

→Fast Facts



Ancestry data

More than 26 million people have taken an at-home DNA test allowing corporations like Ancestry, 23andMe, and Gene By Gene to trace relationships between nearly all Americans. “First rule of data: once you hand it over, you lose control of it. You have no idea how the terms of service will change for your ‘recreational’ DNA sample,’ tweeted Elizabeth Joh, a law professor at the University of California, Davis.”

Antonio Regalado, “More than 26 Million People Have Taken an At-Home Ancestry Test,” *MIT Technology Review*, August 13, 2019, <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/612880/more-than-26-million-people-have-taken-an-at-home-ancestry-test> (retrieved August 13, 2019).



News consolidation

“The top 25 companies that own the most newspapers control the fate of nearly one-third of all papers, up from 20 percent in 2004. This included two-thirds of all dailies—812—and almost a fourth of all weeklies—1,376. The largest company, New Media/GateHouse, owns 451 newspapers in 34 states.”

“Bigger and Bigger They Grow | Consolidation of Newspaper Ownership,” The Expanding News Desert (blog), <https://www.usnewsdeserts.com/reports/expanding-news-desert/loss-of-local-news/bigger-and-bigger-they-grow> (retrieved August 12, 2019).



Historical sound recording archive

“The Boston Public Library donated its vast sound recordings collection to the Internet Archive—hundreds of thousands of audio recordings in a variety of historical formats, including wax cylinders, 78 rpms, and LPs. Following eighteen months of work, more than 50,000 78-rpm record ‘sides’ are now available on the Internet Archive.”

Brewster Kahle, “Browsing the Archive,” June 2019, https://archive.org/details/78rpm_bostonpubliclibrary (retrieved August 1, 2019).



Books and academic success

Children from book-filled homes are more likely to finish college than those from homes without books. The correlation holds true even when controlling for parental education level, wealth, and other socioeconomic factors, including a country’s ideology, political history, and level of economic development.

M. D. R. Evans, Jonathan Kelley, and Joanna Sikora, “Scholarly Culture and Academic Performance in 42 Nations,” *Social Forces*, Volume 92, Issue 4, June 2014, pages 1573–1605, <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sou030> (retrieved August 1, 2019).



Rising share of undergraduates at for-profit institutions

“As of the 2015–16 academic year (the most recent data available), about 20 million students were enrolled in undergraduate education, up from 16.7 million in 1995–96. Of those enrolled in 2015–16, 47 percent were nonwhite and 31 percent were in poverty, up from 29 percent and 21 percent, respectively, 20 years earlier. Private for-profit institutions (e.g., University of Phoenix, DeVry, Capella University) have experienced a 13 percentage point increase in the share of dependent students who come from poor families.”

Richard Fry and Anthony Cilluffo, “A Rising Share of Undergraduates Are From Poor Families,” Pew Research Center, May 22, 2019, <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2019/05/22/a-rising-share-of-undergraduates-are-from-poor-families-especially-at-less-selective-colleges> (retrieved August 13, 2019).

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