

Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts in Turmoil

The 108-year-old Boy Scouts of America is undergoing radical changes, including inviting girls to join. Cub Scouts packs have already been open to girls, with over 3,000 having joined about 170 of the programs for younger children, ages seven to ten. A “nation-wide multimedia recruitment campaign called “Scout Me In” is underway this summer to recruit 11- to 17-year-old boys and girls.

It was reported that “Girl Scout leaders said they were blindsided by the move, and they are gearing up an aggressive campaign to recruit and retain girls as members.” (*New York Post*, 5-2-18)

Amanda Prestigiacomo wrote at DailyWire.com, “Since we are no longer allowed to celebrate the differences between males and females, the Boy Scouts are set to admit girls into their organization, and with the new moronic confusion between ‘equality’ and ‘sameness’ comes a brand new politically correct name: Scouts BSA.” (5-2-18)

Girls Scouts have been under fire in recent years for having aligned with values many families would find abhorrent, including ties with Planned Parenthood. A resource for more information about unwholesome trends in the Girl Scouts is MyGirlScoutCouncil on Facebook and the website, MyGirlScoutCouncil.com. The goal is to expose the Girl Scouts as a more radical and left-leaning organization than that with which many families want their daughters to associate. Evidence is given that “Girl Scouts encouraged and celebrated girl members’ participation (in uniform) in the 2017 and 2018 Women’s March.” Also, leaders of Planned Parenthood have been invited as

speakers at scouting events.

Dumped by the Mormons

Even before the Boy Scouts decided to admit girls, in what is said to be an unrelated move, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints [LDS] had already begun moving away from the Boy Scouts. In May, the church and BSA released a joint statement saying that their 105-year alliance would be terminated at the end



of 2019.

The Mormons said, “The church has increasingly felt the need to create and implement a uniform youth leadership and development program

that serves its members globally. In so doing it will be necessary for the church to discontinue its role as a chartered partner with BSA.” Working toward becoming an Eagle Scout has long been a part of the LDS experience for young men.

Until now, “Mormon boys comprised 1 in 6 American Scouts.” The joint statement said, “The Scouting program has benefited hundreds of thousands of [LDS] boys and young men, and BSA has also been greatly benefited in the process.”

According to the *Deseret News*, “Five years ago this month, when BSA voted to admit openly gay Scouts into troops, LDS leaders noted that the church had always admitted gay Scouts and would continue to do so, but three

years ago, when BSA voted to allow openly gay Scout leaders, the church publicly said that it was reconsidering the Scouting program.” (*Deseret News*, 5-8-18)

Scouts and Condoms

Perhaps no announcement about the new Scouting organization is more telling than that made in early June. At the World Scout Jamboree to be held in West Virginia during the summer of 2019, the Scouts BSA plans to distribute condoms to “all participants.” LifeSiteNews received a statement from BSA defending its plan to distribute condoms to the “international gathering of boy and girl scouts” that says it’s simply addressing the “needs of international health norms.” The statement says that condoms will be made “available through the medical facilities” set up throughout the camps where an estimated 50,000 are expected to attend. LifeSite refers to this as “the latest step in an ongoing radicalization of scouting.” They bring attention to the fact that those attending are as young as age thirteen. (LifeSiteNews.com, 6-1-18)

There Are Alternatives

At a time when children desperately need to put away the electronic devices, acquire hobbies, and learn and enjoy outdoor skills, it is unfortunate that the two organizations best known for helping achieve those goals seem to be falling apart at the seams.

Education Reporter has previously shared that families may prefer American

Heritage Girls as an alternative to Girl Scouts. The corresponding organization for boys is called Trail Life USA, which is “a Christ-centered outdoor adventure, leadership, and character development ministry.”

Below are the Mission and Vision Statements of American Heritage Girls:

Building women of integrity through service to God, family, community and country,” and “American Heritage Girls is the premier national character development organization for young women that embraces Christian values and encourages family involvement.” (AmericanHeritageGirls.org)

This is the Statement of Values of Trail Life USA:

Purity: God calls us to lives of holiness, being pure of heart, mind, word and deed. We are to reserve sexual activity for the sanctity of marriage, a lifelong commitment before God between a man and a woman.

Service: God calls us to become responsible members of our community and the world through selfless acts that contribute to the welfare of others.

Stewardship: God calls us to use our God-given time, talents, and money wisely.

Integrity: God calls us to live moral lives that demonstrate an inward motivation to do what is biblically right regardless of the cost. (Trail-LifeUSA.com)

A Reliable College in Pennsylvania

Tucked away on 200 acres less than an hour’s drive southeast of Pittsburgh is another reliable college — one to which families can send their child and be reasonably certain the child’s values will remain intact, even after four years there.

Saint Vincent is a Catholic college founded in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, in 1846 and currently educates about 1,800 students. About 200 students are pursuing graduate studies. The college’s Benedictine values include community, prayer, stability, discipline, humility, obedience, love of neighbor, and love for Christ.

Saint Vincent College (SVC) offers undergraduate merit-based scholarships while many institutions of higher education only award money according to “need.” Students who have excelled in high school often must take out loans to attend college simply because their parents fall above an arbitrary income level. At SVC, “For 2016-2017, 100% of the freshman class and 95% of all undergraduates [received] some form of finan-

cial aid.” The awards are guaranteed for eight semesters so long as “satisfactory academic progress” is maintained by full-time students.

The male to female ratio at SVC is 52 to 48. This has become unusual at a time when there is a higher proportion of young women than young men attending many colleges.

Areas of study are available under the three main categories of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences; Business, Economics, and Government; and Natural Sciences, Engineering, Mathematics, and Computing.

SVC is surrounded by the Laurel Highlands where students can hike, cross-country and downhill ski, white-water raft, fish, hunt, and more. The college offers 23 varsity sports and more than a dozen club and intramural sports.

Latrobe, Pennsylvania is the birthplace of legendary golfer Arnold Palmer and golfing is popular both in the area (See *Reliable College*, page 4)

Stopping the Slaughter

Students for Life of America consistently gives presentations and sets up booths at college events to help students understand the evil that is abortion. They state, “We launch and support Students for Life groups in colleges, high schools, middle schools, law schools, and med schools throughout the nation to educate other young people about the violence of abortion, create new pro-lifers, and transform campuses into places that support pregnant and parenting students.”



STUDENTS FOR LIFE OF AMERICA

Students for Life of America (SFLA) and other pro-life organizations are among the reasons many young people are pro-life. Having seen ultrasounds of their siblings in the womb and being science-oriented, young people possibly have a better grasp of the fact that it’s a baby, not a clump of cells.

Using statistics from the Alan Guttmacher Institute, SFLA reports that approximately one in 20 American women have had an abortion by age 20, and one in five by age 30. And, “Abortion disproportionately affects black and Hispanic women.” (StudentsForLife.org)

As Michael New reported in the

National Review, a January 2017 Quinnipiac University poll “found that 18-to-34-year-olds were more likely than other age demographics to support a ban on abortions after 20 weeks’ gestation.” Mr. New said the poll wasn’t an “outlier.” He went on to state that “separate polls taken in the summer of 2013 by *National Journal* and Rasmussen both showed that young adults were more likely than other age demographics to support a 20-week abortion ban.” He also says other recent polling “has shown that young adults are more likely than other age demographics to support the Department of Justice investigation of Planned Parenthood.”

Mr. New praised a January 31, 2018 article in the *Washington Post* written by Eugene Scott for “accurately reporting about the significant gains in pro-life sentiment among young adults.” The author of that article, written around the time of the annual March for Life, believes that pressure to end legal abortion “will come from Millennial voters.” (*National Review*, 2-1-18)

(See *Slaughter*, page 4)

EDUCATION BRIEFS

The American Library Association ditched the Laura Ingalls Wilder Award, saying the author of the *Little House on the Prairie* series used racist language and so she's deemed unworthy to have an award named after her. A statement said, "Her works reflect dated cultural attitudes toward Indigenous people and people of color that contradict modern acceptance, celebration, and understanding of diverse communities." Writing at *The Federalist*, Joy Pullmann pointed out the content of books to which the association chose to give awards were full of "identity politics." Pullmann recognizes the actual intent of the association, writing, "In other words, we don't mind stereotypes, introducing children to adult material, and politicization of literature. We are just going to ensure that it all reinforces leftist politics and lifestyle preferences." The new name for the award is the Children's Literature Legacy Award. (7-3-18)

While most expectant parents refer to their child as a baby, a subset of the people have chosen to call their child a "theybie," which signifies that they reject the male/female binary and refuse to label it as one or the other. A theybie parent told NBC News, "For us, it means raising our kids with gender-neutral pronouns — so, 'they,' 'them,' 'their,' rather than assigning 'he,' 'she,' 'him,' 'her' from birth based on their anatomy." The "gender-open" parents "do not reveal the sex of their children to anyone" — including the child. These parents plan to continue the practice as long as they can, even when the child is in school. (NBCnews.com, 7-19-18)

A Fort Worth, Texas school kept parents in the dark about the online sex-education curriculum taught to nearly 18,000 6th graders. Parents weren't told their children would be taught about "sexual orientation" and "gender identity." A parent who asked to see their child's workbook was told that it had been "recycled." (TXvalues.org, 7-20-18)

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Why Kids Aren't Reading

Sarah Mackenzie is an influential author, homeschooling mom of six children, and creator of The Read-Aloud Revival website, podcasts, and more. Her most recent book, *The Read-Aloud Family*, is reviewed in this issue of *Education Reporter*.

In a January blog post, Mackenzie made some great points about reading curriculum and practices. She began with the question, "Why is it that kids love books when they start school, but the average high school student only reads an average of six minutes per day for pleasure?"

Mackenzie then asks:

If you went to a book club gathering and had to prove that you had read and understood the book by taking a quiz or filling out a worksheet, would you go back to book club? Would you race home afterward to start reading the book again?

Mackenzie says, "One of the biggest mistakes we make when it comes to our kids' reading lives is that we school the love of reading right out of them, and then we wonder why they don't spend hours lost in a book."

She asks these questions:

Are any of the books you were forced to write book reports on as a kid your favorite books? Did you re-read them under the covers late at night?

It's not surprising that the creator of The Read-Aloud Revival would have as her first suggestion for instilling a love of books and reading to "read aloud." Her second suggestion to encourage children and young people to read is "share a related experience" with what has just been read aloud. Her third suggestion, "talk about it," gives us insight into the raison d'être of the Read-Aloud Revival. Reading together and discussing literature and ideas is a way for families to develop close relationships and to expose children to the world right from their own homes, led by those who know and love them best.

Book reports aren't the worst thing with which today's students have to deal in public school classrooms. This is where Common Core enters the picture.

Common Core Removes 'Story' from Reading

Common Core has had an impact on how much time students spend reading. An article in *Forbes* magazine explains "the damage that has been done, particularly in high school classrooms, by the

Common Core movement." The author of the article, Peter Greene, spent 39 years as a high school English teacher.

Greene says, "Some of this damage cannot exactly be tied to the Common Core Standards themselves, but are rather linked to the test-based accountability measures that were part of the Common Core movement." The tests mandated by Common Core are part of the deterioration in English Language Arts classes. Teachers teach to tests when tests are as important as those associated with Common Core."

Greene says "the current definition of 'effective teaching' is 'teaching that raises standardized test scores.'"

Greene emphasizes that there's little likelihood teachers will emphasize entire works of classical literature in their classrooms, saying that "there is nothing in the Core to support leading in a content-rich direction, and much in the Core-linked tests to obstruct it."

Greene says classic works of literature are less likely to be taught in today's high school classrooms than ever before. The standards themselves sought to have non-fiction works amount to at least 60% of the reading assigned to students. Children were instantly deprived of the richness, the exposure to great ideas, and the enticement to think deeply that classic literature offers.

He says of traditional, pre-Common Core teaching:

In an English class addressing *The Great Gatsby*, depending on student ability and prior knowledge, the teacher might take several weeks to help the students find their way through the work, followed by a period of discussion and reflection to dig a little deeper before finally embarking on a large project (paper, presentation, interpretive dance, etc.) that would take days to complete and would, the teacher hopes, show how the student can connect several different threads from the work.

Greene says, "The standards treat reading as a skill that can exist in a vacuum, independent of context or content." Common Core testing is designed to remove prior knowledge from questions to give all students a better chance to answer correctly, on a level playing field. Greene says that "students have to be 'surprised' by an excerpt from some work they've never heard of before."

He describes Common Core testing: (See *Why Kids Aren't Reading*, page 4)

Book of the Month



The Read-Aloud Family, Sarah Mackenzie, Zondervan, 2018, \$16.99



Sarah Mackenzie wants everyone to be reading, or having a book read to them. This book will convince even most skeptics that they must read aloud with their children. The author relates intriguing real-life stories that will give those who already have the best of intentions to read with their children the motivation and inspiration to do so more consistently.

The first of three sections is titled "The Time is Now." It's a compilation of reasons we must read with children and the benefits it provides children and families. These include intellectual stimulation, knowledge of the world, empathy, shared vision, and family bonding.

The second section, "Connecting with Our Kids Through Books," serves as a manual for how to cement a family unit by reading together. Keeping a highlighter in hand might be useful because readers will want to mark valuable tips.

Chapter Seven of this section will help over-scheduled, hard-working parents because the author debunks myths. Following is a recap of some of what this chapter offers:

- Explains that a family doesn't need to constantly be reading aloud in order to make a big difference in the family culture and influence children to enjoy reading. A small amount of reading counts.

- Gives parents permission to let children listen to audiobooks, making them aware they don't need to be the only one doing the reading.

- Assures parents that a broad mix of choices ranging from light and fun kids' books to classic literature is very much okay.

- Releases children from sitting still while listening, allowing them to fidget or even do a simultaneous activity, like coloring.

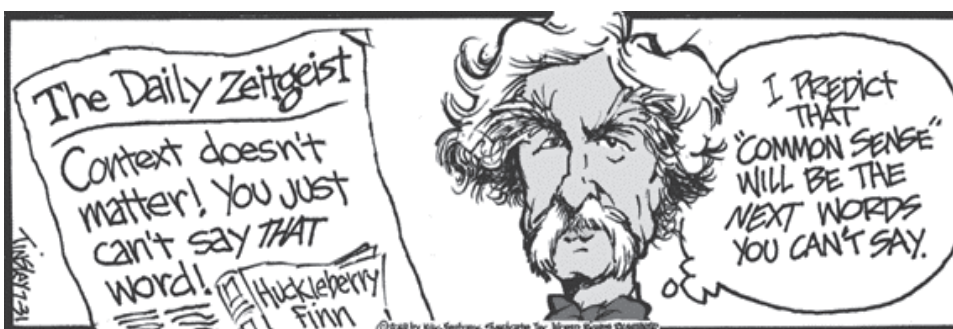
Mackenzie also releases families from visions of perfection. She says, "Even when it's noisy, messy, and more chaotic than you'd like it to be, it still works." She suggests reading on, even in the face of imperfection, or "stepping out in faith" that it will get easier.

Another chapter in this section guides parents through specific questions and leading comments that encourage children to open up and discuss what has been read.

The last section of the book is "Meeting Them Where They Are." It is a compilation of suggested books for four age ranges: 0-3, 4-7, 8-12, and the teen years. Her book recommendations and summaries are excellent.

Mackenzie's Read-Aloud Revival projects aren't successful by accident; she knows her topic well.

MALLARD FILLMORE / by Bruce Tinsley



FOCUS: NAEP and Inattentional Blindness: You Can't Manage What You Don't Measure

By Ian Rowe

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If you have forty seconds, please indulge me for a brief brain experiment. Imagine watching a video* of six college students standing in a circle with a basketball. Three of the students are wearing black shirts and three are wearing white shirts. In the video, the students pass the basketball to each other. Viewers are instructed to count how many times the students in the white shirts pass the basketball. The action is fast and requires strict attention to the white-shirted students. In the end, the correct answer is fifteen passes. (*See www.theinvisiblegorilla.com.)

For two decades, in multiple countries and contexts, as part of repeated research studies, thousands of audiences from diverse backgrounds have watched this video for the first time. A stunning 50 percent become so distracted trying to count the passes that they completely miss something extraordinary. As the researchers, Christopher Chabris and Daniel Simons, note, “Halfway through the video, a female student wearing a full-body gorilla suit, walked into the scene, stopped in the middle of the players, thumped her chest, and then walked off, spending about nine seconds on-screen.”

In the world of neuroscience, this phenomenon of being oblivious to the obvious is called “inattentional blindness.” This occurs anytime we as human beings fail to notice a fully visible but unexpected object because our attention was on another task, event, or activity.

Inattentional blindness is an important concept to keep in mind as we all consider the April 10 release of the 2017 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for reading and mathematics for fourth and eighth grades. The U.S. Department of Education releases results bi-annually to help inform decisions about how to improve the education system in our country.

In keeping with prior results, reading achievement scores remain stagnant. Nevertheless, there are reams of analysis of certain subgroups, especially highlighting the stubborn achievement gaps within the mesmerizing categories of race and income percentile. For example, as a NAEP teaser, Fordham Institute produced thirty-five charts of analysis, the vast majority of which focused on racial differences in outcomes for African American, Hispanic, and white students.

Yet you're unlikely to see NAEP analyses of achievement differences by family structure, even though we know the stability of the family within which children are raised matters monumentally to their educational outcomes.

Take a recent study from the Institute for Women's Policy Research, which shows the number of single mothers in college has doubled over the last decade

to nearly 2.1 million. Despite their best efforts to create a better future for themselves and their children, only 28 percent of single mothers who entered college between 2003 and 2009 earned a degree or certificate within six years—an outcome that adversely affects both mother and child. For college-going women without children, it was 57 percent.

Indeed, evidence on the adverse effects of fragile families on children is widely accepted. Even studies cited by those who believe promotion of marriage is an ineffective strategy to wage in the war against poverty correctly assert that “decades of research show that children raised in single-parent homes fare worse on a wide range of outcomes (e.g., poverty, educational attainment, nonmarital and teen childbearing) than children raised by two biological parents. The poverty rates of single parent households are particularly striking.”

Consider too, recent words from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In announcing a grant to study the link between poverty and the high-risk impact on processes that facilitate learning, the school declared:

Early-life experiences that occur between the prenatal period through age 2 have major impacts on the trajectories of children's early cognitive development, including the neural substrates that support these abilities. Traditional investments toward children in the one-to-two years prior to their enrollment in kindergarten may be too late.

And according to the CDC, there were 1,016,040 births to women aged twenty-four and under in 2016. Seventy-one percent of these births were to unmarried women, and 42 percent were to women who were having between their second and eighth child. There are always exceptions, but the magnitude in the number of multiple, non-marital births to typically unprepared young women and men, and the decades-long rise in the rate of single-parenthood, create a much greater risk of unstable home environments and fragile families that frequently correlate with child poverty, chronic student absenteeism, and the kind of toxic stress that begins in utero and impairs long term academic advancement of children.

Alongside the spirited debate about the causality between single-parent households and child poverty, there is new evidence of the impact of absent fathers, particularly on boys. After studying more than one million children born in Florida between 1992 and 2002, MIT researcher David Autor found that “Relative to their sisters, boys born to low-education and unmarried mothers, raised in low-income neighborhoods, and en-

rolled at poor-quality public schools have a higher incidence of truancy and behavioral problems throughout elementary and middle school, exhibit higher rates of behavioral and cognitive disability, perform worse on standardized tests, are less likely to graduate high school, and are more likely to commit serious crimes as juveniles.”

And Raj Chetty and Nathaniel Hendren just released a comprehensive study titled “Race and Economic Opportunity in the United States” to understand why “racial disparities in income and other outcomes are among the most visible and persistent features of American society.” Some have framed the findings as evidence of the punishing reach of racism for black boys, but the research itself suggests a more nuanced, inclusive recognition of family structure as a key contributor to racial disparities. The study states that “higher rates of father presence among low-income black households are associated with better outcomes for black boys... Black father presence at the neighborhood level predicts black boys' outcomes irrespective of whether their own father is present or not, suggesting that what matters is ... community-level factors associated with the presence of fathers, such as role-model effects or changes in social norms.”

In other words, fathers matter.

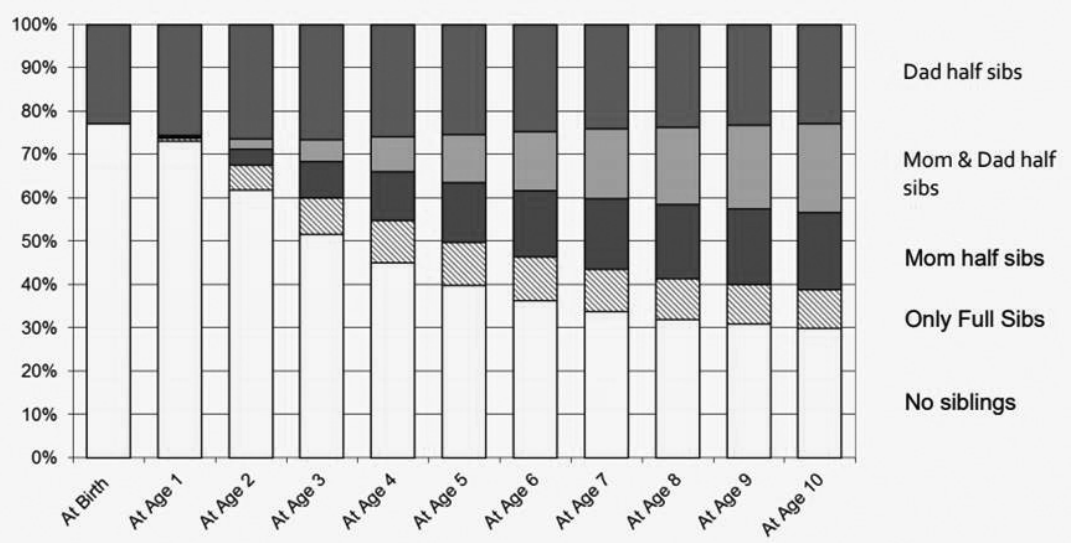
So what does all this mean for NAEP and understanding the factors that truly drive education outcomes? To be clear, NAEP data are a vital and invaluable resource. The test remains the largest

is particularly true in the case of race, where the differences in outcomes (e.g., the Hispanic-white achievement gap) are perceived to be caused by race-related reasons (e.g., racism), which often elicit only race-related interventions, as opposed to other factors complementing those forces. What gets measured gets managed. And what does not get measured gets ignored.

Enter family structure in a full-body gorilla suit, undetected due to obsessive counting in each of the other NAEP demographic groupings. Information on the stability of family structure is hard to track, especially if self-reported. Nevertheless, I challenge the technical experts at the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to incorporate within NAEP groupings some kind of proxy measure for family structure or stability that already exists and for which the government has already collected data. What about age of parents? Or marital status of parents at time of birth? Perhaps there is a way to make use of (anonymized) tax records, as has been done with the Equality of Opportunity Project.

Unlike gender or race, family structure is not a static measure that is easily discernible. It changes over time. Take for example the powerful analysis done by Maria Cancian and Daniel R. Meyer in their study titled “Implications of Complex Families on Poverty and Child Support Policy.” They monitored 7,169 first-born children of unmarried mothers in Wisconsin between 1997 and 2007.

See figure 1 below, from the study.



Source: Maria Cancian and Daniel R. Meyer, “The Implications of Complex Families for Poverty and Child Support Policy,” University of Wisconsin-Madison Institute for Research on Poverty Webinar (September 19, 2012).

continuing and nationally representative assessment of what our nation's students know and can do. It has served as a national yardstick of student achievement since 1969.

NAEP includes information on special student demographic groups, such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, disability, and limited English proficiency. But reporting by these main measurement groupings—though critical—has the unintended effect of fueling the fixation on those categories as the primary bases for comparison. This

Over the decade, ten-year-old children of unmarried parents lived in increasingly complex family structure, as both the biological father and mother had more children in and outside of their relationship.

One suggestion from noted psychologist and researcher Nicholas Zill is that parents of a representative subsample of NAEP-tested students could be contacted by internet, phone, or mail to gather information on parent education, family income, welfare receipt, marital (See NAEP, page 4)

Slaughter (Continued from page 1)

Scott quoted SFLA's Kristan Hawkins who addressed the U.S. Senate's failure to pass the Pain-Capable Unborn Children Protection Act. She said, "For those Senators who voted against the bill, millennials will be asking how they can embrace such an inhumane procedure for infants who soon can survive outside the womb, and the pro-life generation will hold them accountable." (*Washington Post*, 1-31-18)

Other changes in American attitudes are taking place, some of which has to do with increasing knowledge about people with Down syndrome. Some women choose to abort a child diagnosed in utero with Down syndrome. Maybe if people better understand the disorder, their decision to kill would change.

Valuing life means valuing differences. Anyone who has spent time with a "differently chromosomed" child or adult affected by Down syndrome, knows the loving and gentle blessing they are to their families, communities, and society.

Gerber Comes Through

Gerber baby products has chosen its first "Gerber Baby" with Down syndrome. According to Gerber, "This cutie with a contagious smile is 18-month-old Lucas Warren and on February 7 he made history: He's the first child with Down syndrome to become Gerber's 'Spokesbaby of the year' in its 91-year history." Lucas was chosen from among 140,000 babies. Gerber has been featuring babies in its advertisements since shortly after its founding in 1927.



New Gerber Baby
Lucas Warren

Lucas's mother said, "We hope this opportunity sheds light on the special needs community and educates people that with acceptance and support, individuals with special needs have the potential to change the world — just like our Lucas." (*CNN.com*, 2-8-18)

A Special Miss Minnesota Contestant

A young woman with Down syndrome not only competed in the Miss Minnesota beauty pageant, she walked away with the Spirit of Miss USA and the Director's Awards.

Mikayla Holmgren is a student at Bethel University's Inclusive Learning and Development program, a two-year post-secondary program for students with intellectual disabilities. She lives on campus, has an internship at the university's child care center and will graduate in 2018. She's also a dancer and gymnast.

Holmgren said she is proud to be a role model for girls like Clara and Emily. (*Pioneer Press*, 11-26-17)

Denmark is Happy?

Some nations are constantly held up as "better" and more "progressive" than America by people of a certain mindset. One of these is Denmark, a modern socialist nation. But there is something very disturbing going on there. This European nation systematically kills babies in utero who test positive for Down syndrome.

A 2015 Danish newspaper heralded, "Down Syndrome Heading for Extinc-

tion in Denmark." To be perfectly clear, this doesn't mean they have found some way to prevent or "cure" it, but that they are diagnosing the syndrome in utero and killing the baby.

Under Denmark's socialized medical system, "Since 2004 all pregnant women have been offered a DS [Down syndrome] scan — called a nuchal scan — and the number of abortions involving DS children has increased dramatically." The article goes on to say that in 2014, "98% of pregnant women who were revealed to be carrying an unborn child with DS chose to have an abortion."

And the Danish public supports this. Surveys show that 70% of men and 50% of women "thought it was a good thing." (*CPH Post*, 10-20-15)

United Nations Gets Schooled

In March of 2017, Charlotte Helene Fien gave a speech at a United Nations meeting in Switzerland. Charlotte began her speech, "In the 1930s and 1940s the Nazis decided to get rid of all disabled people. More than 200,000 disabled people were murdered including many children with Down syndrome." Charlotte continued, "Today, the same thing is happening. A test that checks for Down syndrome is being used to kill all babies with Down syndrome."

Fien told the gathering that she herself has the extra chromosome present in individuals with Down syndrome. About the goal to eradicate Down syndrome in the future, Charlotte said, "This makes me angry and very sad." She continued, "I am not suffering. I am not ill. None of my friends who have Down syndrome are suffering either."

She said she and her friends with the extra chromosome live happy lives and have dreams for the future. Her personal goal is to teach children to play golf, a game she loves.

Charlotte told the group, which in the end gave her a five-minute standing ovation:

We are not monsters; don't be afraid of us. We are people with different abilities and strengths. Don't feel sorry for me, my life is great!

On March 15, 2018, Charlotte spoke again to the United Nations. She said, "If the UN is to be taken seriously, then they will create sanctions against countries practicing eugenics." She also said, "You can try to kill off everyone with Down syndrome by using abortion, but you won't be any closer to a perfect society. You will just be closer to a cruel, heartless one." (*BrightVibes.com*, 3-2017) (*LejeuneFoundation.org*, 3-22-18)

Charlotte's story is counter to those progressives who so freely call conservative individuals "Nazis," and who would do well to study the true meaning of the slur. They might see that their pro-abortion stance puts them in line with the thinking of Hitler. It is unknown whether Charlotte succeeded in changing the minds of any UN attendees, representatives of an organization that has historically promoted abortion.

NAEP (Continued from page 3)

status, etc. These data could then enrich the NAEP tabulations to better estimate family structure and stability. This would add to the cost of the program, of course, but it would also strengthen the utility of the enterprise and perhaps shed new light on why educational progress has slowed.

As the Figure 1 data indicate, family structure and stability are undeniably significant influencers on a host of child outcomes, including academic achievement. NAEP researchers would do our nation a great service if they developed a common metric that could estimate the effects of these forces on educational progress.

Virtually 100 percent of the research subjects who failed to witness the invisible gorilla upon first viewing immediately saw it the second time around. They usually express disbelief that they initially missed it. But once confronted with the truth, viewers could no longer ignore the reality right before their eyes.

Leaders in education reform and the researchers at NCES have both the capacity and the responsibility to elevate family structure as a critical prism through which we evaluate our country's educational progress, on par with race, socioeconomic status, and the other key groupings.

Release of 2018 NAEP scores means that education reformers and policymakers will engage in handwringing about

outcome disparities between races, classes, and genders. And that they'll ignore a force at least as fundamental to human development. So let 2020 be an opportunity to create a new baseline to measure progress by a critical indicator that has been hidden in plain sight for decades: family structure.

If we really want to cure our blindness and understand why our children are not making the progress we seek, we must make this essential and predictive measure invisible no more.



Ian Rowe is a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, a social entrepreneur and leader who has worked for more than 20 years in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. He is CEO of Public Prep, the nation's oldest and only non-profit network exclusively focused on exceptional, single-sex, all-boys and all-girls Public Charter Schools. Rowe graduated from Brooklyn Technical High School; he earned a BS in Computer Science Engineering from Cornell University and an MBA from Harvard Business School. He is Chairman of the Board at Spence-Chapin, and was the first black Editor-in-Chief of the Harvard Business School newspaper.

**Reliable College** (Continued from page 1)

and among students.

Another famous son of Latrobe is Fred Rogers, creator of Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood. Before his death, Rogers chose Saint Vincent College to house his archives. A \$14 million center bearing his name will hold his pioneering work in children's television and be a center for educators and researchers studying

early learning and children's media.

In 2018, for the eighth consecutive year, Saint Vincent College was on the *U.S. News and World Report* list of first tier National Liberal Arts Colleges. William J. Bennett, Secretary of Education during the Reagan Administration, identified SVC as worth attending, in his 2013 book *Is College Worth It?*

Why Kids Aren't Reading (Continued from page 2)

The student is given an excerpt of a few paragraphs cut free from the context of the larger work. Then the student is required to answer some questions (likely multiple choice) about those paragraphs right now. No opportunity to reflect or connect to a larger context.

He says, "There's a whole discussion to be had about the inseparable nature of reading and prior knowledge, but in the meantime, teachers have been given a clear message — the evaluation of your teaching effectiveness will have

nothing to do with how well you teach (or don't) classic literature."

The July 18, 2018 *Forbes* article also talks about the "booming industry" that sells "Common Core reading test prep books," which Greene says are "page after page of short articles or excerpts, followed by a short series of multiple choice practice questions."

Because of Common Core, Greene rightly concludes, most of an entire generation of people when asked if they read *The Great Gatsby* in high school will respond, "Well, I read a page of it."

IN THEIR OWN (GOOD) WORDS

"As you read my stories of long ago, I hope you will remember that things truly worthwhile and that will give you happiness are the same now as they were then. It is not the things you have that make you happy. It is love and kindness and helping each other and just plain being good."

— Laura Ingalls Wilder

Author of *Little House on the Prairie* & more.

1867-1957