

# THE EPOCH TIMES

# LIFE &

# TRADITION



Independence Day is a time for gatherings in the form of barbecues, picnics, and potlucks, where friends and family can celebrate American liberty.

FOURTH OF JULY

## Happy Birthday, America!

Some tips for making this Independence Day special

By Jeff Minick

**S** SHHREEEEE! BOOM! AHHHH! Up they flash into the night sky, bottle rockets, brocades, Roman candles, and Catherine wheels, exploding in the darkness to the delight of spectators, a glorious fountain of fireworks celebrating Independence Day. Besides serving unofficially as Pyrotechnics Day USA, the Fourth of July is also that midsummer holiday when families and friends gather for backyard barbecues, picnics, and potlucks, the kids dart around in the twilight while the adults relax with drinks in lawn chairs, and parades and concerts pay homage to American liberty.

We've come a long way since that first Independence Day 247 years ago. We've become a transcontinental nation and a

**Road trips provide the opportunity to rummage through the American song bag, a sack of gold that reminds us that we're a land as rich in music as we are in natural resources.**

world power. We've fought wars, pushed and failed and pushed again to establish justice for all, and given away vast portions of our wealth to other countries. We've exported everything from Levi's jeans to Hollywood movies, served as a melting pot for untold millions of immigrants, and touched the surface of the moon.

That action-packed past covers a lot of ground, and America's birthday seems the perfect time to learn more about it. Here are some ideas to help you get started.

### Story Time

Outstanding books of American history and biography abound, but if you're more oriented toward the world of imagination, you've got another treasure

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## Farming With a City View

A story of resilience, self-sustainability, and urban farming

By Annie Holmquist

From the front, Juan Camacho's house and yard looks like most others along the city parkway on which he lives in Minnesota's St. Paul-Minneapolis urban sprawl. But hidden behind the gray-sided Cape Cod house is "Esperanza Farm," complete with chickens, goats, honeybees, and a garden.

Those who discover Camacho's city secret often mistakenly assume that his interest in farming stems from a childhood spent in Mexico, but nothing could be further from the truth. A born city-slicker, Camacho's foray into urban farming unfolded largely by happenstance.

### Adapt and Overcome

A bout of terrible allergies was the first thing that set the course for Esperanza Farm. Camacho was knocked down with them for weeks as a transplant to the area roughly a dozen years ago, so his mother suggested he find a little local honey to fix the problem. "You take in a little bit of poison at a time" with the honey made from local pollen, Camacho said, and "your body gets used to it and it doesn't bother you anymore."

But he was clueless about how to find that magic cure. "Back then, the only kind you could get was the bear honey from Walmart or Target," he said. Fortunately, he happened to know a beekeeper at the time, who kindly gave Camacho a hive and a bee suit, leaving him to figure the rest out by watching videos online.

"The first years I was donating my money to the bee community," Camacho joked. Now, however, he has five hives and produces between 300 and 500 pounds of honey annually via his Italian bees, a friendlier breed, which relieves him of worry that they will bother or attack neighbors and visitors.

His farming enterprise expanded beyond bees, however, when he was asked whether he'd like to live in the house his boss's parents had vacated. The house was old and in decline, but the rent was cheap, so Camacho readily agreed. Over time, he fixed it up on his own dime and time.

This work ethic impressed the owners, and when it came time for the family to sell it, they worked out a contract-for-deed sale with Camacho. Almost overnight, Camacho found himself the owner of a house—and a bank account with only \$80 in it after making a large down payment. As he was just in the process of starting his own business, Camacho knew he

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**(Top to Bottom)** Farmer Juan Camacho; farm fresh eggs from Camacho's farm; and goats gather around for treat time.

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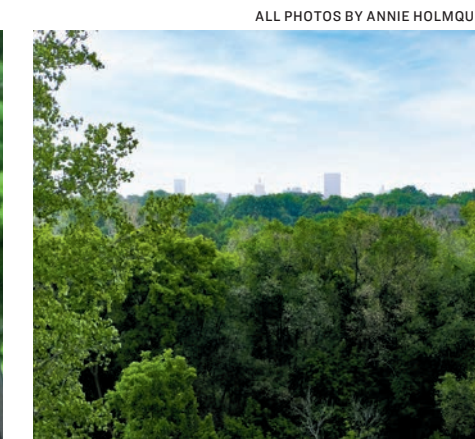
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Juan Camacho wrangles his flock of chickens outside the little hen house overlooking the downtown city skyline.



The skyline of the city's downtown area located a few miles away, as seen from Camacho's backyard farm.



Juan Camacho also keeps a herd of goats.

# Farming With a City View

Continued from Page 1

he had to make his money stretch, so he bought \$60 worth of Ramen noodles, prepared to live on them for the next two months.

And then the furnace broke. In January. In Minnesota.

Wearing everything he owned, Camacho said he “couldn’t stop laughing” over the absurdity of the situation. Thankfully, it only took a 99-cent part he found on eBay to fix the furnace, and he managed to eke out the next few months by taking jobs of all kinds in his fledgling construction business, making his newly acquired house payments in time.

### Building an Urban Farm

Then Camacho got another surprise. When he finally received the house deed, he was shocked to find that his new home sat on 1.5 acres of land. Excitedly, he began hacking down the scrub brush that had worked its way up the hill from the train tracks below, hauling up to 16 loads of brush to the

city dump on weekends. He soon realized, however, that the brush grew back almost as fast as he could chop it down.

On the suggestion of a friend, Camacho looked into renting goats, but soon found out the price was too steep for his budget. Instead, he decided to buy some, finally finding a couple for \$50 apiece. To his horror, he found they

For now, however, Camacho’s main profit is the joy he gets in sharing his little city retreat with others.

were baby goats. “These are tiny!” he exclaimed. “They’re not going to do anything to my backyard!”

Nevertheless, Camacho took them home, eventually harnessing their appetites to act as his personal gardeners, whipping his property into livable shape. He soon added to his herd when the lady from whom he bought his goat kids moved and offered him two more goats and 15 chickens. Today, Camacho daily gathers a haul of farm-fresh eggs on a bluff overlooking the state’s Capitol building.

Those eggs—along with other products from Camacho’s city farm—are often shared with friends and neigh-

bors, the latter of whom are quite open to his little enterprise. “My neighbors bring people over a lot of times,” Camacho said, noting that they think it’s “kind of weird, but it’s cool!”

And when it comes to city permits and inspectors, Camacho really hasn’t had any problems. “Actually, they were kind of in shock, like, ‘You have goats?! You have chickens?!’”

But such city farming isn’t without its difficulties. Just last fall, Camacho was out working with his bees when a man with “huge eyes that never blinked” suddenly showed up behind him. “Hey, this is private property, man!” Camacho told him, suspecting his visitor was on drugs. “He gets super close to me and pulls a gun,” Camacho said. “Give me your wallet!” he demanded, proceeding to grab Camacho’s iPhone and watch, as well as the chain around his neck.

It was a frightening experience, Camacho admitted, and he was ready to do whatever the man wanted. “Take whatever you want—take the bees! I don’t care!” he said, joking that he should have trained his bees to attack such intruders.

All in all, however, Camacho’s city farming experience has been positive. He said he plans to pay off his house in three more years, and then he can pull back on his construction work a bit and focus more on making a profit from his farm. Renting out his goats to others needing some major weed reduction is one possibility, as is selling honey, eggs, and other products from his yard at a roadside stand or on Craigslist.

For now, however, Camacho’s main

profit is the joy he gets in sharing his little city retreat with others. “My wife works with the Hispanic community,” he said, “and people sometimes cry when they’re here because they see all this and they think like, ‘We’re in the city but it actually doesn’t feel like the city, it feels like my dad’s town where I grew up’ ... kind of nostalgia.” He also said he enjoys introducing little kids to his farm. “They never see a chicken... a lot of kids, they haven’t seen where the honey comes from,” he said, noting that many visitors stay a lot longer than they planned and leave with a smile.

“It feels like everything I’m doing, I was doing it for myself, and now I’m finding out it’s actually [other] people enjoying it. It feels good to me to share this space.”

*Annie Holmquist is a cultural commentator hailing from America’s heartland who loves classic books, architecture, music, and values. Her writings can be found at Annie’s Attic on Substack.*



Camacho stands amid the beehives where he was robbed by a city drug addict last fall.

## DEAR NEXT GENERATION

Advice from our readers to our young people

### The Nut Behind the Butt Plate

The first life lesson from the College of Hard Knocks

There are many great colleges and universities in America. The best one by far is the College of Hard Knocks, usually located near you during times of struggle or failure. It is called hard knocks because occasionally life isn’t easy or fair. The greatest lessons in life generally come at these times. Once in a while, it takes a hard knock to jolt us back into reality or turn us away from the wrong path so we can jump back on the right path.

One of my important life lessons came while I was in basic training

at Fort Ord, California. My drill sergeant had wisdom beyond his rank. One day on the rifle range, one of my shots completely missed the target. The drill sergeant came over to see what caused me to miss the target. Feeling embarrassed, I told the sergeant there was something wrong with my gun. He took it from me, inspected it thoroughly, and handed it back to me. He said: “You’re right, private, there is something wrong with your gun. It’s the nut behind the butt plate!”

After a few seconds, I figured out that he was referring to me. I was the nut behind the plate. On my next shot, I focused on the target, improved my body

position, took a deep breath and let out half, and slowly applied even pressure to the trigger. This time, the nut behind the butt plate got a bull’s-eye.

From that day forward, I have always looked at my own behavior before casting blame on others. Whenever I make a mistake, whether in sports, business, my family, or life in general, I am always quick to say “my fault” so as not to imply blame on others or leave doubt as to whose fault it was. Before I ever enter into any situation, make comments, give advice, or decide on important matters, I always analyze my motives to be certain I am doing the right thing for the right reason.

If you find yourself in the position of being the nut behind the butt plate, celebrate the fact that you make mistakes because you are human and that you can learn from your mistakes and move on.

Congratulations, you have just passed your first class, “Growth and Development 101,” at the College of Hard Knocks.

—Ronald D. Francis, Idaho

**What advice would you like to give to the younger generations?** We call on all of our readers to share the timeless values that define right and wrong, and pass the torch, if you will, through your wisdom and hard-earned experience. We feel that the passing down of this wisdom has diminished over time, and that only with a strong moral foundation can future generations thrive.

Send your advice, along with your full name, state, and contact information to [NextGeneration@epochtimes.com](mailto:NextGeneration@epochtimes.com) or mail it to: *Next Generation, The Epoch Times*, 229 W. 28th St., Floor 7, New York, NY 10001

## FOURTH OF JULY

# Happy Birthday, America!

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trove ready to give up its riches. Poke around online for the “best American historical fiction,” and you’ll be inundated with lists of titles and authors, from Michael Shaara’s Civil War novel “The Killer Angels” to Kathryn Stockett’s 1960s civil rights story “The Help” to Larry McMurtry’s Western saga “Lonesome Dove.”

Some of these lists neglect older historical fiction. If your interest lies in America’s colonial and Revolutionary heritage, be sure to take a look at the works of Kenneth Roberts, whose well-researched novels, such as “Northwest Passage” and “Rabble in Arms,” bring that era to life. Betty Smith’s “A Tree Grows in Brooklyn” and Willa Cather’s “O Pioneers!” recreate different but dramatic accounts of immigrant life in America in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Louis L’Amour’s many Westerns, again the product of devoted research, retain the power to whisk us off to the land of trailblazers and cowboys, while Raymond Chandler’s mysteries drop us down into mid-20th century Los Angeles.

And if you’re on the road this Independence Day, don’t forget about audiobooks. Swing by the local library for some CDs before making that trip or download books on your phone and watch those miles vanish as you and your passengers learn about John Adams, Harriet Beecher Stowe, or our country’s first astronaut.

### Sing-Alongs

Road trips provide the opportunity to rummage through the American songbag, a sack of gold that reminds us that we’re a land as rich in music as we are in natural resources. The settlers trekking across the plains in covered wagons, the soldiers marching to battlefields with those peculiar American names such as Cowpens and Chickamauga, and the unemployed trudging through the Great Depression all kept up their spirits with music. Search for tunes on “songs of American history” or on sites such as AmericanMusicPreservation.com, and you’ll be joining your voice to theirs.

The car also makes a perfect classroom to introduce the kids to this grand slice of Americana. If you get sleepy while driving, just crank up the volume and belt out a few tunes as you barrel down the highway.

### Popcorn, Anyone?

Or maybe you’re in the mood for some movies focused on American history. Once again, the resources are inexhaustible, and many of these films should appeal to the whole family. If you’re fresh out of ideas, let your fingers do the walking and search online for “movies about American history.” Like with historical fiction, the choices seem almost endless. There are well-known pictures, such as “Saving Private Ryan” or the Revolutionary War movie “The Patriot.” Then there may be ones you’ve missed, such as 1960 Academy Award winner “How the West Was Won” or the story of composer and performer George M. Cohan in “Yankee Doodle Dandy,” in which Cohan is brilliantly portrayed by James Cagney.

Keep in mind, too, that when we turn to older movies, we’re essentially boarding a time machine. When we watch Frank Capra’s 1934 film “It Happened One Night” or his 1939 film “Mr. Smith Goes to Washington,” we’re stepping back in time nearly a century, where the dress, customs, and culture differ radically from our own. We’re watching more than a movie. We’re watching a living, breathing portrait of a bygone time.

### Archives and Old Papers

Visiting the records from the past can also drop us straight into history without the barriers of interpretation. On YouTube, we can hear the first-person account of a Virginian, Julius Howell, born in 1846, who fought in the Civil War. We can listen to slaves tell us in their own voices about their lives and hardships. American Edith Russell speaks at length about her night on the Titanic, when she and a few others playfully kicked and threw broken bits of ice around on the deck, having no idea that the damaged ship was already sinking.

Go to [ChroniclingAmerica.loc.gov](http://ChroniclingAmerica.loc.gov), and you’ll find more than 20 million pages of American newspapers from 1770 to 1963 stored in the Library of Congress. Here’s a fantastic way to connect with the past. I’m writing these words on June 11, 2023, and the first thing to jump up on this site were some headlines from exactly a century ago: “Worst Flood in Years Sweeps Kansas” or “Many Passengers Hurt in Big Wreck,” which describes a railroad accident. Such news stories remind us that the old saying “the more things change, the more they stay the same” has more than a little truth in it.

Scout out “old newspaper archives,” and many more sites become available, some of which are designed for use in the classroom and can bring a history textbook to life for students. From the Atchison County Mail of Rockport, Missouri, dateline Nov. 8, 1918, just three days before the end of World War I, we read of a Mr. McNulty who’s home on permanent leave after being severely wounded by a rifle grenade fighting in the trenches of France. Alongside the article are large advertisements for boars and cattle.

### A Night at the Museum

“Night at the Museum” is the name of a popular movie franchise having to do with American history, but with today’s digital technology, we can all spend a night at the museum if we choose. Detrimental as they were in other areas, the COVID-19 lockdowns increased the number of virtual tours in museums and at historical sites. You may live in Montana, but if you want to visit Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello, a tour is yours for the asking. You can do the same for the White House, Teddy Roosevelt’s Sagamore Hill home, battlefields such as Antietam in Maryland and the Alamo, and scores of other historic places.

Go to [JoyOfMUSEums.com](http://JoyOfMUSEums.com), click on “USA,” then on “Top 100 USA,” and you’ve hit the jackpot of virtual tours. Here are art galleries such as the MET and Houston’s Museum of Fine Arts, depositories of history such as the International Spy Museum and the National Museum of the American Indian, and special attractions such as observatories and space exhibits.

### Keeping Alive the Flame of Liberty

To love others—spouses, children, friends—means knowing them, and that love and knowledge embeds in us the fierce desire to take care of them, to protect and defend them. We want the best for them and for them to be their best.

The same holds true for our country. By discovering more about our land of deeds and dreams, our affections can only deepen. This year, when we celebrate America’s birthday, we have the means at hand to make that learning more a reality than ever before.

So let’s grill up those hamburgers, savor the potato salad, and shoot off some fireworks, but let’s also take the time to find out more about where we came from and who we are as Americans.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C. He is the author of two novels, “Amanda Bell” and “Dust On Their Wings,” and two works of nonfiction, “Learning As I Go” and “Movies Make The Man.” Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va.



BIBA KEYEVICH

Car rides are a great opportunity to introduce children to classic American tunes.

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“The Union of Drawing and Color,” circa 1624–1625, by Guido Reni. Oil on canvas; 47.4 inches by 47.4 inches. Louvre Museum, Paris.

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FINE ART

## A Division Healed

Guido Reni and the union of drawing and color

By Michelle Platrik

The enlightening exhibition “Guido Reni,” currently on view at the Prado Museum, is the first of its kind in Spain. Guido Reni (1575–1642) was one of the most celebrated painters of 17th-century Italy and was patronized by prominent popes, nobles, and monarchs throughout Europe. Reni, known by the epithet “Il Divino” (“The Divine”), is distinguished from his peers by his ability to depict the divine in visual form. His compositions are synonymous with elegance, beauty, and grace. As the Prado Museum’s digital brochure explains, the perfection of his work “was never considered the result of an innate gift, but rather the outcome of his massive effort in the search for perfection, a task in which drawing and coloring had to come together in harmonious symbiosis.”

The exhibit draws on important loans from international museums and private collections, including major works that are rarely lent. One of the exhibition’s exceptional works is Reni’s celebrated canvas “The Union of Drawing and Color,” which is part of the Louvre’s permanent collection, having been acquired by King Louis XIV in 1685.

### Uniting Color and Design

The impetus for this painting’s allegorical subject matter can be traced to Reni’s early artistic education. He was born in Bologna, when it was one of

Europe’s leading artistic centers, and he was guided by the city’s prominent Baroque artists Lodovico and Agostino Carracci. The brothers’ academy emphasized that painters should look to the Renaissance masters Raphael, Correggio, Titian, and Veronese and their more naturalistic style for inspiration. The brothers soundly rejected the contrasting artificial Mannerist aesthetic that was popular at the time. Thus, the academy promoted the congruent uniting of the artistic elements of color and design.

During the Renaissance, art theory treatises that expounded compositional rules, specifically for historical paintings with allegorical, religious, literary, or classical themes, were advanced and highly influential. The division over the importance of drawing versus that of color can be traced to the end of the 15th century.

In his book “Yellow: The History of Color,” art historian Michel Pastoureau explains: “For the painter, which is fundamental, drawing or color? This question ... prompted many debates, quarrels, and controversies. Most of the time, drawing prevailed: It is masculine and addresses the mind, whereas color, which submits to it, is feminine and addresses only the senses.” In a debate in which many picked sides, the Carracci and later Reni are notable for their promotion of equality for these two fundamental artistic features.

In “The Union of Drawing and Color,” Reni depicts drawing symbolically as a young man on the left of the canvas.

The man wears an ochre cloak and holds a pen pressed against a sheet of paper. The allegory of color is portrayed by the young woman on the right. She holds brushes and a palette awash in colorful pigments. The ends of her lilac turban touch the man’s cloak. He embraces her and they gaze tenderly into each other’s eyes.

The circular shape of the canvas emphasizes the composition’s harmonious theme. A number of copies in a variety of media were made of this celebrated composition and are also held in international collections, attesting to the popularity and influence of Reni’s painting. In addition to its figurative allusions, “The Union



Artist’s self-portrait, circa 1602–1623, by Guido Reni. Oil on canvas; 25.3 inches by 20.4 inches.

of Drawing and Color” showcases Reni’s literal skills as a varied colorist and draftsman of strong lines and modeling.

### Reni’s Legacy

The exhibition “Guido Reni” assembles nearly 80 paintings and drawings by Reni, demonstrating the breadth of his oeuvre, as well as works from other artists to showcase his influential legacy. Many of the Reni works from the Prado’s permanent collection have been specifically restored for this show.

In his lifetime, Reni was seen as the equal of the celebrated Baroque artists Rubens, Caravaggio, and Bernini, but his work fell out of favor in subsequent centuries. The goal of the Prado’s exhibition is to reestablish the public’s understanding and appreciation of this meritorious work.

While Reni is remembered today predominately for the purity and classicism of his devotional artworks, there was much more to the artist and man that has fallen by the wayside. “Guido Reni” rectifies this lapse and returns the artist to his proper place in the art history canon.

“Guido Reni” at the Prado Museum, in Madrid runs until July 9. To find out more, visit [MuseoDelPrado.es/en](https://MuseoDelPrado.es/en).

Michelle Platrik is an art advisor living in New York City. She writes on a range of topics, including art history, the art market, museums, art fairs, and special exhibitions.

### FILM REVIEW

## ‘Sound of Freedom’: A Must-See

Powerful performances highlight this stunning exposé on child trafficking

By Ian Kane

As an admitted cinephile and a film reviewer who’s seen thousands of films, I recall only one about child trafficking: 2019’s actioner “Rambo: Last Blood,” starring Sylvester Stallone. But now, there’s a much more powerful and much more realistic film on the topic: the July 4 release, “Sound of Freedom.”

Mexican-born director Alejandro Monteverde’s new movie is based on real events and a real hero. The immensely talented Jim Caviezel portrays a former agent for the Department of Homeland Security, Tim Ballard. It’s an incisive film that not only entertains, but also illuminates.

### Child Trafficking

The film begins in Honduras. Rocío Aguilar (Cristal Aparicio) is an 11-year-old girl whose family is so poor that she beats a pair of slippers on a piece of wood instead of using drumsticks and a drum as she sings a beautiful song.

A woman named Katy Gisselle (Yessica Borroto Perryman) drops by and meets with Rocío’s father, single dad Roberto (José Zúñiga). Gisselle purports to be the founder of an entertainment company and tells him that Rocío seems to have what it takes to make it big in the industry. Rocío beams at her father with excitement, and he agrees not only to accompany his daughter to Gisselle’s big “annual audition” the next day, but also to take along Rocío’s younger brother Miguel (Lucas Avila).

Roberto and his two kids ride in a beat-up bus to the Honduran capital, Tegucigalpa (a city with one of the highest murder rates in the world), and when they arrive at the audition office, Gisselle tells Roberto that no “audition fathers” are allowed in. He’ll have to come back later that evening to pick them up. Because Roberto sees a professional setting with cameras and other kids excitedly talking about their potential prospects, he leaves his kids there.

Then, in what could only be described as a parent’s worst nightmare, Roberto returns to pick up his children and finds the entire office stripped bare and all of the kids gone.

We are transported to a normal-looking house in the city of Calexico, California, on the Mexican border, where seedy Ernst Oshinsky (Kris Avedisian) is offering a “spring sampler” of children—via the Internet—to prospective clients. Unbeknownst to the child trafficker, agents of the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) department, including Ballard, are staking out his place.

After performing a successful sting



Tim (Jim Caviezel) and Katherine Ballard (Mira Sorvino), who provides warmth and understanding for her husband, in “Sound of Freedom.”



Children being transported from van to shipping container, in “Sound of Freedom.”



Bill Camp is outstanding as ex-cartel member Vampiro, in “Sound of Freedom.”

operation on Oshinsky, Ballard cleverly poses as someone who identifies with the trafficker in order to gain his trust. Ballard then convinces his boss, Frost (Kurt Fuller), to release Oshinsky so that the criminal can lead them to bigger fish. Ballard, in the guise of a fellow pervert who has to hide his pedophilic desires because of his job with the Department of Homeland Security, tells Oshinsky that he wants a “real one.”

In a show of gratitude for granting his freedom, Oshinsky agrees to offer Ballard a trafficked child and shows the agent a picture of a boy. The image is that of recently disappeared Miguel Aguilar, renamed “Teddy Bear.”

Ballard and his department track down Miguel and arrest his trafficker at the Mexican border. The intrepid agent then learns that after being kidnapped, Miguel and his sister Rocío were transported by shipping container to Colombia and separated soon after arriving.

At that point, Ballard becomes determined to find Rocío, and his journey takes him through the labyrinthine web of the human-trafficking underworld. Along the way, he meets a fascinating (and often despicable) assortment of characters. These include an ex-cartel member called Vampiro (Bill Camp), who is trying to redeem himself and atone for a life of depravity; El Calacas (Gustavo Sánchez Parra), a

weaselly trafficker whose beady eyes dart about constantly; and a barrel-chested Columbian rebel leader, El Alacrán (Gerrardo Taracena). Taracena just oozes menace and steals every scene he’s in.

### The Impressive Cast

The acting in the film is outstanding from top to bottom. Caviezel’s ability to portray Ballard as a man tormented by the horrors he’s witnessed during his 12-year career in human-trafficking investigations is incredible. In certain scenes, his eyes emote so much sorrow that you feel the character’s pain. His skill at conveying Ballard’s demeanor of a “quiet storm” is consistently mesmerizing and lends gravitas to the film.

Another stand-out actor is Bill Camp as Vampiro, a similarly anguished soul who turned his back on cartel life and now runs a clandestine operation in Colombia that rescues children from traffickers. He and Ballard identify deeply with one another and go all out in their extremely dangerous efforts to rescue children from the hands of some very bad people.

In one engrossing male-bonding scene, Vampiro describes to Ballard how he transformed his life and gave it new meaning just in the nick of time. He tells Ballard, “When God tells you what to do ... you cannot hesitate.”

Mira Sorvino is also impressive as Bal-

Investigator Tim Ballard journeys through the labyrinthine web of the human-trafficking underworld.

### BOOK REVIEW

## How North Pole Explorers Made the Modern Media

By Mark Lardas

Before reality television, people satisfied the urge to see new places and do new things by reading about the exploits of risk-takers, including explorers. Before the internet or radio, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the way to do that was through the newspaper.

Back then, the modern mass-market daily newspaper was still new. In “Battle of Ink and Ice: A Sensational Story of New Barons, North Pole Explorers, and the Making of Modern Media,” Darrell Hartman threads together two themes: the rivalry between New York City’s major newspapers and polar exploration.

The first thread tells of the 19th-century emergence of the modern newspaper, in New York City. In 1835, James Gordon Bennett Sr. founded The New York Herald, the first paper that focused on news independent of political parties, the New York elite, or advertisers. It made Bennett

one of the wealthiest men of the day and, simultaneously, the most hated (except for his readers) man in New York. Early parts of the book detail these New York newspaper battles.

In 1868, his son, James Gordon Bennett Jr. took the reins at the Herald. He doubled down on news coverage, setting up foreign bureaus and using the then-new trans-Atlantic cable to bring European news to New York overnight.

He also began using the newspaper to create news, hiring Henry Morton Stanley to track down explorer David Livingstone in Africa. This ignited a trend among newspapers of funding exploration expeditions.

Polar exploration forms its second thread. By the 1890s, only the Arctic remained unexplored. Frederick Cook and Robert Peary were chief among the Arctic explorers. They became bitter rivals, with both claiming to have been the first to reach the North Pole. Both proved deceptive. The fame and fortune associated



**‘BATTLE OF INK AND ICE: A Sensational Story of New Barons, North Pole Explorers, and the Making of Modern Media’**  
By Darrell Hartman  
Viking  
June 6, 2023  
Hardcover  
400 pages

lard’s wife, Katherine, who supports her husband’s burning desire to save children. Fortunately, director Monteverde (who also co-wrote the script) didn’t pad the movie with unnecessary home-life scenes—rather, there are a few touching moments between husband and wife that convincingly convey their mutual love.

A special mention must go out to all of the child actors, particularly Cristal Aparicio as Rocío Aguilar. Her expressive face as her character is being transported from place to place tears your heart out. This young actress has a very bright future ahead of her.

### A Most Important Film

The film is a thriller with constant tension as Ballard maneuvers through the sleazy world of human trafficking; you never know if his cover is going to be blown. This is especially true when he becomes fed up with the HSI’s bureaucracy and quits his job, yet continues his perilous investigations with a small cadre of like-minded individuals.

In addition to being a solid thriller, this film sprinkles into its dialogue lesser-known aspects of the human-trafficking industry. For instance, we learn that “you can sell a bag of cocaine one time ... but a child ... you can sell a 5-year-old kid, five to 10 times a day for 10 years straight.” It is also revealed that human trafficking has already surpassed the illegal arms trade in terms of revenue and is well on its way to outstripping the long-reigning king of crime, the illegal drug trade.

In a recent interview with The Epoch Times, Caviezel called “Sound of Freedom” his most important film since 2004’s “The Passion of the Christ,” saying: “It’s the best thing I’ve done since that film. Quality-wise, acting-wise, there’s no a flaw.”

I can sympathize with his sentiments. As a writer and journalist, I will say that this is the most important film review I’ve ever written because it can help to raise awareness of the rapidly expanding business of child trafficking.

The sobering text shown near the end of the film is something we should all heed: “Human trafficking is a 150 billion-dollar-a-year business. The United States is one of the top destinations for human trafficking and is among the largest consumers of child sex. There are more humans trapped in slavery today than [at] any other time in history—including when slavery was legal. Millions of these slaves are children.”

*Ian Kane is an U.S. Army veteran, author, filmmaker, and actor. He is dedicated to the development and production of innovative, thought-provoking, character-driven films and books of the highest quality.*

### ‘Sound of Freedom’

**Director**  
Alejandro Monteverde  
**Starring**  
Jim Caviezel, Mira Sorvino, Kurt Fuller  
**Running Time**  
2 hours, 15 minutes  
**MPA Rating**  
PG-13

**Release Date**  
July 4, 2023

★★★★★

with exploration led both to report altered claims and observations. Neither reached the pole. A publicity brawl broke out, with partisans of the populist-preferred Cook and the patrician-favored Peary battling over claims.

Among the competing newspapers were the Herald—a Cook adherent—and The New York Times, which had recently been purchased by Adolph Ochs, who supported Peary. The Herald and the Times were fighting for New York’s “quality” readership. The question of who was first to the pole became a surrogate for the issue of newspaper credibility.

“Battle of Ink and Ice” is a delightful book and a story of publishing and scientific rivalry. Hartman’s book is entertaining and informative.

*Mark Lardas, an engineer, freelance writer, historian, and model-maker, lives in League City, Texas. His website is [MarkLardas.com](http://MarkLardas.com)*



1. Megan Madden believes that the ages-old concept of "a mother staying home should be normalized once again, and certainly supported." 2. Megan Madden with her husband, Josh Madden, a lecturer in theology at Oxford University in England, and their five children; 3. Megan Madden's flowy dresses are ideal for going for walks or playing with her children; 4. Wearing elegant-yet-modest dresses changed Megan Madden's disposition as a woman in ways she never thought possible.



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF MEGAN MADDEN

## Young Mother Celebrates Femininity and Modesty

By wearing dresses every day, Megan Madden radiates the beauty found in traditional motherhood

By Louise Chambers

A stay-at-home mom of five is making a statement about womanhood by wearing beautiful dresses every single day. Her wardrobe reflects her core values of femininity, modesty, and her worth as a wife and mother. Plus, she insists, it's comfortable!

Megan Madden, 32, a full-time homeschooling mom and author, is married to Josh Madden, 34, a lecturer in theology at Oxford University in England, where they live. Megan and Josh parent five children together: four daughters, aged 10, 6, 3, and 1, and a son, aged 8.

"Motherhood doesn't mean falling apart or losing our identity as women. In fact, through it, we can find ourselves in a brand new way," Megan told The Epoch Times. "So often, we're told to harden, push aside our emotions and feminine qualities, to compete and be like men. But I would argue that the world needs women to be who women are and that in that comes a deep residing peace in our identity."

"Our faith has also fostered our understanding of our identity as God's sons and daughters. The biblical and traditional truths about femininity and masculinity can help us to understand our particular gifts and what we can so beautifully give to the world as men and women."

Megan's first book, "Mary, Teach Me to Be Your Daughter," is being published by Ascension Press and will be released later this year.

Currently pregnant with her sixth child, Megan shares her family life on Instagram and hopes that her dresses exemplify the idea that "timeless femininity" is very much compatible with modern-day motherhood. She receives a lot of feedback, both positive and negative.

Early on in her dress-wearing journey, Megan was out running errands with three of her children when an older man at a cash register commented, "You look so nice, what are you so dressed up for?"

Megan replied, "Thank you, I'm just dressing for my day as a mom."

The man replied that it was beautiful and that he wished more women would dress like that.

"I've had little stories like this happen all the time. It's amazing what a simple dress

can speak," she said. "It's not that I want to be perceived as a 1950s housewife or in an inauthentic way. Instead, I hope to show the beauty of motherhood in our modern times—that timeless femininity doesn't have to be lost in the sight of modernity and the comfort of athleisure."

"I do think beauty and modesty go hand in hand. ... This is why I was so initially attracted to these more vintage style dresses that captured beauty and feminine curves in a lovely way and covered what is appropriate to cover. I value modesty because of the inherent goodness of the body, in recognition of my own dignity—veiling what is sacred for the sake of it, while not being afraid of, well, beauty."

### "The Value of Caring for Your Body"

The couple had their first baby on Oct. 20, 2012, and Megan says she was "completely consumed in motherhood in the best of ways."

"Yet, as a new mom, she found getting dressed difficult and forewent some of her formerly favorite self-care routines, such as painting her nails or wearing makeup."

"After about six months, I had this moment where I looked in the mirror and didn't recognize myself," she said. "I was wearing leggings and big T-shirts with no makeup and a 'mom bun.' It was survival-mom mode, which happens in different seasons, and there is no shame in that, but I knew I didn't feel myself."

Megan decided to start dressing with care, not only for herself but to show her kids "the value of caring for your body and that motherhood is beautiful."

During Josh's graduate studies and early career, they lived in Austria and Poland, where Megan honed her personal style. Struck by the "lovely mothers who were beautifully put together but with a certain simplicity and ease," she started to build a small, intentional capsule wardrobe of dresses made from sustainable materials.

"I no longer have a single pair of jeans

in my closet. I simply stopped reaching for them," she said.

### "My Mom-Uniform"

Today, Megan wears elegant, modest, vintage-inspired dresses every single day. Doing so has changed her disposition as a woman in ways that she never thought possible.

"It's changed the way I sit, the way I carry myself, and my productivity in my day," she said. "The reason I gravitate to more vintage cuts is that those styles of dresses are made with more material, so that playing on the floor with my little ones, for instance, is completely doable; my skirt floats out."

"I have certain dresses that are more casual for days of long walks or more active, and others that are a bit dressier that I don't hesitate to wear for errands. In a sense, dresses have become my mom-uniform. They're a quick outfit that makes me feel put together, ready for my day, and dressed in a way that shows the dignity of my work as a stay-at-home mom."

Megan's interest in womanhood was sparked in her 20s while studying for a degree in political science. She started out by researching women's rights in the Middle East, since she has Middle Eastern heritage, and after moving to Austria in 2017, she took up graduate courses in marriage and family studies.

Sadly, during this time, Megan suffered miscarriages, but she found comfort between the pages of books by women writers such as Edith Stein, Gertrude von le Fort, and Alice von Hildebrand.

"[They] held traditional values while still articulating the dignity and value of woman: equal in dignity to man, but complementary in nature," Megan said. "In light of those studies, I truly believe the heart of a woman is her maternal nature."

**Grounded in Faith**  
High school sweethearts Megan and Josh, who married in 2011, are governed by their Catholic faith in everything they do, and as part of exercising her maternal nature,

Megan agreed with Josh that they would homeschool their children.

"I knew that if I were married, I'd want to be a mother, and if I were a mother, I'd want many children, and if I had many children, I would want to be with them, present to them, and not miss a moment. Because of this, we decided prior to marriage that Josh would be the main provider ... so that I could stay in the home and raise our children," Megan said.

"With that being said, Josh is the kind of father who wants to be with his family and children as much as possible. He pours himself into his work as a theologian and simultaneously finds a way to serve all of us every day. ... We are truly a team in raising the children and being present to them," she said.

Since Megan and her family travel often, the mom of five has integrated bookwork and real-world experiences into her kids' homeschool education, such as visiting Roman ruins in England after studying Roman history and strolling through the National Gallery after learning about art.

Best of all, the beautifully dressed mom said, her kids are each other's best friends. "They've never shown interest in attending a traditional school; we've been blessed with a great community of friends and social opportunities, and I am able to essentially be a private tutor to them, fostering all the areas of interest and slowing down in any challenging areas," said Megan, noting that the best part of being a stay-at-home mom is "watching the children become who they were made to be with their individual personalities, thoughts, talents, and dreams."

Everything in life that's worth something comes with challenges, says Megan, who finds it bizarre that a woman who wants to raise children, be a homemaker, and wear dresses is considered a "traditional wife" by today's standards.

"I would never say across the board what a woman should do, because there are circumstances where another path is best for the common good of the family. But I do think a mother staying home should be normalized once again, and certainly supported," she said.

"Though we may not see the fruits of it right away, fostering life, guiding, and bringing up children is pivotal to the good of the culture. Secondly, the way we present ourselves as mothers communicates to the world something of who we are, our hearts, and our disposition to our work. Yes, I had all these babies. No, I didn't fall apart. See, you can do it, too!"

Arsh Sarao contributed to this report.



Week 26, 2023

### A Nation's Strength

By William Ralph Emerson

What makes a nation's pillars high  
And its foundations strong?  
What makes it mighty to defy  
The foes that round it throng?

It is not gold. Its kingdoms grand  
Go down in battle shock;  
Its shafts are laid on sinking sand,  
Not on abiding rock.

Is it the sword? Ask the red dust  
Of empires passed away;  
The blood has turned their stones to rust,  
Their glory to decay.

And is it pride? Ah, that bright crown  
Has seemed to nations sweet;  
But God has struck its lustre down  
In ashes at his feet.

Not gold but only men can make  
A people great and strong;  
Men who for truth and honor's sake  
Stand fast and suffer long.

Brave men who work while others sleep,  
Who dare while others fly...  
They build a nation's pillars deep  
And lift them to the sky.

NANA\_STUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK

### WHERE WAS THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE SIGNED?

AT THE BOTTOM

"It is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favors."

GEORGE WASHINGTON (1732-1799), FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES



TIMOTHY R. NICHOLS/SHUTTERSTOCK

By Aidan Danza

### This Week in History



A detail of the golden fence of the Palace of Versailles.

### A TREATY IS SIGNED

On June 28, 1919, the Treaty of Versailles, a peace document, was signed in the famous Hall of Mirrors in France's Palace of Versailles by world leaders. This marked the end of World War I. The document was signed following what was known as the Paris Peace Conference led by the leaders of the UK, France, Italy, and the United States, among others.



A British news placard announcing the signing of the peace treaty.

(DETAIL OF VERSAILLES FENCE) PHOTOMASTER/SHUTTERSTOCK; (PLACARD) PUBLIC DOMAIN

## THE DOMESTIC YAK

In the high mountains and plateaus of Tibet, the domestic yak is central to the existence of the people who inhabit the inhospitable country, satisfying nearly all their basic needs, from drink to food to clothing to labor, and even fuel for fires.

The yak may be considered to be one of the most specialized creatures on Earth. It's specially designed to live in the extremely high and dry Tibetan plateau. For example, its body has a large heart and lungs and more red blood cells in order to take in more air and pump oxygen to its organs more efficiently. In a high-altitude area, where the air is thin and oxygen is comparatively scarce, these attributes are extremely important.

The yak has thick, shaggy, dark fur in order to conserve heat in the cold environment, and it has a special stomach in order to pull more nutrients out of poor feed grasses and sedges. Though they are quite large, they have large, cloven hooves and short legs, so they are very sure-footed in tough terrain.

For the Tibetans, the yak is indispensable, and their lifestyle simply wouldn't exist without it.

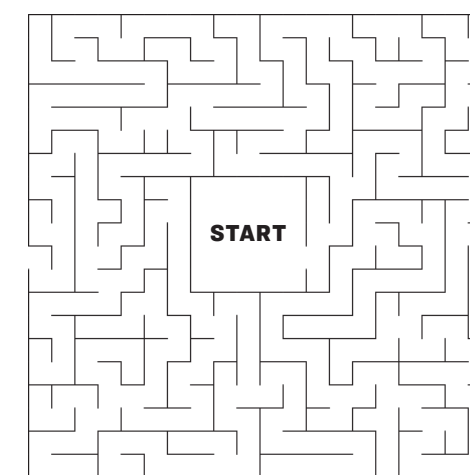
The young yak's fur, harvested by combing while the yak sheds, is soft yet very warm and is used for making clothing. The older yak's long, shaggy, rougher fur is harvested in the same manner for making rougher textiles like blankets and rugs.

The yak provides meat and gives milk, which is drunk straight as it comes as well as made into a yellow cheese and butter. It's also a very popular beast of burden, being the animal of choice for traversing narrow mountain passes, even with a huge amount of weight hanging off the animal. Even the yak's dung is dried and used as fuel for fires where there are no trees.



(YAK) WESTENDG/GETTY IMAGES; (BACKGROUND) DANIEL PRUDEK/SHUTTERSTOCK

## AMAZING ESCAPES!



USE THE FOUR NUMBERS IN THE CORNERS, AND THE OPERANDS (+, -, AND X) to build an equation to get the solution in the middle. There may be more than one "unique" solution but, there may also be "equivalent" solutions. For example:  $6 + (7 \times 3) + 1 = 28$  and  $1 + (7 \times 3) + 6 = 28$

Easy puzzle 1



Solution For Easy 1  
 $8 - 8 + 8 \times 8$

Medium puzzle 1



Solution For Medium 1  
 $6 \times (81 - 8 \times 8)$

Hard puzzle 1



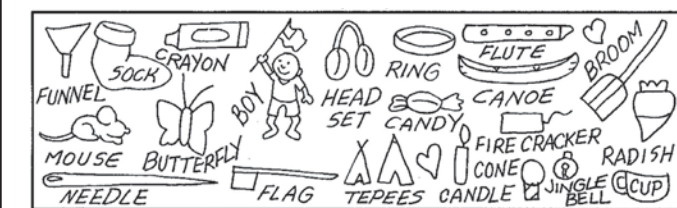
Solution For Hard 1  
 $7 - 11 + 91 + 82$



WORD SEARCH: Happy Independence Day

JOHN HANCOCK SPR  
RCI ETENOODDTAEN  
HMSWRYALRYNHTYS  
OMTYE IDOGEDIROS  
DAOOAFCDNEHOIVS  
ERRRSNQIRWLVWIV  
IYYKOJSENGULTR  
SLTCNEUSDICGSGR  
LAXJRNLBSBCSIE  
ANDPOGOIYTLGON  
NDTJLHEBTAUVIG  
DELAWARESESTEAN  
FLAGXNEWJERSEYT  
JOHNADAMSQKTSY  
MBETSYSROSSJYME

Betsy Ross	New Jersey	Rhode Island
Blue	New York	Sovereignty
Colonies	Old Glory	States
Concord	Patriots	Treason
Delaware	President	Virginia
England	Red	White
Flag		
History		
John Adams		
John Hancock		
July		
Liberty		
Maryland		



HIDDEN TREASURES by Liz Ball  
www.HiddenPicturePuzzles.com

## EDUCATION

# An Experiment in Tradition Nurtures Wonder

The radically traditional educational model of John Senior

By Walker Larson

In 1936, a 13-year-old boy from New York, who had run away from home, walked down a lonely road in South Dakota while a storm menaced in the murky clouds above. A trucker pulled over by the wayfarer and shouted, “Kid, there’s a tornado brewin’. Get in!” The boy did so and was saved from the tornado. The trucker, Morgan Tinzer, took him to his house and eventually contacted the boy’s parents.

What was the young New Yorker doing out west on that stormy day, without his parents’ knowledge?

It was simple. The boy—named John Senior—wanted to be a cowboy.

In his own words, as recorded in Fr. Francis Bethel’s book, “John Senior and the Restoration of Realism”:

“Having had from childhood an urge for good times lost, I satisfied it first with poetry and then with cowboy stories ... and at thirteen ran away from home and the encroaching city which by the 1930s had metastasized suburban cells in our rural fields. But by that time fenced farms had pretty much destroyed the open range ... so it was something of a miracle that as late as 1936 I found a ranch in the Dakota Badlands where cowboys still rode horses on roundups.”

The episode ended well for all parties: Senior was recovered by his parents, but they agreed to allow him to work on a ranch in the summers as long as he returned home for his schooling the rest of the year.

It’s a striking image—this renegade boy on a dusty Dakota highway, facing the oncoming storm. But in some ways, it’s a fitting emblem of Senior’s life and work, since he would grow up to be a teacher who would stand in the face of the tornado, as he perceived it, that had gone through modern education. And he was so successful and touched so many lives that in 2019, a memorial was erected to the educational program he and his colleagues created.

## Standing Against the Storm

That program was the Pearson Integrated Humanities Program (IHP) at the University of Kansas, inaugurated in 1971 by John Senior, Dennis Quinn, and Franklyn Nelick. All three were teachers of English or literature who shared a growing unease over the state of incoming freshmen. In the words of James Conley, a former student: “The professors saw that the modern students who came to the university might be very bright academically, but their memories and imaginations were so affected by the modern

world. They were sort of bankrupt when it came to the imagination.”

The professors also shared a common, if unconventional, vision of the remedy. They called it “an experiment in tradition” because their model was based on long-abandoned Greek and medieval philosophy and pedagogy.

Through the program, the professors sought to reshape their students’ imaginations through contact with the reality around them and the great books of Western civilization. The program aimed

to “situate students in reality sufficiently that they would be able to fully appreciate good books, and then the great books, and to lead lives of gentle men and gentle ladies,” according to the IHP Memorial website.

Above all, Senior and his colleagues sought to inspire in

the students a sense of wonder. Indeed, the motto of the program was *Nascantur in Admirazione*, which means, “let them be born in wonder.”

Wonder for John Senior isn’t mere curiosity, but a proper response to the marvels of the world around us, a sense of

awe and longing for higher things. Senior is quoted in Bethel’s book as saying that wonder is “the reverent fear that beauty strikes in us.”

We might say that wonder is what gives purpose and meaning to all learning, so that learning is not merely the gathering of abstract knowledge or stale facts, but a process of falling in love with the truth. Senior wanted to restore philosophical realism in the face of the gale of relativism, subjectivism, and skepticism that had swept over society. He wanted students to believe in and love truth.

But how to instill this wonder, belief, and love?

## Fostering Wonder and Wisdom

To accomplish this goal, the program offered a unique style of lectures (see below), poetry memorization, discussions, conversational Latin, rhetoric classes, studying abroad, and also more unusual activities such as stargazing, fall festivals, singing, and dancing. These were all meant to capture not just the students’ minds, but also their hearts.

Senior knew that intellectual formation wasn’t enough for the reality-starved generation he was dealing with—they needed something even more fundamental. They needed to encounter the real with their whole being and have their imaginations and emotions captivated by it—as one is captivated when looking at the bejeweled night sky—or else true intellectual formation would be impossible.

Senior and his colleagues called their teaching style “the poetic mode,” which we might define as a contemplative and unstructured encounter with the subject matter that engages the emotions as

**We might say that wonder is what gives purpose and meaning to all learning, so that learning is not merely the gathering of abstract knowledge or stale facts, but a process of falling in love with the truth.**



▲ The motto of John Senior’s program was “*Nascantur in Admirazione*,” meaning “let them be born in wonder.”

much as the mind. Bethel summarizes Senior’s approach as follows.

Drawing on the wisdom of the ancient Greeks, Senior saw three stages to education: gymnastic (physical), poetic, and philosophical. In the gymnastic stage, the student has “hands-on” experience of reality—using tools, playing sports, feeling grass, studying plants and animals, developing his or her body. As Aristotle says, all knowledge begins with the senses.

The next stage, the poetic phase, forms the imagination and emotions to respond appropriately to reality and to yearn for it (wonder). The final stage is the more structured philosophical stage, dealing directly with intellect and the acquisition of wisdom and knowledge—which can now grow in the fertile ground of well-trained senses, imagination, and emotions. Bethel puts it this way: “Gymnastics begins in experience and ends in delight; poetry or music begins in delight and ends in wonder; philosophy begins in wonder and ends in wisdom.” In Senior’s own words, quoted by Bethel, “The first two stages of education allow the mind to become awake” in order to truly benefit from the pursuit of wisdom at the highest level.

The primary way the professors operated in this “poetic stage” was through “group lectures.” These lectures were unscripted conversations among the three professors about what the students were reading (by classic authors such as Homer, Plato, Herodotus, and Shakespeare). They believed that this was a more “poetic” way of teaching, as opposed to a standard methodical lecture by a single teacher.

The spontaneity, friendship, surprise, humor, and spur-of-the-moment connections and epiphanies of this conversational method produced delight in the students as they worked through the texts. The professors didn’t let students take notes, according to Bethel, but encouraged them to practice the art of observing, listening, seeing—simply being present in the moment as their teachers explored the ideas and feelings the texts evoked.

The IHP became more than just a Great Books program. It was a community of friends and truth-seekers. The IHP became very popular; for instance, it quickly grew from 20 students in the first year to 140 in the next. The university eventually discontinued the program, but in the years that it ran, it affected many lives and generated unparalleled results in restoring education and culture. Those who participated in the program speak of it with a kind of awed reverence.

Conley, an alumnus who later became a Catholic bishop, attests to the profound effect of the unique experiences and enduring community that were the fruits of the IHP. “I was with others who were on the same journey searching for the truth. That combined experience really changed my life.”

Isn’t that the goal of all great educators, after all? To change lives for the better? If so, then there’s much that teachers can learn from Senior, Nelick, and Quinn and the adventure of the IHP.

*Walker Larson teaches literature and history at a private academy in Wisconsin, where he resides with his wife. He holds a master’s in English literature and language, and his writing has appeared in The Hemingway Review, Intellectual Takeout, and his Substack, “TheHazelnut.”*

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