



Moments are Being Taken away from the Next Generation of Scientists

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I'm 17 years old. In AP Psychology, our final project is to design an experiment, collect data, and write up the results. My teacher suggests that our group, fascinated by the concept of false memories, reach out to memory researcher, Dr. Elizabeth Loftus, for advice. I email her, and to my surprise, she responds. I send Dr. Loftus a thank-you email with our results. She reads our report and congratulates us on our significant result.

I am astonished that such an established researcher and professor would not only respond to our initial email but also read our work. So begins my unrelenting dream to become a scientist and mentor like Dr. Loftus. Today, shrinking federal budgets leave scientists scrambling to sustain their research and staff. In turn, scientists have less time for public education and mentorship.

I'm 18 years old. I will begin college in the fall and major in psychology. A friend's mom, an addiction counselor, recommends I read the book "Unbroken Brain" by Maia Szalavitz. Szalavitz's book highlights the racial injustice in the war on drugs and how punitive responses to addiction harm people's lives. This resonates deeply with my experiences growing up, when I witnessed firsthand how punitive systems often caused more harm than healing.