

The Paradox of Our Age

We have taller buildings but shorter tempers; wider freeways but narrower viewpoints; we spend more but have less; we buy more but enjoy it less; we have bigger houses and smaller families; more conveniences, yet less time; we have more degrees but less sense; more knowledge but less judgement; more experts, yet more problems; we have more gadgets but less satisfaction; more medicine, yet less wellness; we take more vitamins but see fewer results. We drink too much; smoke too much; spend too recklessly; laugh too little; drive too fast; get too angry quickly; stay up too late; get up too tired; read too seldom; watch TV too much and pray too seldom.

We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values; we fly in faster planes to arrive there quicker, to do less and return sooner; we sign more contracts only to realize fewer profits; we talk too much; love too seldom and lie too often. We've learned how to make a living, but not a life; we've added years to life, not life to years. We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet the new neighbor. We've conquered outer space, but not inner space; we've done larger things, but not better things; we've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul; we've split the atom, but not our prejudice; we write more, but learn less; plan more, but accomplish less; we make faster planes, but longer lines; we learned to rush, but not to wait; we have more weapons, but less peace; higher incomes, but lower morals; more parties, but less fun; more food, but less appeasement; more acquaintances, but fewer friends; more effort, but less success. We build more computers to hold more information, to produce more copies than ever, but have less communication; drive smaller cars that have bigger problems; build larger factories that produce less. We've become long on quantity, but short on quality.

These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion; tall men, but short character; steep in profits, but shallow relationships. These are times of world peace, but domestic warfare; more leisure and less fun; higher postage, but slower mail; more kinds of food, but less nutrition. These are days of two incomes, but more divorces; these are times of fancier houses, but broken homes. These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, cartridge living, throw-away morality, one-night stands, overweight bodies and pills that do everything from cheer, to prevent, quiet or kill. It is a time when there is much in the show window and nothing in the stock room. Indeed, these are the times!

Credit for this piece has been attributed to comedian George Carlin and one of the students involved in the Columbine school shooting. According to "Snopes", the true credit belongs with Dr. Bob Moorehead, former pastor of Seattle's Overlake Christian Church. (He retired in 1998 after 29 years in that post). The essay appeared under the title "The Paradox of Our Age" in Words Aptly Spoken, Dr. Moorehead's 1995 collection of prayers, homilies, and monologues used in his sermons and radio broadcasts.

A caution is posted on Snopes (November 1, 2007) that outlines how Dr. Moorehead has a clouded reputation from allegedly sexually abusing males in the congregation. References from Snopes are quoted below.

Macdonald, Sally. "Lawsuit Against Pastor Explained."
Seattle Times 19 August 1998 (p. B1).

Moorehead, Bob. Words Aptly Spoken.
Kirkland, WA: Overlake Christian Press, 1995. ISBN 0-9639496-6-7 (pp. 197-198).

Associated Press. "Overlake Elders Reverse Earlier Stance on Pastor Case."
21 May 1999.

