

SOME DON'T LEARN TO BE FATHERS UNTIL THEY BECOME GRANDFATHERS

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One of the reasons I started and continue to write this column is because of my grandchildren. I want them to know me and my character as well or better than I did my grandparents.

I knew one of my grandfathers well, but the other one only slightly. Fortunately, I came to know one of my great grandfathers very well. He lived with us for the first 15 years of my life. Born in 1844, he was 17 when the Civil War started. He and my great grandmother raised my father.

My great-grandmother died when I was four and my memory of her is vague, but loving. Being from the old school, as one might say, great-grandpa possessed a character seldom seen in today's citizens. He instilled it in my father and he, in turn, in me. I tried to do the same with my four children. As I look at my eight grandchildren, I realize it is an almost impossible task to do the same for them.

The Hollywood-sponsored media outlets command our children's attention in ways it is impossible to compete with. It's hard to teach children about honesty or integrity when they see the rewards and adulation heaped on morally corrupt people today. The media is directly responsible for the promotion of such people and ideas.

We have had the privilege and good fortune to share our home with a loving 15-year-old granddaughter from the age of two. I personally have come to know and sympathize with parents today who are trying to teach their children worthwhile values. It is alleged that over 4 million grandparents are raising their grandchildren today. My granddaughter is the third generation of my immediate family in which grandparents have raised one of their grandchildren. My parents raised my oldest daughter. From all that my mother told me and from my own experience it is much harder than raising your own children.

I admit, as I have freely in this column about other matters, that much of my problem is due to age. I no longer have what little patience or fortitude I once had. Couple that with the gender gap and I am lost.

As I stated in the first sentence of this article, I write this column in part because of my grandchildren. I have come to realize that much of that purpose is lost because they and other young people do not have the time or interest to hear what an old curmudgeon like me has to say. I have come to know those with the most interest are people my own age, or those with the same (or different) political views.

I am sure my grandchildren will come to appreciate what I am trying to do here even if they will not agree with my philosophy of life. Columnist Charley Reese in a recent column summed up much of what I am trying to say and I fear for mine and everyone else's offspring: "Americans these days seem to think more about economic well-being than political freedom." He goes on to say, "few Americans today seem to even care if the government does or does not obey the Constitution."

The present administration seems obsessed with assigning many of our sovereign rights to the so-called New World Order and the United Nations.

To make a long story short, I fear that when we lose our sovereign rights all the others are not far behind. I never had the time or inclination to think or even care about what the implications were when I was younger. Now that I have become a grandfather, I realize I should have when I was a young father.