

Parenting Generations

Nobody asked but ...

I am in the fifth generation of parenting now. It is worth noting that I include parenting myself in the second generation, and my own parents before that — they learned from me as I learned from them. I will not try to argue here that I had a similar relationship with my grandparents, but based on my connections with 8 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren, it is certainly worth considering. The job of parenting essentially involves respect in every direction and the communication of both genetic and memetic information. The genetic information is mostly passive and static, while the memetic information is dynamic and nearly boundless. I don't have the exact quote, but I can paraphrase — Virginia Woolf once wrote of a grandmother, in *To the Lighthouse*, that she would be in the spirits of all who came from her and knew her, and of all who came after them. It is a huge and joyful burden.

Kilgore