

INSIDE NEWS

from the President

March 2025

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

112 Elden Street, Suite P
Herndon, Virginia 20170
703.318.0730
www.cblwomen.org

STAFF LEADERS

Kimberly Begg
President
Cindy Rushing
Vice President
Catherine Hendershott
Assistant to the President
Rachel Hurley
Social Media Coordinator
Lauren Husmann
Program Director
Nica Marin
Events and Marketing Coordinator
Bridget O'Neal
Digital Media Coordinator
Caitlin Quinones
Operations Director
Sandra Scarlatoiu
Event Production Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michelle Easton
Chairman
Kimberly Begg
President
Nicole Hoplin
Treasurer/Secretary
Clare Luce Abbey
Camille Hart
Kate Obenshain Keeler
Sarah Rindlaub
Marji Ross
Linda Teetz
Ursula Meese, *Emeritus*
Darla Partridge, *Emeritus*

ADVISORY BOARD

Amber Athey Duke
Emily Jashinsky
Amanda Collins Johnson
Ying Ma
Mary Margaret Olohan
Catherine Pakaluk



Dr. Paul Kengor Exposes the Marxist Roots of International Women's Day (March 8)



Addressing an in-person, **C-SPAN**, and **LIVE X** audience, Dr. **Paul Kengor** shares the shocking Marxist origins of a purportedly pro-woman holiday that is now celebrated worldwide by **Fortune 500** companies, as well as colleges and universities.

Dr. **Paul Kengor**, a **Grove City College** professor, best-selling author, and editor of *The American Spectator*, delivered a compelling lecture at the Luce Center on March 7, titled *The Marxist Roots of International Women's Day*. Dr. Kengor revealed how this widely celebrated holiday—now endorsed by major corporations such as **Google**, **McDonald's**, and other **Fortune 500** companies, as well as colleges and universities worldwide—was originally created to advance communism by weakening the family. **C-SPAN**, which reaches over **90 million** households, recorded the event, and **X** carried it **LIVE**.

The Radical Origins of International Women's Day

Dr. Kengor began his talk by tracing the roots of International Women's Day back to socialist movements in the early 20th century. He highlighted the key figures behind the holiday, particularly **Alexandra Kollontai** and **Clara Zetkin**, both influential Marxist activists.

Kollontai, a prominent Bolshevik, saw the day as an opportunity to mobilize women for the socialist cause. She emphasized that the holiday's primary goal was to promote the "victory of communism and complete equality of women," which she understood as one in the same. She explained: "The worker-mother must learn not to differentiate between yours and mine. [She] must remember that there are only our children, the children of Russia's communist workers.... Communist society will take upon itself all the duties involved in the education of the child."

Zetkin, a German socialist, introduced the concept of an annual women's day at the 1910 **International Socialist Women's Congress**, arguing that it should be used to advance socialist principles.

Lenin’s Strategy to Dismantle the Family

A major theme of Dr. Kengor’s remarks was the role of the Soviet Union in institutionalizing International Women’s Day. He cited historical records showing that after the **Bolshevik Revolution**, **Vladimir Lenin** officially recognized March 8 as a national holiday in 1922, a move meant to align women’s rights with Soviet state policies.

He explained that in Marxist ideology, the family was seen as an institution of bourgeois oppression that needed to be dismantled for the socialist revolution to succeed.

Quoting directly from *The Communist Manifesto*, Dr. Kengor underscored how **Karl Marx** and **Friedrich Engels** viewed the abolition of the family as a necessary step in achieving a classless society.

“Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists,” Marx and Engels wrote in 1848. He detailed how communist regimes sought to push women out of traditional family roles and into state-controlled workplaces, promoting the idea that children should be raised collectively rather than within the nuclear family.

The Soviet War on Marriage, Parenthood, and Education

Dr. Kengor delved into how socialist and communist movements historically worked to redefine the concept of the family. He referenced Engels’ book, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884), in which Engels argued that the traditional family structure was an oppressive system that had to be eradicated. Engels wrote, “With the transfer of the means of production into common ownership, the single family ceases to be the economic unit of society. Private housekeeping is transformed into a social industry. The care and education of the children becomes a public affair; society looks after all children alike.”

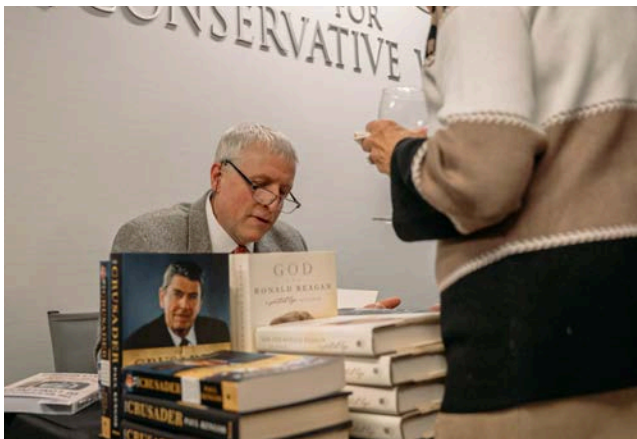
Following the Bolshevik Revolution, Soviet leaders immediately implemented radical policies to weaken traditional family structures. Lenin’s regime legalized abortion in 1920—making the Soviet Union the first country in the world to do so—while also making divorce easily accessible, allowing either spouse to dissolve a marriage with a simple request. It outlawed homeschooling and private education, requiring all children to attend state-run schools where they were indoctrinated with communist ideology. It took full control of child-rearing, aiming to replace parental influence with loyalty to the state. Meanwhile, Soviet propaganda celebrated communism’s “liberation” of women from domestic roles, ensuring their full participation in the workforce under state control.



Jeremiah (editor of *Restoring America at The Washington Examiner*) and **Erin** (Development Writer at the *Heritage Foundation*) **Poff** join fellow conservatives at the Luce Center.



Jim Bennett asks Dr. Kengor a question following the talk.



(Left) Dr. Kengor signs copies of his books for guests. (Right) Dr. Kengor speaks to an in-person, C-SPAN, and LIVE social media audience that includes men and women of all ages.

Modern Parallels: How Today’s Feminism Echoes Marxist Ideals

Shifting to contemporary debates, Dr. Kengor compared historical Marxist perspectives on gender roles to modern feminist movements. He pointed out that while early communists sought to abolish the nuclear family, today’s left-wing activists often echo similar themes, advocating for policies that downplay traditional family structures in favor of state-controlled solutions. He also touched upon the role of organizations like **Planned Parenthood** and progressive advocacy groups in pushing these agendas.

Dr. Kengor challenged modern claims—such as those in *The New York Times* article “Why Women Had Better Sex Under Socialism”—that communism benefits women, arguing that such narratives ignore historical and common sense realities. Under Soviet rule, women were often forced to work grueling, hazardous, state-mandated jobs while enduring high rates of domestic violence and abortion without regard for their physical, emotional, or spiritual health.



Conservative attorney **Cathy Ruse** enjoys the company of fellow conservatives.

From Class Warfare to Culture Wars: The Expansion of Marxist Ideology

Expanding his analysis, Dr. Kengor explored how Marxist ideas have shifted from economic class struggles to cultural and gender identity battles. He discussed how today’s left-wing movements use the same framework of “oppressor versus oppressed” but now apply it to race, gender, and sexuality rather than economic class. He cited figures such as **Angela Davis**, a former **Communist Party USA** leader, as well as contemporary activists who embrace Marxist rhetoric in gender and race debates.



(Left) **Kimberly Begg** welcomes guests to the Center. (Middle) President’s Club members **Nicholas and Sonja DeCarlo** and their guest, Monsignor **William Saunders**, speak with Dr. Kengor before his book signing. (Right) Vice President **Cindy Rushing** shows **Orene Blum** a display of **Clare Boothe Luce**’s custom-made Bergdorf Goodman suits, which were donated to the Center by **Clare Luce Abbey**, Luce’s granddaughter who serves on the Center’s Board of Directors.

Clare Boothe Luce: A Champion Against Communism

Dr. Kengor concluded his speech by paying tribute to **Clare Boothe Luce** as a staunch anti-communist. He detailed her influential career as a playwright, journalist, and diplomat who fiercely opposed communist ideology. Luce, a devout Catholic convert, worked closely with figures like Archbishop **Fulton Sheen** to counter Marxist narratives and defend traditional American values.

He also shared a little-known story about Luce’s attempt to produce a Hollywood film about **Claudia**, the wife of **Pontius Pilate**. According to Dr. Kengor, **Howard Hughes** purchased the screenplay but shelved it, preventing its release. He suggested that revisiting Luce’s legacy could provide important lessons in countering modern-day cultural Marxism.



(Left) Social Media Coordinator **Rachel Hurley** speaks with guests. (Middle) **Sandy Dominick** shows friends a copy of Dr. Kengor's acclaimed book, **The Crusader: Ronald Reagan and the Fall of Communism**, which the Hollywood blockbuster film, **Reagan**, starring **Dennis Quaid**, was based on. (Right) Young women anticipate Dr. Kengor's remarks.

The Ongoing Battle: Key Takeaways and Audience Questions

Dr. Kengor's lecture was followed by a Q&A session, during which attendees asked about current international efforts to redefine gender roles and motherhood. He highlighted ongoing negotiations at the United Nations to remove references to "mother" and "motherhood" from official documents, seeing this as a continuation of the Marxist agenda to reshape family structures.

He concluded by emphasizing that the ideological battle over the family and gender roles has been ongoing for over 200 years. "This is a revolution that has gone on for centuries," he warned, urging the audience to educate themselves on the ideological foundations of movements like International Women's Day.



Austin Ruse, president of C-FAM and author of **The Catholic Case for Trump**, asks a question following Dr. Kengor's remarks.

An Evening of Insight and Intellectual Engagement

This special occasion marked the launch of the Luce Center's new membership initiative and **President's Club** event series, designed to foster camaraderie and intellectual engagement among conservatives and increase support for national outreach and leadership programs. For information about membership, please contact **Catherine Hendershott** at chendershott@cblwomen.org.



(Left) **Catherine Hendershott**, assistant to the president, shares membership benefits with guests. (Middle) **Stella Morabito**, author of **The Weaponization of Loneliness: How Tyrants Stoke Our Fear of Isolation to Silence, Divide, and Conquer**, engages in conversation with **Orene Blum**. (Right) **Jack and Becca Hanssen** enjoy hearing from a fantastic speaker and spending time with fellow conservatives.



Seohyun Lee urges students to cherish their freedom.

Lee described growing up in **Pyongyang**, where strict government control dictated every aspect of daily life, from education to personal freedoms. Her life changed forever when a close friend's family was sent to a labor camp following her father's execution for his ties to Kim Jong Un's uncle. "That was the moment I lost my last hope in my country," Lee recalled. Facing the reality that reform was impossible, her family made the dangerous decision to defect.

"I never imagined one day I would be living thousands of miles away from my home," she said. "But every moment I enjoy this freedom, I realize it comes at the cost of those left behind."

She urged students to cherish and defend their freedoms, warning that authoritarianism thrives where people become complacent. "Freedom is like the air we breathe—you don't notice it until it's gone," she said.

Shavelson offered these reflections following the event:

I'm incredibly grateful for the privilege of organizing this event! The CBL internship's impact extends beyond summer; it equips you with bravery and community that stays with you long after the summer ends. Huge thanks to the Luce Center and CSAD at Kenyon for the logistical and financial support! I'm still riding the high from the event—best early birthday gift ever!—and can't believe I pulled off such a packed, popular event. Its success has boosted my confidence. Thank you for giving me the tools to do this!

Lee, a North Korean defector and human rights activist, spoke at **Kenyon College** on March 18, warning students about the brutal realities of life under the **Kim Jong Un** regime and the dangers of communism.

Hosted by **Yael Shavelson**, a 2024 Luce Center summer intern, through her college's Center for the Study of American Democracy, the event provided a rare firsthand account of life in North Korea from the perspective of a freedom-loving refugee.

More than 130 peers and faculty members attended the lecture, which was the Center for the Study of American Democracy's best-attended event this year.



Lee poses with **Yael Shavelson**, a **Kenyon College** student and 2024 Luce Center intern.



Lee speaks to more than 130 students and faculty members at Kenyon College's Center for the Study of American Democracy's best-attended event of the year.

Dawn Hawkins Inspires Conservative Women to Lead the Fight Against Exploitation



(Left) Amy Jeffrey and Jennifer Herzberg enjoy coffee and conversation. (Right) Dawn Hawkins shares insights from her 14 years of experience serving as Director of the National Center on Sexual Exploitation.

Dawn Hawkins, director of the **National Center on Sexual Exploitation (NCOSE)**, delivered an impassioned and thought-provoking address at the **Conservative Women's Network** event on March 21 at the Luce Center. Her message confronted the cultural challenges of sexual exploitation while casting a hopeful and empowering vision for the role conservative women can play in leading change.

Hawkins, a seasoned advocate with more than 16 years of experience, emphasized the urgency of addressing the interconnected issues of pornography, child sexual abuse, sex trafficking, and online exploitation. "These issues have long been treated in silos, which is why we've seen so little progress," she explained. "But when we step back and see how they overlap and fuel each other, we can begin to develop real solutions."

Despite the gravity of the topic, Hawkins urged attendees not to lose heart. "There's a movement for human dignity that's working," she said. "We are seeing significant progress—and that brings me a lot of hope." She pointed to recent legislative victories and mounting pressure on tech companies to implement safety reforms. "We've taken on companies like Google and Apple—and we've won," she said. "They said it couldn't be done, but we kept showing up, telling the truth, and refusing to back down."

"We don't need to match their millions of dollars," she added. "We need the truth, the courage to speak it, and women who are willing to lead."

Hawkins encouraged attendees to see themselves as essential players in a larger movement. "We each have a role to play," she said. "Whether it's in your home, your church, your community, or on Capitol Hill—you can make a difference." She stressed the importance of equipping young women to speak out, advocate for change, and model strength and virtue in a culture that often undermines both. "When we give women the tools to lead," she said, "they become some of the most powerful advocates for human dignity."

Hawkins encouraged participants to take even small steps, reminding them, "You don't have to do everything—but you must do something."

"We can't just walk by," she said. "We have to be the ones who speak up, who step in, and who lead."

Hawkins closed with a call to courage and conviction. "We can build a world where all people can live and love free from sexual abuse and exploitation," she said. "And conservative women will be at the forefront of making that vision a reality."

Clemson Women Gain Confidence and Firearms Skills at a 'Day at the Range'



Clemson junior **Peyton Amick** practices her marksmanship skills at a “Day at the Range” campus event.

College women at **Clemson University** participated in a “Day at the Range” event, the Luce Center’s signature Second Amendment program, on March 1. Led by NRA-certified instructors, the event provided expert training in firearms safety and marksmanship, equipping participants with technical skills and a newfound appreciation of their constitutional rights.

Students expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to participate in this uniquely empowering program. Clemson sophomore **Madeleine Leonard** told us, “This was my first experience with handguns, and as a result of this event I now feel confident in my ability to use them well and safely should I ever need to for self-defense.” Freshman **Emilia Elder** shared, “I really appreciated this event because it allowed me to connect with others in my community that have the same values as me!”

The reaction of these young women demonstrates that our Day at the Range events are more than just training sessions. They are powerful experiences that prepare young women for strong, conservative leadership.

On a Personal NOTE

Dear Friends,

It’s deeply rewarding to work with young women like **Yael Shavelson** (page 6), a former Luce Center intern, to help them grow into confident, courageous leaders. She recently shared:

*The Luce Center provides lasting courage and community. That’s how I hosted Seohyun Lee—a phenomenal speaker with a powerful story to share. Her message, like the Luce Center’s mission, is: **Fight for freedom; fight for truth.***

Thank you for your support. It’s an honor to partner with you to help today’s young women become strong conservative leaders.

In Friendship & Freedom,

Kimberly Begg
President

kimberly@cblwomen.org

P.S. Thanks to great friends in California, every gift to our **Annual Fund** is being matched—dollar for dollar! We’re just **\$10,555** away from reaching our goal, and your support could be the difference that gets us across the finish line. ***There’s still time to double your impact.*** To give, simply contact me or scan this QR code:

