of them had had it from 1977 to 1979.*⁷⁸

- Few women having children.
- Lower birth rates.
- Delay of marriage.
- Small family members.
- Birth control.
- An increasing rate of abortion. Married, unmarried and teenagers were allowed to terminate a pregnancy at will in the first three months.
- Fragmented household with adolescents living home at an early age.
- The break down of family ties and traditional duties.
- Increasing pre-marital couples.
- Rise in female-headed household.
- Increasing number of working women.

⁷⁸ Donald J. Besharov, “*Trends in Teens Sexual Behaviour*”, 2000. pp. 1-11.

- More equality for women and Afro-Americans.
- Growth of drug abuse.
- Growth of crime rates.
- More and more adolescents and kids were running home expecting a better life that was in fact full of dreams and disillusionment.
- Raise of children psychological disorders on account of the unlimited parental quarrels or mostly divorce cases.
- Since most of the middle class families were instable a decreasing rate of religiosity was overwhelmingly prevalent for they were more concerned with the domestic disputes than with being involved spiritually.
- Less church attendance within the middle class families.
- Parents were so absorbed by their jobs that they neglected the parental tasks as the physical and moral education of their kids. For instance, they did not care whether or not the kids did their homework activities, obeyed the teachers at school following their directives, went to school or came home on time, etc. And children in another context of situation acted similarly. The pleasure to gather around the table for breakfast, lunch or dinner became old-fashioned. In short, materialism and tolerance eclipsed idealism and conservatism.
- Poverty of the sixties affected a great deal of middle class American parents till they could not provide for the least needs of their kids.
- 10 to 15% annual inflation rate.
- Energy crisis.
- Economically, the poor were growing poorer and the rich richer.
- Homosexuality had been affirmed as a social lifestyle.
- Feminism was moving at a fast pace.
- Declining standard of living.
- A high level of suicide rate within the youth population.

- Display of more and more brutal acts of violence on TV, a slide that started with the movie *A Clockwork Orange* in 1971. Statistically, it had been estimated that by the age of twenty-one the average American child had been witnessing no fewer than 8,000 murders on television.
- The large ubiquity of handguns within the young American population, which led to an upsurge of violence, homicides and suicides placing America in the forefront of the highest criminality rate in the world.

With regard to the issue of woman during the seventies she knew a massive entry into the work force. What followed was but pitiful for her as well as for what was supposed to be her family for, an upsurge in divorce had overthrown old family norms and gender roles emerged. Some of them, as stated in chapter two were obliged to face such dilemma to provide what was essential to their kids since they had no family income. But others like *the gender feminists* worked hard to come to be the equal of man at home and at work. In the seventies, they led a war against men as one feminist said; “*if the sixties belonged to Blacks, the next year was ours*”. Betty Freidan, Germaine Geer, Susan Brown Miller, Ti Akinston, Shulamith Firestone and other fervent feminist activists stood steadfast towards gender egalitarianism as well as female total autonomy. Kate Miller in her book *Sexual Politics 1970*’ said that “*marriage was the agency that maintained the traditional pattern of men’s power over woman*”. And for Ellen Peck in “*The Baby Trap*” (1971) contested children conception and rearing affirming that “*their absence was a real liberation for women*”. Indeed, they aimed at being the *matriarchy* instead of the *patriarchy* from a family as well as a socio-political angle. NOW feminist movement’s objective was to end job discrimination, to legalize abortion and to obtain federal and state support for child-care centres. Under the title IX of the *Educational Amendment Act* of 1972 they succeeded to obtain equal opportunities for women that were highly ensured by the *College Programs*.

The wisest said that both home and house are woman-made, she has always represented the heart and soul of the family. She symbolizes *tenderness, affection, respect, and devotion* to her family task of a honourable housewife, mother and spouse. Whereas, with her social emancipation she devoted her time working only. Once at home her role was to take care of the household tasks or to rest for a while and then look after what her husband and children needed. Of course, it was not easy to manage all that at once. Consequently, the husband made a deal either to manage herself between home and work or stop working. The deal was for the majority of the working women a sharp refusal. From a self-reliant point of view, one could not neglect the fact that she had advantages that she could not get beforehand like: *social freedom, income and responsibility*. But man in general and woman in particular *should* make some sacrifice mainly when the family is to be the centre of the conflict. Unfortunately, she did not succeed to connect her job to her household tasks. So she preferred to resign via the would-be safest road named *divorce* since:

*From 1970 to 1975, divorce rate reached 32.80%, the equivalent of 708.000 the total of the American population. From 1975 to 1980, it increased to 48.13%, the total of 1.036.000. And in 1976, the divorce rate came to 50.49%. Even illegal abortion rate increased to reach 650.000 cases in 1973. 75% professed to believe that it was acceptable to be single and bring up children.*⁷⁹

Statistically speaking, when young persons got married there used to be higher divorce rates, besides those who got divorced usually remarried. And what generated from that mess was: step-brothers, step-sisters, step-fathers as well as step-mothers. Their relationships were tensed, which made any kind of contact between them a fit of anger. The concept of the ideal family partially vanished. The number of couples who lived together outside marriage had eventually increased seven times. More often than not, million of single mothers raised their kids on their own without the assistance of the father. To be single then, was fashionable to the point that most of the women because of movements like the *feminists* found it normal and even easy to get separated

⁷⁹ David Lee, op.cit. p. 6.

from men who shared their lives years or perhaps decades. Now the potential victims were essentially the kids who suffered doubly. Psychologists affirmed that single parent-households did not mean a child was being single-parented. Actually, in a non-custodial divorced parents when there used to be a re-marriage or stepchildren, parents continued to get involved with their kids, but to what extent?

Generally, along the sixties and seventies after parents got technically divorced brothers and sisters were raised in a single-parent family. But family was likely to change. First, they lived with their mothers then with their fathers and sometimes for a whole life. Most of the time kids kept in touch with both of them. However, face to a situation where the parents remarried, stepparents showed reluctance as well as indifference towards the children and were often void of feelings. Sharing the usual family tasks that they used to do with their own children seemed a far away dream. A gradual emotional detachment arose between the parents and their kids usually because of the negative attitude of the stepparents. In another context of situation, the problem might be reversed and the bad could be the kids personally. They were either living in a hostile atmosphere of indifference and struggling to gain the sympathy of the stepparents or viewing them as substitutes trying to replace one of their parents. They felt their lives were scattered and influenced by the attitudes, opinions, lifestyles and personalities of the others. In such scrambled dilemma, kids' rebellion against the established authority_ parents or stepparents_ began to spurt.

Obviously, *children* are known to be psychologically weak. So when their parents got away from one another the reaction of the formers was either to develop a reclusive temper which might have created a step by step depression and in some cases perhaps a state of mental lack of balance or rebel against the parental decision_ of divorce_ while running away. Some kids came to prefer to be adopted than to be in the custody of one of the parents. Whereas, the remaining category of children did submit to the established fact that they would never see their parents together again. They were living with an incomplete feeling of the parental love and care that in addition would

always prevail. The turbulence of the sixties did not follow the moral unity of the middle class family of the fifties and by the way damaged its perpetuation throughout the seventies. In short, the source of moral decay was the sixties presumed to be a decade in decline.

Another crucial issue rose within kids' personality, the expression of disenchantment with life embodied in what people called *suicide*. Throughout the seventies, there used to be a huge increase in suicide among younger Americans for instance:

*From 1960 to 1977, the suicide rate (per 100.000) of white males aged 15 to 24 more than doubled, going from (8.6 to 22.9%).*⁸⁰

Despair sharply peaked among kids. An important proportion of them felt unwanted, unloved. The blameworthy were the parents with their negative attitude and misunderstanding because they found out that they had no common points now. So, they chuck out everything including their children who were the most gifted present the Lord offered them. Not a very fair attitude from parents who were supposed to cherish and sacrifice for the well-being of their progeny. Instead, they were imbued with selfishness and narcissism which blinded them to the point that they did not care about the present and future of their children. The common ground parents would have reached would be to be wise and think twice before acting so as to not harm or hurt their frail feelings. At least, to show them that they were not the reason or guilty of the marital breach. Socially, the real victims were not the parents but rather the children who were destabilized and disoriented. Besides the fact that they missed something that could never be replaced what ever the value that is *parental love and affection*.

Sociologists claimed that criminal activity had soared among youth then. In great part because of the previous points of family crisis that step by step involved the consumption and distribution of dangerously addictive illegal drugs such as *LSD*, cocaine and heroin. Statistically, the number of juvenile arrests doubled in the same decade.

⁸⁰ Lowell Gallaway and Richard Vedder, "*The Impact of the Welfare State on America's Children*", 1996. pp. 1-9.

With regard to women again, sociologists noticed a massive liberation movement and an increase in female labour force participation as well as second job or over-time work. Moreover, illegitimate births tripled. In the late seventies, 13% of families with children had only one parent. The amount of time parents spent with their kids was declining even in traditional families. Instead of being the sole arbiter of family interests, governmental policies had contributed to the break down of traditional loving family arrangements for children.

- First, public assistance programs had provided powerful incentives for illegitimacy and for the existence of single parent-families.
- Second, no-fault divorce laws at the state level had reduced the legal and the psychic costs of getting divorced.
- Third, *marriage penalty* that reduced the federal tax burden for some couples who lived together outside marriage.
- Fourth, the same tax code provided tax breaks for families who hired outsiders to care for their kids but not for family members who provided such care.

Those governmental steps enlarged the gap between parents and children. Furthermore, *moral relativism* increased in part as a result of governmental policy. Courts ruling prohibiting the posting of the *Ten Commandments* and use prayers at graduation ceremonies were small examples demonstrating a down playing of institutional forces that were supposed to inculcate values instead of uprooting them. The welfare system undermined the negative consequences of behaviour that foremost social threat was the erosion of moral values. The schools promoted curricula that reduced positive reinforcement of traditional values. In short, government had debilitating effects upon the future moral state of the American kids.

Always in the same line of thought, since much more women were working outside home consequently childrearing was a real handicap to their professions. They preferred to be bound outside home than inside it. As a consequence, what was obvious

was the female mainstream delay of marriage. It caused a lower birth rate and narrowing family members till the birth rate became an integral part of their alienated spirit towards family conception. The notion of family and marriage was utterly dead. Who could imagine that the United States' government via the *Supreme Court Decision* of *Roe vs. Wade* on *January 22, 1973* would legalize *abortion* and would have been heavily supported by the *feminist* trend? Historically, no one could. That is why an *anti-abortion* movement was born in response to that genetic aberration. As a matter of fact, *the Supreme Court* passed down its decision which legalized abortion *after the three months of pregnancy* for all American women. Regarded as pro-choice extremists they adhered to the absolute right of women to abort a foetus. In that regard, *T. A Byrnes* an American sociologist in his book "*Catholic Bishops in American politics*" published by the Princeton University Press in *1991* about abortion during the *1970's* argued that:

*God the Lord of life has conferred on men the surpassing ministry of safeguarding life.... Therefore, from the moment of conception life must be guarded with the greatest of care, while abortion and infanticide are unspeakable crimes.*⁸¹

He clearly asserted and condemned at the same time the fact that human beings are gifts from God and so precious that once life is to be present in his or her heart beatings there is no reason to take it_ life_ away. For most of the fundamentalists and conservatives *abortion was the equivalent of murder*. Moreover, it had directly overridden the traditional family values along with religion.

Even drug addiction and gangs' affiliation were not excluded. The outcome of the hippie culture that peaked in the early *1970's* carried on through the end of the decade. Feminist and Gay Rights movements brought much more negativism to social convention. Moreover, the impact of *contraceptive pills* on social relationships, an increase in divorce rates, single-parents households and pre-marital sex enhanced their liberal spirit within a pluralistic community. The first time *gay rights* were introduced in the American nation was in *New York City Council* on *January 6th, 1971*. Their social

⁸¹ Stephen D. Munford, "*Why the Pope Can't Change the Church's Position on Birth Control?*" 1999. pp. 1-26.

manifestation took a great impetus. They even came to introduce fields like, politics, economy, law, etc.

More often than not, well-educated middle class adolescents turned delinquent at once. They kept on behaving the way the hippies behaved. The seventies according to them were continuity to the extravagance of the sixties if not an extreme exceeding to all moral barriers. They preferred wondering here and there searching peace and love that they could simply get at home with the warm affection of their parents. Most of them run immoral, indifferent and selfish. Indeed, the American society was morally and psychologically spiralling downward.

Even the nuclear family went against the norms of the old family lifestyle, since the role of woman took a radical shift from those of the earlier generations. Because of the liberal attitudes towards social structure came new perspectives to child rearing as well as education for, what used to be salient was the decline in attendance to boarding schools and a rise of local day schools. Education was increasingly institutionalized, which tended to homogenize the information taught and thus exposed children to ideas that were contrary to a family's traditional beliefs. Unfortunately, some historians observed that homogeneity and exposure to such ideas were essential in a pluralistic society such as America. But others stuck to the maxim of ethical conventionality and remained faithful to the good old methods of unification of thoughts based on the moral ethos as well as religious spirit, even if the social context was unusual and ethnically varied. Universities became friendlier and less authoritarian towards students because of the prior student's unrest one decade earlier. They were in a position where they could control their supervisors. The hierarchy was non-effective for almost the supervisor became subordinate and the subordinate supervisor. The educative scale was undergoing reversed roles and it became too serious that the boss could not get hierarchically his or her educational status.

In retrospect, the *nuclear American family* was no longer being over-idealized, over-nostalgic, sacred, cherished and fundamental just like it used to be after

World War Two when it shaped the historical institution that the American society was based on. The only reason that made it so idealistic had been the fact that before and during the war, one could not speak of a family concept or the oneness of its moral values. It used to be on the contrary fragmented and to some extent, lifeless and traditionally non-spiritual. Fathers were at the battlefield while mothers were either serving at the administrations replacing their husbands at work or simply staying home looking after their kids. No other alternatives were being possible for neither the spouses nor children.

Now during the seventies, the quest for self-fulfilment and intimacy had taken an individualistic tone. To some extent, family member clashes led most of the time to the break-up of a marriage and the dissolution of the family. The distinctive characteristics of the working middle class family stressed on family ties and less on marital closeness, adult-centeredness and higher value on obedience in child rearing. Their only concern was *self-interest*. The middle class American family was undergoing such radical moral, social, economic as well as political turmoil which a wave of religious conservatism emerged urgently to revive *the traditional American middle class family*.

2. The Religious Right: Back to a New Educational and Religious Traditionalism

The American society in general and family in particular had been got up in a spiral of a post-modern moral decline. Caught in the web of narcissism, selfishness as well as self-centredness most of middle class family values were running a perilous danger that principles were heavily spurred during the sixties. Instead of moving forward American morality was backsliding damaging everything on its supposedly way to social welfare, oneness of principles and individual commitment.

James Nelson a black Baptist who after being a nightclub entertainer and business man during the sixties turned as well as his family during the seventies a fervent pro-Christian American citizen. His *Christianity* he said saved him from the counter-cultural days of the sixties. *James* realized one decade later that *extravagance* as well as *immorality* had no way out and that *religion* was the only door opened to his misdeeds and confessions.

John Schneider and other survivor of the hippie generation along with his brother were addicted and alcoholic. And because he got troubles with his wife and her father *John* planned to *murder* them and at the same time take the opportunity to *steal* the money belonging to his spouse. Unfortunately, he did nothing of what he planned. Thanks another time to his hidden sense of rooted-religiosity that triumphed and that without it he would have dropped away. He soon after his devilish thoughts, converted to Christianity that altered his insane spirit turning what it remained from his personality to a conscientious as well as a wholesome individual.

Those two cases used to be a great impetus to their moral demeanour in time of moral rehabilitation and trend diversity. What both of them did, proved that deep inside their conscience were hidden good and wise persons. Despite the fact that they did not

comply with the rules they nevertheless remained loyal to their traditional Christian precepts.

Even family ties were trapped in that contextual immoral extravagance. The spirit of familiarity with a fundamentalist ideology seemed ethically far away. The sense of collective contribution for the general well-being had been substituted by private interests along with the spirit of competitiveness. The horizon of unification of thoughts was unanimously and concretely unrealisable to some extent unthinkable. It was an era where virtues faded away and morals started boiling, making of the generational conciliation a seemingly long-lasting obstacle to *spiritual fulfilment* before being *a material one*. However, thanks to the roots of moral rehabilitation spread from the late fifties America regained its status as a born-again Christian nation.

Members of the same family were living in an atmosphere of continual decline. A great number of careerist women were the whole day absent from their household tasks. Even fathers could not spare a few moments to their offspring. Disinterested from their crucial mission of *parents*, they favoured job over the kids. Sharing between home and work used to be a real dilemma. But in reality, their only concern was money. From the one hand, the only excuse they found was to meet the needs of their children to bring them the life they always dreamt of, to provide them the most brilliant and safest future or simply or to live the life they themselves missed once kids. But from the other hand, parents forgot that money, pleasure and social advantages could not rescue them_ kids_ from the golden principles involving *morality*, *spirituality* and *religiosity*.

A moral mission that they were not yet predisposed to. Even if they missed them_ principles_ at home they could have been learning them at school. Unfortunately, teachers were more focusing on teaching the mainstream individualistic ideology that centred on egoism than taking their pupils back to the world's ethic imbued with maxims like to be: pro-moral, pro-family as well as pro-social American citizens.

It was high time to:

- *End* drug abuse and gang affiliations for it ruined the middle class family moral values, mainly within adolescents.
- *Stabilize* and *coordinate* between parents and children and thus find preliminary solutions to single-parenting and childrearing.
- *Re-instil* the Christian religious doctrines that used to be the cornerstone as well as pillar of America of the eighteenth century.
- *Reinsert* the importance of spiritual values, love of the family and respect of the other.
- *Reaffirm* the duty of parents to bring up their children with love, teaching them the ideals of: helpfulness, kindness, altruism, self-sacrifice, obedience and respect.
- *Make* employers more responsive to the needs of their families including flexible work hours and day-care at the work place.
- For schools and universities *to replace* curriculum and old-teaching methods by learning by doing. In other words, to base their lessons on a practical rather than a theoretical work. For instance, instead of giving a simple definition of the term *drug* teachers should be taking them straight to in a detoxification centre so as to see the authenticity of the devil named *drug* and its pitiful repercussions on the addicted person.

Not an easy task for both conservative American families and authorities for they saw their social institutions disintegrate and vanish step by step. Up to a point, *education* was the central issue of the middle class American parents as one renowned American president affirmed:

The problem of American education goes deeper than the lack of buildings or lack of equipments or lack of scholarship or even lack of personnel. It involves quality; quality of teachers, quality of

*instructions, quality of curricula, quality of students, quality of output and quality of standards.*⁸²

Actually, the cradle of *education* has always been *school*. It represented and still represents the most powerful, authoritarian and a mystique-ridden institution in modern society. It also during the seventies replaced the church as an official institutional expression of Christianity of the modern secular state that during the sixties underwent a spiritual disestablishment wherein it moved from the religiously traditional to the commonly atypical and weird. The vast majority of people then had nothing serious to do with education or to some extent religion at all.

The classical virtue of *prudence* by which a person knew the good from evil, truth from falsehood did not operate in children once at school who were basically not supposed to have any knowledge, or experience about the near future.

There used to be some exceptions where schools were not the appropriate social institutions for a child education. Obviously a teacher's role was not only to teach but also to embody many characters at once. He or she should be the father or the mother, the brother or the sister, the friend or the neighbour next door or psychologist. Teachers should always be ready to listen to the matters of their pupils. And when they carefully listen to them they could guess whether or not the kid has got another intellectual or manual predisposition. The signs of that predisposition in the seventies were often revealed under form of a total intellectual disinterestedness. In that case, teachers along with the parental support immediately stopped the school process for the way to force or to exploit a kid is known to be an inhumane method that has no moral basis of free exercise of choice and full realization of individual potential. That is why, thousands of kids failed to achieve what they always dreamt of along their pretty life.

That did not mean that the child was stupid or at some extent not educated. Morally speaking, education is not only the emblem of intellectualism it also involves the hidden manual capacity and skilfulness of the pupil. And a second chance would be

⁸² The American Atheists, op.cit., p. 4.

welcomed to him or her. Education is present everywhere in science, art and literature, but the foremost education is the one performed at home by the parents. It is the only manoeuvre that keeps us in every generation from having to go back and start over in the quest for civilization as well as struggle for liberty that *_liberty_* was one of its most precious maxims. To study or work with a liberal spirit often offers unlimited hope in a supposed to be a free society. So, to feel that deep inside every one resides a high sentiment of freewill makes every one psychologically self-confident and ready to prove the effectiveness of the work done. Which leaves the kid with unlimited perspectives he could brilliantly achieve.

Education further means *civilization* and *culture* that are firmly rooted in the past but still live to preserve the western system of moral values that until the present day remains undoubtedly unchanged. Even reason and free will do guide our moral conduct. Sociologists defined it as following:

*Every nation which has reached a certain stage of development is instinctively impelled to practice education. Education is the process by which a community preserves and transmits its physical and intellectual character. For the individual passes away but the type remains. The natural process from one generation to another ensures the perpetuation of the physical characteristics of...men; but men can transmit their social and intellectual nature only by exercising the qualities through which they created it: reason and conscious will.*⁸³

It was a field under attack and threatened by the growth of the liberal spirit. That is why it should be absolutely bound to *values* and *traditions* as one observed:

Now the education keeps pace with the life and growth of the community, and is altered both by changes imposed on it from without and by transformation in its internal structure and intellectual development. And since the basis of education is a general consciousness of the values which govern human life, its history is affected by changes in the value current within the community. When these values are stable, education is firmly based, and when they are displaced or destroyed, the educational process is weakened until it becomes inoperative. This occurs

⁸³ Everett Reimer, "Education and Private Policy; De-Schooling Society", 1971. pp. 2-50.

*whenever tradition is violently overthrown or suffers internal collapses.*⁸⁴

Obviously, educational institutions like schools and universities have always existed to preserve and hand on the values, knowledge as well as discipline of the American society in general and middle class family in particular. So globally, it was both family and society with their values, discipline and knowledge which were essentially under attack. For instance, with issues like social classes, discrimination, or racial segregation_ that created structures of exclusion_ the concept of education as a general social institution was now *dehumanized*. Above all, schools must have been preserved and defended. They represented and still represent a kind of shelter for children in their quest for a new fundamentalist society as well as culture based on the elusive energies of their brains. So, end racial imbalance might have been fundamental to the well-being of public schools then. Being Afro-American pupils or students into a full conformity to the concept of a traditional family and society was unthinkable and their integration used to be incomplete.

*Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect on the colored children...: The policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the Negro group. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of the child to learn. Segregation ..., therefore, has a tendency to retard the educational and mental development of Negro children and to deprive them of some of the benefits they would receive in a racially integrated school system.*⁸⁵

The effect of segregating races and social classes into separate classrooms or unites of studies were damaging to all students in educational, psychological and social terms. And the probabilities of a mutual understanding were shrinking little by little.

Education is also *morality* that goes on apace. So frankness about sexuality during the sixties that carried on during the seventies degraded the American way and identity in every conceivable way. However, to respond to such moral chaos only a cry for censorship was crucially needed. And to reach self-censorship firstly, one ought to

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid, pp. 18-19.

have resource to his or her practical moral point that plays the role of censor. Secondly, to be strong enough to realize that wrong behaviour can deform or degrade them. Censorship also implies an expression of self-control, which is essential for individual and social freedom. Self-control along with conscience can stop the growth of moral decay.

Freedom and responsibility are also considered as two basic correlative topics in both morality and religion. For instance, a young boy is free to buy drugs but if he does so he is not free to avoid the consequences of becoming enslaved to them. That is why, God leave him with the alternative consequences of his freedom. Moreover, they are left with the alternative of either following His divine Commands or not following them.

One is inclined to think that education during the seventies was not only the concern of the individual but was essentially the function of the whole American community. The formative influence of the conservative trend on the middle class families was primarily to educate the present and future generations of individuals so as to make them in its own image of true conformist and loyal Christian American citizens. Therefore, education as one said in any community, be it a family, a social class, a profession, race or state, is the direct expression of its active awareness of standard. And that, moral as well as cultural crisis were the result of the abandonment of those deliberate endeavour.

With regard to *values* and *virtues* some teenagers had been taught the standards of *right* and *wrong* in public schools that played an important role in the moral progress in the areas of *civil rights*, *civil liberties*, *instilling the moral code of conduct*, etc. They indeed, expressed more sensitivity towards those precious maxims than their parents or grandparents did. They were being motivated to read books about people whose ideals as well as behaviours reflected their real society's highest standards. That category of sensitive young children and adolescents fostered their spirit of value that was a real chance for them to grow into mature, sensitive, religious and morally responsible

adults, thanks to the steady learning of their parents. Whereas, another group of young people had completely broken down morality. They grew up thinking that morality was synonymous with oppression and even abuse of self-personality. Up to a point, if children or adolescents believed that life held no potential that could not be realized at thirteen and then the restraints imposed upon their sexuality, indolence or greed by their culture their parents appeared to them as a violation of their constitutional rights.

Thus, virtue, moral values, standards of right and wrong, education, culture and civilization were supposedly to be moral realities at that time and even now. Besides the fact that it used to be the key that education gives each new generation to gain access to its cultural as well as religious inheritance.

Discipline as a sacred virtue was crucial for children that parents somehow dismissed and being so busy to admit that it was so vital to kids' demeanour that they could not get it at both home and school. That sacred virtue used to be the missing link of a whole chain of moral values strengthened by a strict religious behaviour.

Generally, parents do expect much more than *a good morning* or *a thank you* from their children, teachers from their pupils and professors from their students. Unfortunately, the continuing degeneration of that personal virtue among the majority of them seemed to be emerging as the most urgent issue to be studied and solved. That is why during the seventies the field of education brought a revisitation of *values* but under a personalistic approach called *Values Clarification*. That process put forward the principle of values that were to be represented in a neutral way to students who were to clarify and select their choices.

Actually, when the question of values came up to their narrow spirit that was ruined by the precedent moral troubles they collectively asked the following question: *whose values should we learn?* To answer them, the wisest advised children and adolescents to believe in a core set of virtues found commonly in a Christian worldwide view or a Judeo-Christian philosophy, even if many of them did not characterised

themselves as particularly *religious*. Yet the personalistic approach of *identification virtue* instead of giving birth to a more moral society it resulted in a moral decline. Indeed, public schools as well as universities had arbitrarily ignored their original roles in morality and character education. Moreover, some liberal churches and religious organisations adhered to the principles of that moral deficiency.

Many pupils and students came to schools and universities respectively with little moral teaching from their parents, communities or religious institutions if they ever had. The considerable lack of values was highly prevailing within the mainstream students' segment.

The whole public opinion and governmental authorities became aware of what was to destabilize, disunite and decline their seemingly monopoly of the perfect moral nation over the world. They must have intervened to stop the erosion of values as well as immoral contamination. As the French historian *Alexis De Tocqueville*, wrote 160 years ago about that supposedly powerful country:

*America is great because America is good. If America ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.*⁸⁶

So, morality was in great danger that not only threatened children and parents, old and youth but the external image of a post-modern moral America continually spiralling downward.

Even the principle of *work ethic* lost its value based on consciousness and hard work. Over-competitiveness and disinterestedness made the majority of the middle class working category favour quantity over quality. Their concern was not the quality of the job doing and how delicate and refined might be its end but rather the amount of money and promotions they could benefit from. No trace of conscientiousness was apparent in neither their actions nor in their feelings. The real sense of work ethic that once upon a time meant *a cultural norm that places a positive moral value on doing a good job based on a belief that work has an intrinsic value for its own sake*

⁸⁶ Noel Hornor, op.cit., p. 205.

had hardly been followed, it had indeed been completely reversed. Contrary to men who were less involved in work ethic women had brilliantly scored. They struggled to reaffirm their socio-political status in a male-made context. Their strong sense of enthusiasm placed them in a position of positivism, instead of negativism. Their strategy was to promote spiritual awareness and a flourishing political career.

So, to come back to those moral ideals, *education, spirituality, religion* as well as *moral values* were regarded as the only alternative to rescue a nation in decline. And to act as such was not the business of a simple American citizen but of a socio-political institution or some might call it a pro-family organization called *the Religious Right Movement*. Indeed, they called for an immediate return to *virtue* and *morality* already corrupted by the poorly designed welfare system, drug culture, detrimental effects of discrimination, religious decline, unemployment, etc. As true fundamentalists they embodied a continuity of traditional scriptural and dogmatic theology which proved later on to be true sources of moral authority in Christian teachings.

Independently from the extra-liberal spirit of sixties mainstream social commitment of the American fundamentalist activists of the seventies exceeded the moral expectation of the conservative spirit. When most of them lost confidence in both public and government authorities the new conservative tendency emerged to prove that society in general and middle class family in particular were not completely damaged and that they could be rescued from moral disintegration as well as decline.

America experienced during that era a major revival of evangelical religion. It was no longer a local or provincial phenomenon that could easily be dismissed. *Christian Evangelicals* or *Christian Right* organizations owned their own TV and radio stations. They operated with their own schools and universities. The seeds of morality, religiosity and spirituality were however still present in the spirit of a small portion of well-educated old-parents. Integration, self-reliant personality as well as strong sense of piety were the path they favoured, reluctant to other immoral disciplines. A survey in 1977 revealed that more than 70 million Americans described themselves as born-again

Christians who had a direct personal relationship with *Jesus Christ*. Along with other fundamentalist activists they formed a conscientious fragment of the American society that sought the reintegration of America Dream. Their aim was to bring back enthusiasm and inspiration that their ancestors carried with them in the New World looking for religious and social tranquillity as well as political freedom. They were the kind of persons who were convinced not indifferent. Besides the fact that to embody such precepts high standard of preparation was required from them.

Perceived as the saviours of humanity *the Religious Right, the Christian Right, the New Christian Right, or the New Religious Right* were all fundamentalist denominations. But the key movement known as *the Religious Right* was firstly a politico-religious behaviour or movement of white *Evangelists* that constituted the target consistency of *the New Religious Right*. Their mission was to bring back the traditional morality, values and religious spirit within the mainstream which was not an easy task at all as one fervent fundamentalist activist declared that:

*Our task is not to Christianize America, but to bring about a moral and conservative revolution.*⁸⁷

Some historians argued that those movements belonged to different political as well as social streams. Some wanted political fame others wanted wealth but all wished to see America move as one steadfast Christian citizenry not languish under the oppressive spirit of immoral tolerance.

They targeted the American population at the beginning then their interests shifted to reach the large political spectrum. At the beginning, a great number of the middle class families did not embrace their religious traditionalism. But it did not discourage their efforts to reintegrate what should be reintegrated. They on the contrary, succeeded to re-establish the American traditions and reaffirm the American identity as an eternal entity combining religious and political values into one thematic ideology.

⁸⁷ George Brown Tindall with David E. Shi, op.cit., p. 1425.

Jerry Falwell who was *the Moral Majority's* best known spokesman in the late seventies and throughout the eighties expressed the sentiments of countless other groups in a new religious political right. His priorities along with those of the *Religious Right* to moral regeneration were that:

- Christian morality *ought to* be preserved.
- The economy *ought to* operate without interference by the government which should be reduced in size.
- The Supreme Court Decision in *Roe vs. Wade (1973)* legalizing abortion *ought to* be reversed. Besides, rectify the ignorance of *abortion* by teaching its adherents that '*life began at conception*' and that 60% of Americans favoured as a freedom of choice principle of abortion in *Roe vs. Wade*.
- Government *ought to* limit teenagers' access to contraception.
- Government *ought to* stop gang affiliations and drug abuse.
- Evolution *ought to* be replaced in schools by the Biblical story of creation.
- Prayer *ought to* be restored in schools.
- Soviet expansion *ought to* be opposed as a form of pagan totalitarianism.
- The state *ought to* deny recognition and acceptance of homosexuality.
- Equal Rights Amendment and Strategic Arms Limitation Talks *ought to* be opposed.
- Both government and the public opinion *ought to* enforce the traditional vision of family life.
- Traditional family *should not to* be guided it rather *ought to* be autonomous.
- Male *ought to* regain his authority as a patriarch. He was supposed to be the head and responsible of his family as a sacred duty bound.
- Media that promoted an '*anti-family*' agenda *ought to* be censored.

- They *ought to* put liberal politicians on the right path leading a drastic war against *Darwinism, evolutionists* and favouring *anti-war* as well as *civil rights movements*.

They triumphed with their moralistic zeal and financial resources to promote morality in public life and combat legislations that favoured the legalization of immorality. Within a year, *Falwell* claimed over *4 million* members including, *72.000* ministers, priests and rabbis which soon reached the whole country. On the whole, they declared themselves as *new-born* or *born-again Christians*.

The most outstanding figures that set up those imperatives used to be:

- *Barry Goldwater*: the holder of the patrimony of the New Deal liberation and the leader of the *Religious Right movement*.
- *Pat Robertson*: was the first to launch Christian Broadcasting Network on TV.
- *James Dobson*: founded Focus on the Family in 1977.
- *Paul Weyrich*: the original founder of the *New Right* was one of the first to focus on abortion. And in 1977 he created *the Family Channel*. His aim was to instil the definition of the word *family* in the hearts and actions of each American. A family that ideal comprised a husband a wife and children.

And others like: *Richard Viguerie, Tim Lahaye, Beverly Lahaye, Judith A. Reisman, Charles Stanley, James Kennedy* were among the many who struggled to renew the decaying permissive style the lost generation of the sixties had for a long time adopted.

The *Christian Right* and other fundamentalist organizations like the *Moral Majority* or *Christian Coalition* adhered to principles that were closely related to each other. The *Moral Majority* was a movement made up of conservative Christian political action committees. Their personal beliefs were important to maintain the Christian conception of moral law. A conception they believed represented the opinion of the majority of Americans_ hence the movement's name. It reached a membership of

millions. The *Moral Majority* was of the second largest conservative lobby group after the Christian Right, in the USA. Their principles were common and moved in parallel with each other though diverged politically.

Actually, the counter-culture was the only reason for their rise. Permissiveness let the American society dismiss *family values*, encouraged with the widespread distrust in the government and erosion of traditional religious principles created a backlash. Some liberals affirmed that the *Right* was not a serious long-term political movement but rather a transitory phenomenon led by irrational, paranoid people who were angry at the changes taking place in America. Conservatives did not want to get where the liberal secularists wanted to take them. They indeed, wanted to bring Christian religious teachings and overall morality. A vision absolutely religious of the world conception as a traditional Christian dogma that *ought* to be applied without any restraint.

The majority of the Right wing members used to be pro-family adherents. Even President *Nixon* in 1972 declared that the USA should welcome and plan for a stabilized population. It included a program of fertility control as well as sex education that would reduce to three child family.

Again with the support of James *Earl, Jr. Carter* (1942-) the thirty ninth president of the USA the Democrats introduced the family theme to national politics under the banner of "*Family Policy*". *Daniel Patrick Moynihan* and *Walter Mondale* were among the first to propose that government had a role to play in *strengthening families*.

Economically, one famous sociologist wrote in 1979 an article in the *Harvard Education Review* about the state of the middle class families in the American society that families were under stress, not only because they lacked moral values but also because:

*The impact of economy and working conditions on families was a central theme.... Job, a decent income adequate housing and health care were the minimal conditions for a healthy family life.*⁸⁸

Statistically, the American economy stagnated just after 1973 which created a family crisis as: the eclipse of traditional employment centres, destruction of formerly high-paid union jobs, expansion of the female and minority work force and the mounting dilemma of welfare capitalism.

As a matter of fact, family values, norms and strategies that once coordinated personal life_ with older relations of production as well as distribution_ were now out of sync with political and economical trends. Consequently, it caused pain and disruption within families creating changes in ways that sometimes made things worse, as to bring it back into balance with both economic and political realities. The economic factor was more disastrous than profitable. Under such circumstances, strengthening traditional family structures was going to be an extremely hard deal. Even though countless of efforts had been supplied for the sake of the socio-economic welfare nonetheless, it did not change the economic and social context of modern middle class family life and values. It was unlikely to solve the problems that continually led people to engage in personal behaviour that went against many of their rooted family moral values.

Most of them did not avoid misfortune. In 1974 government recognized the problem of *child abuse* that is why it enacted *The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act*. It was a legislation to call for federal assistance to states to help them develop the prevention as well as treatment programs for abuse and neglect. The act also established '*The National Centre on Child Abuse*' that helped as a cleaning house for current data on child abuse and neglect.

So, Americans began to loose faith in their government not because this latter stood inactive towards the upsurge of social issues like: unemployment, delinquency or

⁸⁸ Arlene Skolnick, op.cit., p. 13.

religious decline but rather on account of the inflation of expenses it attributed to the *Vietnam War*. 70% of them did not trust in their government. The American authorities conspired against their own nation and by the way against the American citizens. So, economy began to stagnate and people sceptical about their government declared it as an enemy. Disillusionment of the sixties still persisted. That is why, fed up of the mainstream passivity, lack of confidence and faith in themselves the remaining category of faithful middle class families decided to rally around what seemed to bring them comfort and self-confidence in short, the new conservative trend. The evangelical *Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon* for instance, was both conservative and liberal but rebelled against the *Vietnam War* that according to him uprooted the deep Christian moral values of the American middle class family. That is why, president *Carter* planned to regain and restore the middle class family's faith in the American government. His aim was that the American family could shape and control government as well as society and renew the confidence built on the American Dream. In a public speech in *July 1979* entitled '*America's Crises of Confidence*' and to grow the spirit of confidence instead of disillusionment in the hearts of millions of good and loyal American citizens he claimed that:

*We simply must have faith in each other. Faith in our ability to govern ourselves, and faith in the future of this nation. Restoring that faith and that confidence to America is now the most important task we face.*⁸⁹

Unfortunately, most Americans rejected his words and promises. And it was not until *1980* when they elected *Ronald Regan* the born-again Christian, pro-family man par excellence and founder of '*the Committee to Family values*' that the first lights of the American Dream regained every American home.

Another issue aroused anger and opposition from the Religious Right was *feminism*. They firmly opposed their anti-family propaganda that turned the concept of family role upside down. Their moral and political campaign against the middle class

⁸⁹ Chris H. Lewis, "*What Are Some of the Major Problems Facing America in the 1970's and 1980's?*", 2002. pp. 1-10.

family caused its disintegration at some extent. Considered as anti-feminists one Right activist affirmed that they undermined the roles of wives and mothers that many conservatives believed was the glue that held the family and the larger society together. If women gave up those roles and tried to become like men then society and family would break down. Feminism was a threat because women pursued self-interest, selfishness and narcissism that not only made them neglect their *family duty* but also becomes contemptuous to their values and virtues. Conservatives were not against the fact that women worked or not their only concern was that they could manage themselves to fulfil their task as a mother first then a worker. The priority was the family and the strength of the American society laid in the family and anything that threatened the family threatened America in their view point which is pretty true.

Socio-politically speaking *Phyllis Schlafly* (1924-) the leader of the *Stop ERA* movement and as an American conservative political activist opposed both feminism as well as the Equal Rights Amendment. As the rest of the religious conservatives she withdrew from the mainstream American culture taking refuge in Bible colleges, independent congregations and Bible conferences. She was above all known for her firm opposition to women's liberation movement. Her social as well as family principles were to advocate a full-time mother and wife. *Phyllis* was anti-liberal but used to be herself a lawyer, editor of a monthly newsletter. In most of her editorials she criticized sex education in public schools and was against federally funded day-care as well as abortion. Woman's role started when man's role ended. In other words, she *ought to* be the traditional mum that was supposed to:

- *Be* a housewife instead of a breadwinner.
- *Care* all day about her children, husband and household tasks.
- *Stay* home because working out was the mission of the husband not the wife.
- *Sew* and knit instead of working in offices or administrations or even be a noble teacher.

The middle class mother or wife on the other hand, was not allowed to:

- *Take part in feminist, liberal or social associations.*
- *Have a job outside home.*
- *Turn upside down the concept of family hierarchy.*
- *Reverse the roles by making the woman work outside and man staying home.*
- *Be active in social movements and monopolize the political field.*
- *Use contraceptives to limit family members.*
- *Abort since it was Biblically and humanely considered as a murder, mainly after the period of conception.*

Schlafly's perception of the post-modern woman was somehow old-fashioned at some extent. A woman was supposed in her viewpoint to play her role of housewife only neither study nor work. Furthermore, she was not allowed to abort or take contraceptives such as the pill RU 486 that reduced the fertility rate.

Abortion as one of the most central themes mentioned so far upset a large spectrum of high ranked personalities. Among the protesters *the Vatican*. In its *Vatican Declaration* the whole Christian papal community declared that:

*A Christian can never conform to a law which is in itself immoral, and such is the case of a law which would admit in principle the licitness of abortion. Nor can a Christian take part in a propaganda campaign in favour of such a law, or vote for it. Moreover, he may not collaborate in its application.*⁹⁰

Women were imbued with the hysteria of liberalism and self-centeredness. They were so cruel and heartless that they completely disdained their Christian faith. Pride, exaggerated self-image as well as lack of selflessness pushed the majority of them ignore the sixth Commandment of the Holy Bible “*You shall not kill*”. In their opinion, that imperative was intended to criminals who arbitrarily murdered innocent persons. However, in their case aborting was a normal act since now it has been

⁹⁰ Stephen D. Munford, op.cit., p. 8.

adopted by the US Supreme Court. To justify their abhorrent action the only answer to the conservatives for their defence was: *it is just a simple foetus it is not a person yet.*

That moral despise made the religious world more and more confused but not perplex. As Pope *Leo XIII* in his encyclical on “*The Chief Duties of Christian Citizens*” said:

*If the laws of the states are manifestly at variance with the divine law, containing enactments hurtful to the church or conveying injunctions adverse to the duties imposed by religion, then truly to resist becomes a positive duty, to obey a crime.*⁹¹

The *Archbishop Joseph Bernardin* wrote in his pastoral plan about his fight against abortion:

*The abortion decisions of the United States Supreme Court (January 22, 1973), violate the moral order and have disrupted the legal process which previously attempted to Safeguard the rights of unborn child.*⁹²

In his viewpoint, to enact such law was often no better. That is why, he additionally put forward a pro-life legislative program including:

- A passage of a constitutional Amendment providing protection for the unborn child to the maximum degree possible.
- Passage of federal and state laws and adoption of administrative policies that will restrict the practice of abortion as much as possible.

Unfortunately, he was not much heard, the mainstream women opinion was indifferent without any feeling of guilt or consciousness, regard or duty towards what God brought them with. They did not bear the *will power* to brave their moral weakness. Theoretically, it has been proved that the *will* of a man is about 90% of his moral formation. The role of the *will* is to make every one master of his own life and events. Some call it the practical side of moral formation, that key basis is *reason itself*, telling us our *duties* and our *rights*.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

To not abort according to the New Right, was a *duty*. Women *ought* to be wise persons who eventually could feel duty bound to act in a reasonable imperative way rather than irrational selfish one. They were so materialized that they came to be deprived of spirituality. In the sense that scientifically, once a mother reaches the third month of pregnancy the foetus has got a soul and as a soul is a living entity so to abort means to arbitrarily kill a person. From an ethical point of view, women *should not* abort at least with respect to their Christian moral traditions.

As pope John Paul II said:

*To refuse to take part in committing an injustice is not only a moral duty; it is also a basic human right.... Democracy cannot be idolized to the point of making it a substitute for morality or a panacea for immorality. Fundamentally, democracy is a 'system', and as such is a means not an end. Its moral value is not automatic, but depends on conformity to the moral law.*⁹³

Since man is basically a vulnerable and weak being most of the time heavily influenced by external factors, morality *ought to* be an integral part of his demeanour. It becomes *a necessity* before *an obligation* for his self-fulfilment. In this case study, traditional values should comply with a post-modern era of technology and science for humanity goes with civility not incivility.

From a religious point of view, the Religious Right moved with a giant step. At the end of the decade, America noticed a large expansion of evangelical mega-churches. For instance: the Second Baptist Church in Huston, Texas, Saddleback Community Church in California and Calvary Baptist in Winston, Salem. In 1978, there were 6.000 such schools with one million pupils.

In short, they fought the exaggerated principles of the counter-culture that main issues used to be: homosexuality, feminism, pornography, juvenile delinquency, pre-marital and extra-marital sex, drug addiction, gangs affiliations, despise of parental authority, lack of religious practice at both home and school, the permissive liberal

⁹³ Stephen D. Munford, op.cit., p. 20.

spirit of the American family, the laissez-faire capitalism that destabilized the middle class family by offering women more alternatives to work and thus ignore their household task, etc. All those reactions did not live them inactive. The goal of their mission was to save a nation from a perilous danger called *counterculture* and to honour the religious and social ideals of their founding fathers, that core maxims were: *freedom, right, duty, equality* and at last *pursuit of happiness*.

In most of the cases, they could not brave by themselves that tremendous social unrest. That is why both all social segments and government had come to a compromise that had put America as the worthier and most moral nation over the world.

3. Solutions in Perspectives: Back to a Modern Kantian Morality

At first glance, modernity seemed holding the substantial potential of technology and science which could bring man but advance and success throughout time. It brought mankind with modern means like: TV, radio, computer, telephone, household appliances, etc that helped him manage his daily tasks easily and gain much more time than before. So, technology made him a fully autonomic individual that can live on with his modern period.

However, sometimes modernity has got positive points as it may have got negative ones. With regard to the seventies, the USA witnessed a continuing degeneration of personal virtue among teens embodied in an upsurge of mayhem, which was usually transmitted via audio-visual means mainly TV. It morally, deteriorated children's values. Violence and pornography used to be the kind of visual means that aroused passionate excitement within little kids and even adolescents who were known to be psychologically vulnerable. Generally, it was potentially a dangerous stuff that should have probably been kept out of the hands of minors. Furthermore, the display of violence and brutality should have been banned just because it inspired them to imitate the action. A well-educated child or adolescent was supposed to convey the best of him not the worse that might have offended the accepted moral community standards. In that particular case, parents were to play their role of educators by controlling tolerance with one precious maxim called *the limits* that some named it *ensorship* or *self-censorship*.

A person is by nature not free, not because he or she is not bound to any external authority figure but is rather free when he or she is strong enough to control the internal authority figure. This latter is living within him or her and is currently named *passion* or *desire*. Some psychologists argued that the poor were more likely to be predisposed to violence as well as immorality. But they neglected the probability that violence was a genetic and hereditary defect, an aberrant gene that springs up with a

person's behaviour and not just because he or she suffered social, economic or political unrest even if they belonged to a middle class family.

In another context of situation, the *educational field* was also hit by phenomenon of modernity. To save a generation in decline, the best thing they would have done was to meet once a week for instance as a group with social studies teachers, or the staff members of the institution to discuss their experiences, feelings of frustrations, success or simply exchange ideas. Those steps were primordial to be sure that they were coming to fresh understanding and having the feelings that they were really part of a wholesome community, not just intensify old prejudices. Teenagers be it pupils or adolescents often hurt themselves and others because they lacked awareness of moral values. The blame-worthy in most of the cases were not them but those who were supposed to instil the teens the most valuable moral codes they needed precisely parents or teachers. An effective character education indeed would have improved students behaviour and made schools or universities more civil communities which would have improved academic performances.

Initially, many students or pupils came to their educational institutions with little moral teaching from their parents, communities or religious institutions. Basically, the *duty* of both parents and teachers would have been to educate the young generation:

*Avoid idleness, profanity, and falsehood, and to instruct them in the manners and morals and the principles of a free government. Each teacher shall endeavour to impress upon the minds of the pupils the principles of morality, truth, justice, patriotism, a true comprehension of the rights, duties, and dignity of American citizenship, including: kindness towards domestic pets and the humane treatment of living creatures.*⁹⁴

So, to inculcate the dutiful character in each of them and as a *Kantian dogma* one would have emphasised within the curriculum of those public institutions the following fundamental moral values:

⁹⁴ Daniel C, Elliot, “ *Moral Values For Public Education*”, 2004. pp. 1-5.

- **Morality**: represents the foundation of any society in this case, the American one. It is further defined as a responsibility for personal decisions, conduct and the *obligation* to demonstrate concern about the well-being of others, along with showing respect for the living creatures. During the seventies, it was to be taught to the teenagers as key value that each citizen in a free society should respect the worth and dignity of the other as well as his freedom of conscience. *Religion* should also have been presented as the primary source for the presence of basic moral principles. Its significant contribution would have been appreciated by them including the sacredness of human life and belief in freedom of worship. As President *Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919)*, rightly said that: “*To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society*”.
- **Integrity**: school should encourage students to live and speak with integrity. In other terms to be trustworthy. To foster integrity was to help build character and self-control, fairness and justice. To help carry and pursue excellence. To assist students to be honest with them. To encourage the development of reliability in relations with others. So, merely to be an overall desirable American citizen. Mainly when the foremost issue then used to be racial marginalisation that created within each middle class family perpetual and mutual disagreements.
- **Civility**: the model of civility is to be referred to as: *honest, responsible, respectful, truthful, self-disciplined, compassionate, perseverant, dutiful, rightful, generous, benevolent, altruistic, patriot, emphatic, obedient* to the established laws, etc. Civility has always been the hallmark of America. It is the commitment of every citizen. The means by which any society can be measured as a valuable or non-valuable one.
- **Duty**: if one comes to summarize all values and virtues he or she will come to the conclusion that nothing could be fully achieved without the imperative presence of *duty*. *Reason* and *will* that God endowed man with are in great part

the energy that strengthens the moral and physical capacities. Man needs them to vanquish his internal traits that usually push him to act contrary to the conventional moral code of behaviour. *Duty* unifies all the other values under the emblem of: *self-sacrifice, understanding, harmony and pacification*. To realize those ideals, there used to be nothing preferable for most middle class American teenagers and families than to yield to a both divine and human discipline codified in an imperative social system named *moral duty*.

Admittedly, both liberals and conservatives converged to agree that the roots of social problems lay on the disintegration of the of the family as an instrument of moral and social control. They collectively managed to almost heal what was left as a civilization in decay and sought social solutions to the issues being as to:

- *Keep* pressing for equal pay and equal work. Not like feminists wished a total liberal woman but at least share their duties as truly integrated American citizen who lived a post-modern evolution not regression.
- *Introduce* more part-time and above all flex-time jobs for working mothers and fathers with regards to their children.
- *Give* tax breaks for employers who provide well-run day-care centres for their employees.
- *Provide* federal funding for pre-schools and day-care centres.
- *Legislate* maternity leave up to five years with some right to reemployment and retraining at the end.

Other measures would be called to prop up the middle class family itself and to reduce the number of divorces of couples with young children and thus of single parents. In short, to bring back *moral duty* as *Kant's* dominant moral principle as:

- *Restrict* access to divorce for parents with children at home by demanding a waiting period, marriage, counselling, etc in order to try to keep the family

together until the children would have left home. The weak and nascent personality of the kid would have been taken seriously into account for it might be non-reversible for him or her.

- *Garnish* salaries of divorced husbands who failed to pay alimony and also fathers of illegitimate children.
- *Avoid* access to abortion because it devalued the family principle by fragmenting its moral unit.
- *Found* religious associations for divorced to instil them the major precepts God imbued man with from the beginning of his creation including the fact_ for spouses_ to be faithful and loyal towards one another.

With regard to the issue of drugs that spread among the youth population then government tried to:

- *Decriminalize* and heavily tax, marijuana which was to be used by one third of the American population and appeared to be a no more dangerous drug than alcohol and less addictive.
- Greatly *increase* the number of centres for addicts seeking help in detoxification.
- *Provide* detoxification programs of young adolescents.
- *Provide* tax breaks for corporations that could test, treat and educate the not fully lost generation.

Those measures should have decreased the profits of the drug lords and reduce the needs of drug-users to behave violently at home, school and in the streets. Even hand guns as well as gangs members should have been reduced in size. Crimes, juvenile delinquency and brutality rose within the young desperate middle class population to affirm the survival of the fittest.

A weapon that was firstly designed for self-defence was now a means to kill and get one's revenge. *Imprisoning* generally means *condemning* however that process

was not the only remedy for that community in decline. The right word to use would have been *punishing* not *condemning*. To punish means that the individual who went beyond his or her immoral limits had a second chance to almost renew his or her asocial demeanour. Whereas, to condemn would mean that no choice was left to his or her redemption. Most psychologists agreed with the principle of *social rehabilitation*. In other terms, altering their mentality with intensive psychological therapies that would have relieved at least 50% of them.

So to reduce that unprecedented addiction to violence government should have taken drastic measures to both control and reduce guns at home as well as outside home. The best thing they would have done would be to:

- *Ban* all sales of handguns and semiautomatic weapons and register all ownership of guns just like cars. This modest proposal would have brought America into line with all other developed societies.
- *Confiscate* all guns and knives found on teenagers as well as gang members.
- *Sell* only rifles and shotguns to hunters.
- *Put* a huge tax on the sale of all munitions.
- *Advertise* the danger of guns at schools, universities, administrations or through posters in the street walls.
- *Install* metal detectors in all schools and confiscate any weapon found even if it is at home.
- *Support* all proposals to ban assault weapons.

Other measures were in perspective for the sake of a morally sound family among them:

- *Ban* violence from TV during daylight hours and restrict it after dark.
- *Pass* legislation ordering all schools to stay open till 5:00 or 5:30 pm. So as to *avoid* turning children out into the streets with no one at home to greet them since the parents were supposed to be busy elsewhere.

- *Spur* the gifted children by providing them more federal funds for their studies.
- *Demand* that no pregnant unmarried mother gets additional welfare, until she discloses the name of the father. *To make* every individual *responsible* and have a moral conscience that continually warns her wrong done.
- *Bring* high quality of health care for all.
- *Subsidize* day-care for children of working parents.
- *Subsidize* for parents who stay at home to care for their pre-school children.
- *Practice* and *participate* more in community improvement programs and thus become actively involved in elections to come to bring moral and material solutions to hundred of middle class American families.
- *Renew* the family fibre by elaborating a system of family moral restructuring centres that could reintegrate the spirit of oneness and union of morals as well as fostering the long lasting religious ideals of both sides_ parents and children.
- *Market* magazines and why not throughout newspapers, religious and moral guide-lines via Biblical verses to the betterment of middle class families' daily life situations. Moreover, that considerable pace could have brought them back to what is really viewed as the corner stone of man's struggle to being at least a moral individual within a cruel trend.

Globally, what the middle class American family really missed was not to yield to the virtues, moral values and ideals both divine and socially established ones. Most of them lacked in moral values because morality did not fit their clumsy minds. They interpreted every religious precept as an unrestricted authority that looked only for taking control. In other terms, to dominate the supposedly free, liberal individual_ that fought to acquire the most precious right that of total autonomy_ was unthinkable. That is why again, the religious Right movement along with the old-minded parents via their fervent calling for grand unified moral perspectives endeavoured to make reason and conscience man's ally not enemy. That reasoning was commonly known as the process of *moral regeneration* or simply re-teach the commands formerly known as unjust

showing the true justice that aims at the general well-being_ including altruism_ than the justice that spurred individualism as well as egoism. Substantially, the mainstream American counter-culture had deliberately rejected the only means to reach the real social autonomy or more precisely the achievement of the most genuine American Dream's middle class family *ought to* follow.

4. How Middle Class American Family Moral Values Ought to Be

Moral values have always been perceived as the most valuable basis to shape man's personality and character. A godsend for a civilization supposed to embody the doctrines of its Founding Fathers calling who fought for freedom, right, justice equality and duty. As a matter of fact, Americans have always been faithful to those directives that seemed steadfastly adopted and its adherents entrenched at least until the late fifties. Now from the early sixties on, those precepts were heavily shaken by an unlimited sense of permissiveness and nascent liberal commitment within a large segment of middle class families. Furthermore, the seventies that were supposed to be the turning point of a whole decade of social unrest throughout the tremendous efforts of the fundamentalists seemed walking on the steps of the precedent one. Obviously, history proved that considerable changes had been achieved during that era. Nevertheless, much more was to be expected from both conservatives and the social mainstream in the future.

Ethically speaking, Christian morals have always been known to be found on a solid and unprecedented foundation that appeals to empathic principles more often called *the four rules*. The first one is *the Golden Rule*: "*Do unto others what you would have them do unto you*". It is a rule that places a big interest on a cooperative style of virtuous behaviour and that proves to be crucial for the accomplishment of a great ethical system. That precious rule also encompasses the highest degree of self-morality before it becomes just morality. Generally, a man is never in a state to change a community's behaviour before he changes his own behaviour. To be generous, benevolent or altruistic to gain the sympathy of the others is not the aim of the action done. The real act will be the authenticity of his feeling and deep moral intentions that derive directly from either conventional social values or religious precepts. In the case of religious commands, God has never been the commander, the punisher or the unfair

on the contrary He has always planned for what is the best for His beings. To command is not to let a man be drawn by his excessive envy of liberty that leads him to his self moral-destruction. Actually, his liberty ends when God's imperatives begin, a kind of *religious moral duty* that appeals for the ethical effectiveness and the winning divine strategy which made of America above all, a free Protestant nation.

Other rules covered the general standards of ethics and consequently framed the personal ideologies of lots of Americans. Among them: *the Silver Rule*: “Do not do unto others what you would not have them do unto you”. That rule forbids any descent into the realm of violence. It prohibits any retaliation in any form to harm done by another. It traditionally equates to the strategy of non-violent resistance against unfairness. That strategy emerged in the context of the non-violent resistance to racial segregation promoted by *Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.*, during the sixties and a bit of the seventies. Not to resist means that the individual concerned_ the righteous_ should possess a great personal sacrifice as the patriot toward his country or parents toward their children. In term of social and family welfare, the *silver rule* is meant for virtuous persons who own patience and a great moral fibre.

The Bronze Rule: “Repay goodness with goodness, but evil with justice” reflects the pronouncement of the Old Testament: “eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth”, which commonly means that a person *should* repay like with like. In a family context, children who disobey their parents are likely to deserve a punishment. So, if they lie to them the parents have full right to have no conversation until they _children _ apologize and recognize that what they did was morally wrong. In another context of situation keep kind with the persons you know even if they are unfair with you try to call upon your fair reasoning to react via justice instead of personal retaliation. Here again, reason is to play a salient role for the self-perpetuation of moral conduct.

The Iron Rule: “Do unto others before they can do unto you” entails the absolute yield of the individual to the law of morals and manners. From an altruistic point of view, a person should always be present before the other calls him or her. An

individual is supposed to be on duty to the other at any time or any place, which requires both moral and physical capacities.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Golden Rule</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“ Do unto others as you would have them do unto you ”</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Silver Rule</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“ Do not do unto others what you would not have them do unto you ”</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Bronze Rule</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“ Repay goodness with goodness, but evil with justice ”</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Iron Rule</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“ Do unto others before they can do unto you ”</i></p>

Admittedly, the middle class American family during the seventies was not fully predisposed to reach that stage of moral virtuosity. Nevertheless, what they fulfilled was a partial adoption of the moral as well as religious duty that *Kant* called for. The process of moral revaluation was not to last much longer.

Indeed, the Religious Right did not fail in promoting its moral mission but their moral activism was regarded as a bolding step towards a decade of almost nearly self-sacrifice, social stability as well as conventional moral spirit.

***Conclusion**

In view of what had been discussed and evaluated, it seems that America after having endured a period of doubt mainly during the sixties through liberal movements like: *the hippie, atheist, feminists, etc*, knew nevertheless, how to cast doubt on morally and religiously. Moreover, it discovered again a new form of Puritanism after a seemingly long decade of struggle however, every hope to recover new values seemed distant.

Up to a point, it seems that thanks to both the hard as well as perpetual work of *the Religious Right* they proved to be the very guardians of a Christian, traditional, ethical and modest America. History shows that the message elaborated and conveyed by the *Founding Fathers*_ inspired at the first place by the Holy Bible as well as educative values then_ had been derived from its initial calling in favour of modernism and liberalism shielded by strong values.

The conviction and determination of the *architects of the Declaration of the Independence* to convey to the coming generations via a conservative American society the whole moral and spiritual values had been fundamental to it.

Thus, the family role is and remains a forever crucial means in the conveyance from father to son and mother to daughter of those precious goods and visceral codes named *moral values*.

Bibliography

- Achilles Heal Collective, “*Father Figures*”. The Radical Men’s Magazine. Fathers & Fatherhood_ Issue 9, April, 1990. pp. 1-9.
- Adolph Jenna’s Interview with Reverend Abbazio, “*Gay Marriages_ Civil Wrongs or Civil Wrongs?*” Richmond Hill High School, 2006. pp. 1-4.
- American Atheists, “*School Prayer Decision*”, 2006. pp. 1-22.
- Besharov Donald .T, “*Trends in Teens Sexual behaviour*”. American Enterprise Institute For Policy Research. Children and Youth Services Review, 2000. pp. 1-11.
- Browning Don .S, “*From Cultural Wars to Common Grounds; Religion and the American Family Debate*”. West Minister John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky, 1997.
- Burke Cormac, “*Covenanted Happiness; Chapter 11; The Family and the Permissive Society*”. New Edition, Scepter, 1999. pp. 1-15.
- Burke Cormac, “*Covenanted Happiness; Chapter 9; Parents and Children and the Rules of Life*”. New Edition, 1999. pp. 1-17.
- Cardinal Francis George, “*OMI; Dwell in Love; A Pastoral Letter on Racism*”. Archdiocese of Chicago Privacy Policy, 2000_2007. pp. 1-5.
- Carlson .C Allen, “*The Family and Homeland Security; Lessons From the Cold War Years*”. March, 2003. pp. 1-19.
- Carter Stephen, “*Civility, Manners, Morals and the Etiquette of Democracy*”. Harper Collins, New York, 1998. pp. 1-11.
- Christensen John, “*The War That Won’t Go Away*”. Cables News Network, 2001. pp. 1-5.

- Cline Austin, “ *Antagonism and Atheism; Atheism 101; Introduction to Atheism and Atheists*”. Answer to Questions & Mistakes, 2007. pp. 1-2.
- Elliot Daniel .C, “ *Moral Values For Public Education*”. Azusa Pacific Education. Academic Exchange Quarterly Spring. Volume 8, Issue 1, 2004. pp. 1-5.
- Essentials of Unification Thought_ The Head_ Wing Thought, “*IV. Appraisal of Traditional Theories of Ethics From the Viewpoint of the Unification Theory of Ethics*”, 2007. pp. 1-6.
- Fishburn Janet, “*Chapter One; the Church in Domestic Captivity*”. A New Vision For the Household of God. Abington Press, Nashville, 1991. pp. 1-12.
- Friedman Leon, “ *The civil Rights Leaders*”. New York, 1968. pp. 133-136.
- Galloway Lowell, and Veder Richard “ *The Impact of the Welfare State on America’s Children*”. Join Economic Committee Study. Jim Saxon, Vice Chairman, May, 1996. pp. 1-9.
- Glover Lorry, “ *The Myth of Better Times; America’s Real Family Values*”. Conference and values in High Education. USA, 1998. pp. 1-3.
- Glover Lorry From Coontz Stephanie, “*The Way We Never Were; American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*”. Basic Books, New York, 1992. pp. 1-11.
- The Holy Bible, “ *The Old and New Testaments*”. New International Version, International Bible Society. Michigan, USA, Copyright © 1984.
- Hooker Richard, “ *The European Enlightenment; Jean Jacques Rousseau*”. World Civilizations, USA, 1996. pp. 1-4.
- Hornor Noel, “ *Society’s Slide Into Sexual Immorality*”. United Church of God. An International Association, 1997. pp. 1-8.

- Karl Nicholas, “Essay; The 1980’s _ Return to Conservatism”. Brington, SA 5048, Australia, 2006. pp. 1-10.
- Lamuth John .E, “ *The Ultimate Guide to Family Values; A Grand Unified Theory of Ethics and Morality*”. Fairhaven Books Publishers. Revised Edition, la Vergne, Tennessee, USA. Copyright © 2005.
- Lee David, “ *Before the Court Ruled_ Where They Really Good Old Days?*”. American Atheists, USA, 2006. pp. 1-9.
- Lee Harris, “ *The Future of Traditions; Transmitting the Visceral, Ethical Code of Civilization*”. By The Board of Trustee of Leland Standford Junior University, USA, 2007. pp. 1-25.
- Lewis Chris .H, “*What Are some of the Major Problems Facing America in the 1970’s and 1980’s?*” Sewal Academic Program. University of Colorado at Boulder, August, 2002. Pp.1-10.
- Mc Elory Wendy, “*Marriage and the family; An Ideological Battleground*”. Mc Farland, 1996. pp. 1-15.
- Mintz Steven, “*A Social History of American Family Life; Does the American Family Have A History?*” The Organizations of American Historians (O.A.H), 1988. Co-Authored with Kellogg Susan. pp. 1-8.
- Munford Stephen .D, “ *Why the Pope Can’t Change the Church Position on Birth Control?*”. Saint Louis, Missouri, 1999. pp. 1-26.
- Newbrough Celeste, “ *Clowning Reproductive Rights and the Gender Revolution*”. A Publication of the International Archives of the Second Wave, February, 1997. Pp.1-16.
- Reimer Everett, “ *Education and Private Policy; De-Schooling Society.*”. United Teachers Magazines. Harper & Row, New York, 1971. pp. 2-50.
- *Right*, “ [http:// en. Wiki. Pedia. Org/ Wiki/ Right](http://en.Wiki.Pedia.Org/Wiki/Right)”(2007). pp. 1-5.

- Segal .A Elizabeth and ‘Brzuzy Stephanie’, “ *Social Welfare Policy, Programs and practice*”. Quebecor Printing Kingsport, Tennessee, USA, 1998.
- Skolnick Arlen, “ *Family Values; The Sequel*”. The American Prospect. Volume; 8, no: 32. May 1, 1997_ June 1997. pp. 1-17.
- Stone Laurence, “ *Family Values in Historical Perspective; The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*”. Harvard University, USA, 1994. pp. 67-110.
- Tindall George Brown and Shi David. E, “ *America; A Narrative History*”. By W.W. Norton & Company. Third Edition, Volume One, New York. Copyright © 1992.
- *Traditions*, “ [http: // en. Wiki. Pedia. Org/ Wiki/ Tradition](http://en.Wiki.Pedia.Org/Wiki/Tradition)” (2007). pp. 1-4.
- Trusted Jennifer, “ *Moral Principles and social Values*”. Routledge & Kegan Paul LTD, London, 1997.