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Sylvia Ann Hewlett

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Sylvia Ann Hewlett : When the Bough Breaks: The Cost of Neglecting Our Children before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised When the Bough Breaks: The Cost of Neglecting Our Children:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. What an eye opener! By Amy L One of the things I like about this book is that instead of diminishing the role of men it points out their importance. It also shows government policies can make a big difference in the lives of children. It is full of shocking statistics. Did you know that 27% of kids don't graduate high school? That Medicare will pay for an 80 year old man to have bypass surgery while a poor woman cannot get free prenatal care? That if a pregnant woman seeks treatment for drug addiction it is not easily available? However, once children are born prematurely or drug-addicted, society picks up a huge tab for that. Read this book and find out why and what changes the author recommends. Truly a remarkable contribution. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book, though a little dated By Paul M. Day Sylvia Ann Hewlett is one of the few economists concerned with this topic. This, along with her book "The War on Families", frame the issues quite well. Read both books for the entire perspective, since this book is older... But the problems remain... Her idea that American families suffer from both a Time Deficit and a Resource Deficit is one I still use in explaining these issues. Those twin deficits are still around today, and no one seems to address them. The increasing working hours and declining social services are not current political issues... We can add to that the increasing dependence on dual incomes: where both parents HAVE to work to make what they could in previous generations. I suggest reading these books along with Neal Postman's "The Disappearance of Childhood". That book goes into the origins of childhood and

how the creation of the mass media and institutionalization threatens it. 0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Killing Fields in the Name of Saving Family By Bradley P. Hayton Childhood is in danger in Western society. In the age of the self, children are quickly becoming one of the last priorities of parents and even the state. The problems of poverty, divorce, out-of-wedlock births, absentee parents, latchkey kids, violence, drugs, and child neglect permeate to the roots of America. Hewlett, an economist and former director of the Economic Policy Council, a labor-management think tank, calls for Americans to once again take responsibility for their children, or future generations are in peril. Her statistics are compelling. Poor education, decreasing SAT scores, decreased parental involvement, increased women in the workplace, infant death, lack of health insurance and care is destroying our children. The causes, according to Hewlett, are: 1) the job crunch (decreased wages; more women working); 2) family breakdown (divorce rates, out-of-wedlock births due to unemployment and lack of education); 3) lack of housing; 4) shortfalls in healthcare; 5) substandard child care; and 6) lack of adequate education funding. Other chapters list even more causes: "the huge jump in the number of mothers at work, the escalation in job-related stress, the expanding work week, the sharp increase in divorce and single parenthood, and the abandonment of children by their fathers all play a part in explaining why so many mainstream American kids are in distress" (p. 72). Hewlett blames even more culprits. It is a society that is "looking out for number one" by deregulating TV, replaces religion with psychology, redefines love with selfishness, implements no-fault divorce, devalues domestic roles, doesn't license child care centers, and allows psychiatric entrepreneurs to hospitalize teenagers who really don't need help. In sum, preoccupied parents, permissive laws, and unregulated markets exacerbate one another and together create an environment that is remarkably antagonistic to young people" (p. 133). Government spending is also a culprit. Increased social security and medicare benefits for the elderly are bankrupting our future. Increasing housing costs are creating a homeless mass. Civil service and military pensions are rewarding laziness. And lack of funds to build American infrastructure is rewarding a debtor society with no regard for the future. Hewlett's prescriptions are confusing, and sometimes contradictory, to say the least. Basically, she believes that the federal government should not only be our Big Brother, but our Big Mother. "Unbridled parents and aggressive entrepreneurs [should] be reined in by a government acting as guardian of America's children" (p. 133). Civil government should increase funding for education, prenatal health care, abortion, postnatal health care, maternal health care, child care, education from womb through university, family support (in case of divorce and single parenthood), support for families with young children, subsidized housing for families with children, and more programs for disadvantaged youth, including more psychiatric hospitalization (which she formerly criticized). A deficit-spending government should obtain these extra monies by cutting Social Security, making its pensions self-supporting, and cutting defense spending. Ah, there's more that government can do. They can regulate greedy businesses more by giving tax incentives for businesses to implement flex time, compressed work weeks, part-time work with benefits, job sharing, career sequencing, extended parenting leave, and home-based employment opportunities. Of course, they should be forced to provide family leave time for new children. And government should increase the regulation of child care facilities. It should lengthen the school day and the school year. Hewlett's primary model society is Sweden. She is literally in love with its socialistic, Big Mother policies. And Sweden has one of the highest abortion rates, illegitimate birth rates, live-together unmarried couple rates in the world. Every aspect of parenting has been prescribed and funded by their government. Indeed, civil government has replaced the functions of the family. It seems that Hewlett has also engaged in a little "voodoo economics" of her own. Her own statistics indicate that government funding of Social Security has primarily increased due to the increasing amounts of elderly (pp. 152-153). Pensions could be made self-sufficient, but it will take years. And even she admits that the "peace dividends" have really been a myth, and that other priorities have consumed Washington's spending any left over funds. In short, Hewlett advocates deficit spending with a vengeance. She admires the policies of Kennedy and Johnson's War on Poverty (p. 164), which led America down the road to bankruptcy. And although she talks about personal responsibility to take care of America's children, her prescriptions are mostly more of status quo big government programs which have a proven failure rate. For all her statistics, she doesn't examine the failure of preschool education, like Head Start. Though she acknowledges the early child care is detrimental to children, she wants increased government funding of such programs. ("Let's fund tobacco, alcohol, cocaine. People are going to do it anyway, and besides, we should lower the cost so people can afford it!") I am amazed that an economist would want increased government housing subsidies. Every study I have read have demonstrated that such policies have had almost no effect on making housing affordable, but rather, due to increased monies chasing after the same housing, have raised the cost of housing for all. (The same is true for the expansion of credit available for housing.) In sum, I find Hewlett's book full of the same liberal rhetoric that is already destroying the lives of our future generations. The very fact that she advocates abortion indicates her true motives. Until parents begin to take personal responsibility for their actions, until they are forced either by circumstances or by their own sense of morality to take care of their own children, will children actually grow up experiencing moral, spiritual, economic, and physical health. For civil government to replace family government only harms children, and indeed our moral fortitude.

An analysis of how the United States has fallen far behind other countries in its commitment to children challenges the

government for spending five times more for the elderly than for children. Reprint. National ad/promo.

From Publishers Weekly Hewlett seeks to arouse the government and the public to action with this powerful, solidly documented study, a BOMC alternate in cloth, of America's neglect of its children. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Hewlett, an economist, consultant, lecturer, and a volunteer with homeless children, has produced a powerful, extensively researched and often shocking book that explores the plight of a vast number of our children today. She delves into a multitude of problems--substance abuse, emotional instability, and broken homes--that contribute to parental and public neglect. Hewlett also outlines ways society can help to rectify the situation, including educational reform, changes in workplace, and government policies. The author's "no holds barred" approach to the harsh reality of neglect stirs the emotions and will no doubt cause public reaction. This book will be of great interest to professionals and general readers, as it is a well-documented, compelling study that fully analyzes a nationwide problem.- Jo-Anne Mary Benson, Osgoode, Ontario Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Kirkus sA searing critique of the American family, our corporate leaders and public officials. American children, contends economist Hewlett (*The Cruel Dilemmas of Development*, 1980), are victims of private and public neglect. There are almost 13 million poor children in this country, Hewlett declares--a rise of 20% since 1979. Of these, 330,000 are homeless and 12 million are uninsured and medically neglected. Hewlett also cites increasing numbers of broken marriages, unwed teen-age mothers, and drug-addicted babies. Our barely literate high-school graduates, she says, cannot compete with their peers in Japan or Europe. Hewlett places much of the onus for the crisis on the breakdown of the family. With the therapists and feminists of the Sixties, she argues, came a "me first" philosophy that fostered divorce and neglected children. Government policies--local and national--have been equally detrimental. Restrictions on free legal abortions have resulted in the birth of unwanted children whose societal costs become a monumental burden to all. And housing welfare families in squalid welfare hotels at \$2,000 a month is both unconscionable and counterproductive, she contends. Hewlett winds up her impassioned text with concrete suggestions for reform, ranging from changes in the divorce laws to staggered work hours that allow parents to spend more time with children. Much can be learned from her compelling, well-documented study. -- Copyright 1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.