



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on February 18, 2023

Our Little Barbarians

Recently, an establishment called Nettie's House of Spaghetti in New Jersey announced they will no longer allow children under 10 to dine at their restaurant.

The move caused controversy, with some respondents applauding the policy and others accusing Nettie's staff of being "child haters." But the top commenter at MSN.com summed the issue up succinctly:

"We don't hate your kids," she [wrote](#). "We hate your parenting."

Congratulations, madam, you won the internet today.

If this seems a tempest in a teapot, know that it has implications for our entire society because it reflects a deadly modern problem:

Too many Americans are failing to civilize their children.

It should be obvious that no restaurant would take such a decision lightly, as you want as many customers as possible coming through your doors. But Nettie's management explained on [social media](#) that while they love kids, because of the "noise levels, lack of space for high chairs, cleaning up crazy messes, and the liability of kids running around the restaurant, we have decided that it's time to take control of the situation."

Okay, a parenting pro tip: If your kids are running around a restaurant as if it's a playground, you're doing it wrong.

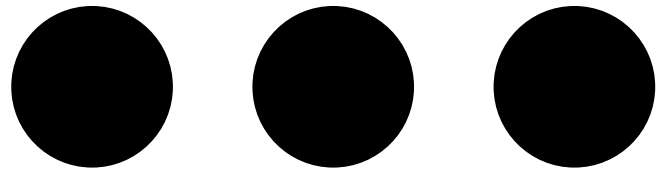
My parents took me to eateries for as long as I can remember. Yet it never occurred to me, ever, to bound about and treat the establishment like an amusement park. It's not that I was a saint; in fact, I had a bit of a temper and a low threshold for frustration. But my mother (this was her domain) enforced discipline and behavior standards. So certain actions were just beyond consideration.

Speaking of which, consider the 2018 video below of a young boy, 10 to 12 years old, getting in a grown man's face, refusing to relent, finally throwing punches at him and then — upon getting pushed to the ground when the victim finally defends himself — crying like a baby and acting aggrieved.

(Click [here](#) to watch the video; warning: inappropriate language.)

No well-raised child would even think in his wildest dreams about initiating violence with an adult stranger. What's more, that the boy was so shocked at receiving a mild comeuppance indicates that consequences for misbehavior were alien to him. Why, he might even have gotten away with hitting his parent (I'm guessing there was no father around).

As should be obvious, I'm not criticizing the "youth" with a fuddy-duddy, "Kids today!" lament; in fact,



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many of the people responsible for their behavior are my age or older. The point is this:

If you're wondering why our civilization is in steep decline, coming apart at the seams, with liberty imperiled, *this is the reason*.

"Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom," Benjamin Franklin observed. "As nations become more corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters." Failing to recognize this truth is deadly. President Ronald Reagan once warned that "[f]reedom is never more than one generation away from extinction"; focusing on freedom, however, as so many today do exclusively, is to put the cart before the horse. For Reagan's statement is only true insofar as virtue is never more than one generation away from extinction.

"Virtue" is the word, too. No, this has nothing to do with "virtue-signaling," an appealing but misguided term that simultaneously flatters leftists and demeans a noble, necessary and divine concept (so I instead say "value-signaling"). Leftists are opponents of "virtue," which is defined as that set of "objectively good moral habits"; in reality, liberals have traditionally called their faux virtue "values," though it actually is vice.

Now, babies are born little barbarians; some [even describe them](#) as tiny "sociopaths." Regardless, parents' job is to civilize them, make them the type of people who can sustain *civilization*. This involves modeling virtue and cultivating it, the latter via moral teaching; incentivizing good behavior; and, yes, punishing misbehavior.

The last concept is especially unfashionable today (except when punishing politically disfavored people for politically incorrect "transgressions" — i.e., "hate" crimes — then the punishment can't be harsh enough). But there's a reason why the Bible [tells us](#), "Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him."

The point is that if the above civilizing process is effected successfully, the child will have sound moral habits. Moreover, after being repeatedly compelled to act rightly, he will perhaps learn that it feels better to be good than bad — and then voluntarily choose to be good.

Saving or Scuttling Civilization

Ancient Greek philosopher Plato spoke about this when saying that a child should ideally be raised in an atmosphere of nobility and grace (i.e., our modern culture's antithesis) so that he can develop an "erotic" — as in emotional, not sexual — attachment to virtue. Once accomplished, he'll be more likely to accept the dictates of reason upon reaching the age of reason.

Tragically, though, far easier is "developing" (our fallen state makes this personal slouch toward Gomorrah natural) in children an erotic attachment to vice. In fact, our society, with its sexually, ideologically and morally corruptive schooling and entertainment, appears as if it's designed to do just that. Then when the child reaches the age of reason, he'll be quite unreasonable. He'll have misbegotten emotional attachments that will — and this *must be understood* — correlate with evil *ideologies*. The consequence?

Well, if you want to know why leftists generally cannot be reasoned with — why you can marshal the facts and present an airtight argument and they'll just [dismiss it with an emotion-driven response](#) — *the aforementioned is the explanation*. They have an emotional attachment to evil.

By the way, the "age of reason" is considered seven, and with good justification: "Show me a child at seven and I'll show you the man," the old Jesuit saying informs, expressing a developmental reality.



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Consequently, there isn't much time to mold that little sociopath into a saint.

So take heed, because the brats running around in restaurants today will be running, and ruining, the country tomorrow — and those who've not mastered themselves will be mastered by tyrants.

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