

# EDUCATION REPORTER

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## Phyllis Schlafly Eagles Welcome Collegians

Each June, college students from around the nation gather in Washington, DC to study the work and words of the late Phyllis Schlafly. At the annual Collegians Summit, young people meet legislators, tour seats of government, and learn how to be active in their communities.

Meeting this year from Tuesday, June 11 through Thursday, June 13, rising freshmen, undergraduate, and graduate students attend the annual free event. Panelists who are White House officials, members of Congress, and other experts address topics including life and family, sovereignty, patents, trade, and economics. Students are trained in activism, co-



alition building, event hosting, and communication. They enjoy exclusive tours of the Capitol, the National Archives, and more.

A staunch pro-life activist, Phyllis Schlafly began the collegians conference 26 years ago. Abortion survivor and author Melissa Ohden, a featured speaker at the 2019 summit, would have met with Mrs. Schlafly's approval. While in-utero, Ohden survived a saline infusion at an abortion clinic. Despite this attempt to kill her, Ohden's story is one of forgiveness, overcoming, love, and God's grace.

In 2012, Ohden founded the Abortion Survivors Network to help educate the public about failed abortions and survivors while providing survivors themselves with emotional, mental, and spiritual support. She holds a Master's Degree in Social Work and has experience in the fields of substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, sexual assault counseling, and child welfare. She is on the Board of Directors of the Vitae Foundation, a pro-life media organization, and has testified before the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. In 2017, Ohden published her award-winning book *You Carried Me: A Daughter's Memoir*.

For more information about Collegians or the annual summit, please visit [PhyllisSchlafly.com](http://PhyllisSchlafly.com).

Phyllis Schlafly Eagles also offers two paid summer internships, one in Washington, DC and one in St. Louis, MO. For more information on this exciting opportunity to work with a premier conservative organization, go to [PhyllisSchlafly.com/Internship](http://PhyllisSchlafly.com/Internship).

## Did They Malign the Wrong Kids?

The Covington Catholic High School students who were in Washington, DC for the March for Life in January and wrongfully vilified by the mainstream media, Democratic 2020 presidential hopefuls, celebrities, and more might have been the wrong people to attack. These teens and their families have attorneys, and they aren't playing.

The mainstream media claimed for days that teenaged students wearing "Make America Great Again" caps surrounded and taunted a Native American Vietnam veteran on January 18th at the Lincoln Memorial. It turns out that the reports were lies. The full video shows there was no taunting and further investigation proves the "Vietnam veteran" never left the U.S.A. The Native American man approached the students and continually beat a drum. Then he lied about it.

### He Wasn't a Vietnam Veteran

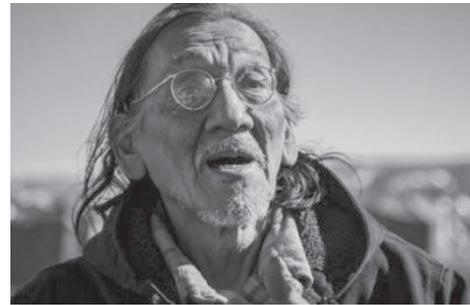
Almost all news outlets called Native American Nathan Phillips a "Vietnam veteran." But he was not only *not* a victim, but *not* a Vietnam veteran. It's unclear whether the drum-beating man told news outlets he was a Vietnam veteran, or a "Vietnam-era" veteran, or something else. Phillips himself spoke in various older Facebook posts as if he'd seen combat. He said in one, "I don't talk much about my Vietnam times. I usually say I don't recollect, I don't recall those years."

The truth is that Phillips served as an "anti-tank missileman" for four months, then as a "refrigerator technician" for the majority of his service. He was in the Marine Corps from June 1972 to May 1976. He never left U.S. soil. (Military-Times.com, 1-23-19)

It is also true that Phillips lied. He said that the students threatened him and chanted "build that wall," which the extended video shows never happened. He said of the 16-year-old boy, "... that guy in the hat stood in my way, and we were

at an impasse. He just blocked my way and wouldn't allow me to retreat." That also never happened.

What did happen is that the young people at whom black Israelites screamed insults and who were accosted by the Na-



tive American remained cool and calm under intense pressure.

### Betrayed by Adults

Even the diocese of the high school the students attend accused them of wrongdoing. A statement released by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington said:

We condemn the actions of the Covington Catholic High School students towards Nathan Phillips specifically, and Native Americans in general, Jan. 18, after the March for Life, in Washington, D.C. We extend our deepest apologies to Mr. Phillips. This behavior is opposed to the Church's teachings on the dignity and respect of the human person.

After the diocese hired outside investigators, the report those uninvolved observers submitted showed that the students had done nothing wrong. They weren't bigots. They were not exhibiting hatred. Was it perhaps their hats indicating that they support their president that got so many people so riled up?

The diocese said it felt bullied into making an immediate statement. Kentucky Bishop Roger Foys now says the students "were placed in a situation that was at once bizarre and even threatening." He says, "The immediate world-

wide reaction to the initial video led almost everyone to believe that our students had initiated the incident and the perception of those few minutes of video became reality."

Foys said that after intense media coverage, the diocese issued a "premature statement." In a subsequent letter to parents, he said, "We should not have allowed ourselves to be bullied and pressured" and he apologized to all the Covington "families who have felt abandoned during this ordeal."

The mayor of Covington, Kentucky, Joe Meyer, wrote in a newspaper to say that the incident at the Lincoln Memorial was "disturbing, discouraging, and — frankly — appalling." He said, "The point is that because of the actions of people who live in Northern Kentucky, our region is being challenged again to examine our core identities, values, and beliefs." He continued, "Covington is proud of being a welcoming city where bigotry, discrimination, and hatred will not be tolerated."

This is important because it reflects the way social media and the news media can spread lies that harm individuals. It also shows how young people can be disrespected. Many wonder why the mayor and the leader of the local diocese failed to contact the students and chaperones directly before condemning these children and even threatening expulsion. When did it become appropriate to attack children in such a manner?

In another rush to judgment, Matthew Lehman, who claims he's a 1995 Covington Catholic High School graduate, started an online petition calling for the firing of the school's principal "for fostering an environment where these types of actions and words are condoned." Again, to what words and actions did he object? The video shows the students did nothing wrong. It was the lies about them

(See *Wrong Kids*, page 4)

## A Look at the 'Other' Higher Education Scandals

Mike Petrilli points out that the media should stop "looking the other way" from the real scandal plaguing American higher education. He says that "our K-12 schools only prepare about one-third of our students to succeed in postsecondary education, even as they encourage two-thirds of eighteen-year-olds to give college a try."

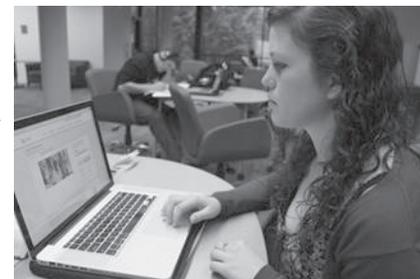
Petrilli, whose qualifications include being president of the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, a Stanford University Hoover Institution research fellow, and the executive editor of *Education Next*, wrote a commentary about the media's fixation on the recent Boeing 737 crashes and the college admissions scandal.

The media over-focus on plane

crashes gets them ratings but the truth is that air travel is safe and crashes are rare.

As far as admission to top tier colleges and the hype about a group of wealthy individuals (including celebrities) cheating to get their children a spot, Petrilli points out just how little all this affects the average American. It is great that the cheaters have been exposed and the courts will punish them. What Petrilli makes apparent is how irrelevant this is to most of the student population and their families.

Petrilli says:



There are about 17 million Americans between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two. And there are about 440,000 undergraduates in America's most selective colleges and universities as defined by Barron's—the eighty or so brand-name schools of the type that were implicated in this week's scandal. (These include the Ivies, the best liberal arts colleges, and a handful of the marquee publics, like UCLA and the University of Virginia.) A non-trivial number of these students are

(See *Other Scandals*, page 2)

## EDUCATION BRIEFS

**On March 18, in Mobile, Alabama, an illegal alien minor, free in the U.S. after receiving a final deportation order, crashed his vehicle head on into that of a local private-school teacher, killing her.** The Guatemalan youth claimed asylum in 2017 after smugglers helped him illegally cross the border into Arizona. “There are over one million illegal aliens in this country with final deportation orders” and the 16-year-old who is charged with vehicular homicide and leaving the scene of an accident is “one of 129,000 Guatemalans with final orders who remain here.” Sonya Jones was a popular teacher at Living Word Christian Center Kingdom Academy. The same week, in Kittitas County, Washington, a deputy sheriff was killed and another wounded by an illegal alien who “opened fire” on police after a road-rage incident. The alleged killer crossed the border into Texas in 2014 on an agricultural visa, which is valid for no more than three years. “In 2017 alone, 700,000 individuals overstayed their visas, and 85% of them still remain in the country.” (ConservativeReview.com, 3-22-19)

**Upon release of the Mueller Report, Jeanne Allen, founder and CEO of the Center for Education Reform, reflected on both the hype and tremendous amount of money spent on allegations against the Trump campaign.** She said that children are “our most precious resource” and asked, “Are all eyes really on this report, or are they in their backyards, in their homes, and on their schools wondering how and when someone is going to fix the dysfunction?” Allen continued, “There are people whipping up teachers into a frenzy against the most basic opportunities for kids in states from Arizona to North Carolina, school board presidents demanding that things stay the same as they are, despite a majority failing schools in their district.” She lamented that “the entire country is apparently riveted on some stupid report out of Washington.” She stated, “Maybe the media can’t seem to acknowledge the corruption and miseducation most U.S. students are victims of, but we can.” (EdReform.com, 3-19)

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## Cedarville University: A Reliable School Making 3-D Prosthetics

Cedarville College opened in 1894 and was once affiliated with a conservative Presbyterian church. Today Cedarville University is a private Baptist university. The school occupies about 400 acres in the village of Cedarville, Ohio, about a half hour east of Dayton.

Cedarville University offers 130 undergraduate programs and graduate degrees in nursing, business, ministry, engineering, and pharmacy. There are about 3,700 undergraduates and over 430 students seeking graduate degrees. They represent 49 states and 41 foreign countries.

The school boasts a 97% job placement rate. Over 98% of students are employed or in graduate school within six months after graduation.

Students are required to attend chapel and to complete a five-class Bible minor. Eleven single sex residence halls all have co-ed lounges.

### Engineering Missing Limbs

In 2018, Connor Hart, a mechanical engineering major, founded the Hands of Hope Foundation, a non-profit that helps children receive free 3-D printed prosthetics. Hart says, “Prosthetics do not solve the problem of missing a hand, but they do help to empower children to have a more confident view of themselves.” Hart was first involved with providing prosthetics in 2015, when he was still an Ohio high school student. In his first such project, his team made a prosthetic for a 7-year-old girl who was “missing her left arm from the elbow down.”

Professor Robert Chasnov, dean of the Cedarville University school of engineering and computer science and senior professor of engineering, says,

“Connor went the extra mile by sending me an email over the summer just prior to coming to campus for his freshman fall semester.” Chasnov continues, “He needed a space for the 3D printers he uses to manufacture the hands his team would be designing. Since we had a project lab that was being used primarily to store mobile test equipment, I set him up in that space and gave his student team card-key access to that project lab.”

Cedarville students are raising funds and building a 3-D prosthetic training program they hope will be a model for

other schools. Hart says, “What I love most about working for Hands of Hope is knowing I am positively impacting the lives

of both our clients and volunteers.”

### Student Organizations & Ministry

Cedarville students compete in 16 sports and there are over 120 student organizations, many of which provide opportunities to “develop leadership skills.” These organizations also include honor societies, sororities and fraternities, a student government association, and much more. The Student Government Association (SGA) “provides a voice for students, encourages involvement on campus, and develops campus morale.”

The school’s website advertises the welcoming atmosphere of Cedarville and its “tight-knit Christian community.” There are opportunities for “intentional ministry” involvement, such as ministering to inmates in local prisons, tutoring immigrants and refugees, making overseas medical mission trips, and other global outreach opportunities. (Cedarville.edu, 1-11-19)



## Other Scandals (Continued from page 1)

from overseas. So do the math, and you find that some 2 or 3 percent of young Americans are enrolled in these kinds of schools. Expand the universe to the next tier of colleges and universities—like my alma mater, the University of Michigan—and you get to 4 percent. Four percent! (FordhamInstitute.org, 3-15-19)

Non-stop coverage of the admis-

sions scandal dilutes the real problems that afflict the vast majority of young people. Our schools are doing a poor job preparing them for college and those who do attend are often saddled with debt that is very difficult to repay, especially given some of the irrelevant fields of study offered. Schools are failing to give those who don’t wish to attend college the skills

and training they need to succeed at other jobs.



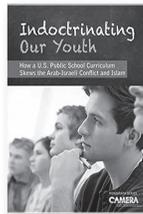
## MALLARD FILLMORE / by Bruce Tinsley



## Book of the Month



**Indoctrinating Our Youth: How a U.S. Public School Curriculum Skews the Arab-Israeli Conflict and Islam,** Steven Stotsky, CAMERA Monograph Series, 2017, \$9.95



After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, many tried to understand the motivation for such hatred of America. While a justifiable quest, the Newton School District in Massachusetts took some questionable steps, which this book exposes.

Just two months after the attacks, they invited Howard Zinn, an America-bashing leftist, to address students. Zinn was a Newton resident who wrote a “history” book titled *A People’s History of the United States*. Textbooks like this one that teach students about the world but fail to give a fair accounting of the contributions of the West become dangerous if presented without balance.

Newton district schools invited other controversial speakers, made poor curriculum choices, and some teachers were either poorly trained or deliberately deceptive.

In the past, committees selected textbooks and citizens and parents reviewed them before they were approved. When students brought textbooks home from school, parents could review them. Further, the elimination of textbooks allows teachers to rely on the internet. Teachers too frequently select subpar or questionable materials to print or send to student devices.

*Indoctrinating Our Youth* chronicles the school district’s failure to teach honestly about the Middle East and exposes troubling trends in education nationwide. Some schools have moved away from relying on Judeo-Christian principles and often criticize Western civilization instead of teaching the ways it has benefited the world.

Parents and others became concerned that Newton students were being fed anti-American and anti-Israel material in favor of pro-Islamic materials. In 2014, results of an independent analysis were released, criticizing the district for “multiple, easily-refuted instances of inaccurate and false information”; “plagiarism to deceptive editing”; taking material from a “hate-filled, religious, proselytizing website”; “repeated biases against Israel and the U.S., and more.

Stotsky’s book has scores of footnotes following each chapter. He provides examples of curriculum used in 9th-grade World History and a 10th-grade unit on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that can at best be called inaccurate. But what occurred in Newton isn’t an isolated incident and teaching slanted history isn’t limited to Middle Eastern studies. Many American students are being indoctrinated against their own nation, our allies, and Western Civilization.

# FOCUS: The Biggest Higher Education Scam Isn't Hollywood Fraud, It's Academia Itself

*'The justifications for propping up universities, which often act as little more than elite sorting mechanisms as well as left-wing indoctrination centers, are growing thin.'*

by Inez Feltscher Stepman

*Originally published at TheFederalist.com on March 14, 2019. Reprinted with permission.*

Yesterday, 50 wealthy parents and university officials, among them actresses Felicity Huffman and Lori Loughlin, were charged in the nation's largest and most expensive college admissions corruption case ever prosecuted.

If it seems weird to most Americans to spend half a million bucks bribing the University of Southern California to admit your daughters as crew recruits, it's because they haven't spent much time in what Charles Murray calls Super ZIPs, the uber-wealthy coastal enclaves that increasingly measure self- and social worth according to placement on the *U.S. News & World Report* ranking.

The legal way to go about these things, of course, is to put up a campus building with your family name on it. Illegal new money bribery aside, the justifications for propping up universities, which often act as little more than elite sorting mechanisms as well as left-wing indoctrination centers, are growing thin.

The federal government spends \$75 billion a year on higher education. Taxpayers also hold the ultimate dance card for the \$1.5 trillion in outstanding student loan debt, much of which will likely not

be fully repaid. For public universities, state-level funds also play a large role.

For their massive investment, Americans enjoy the fruits of their left-wing radicalism incubators in the form of a generation that views socialism as better than capitalism, free speech as dangerous, and America as irredeemably racist, sexist, and bigoted. And don't forget the



brilliant academic research co-authored by felines we all underwrite.

You would think that Republicans would dial back subsidies to left-wing colleges out of mere self-interest, but nobody has ever gone broke betting against Republican backbones. Despite controlling Congress and the presidency for two full years, Republicans failed even to curb increases in student loan subsidies. At minimum, freezing federally backed loans at current levels would halt their upward pressure on tuition prices, which have skyrocketed well above inflation thanks to government largess.

To add insult to injury, the cost of this government generosity is borne not just by those who use it, but by the two-thirds of Americans who do not have a

bachelor's degree. Subsidies for higher education may well be one of the most regressive programs in operation, skimming from President Trump's "forgotten men and women" to hand goodies to the children of the nation's elites.

The left, allegedly still the voice of the working man, wants to increase that burden. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and other mainstream voices in the Democratic Party have voiced support for "tuition free" college, which of course in reality means "tuition bill entirely funded by the U.S. taxpayer."

If she wants to really eat the rich, she should instead look into why the tax code exempts multi-billion-dollar endowments while the institutions attached to them still accept federal charity in the form of taxpayer-backed student loans. Why should a single student at Yale University, which has a cool \$26 billion laying around in its endowment, require a taxpayer-backed loan to attend?

"Nonprofit," that magical word, covers Harvard University's \$39 billion endowment as well as well-staffed "diversity" departments and Olympic swimming pools. But Congress is holding hearings to attempt to slap regulatory standards onto the small number of for-profit universities that often typically serve poorer and older student populations that the most prestigious legacy institutions wouldn't bother to consider.

The definition of chutzpah is endowment-laden universities, the recipients of

\$1.5 trillion in taxpayer-funded loans, calling their alumni, hat in hand, as though they were the local soup kitchen. Universities are big business, and their excess is all the more offensive for having being built in no small part on the backs of the majority of Americans who never set foot in their hallowed halls.

It makes no sense for a Republican majority to hand out subsidies to the breeding grounds of their political opponents. It makes even less sense for Americans making the average household income of \$60,000 to subsidize the elite's women's studies degrees.

This is the new feudalism. Universities appeal to the public purse on the basis that they form better workers and citizens, and take the best from all walks of life on a meritocratic basis for the study of higher things. The reality they offer is a laughable shadow of that promise, and not just because Hollywood actresses apparently bribe smart kids to take the ACT in place of their children.

The bribery case making headlines yesterday just might be the least fraudulent thing about higher education.

*Inez Feltscher Stepman is a senior contributor at The Federalist. She is also a senior policy analyst at Independent Women's Forum and the Thursday editor of BRIGHT, a women's newsletter, in addition to being a Lincoln Fellow with the Claremont Institute.*



## Do You Want Your Kids To Go To An Elite College Or Get An Education? They're Not The Same Thing

*'College entrance has become the primary, all-consuming educational goal for far too many parents, at the expense of understanding what constitutes a good education and what it should accomplish.'*

by Mark Hemingway

*Originally published at TheFederalist.com on March 14, 2019. Reprinted with permission.*

The celebrity college admissions scandal feels tremendously validating. I don't mean I'm reveling in the misfortune of vapid celebrities with disagreeable politics, although if I'm being honest, my schadenfreude meter blew past acceptable levels for a practicing Christian as soon as the story broke.

I mean this: As soon as my wife and I started talking about marriage, we started talking about having kids, and as soon as we started talking about having kids, we started talking about what a good education for them would look like. That's not a terribly uncommon sequence of events for college-educated couples who decide to get married.

However, my wife and I have a very

different view of what a proper education looks like than does American culture writ large. Our primary goal is that we raise children who continue to practice our Lutheran faith and have stable, child-rearing families.

Yes, concerns about career achievement and financial security are in the mix, but only insofar as they are necessary to support their family, church, and community, and do not otherwise interfere with a life focused on higher things. We believe inculcating specific values such as gratitude, selflessness, charity, and a diligent work ethic is a recipe for their happiness.

Decisions related to educational philosophy have dominated our lives. We made significant financial sacrifices to move close to where our Lutheran church's classical school is located, and we are actively involved in the school as parents and members of the congregation. I have educated myself in classical curricula and pedagogy, and I'm even on the school board.

Getting good grades at my children's school requires even the good students to grow and face challenges. The school

encourages self-sufficiency among students, and is not afraid for children to face consequences for bad behavior and mistakes. This is what I want for my children, precisely because I want what's best for them.

**We're Not in the Rat Race, But Elites Are**

But, as has been so well illustrated by the college admissions scandal, America's elites, much less our educational institutions, don't seem to give



one whit about the idea that education should be first and foremost designed to produce moral and competent citizenry. The end goal for them is preserving and passing on their elite status to their children, and in the case of the universities, making enormous amounts of money off the anxiety surrounding this goal.

As a friend of mine who's no stranger to dealing with wealthy and powerful people put it, "It's not an exaggeration to say [elite colleges are] the central organizing obsession for a large segment of

American society. It shouldn't be, but it is. And that system's roles as both central feature and obsession have only gotten more so over recent decades, as (a) anxiety over the future keeps getting worse, (b) focus on elite colleges as the main avenue to avoid that risk has only increased and (c) the difficulty of getting into the elite colleges has skyrocketed."

In this respect, this scandal has captured our attention like few news stories as of late — and that's clearing a high bar. The populist frame of discussion over the last however many years is premised on the idea that the system is rigged to benefit the rich. This is a pretty dramatic example of that, given it took college admissions, a system everyone already knew was stacked to benefit the rich, and showed that it's so much worse than anyone thought.

The result is that America's bourgeoisie are focused not on the actual education of their children, but ensuring they get into the right college as a guarantor of success. But what counts as "success" in education? In the case of the people who can afford to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars to cheat on entrance exams or buy their kids' matriculation outright, financial success shouldn't even be a concern. Do they think their children are going to be happy when they grow up

*(See Elite College, page 4)*

## Elite College (Continued from page 3)

and get thrust into a world where they are forced to confront the yawning chasm between their credentials and actual capabilities?

That's not even dealing with the self-doubt and anger hundreds of rich kids are confronting right now. It exists, first, because their parents failed to take an active interest in their education, moral and otherwise. Second, it exists because they thought so little of their children they bought for them the biggest signifier of personal merit they are likely to have at a young age.

### Many Credentials Are Entirely Bogus

This brings me to another aspect of this scandal that should alarm everyone concerned about what kind of society we are creating for our kids. We are increasingly devaluing applied knowledge as a function of education. Partly this is because we are victims of our own success. We live in a society that spins off so much wealth that it's possible to earn a good living as a narcissist posting pictures of yourself on the internet.

Credentialism creates the illusion of knowledge and capability where none exists. You cannot build a strong society when the need for family doctors is approaching crisis levels. Meanwhile we're telling our kids that spending \$150,000 for a sociology sheepskin or, God help us all, a journalism degree is the going rate for upper-middle-class success.

Of course, not everyone is destined to get a science degree, even if increased emphasis on such fields is necessary. Merely understanding what knowledge means as it relates to the world outside yourself is vital to being educated in any truly meaningful sense.

In high school, my best friend Jake got a job insulating a barn on his dad's boss's property. He couldn't do it by himself, so I got in on the action. (Even then, Jake really knew what he was doing — he is now a partner in a very successful architecture firm.)

Anyway, we had to cut out plywood panels and nail them to the framing to cover up the insulation in the barn. Yet we had limited access to tools. For reasons I can't exactly remember, we had to cut out all the panels to fit the walls with the saw all at once, but we didn't have a ladder tall enough to reach the eave of the barn to measure the height of the triangular piece of plywood we needed to cover the eave.

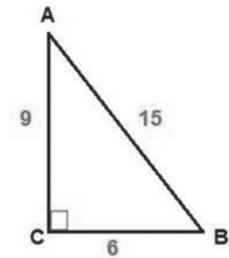
What we did have was right triangles, and could measure the length of the side on the bottom. We were both in high school and had just taken trig, so some quick back-of-the-envelope math gave the length of the other two sides. We crossed our fingers and cut out the triangular pieces of wood with the skill saw.

A couple of days later, we got a ladder and, wouldn't you know, it fit perfectly. It turns out all those story problems in my math textbook weren't just theoretical. Heck, if you put a gun to my head, I might even be able to repeat that feat to this day. (SOHCAHTOA for the win.)

### The Real Point of an Education Is Actual Competence

Ultimately, I learned on that job that accumulating knowledge isn't about meeting some minimum threshold so some institution can declare that you are an educated person. My Algebra II grade did not retroactively improve because I was able to apply rudimentary trigonometry in the real world, but the abilities and earned self-worth from this and other episodes like it are the ultimate aim of education.

In that respect, my upbringing was fortunate, because I knew how to recognize a teaching moment like this when it hit me upside the head. My Lt. Col. father was a recon Marine who thought



knowledge of the world didn't just make life more interesting and allow you to be more helpful, but possessing a certain piece of basic knowledge could also be a life or death matter. Think of how many tragedies have occurred because someone botched some basic math.

There's also increasing evidence that our focus on education as a means to selfish ends is creating a mental health crisis. So many people now have information economy jobs where they don't have any tangible sense of what they're accomplishing day to day, and in comparable terms, there's profound satisfaction to be found in traditional tradesmen jobs where one tangibly builds and fixes things.

These, of course, are the well-paying jobs we've spent 50 years denigrating as inferior to jamming a PEZ dispenser full of Prozac while sitting in whatever Godforsaken corporate cubicle your comparative literature degree lands you in. Much evidence for this disparity is provided in Matthew Crawford's excellent *Shop Class as Soul Craft: An Inquiry Into the Value of Work*.

You hardly have to be a welder to enjoy your job, but a proper education should start with the idea that it needs to give you the skills to control your own destiny, at the very least to the degree you are happy and productive. A big part of figuring out what work is going to fulfill you isn't just determining what interests you, but understanding what values are important.

### Focus Less On College, and More On Your Kids' Souls

If you really care about your kids' education, you will be focused on cultivating their faith and character; making sure that they understand the accumulation of knowledge is ultimately a tool for improving the world around them, and not just about credentials and wealth; and give your children the confidence and capability to forge a path in life of their choosing.

Having your child attend an elite university, however, will not automati-

cally accomplish any of those objectives. Rather, it should be painfully obvious that whatever benefits a top-tier college education might confer, if you're not vigilant, these institutions are likely to undermine morality and debase the more meaningful aspects of education. Indeed, no one should be surprised that America's corrupt elites are using corrupt means to get their undeserving kids into corrupt educational institutions, and we still mutter "meritocracy" under our breath like it's some kind of magical incantation that makes us feel better about what we've become.

Of course, for all the effort I've put into thinking about my own kids' education, I can't and don't pretend to have all the answers for what does constitute the best education. There are never any guarantees that kids will turn out as you hope, to say nothing of every parent's struggle to avoid saddling your children with your own flaws.

But this college admissions scandal has affirmed we have one thing right. I have high and detailed expectations for my children, and if you asked me to prioritize them I'm not even sure what college they are going to attend would be anywhere on the first few pages. Unfortunately, this has become the primary, all-consuming educational goal for far too many parents, at the expense of understanding what constitutes a good education and what it should accomplish.

For the children, the result of this thinking is an elitist Peter Principle at best, and a generational existential crisis at worst. For the parents, the result of this college obsession ranges from guilt to jail time. And for society as a whole, it all comes down to the cliché that children are our future, and our prospects aren't looking so hot right now.



Mark Hemingway is the Book Editor at The Federalist, and was formerly a senior writer at The Weekly Standard.

## Wrong Kids (Continued from page 1)

repeated by the media that was the real abuse. Maybe Lehman hated the "Make America Great Again" hats that some students wore. More insight into his political leanings and motivation could be explained by the part of his petition that calls on the school to stop students from attending the March for Life. (Breitbart.com, 1-20-19; 1-25-19; and 2-11-19)

### What's Next?

There is likely a day of reckoning ahead for those who falsely accused the Covington Catholic High School students. As attorney Robert Barnes explained to Jesse Watters on Fox News on January 28, although defamation is sometimes difficult to prove, this case is different. Barnes says:

When there is a defamation and libel of private citizens, particularly minors, then the legal standard goes way down. So you no longer have to prove actual malice or malevolent intent. All you have to prove is that a false statement was made — or in Kentucky, the law is even broader,

'an unflattering impression given and a person's impression in a false light' — and otherwise ... that it just be negligent to do so.

Attorneys representing the 16-year-old who was blasted in the news for days include Todd McMurtry of Cincinnati and L. Lin Wood, an Atlanta libel and defamation specialist. They and a team of additional lawyers reviewed the video for days. Then they concluded, "We have a good faith basis to sue."

At the end of January, the attorneys gave media outlets and individuals 48 hours to retract or delete all false accusations against the students.

In early February, McMurtry said they had sent "documentation preservation letters addressed to organizations and individuals they believe may have defamed or libeled [the 16-year-old] with false reporting." He continued, "They know they crossed the line." He added, "Do they want 12 people in Kentucky to decide their fate? I don't think so." McMurtry also said, "For the mob to just go

tear apart a 16-year-old boy is inexcusable." (*Cincinnati Enquirer*, 2-1-19)

### How Much Money?

Attorneys for the 11th-grade Covington student filed a \$275 million lawsuit against CNN, saying that the media giant "elevated false, heinous accusations of



racist conduct" against their client, which was outside of "well-established journalistic standards and ethics." Attorney McMurtry said that "without any reasonable investigation," the organization "took something straight off Twitter that had been in essence manipulated so that it told one

story and they reported it as the truth."

They have also filed a lawsuit for \$250 million in the Eastern District of Kentucky against the *Washington Post*, which includes "compensatory and punitive damages."

It is expected that others, including the fake Vietnam veteran Native American activist, will also be sued.

This nation was founded on Judeo-Christian ethics, the rule of law, and innocent until proven guilty. It seems that many adults could have given these students a little grace and waited with a bit of patience until the facts were known instead of believing the worst and exhibiting such *childish* behavior.

## IN THEIR OWN (GOOD) WORDS

"Remember, those that wait upon the Lord will rise up with wings like eagles, and they will run and not be weary. And don't you ever be weary, because the battle goes on, year after year, and we need all of you young people to join us in the battle."

— Phyllis Schlafly  
1924-2016