



# DEMOCRACY DEFENDERS

## Concerned Citizens Defending Democracy

*Promoting Democratic Institutions, Deliberative Dialogues, and Racial Justice and Reconciliation*

*By Building Bridges and Strengthening Partnerships*

<https://www.cddus.org/>

March 2022

### Events of Interest

#### What it Took to Win: A History of the Democratic Party

**Tuesday, March 1, 2022; 4:00-5:00pm ET**

Historian Michael Kazin identifies and assesses the Democratic party's long-running commitment to creating "moral capitalism." Hosted by Harvard Ash Center.



#### Local Democracy Initiative Webinar Series

**Wednesday, March 2, 2022; 2:00-3:00pm ET**

Connect with city and community leaders to gain insights and share best practices to help democracy thrive at the local level. Hosted by National League of Cities.



#### Facing Autocracy, a Global Challenge

**Wednesday, March 2, 2022; 4:00pm PT / 7:00pm ET**

New forms of organizations and democratic leadership must be promoted and empowered to stop the spread of autocracy. Hosted by Stanford Center on Democracy.



#### Humanities on the Hill (HoH)

**March 7-9 and March 14, 2022 (In-Person/Virtual Options)**

A three-day event that brings together humanities councils to advocate for federal funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities. On **Tuesday, March 8, at 5:30pm ET** join virtually. Hosted by Federation of State Humanities Councils.



#### 23rd Annual White Privilege Conference

**March 9-12, 2022 in Charlotte, NC (In-Person/Virtual Options)**

One of the premier anti-racism conferences in the nation. This year's theme is "White Supremacy, Religion and Reciprocity" and features keynote author Resmaa Menakem; filmmaker, musician, activist Bree Newsome, among others. The conference is organized by Dr. Eddie Moore of The Privilege Institute.



#### The Psychology of Disagreement: How Leaders Can Navigate Polarized Conversations

**Wednesday, March 16, 2022; 11:00-12:00pm ET**

Live webcast with Julia Minson exploring how people engage with opinions, judgments, and decisions that are different from their own. Hosted by HKS.



#### Social Media's Free Speech Problem

**Thursday, March 24, 2022; 6:00pm ET**

The problem of disinformation on social media has ballooned over the last few years. How do we control this false speech while protecting the First Amendment and our democracy? Hosted by Brennan Center for Justice.



#### When the Stars Begin to Fall: Overcoming Racism and Renewing the Promise of America

**Thursday, March 31, 2022; 7:00-8:30pm ET**

Dr. Theodore R. Johnson sees both a Promise "big enough for all of us" and an existential threat if we cannot somehow find each other to live into it. Hosted by The Village Square.



### Opinion

#### So, Where Does That Leave Us?

*By Neil Hartbarger*

I have zero confidence in the capability of our political parties to solve any of the crucial problems facing our nation and our world, including culturally and politically embedded racial violence and looming climate catastrophe, among many other troubles. These are existential issues for our culture, our country, and human life, and they are made more intractable by citizens' disillusion, distrust, or even rejection of democracy's processes and fundamental principles.

As the political parties and legislative bodies stagnate (and even make things worse), the hot topic of "reimagining policing" has become Last Year's Problem even to many on the left. Income inequality continues to climb. And most of us now find ourselves bunkered—and blinkered—with only the likeminded. Millions cling to "[The Big Lie](#)" in the face of all evidence that demonstrates we conducted one of the best-run, fairest elections in U.S. history.

So where does this litany of woe leave us? Well, coming from "deep left field," my faith is in community, in our ability, one human to another, to work toward something better. It may seem odd given my somewhat anarchist leanings that I'm actually a huge fan of big government, because that's the "organ" through which the community can act. Unfortunately, organizing and acting through our constitutionally constructed bodies, nationally and locally, can be glacially slow. We don't have time for glacial. None of the problems we face are amenable to patiently waiting.

#### So again, where does that leave us?

- **The long game** is, of course, to continue doing what we're doing, contacting our national leadership about our concerns and working to elect people who actively make the world better.
- **Medium-term**—and this is where liberal small-d democrats have failed to show up over the past four or so decades—we need to work in our local communities, learning how things have gone so far off track, voting up and down the ballot for candidates who believe in inclusive democracy, and working with our neighbors to make it better, little by little.
- **The immediate response**, though, is direct action—*showing up*, whether marching or through actual civil disobedience. For example, if 500 or a couple thousand folks get arrested handing out water at a Georgia polling station, it might make an impression.

As Frantz Fanon said, "By any means necessary." I say, by all means.



Please provide any comments or suggestions to:

[cdd.connect@gmail.com](mailto:cdd.connect@gmail.com)

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## Civics Education Resources

It is important for students to be prepared to participate in their democracy. See globe link for the civics education high school requirements by state:



### CivXNow

Formed the nation's largest cross-partisan coalition to fuel our constitutional democracy through K-12 civic education. A project of iCivics.



### Annenberg Classroom

Provides a free comprehensive multimedia curriculum for teaching the Constitution to middle and high school students and learners of all ages.



### Civics Renewal Network

A consortium of nonpartisan, nonprofit organizations committed to strengthening civic life in the U.S. by improving accessibility to no-cost learning materials.



### Center for Civic Education

Develops curricular materials, provides professional development for teachers, and advocates for stronger civic education in the U.S. and emerging democracies.



### Democratic Knowledge Project

Provides resources for educators and students to support the development of authentic, informed, and skilled civic participants.



### Civic Engagement in a Constitutional Democracy Course

Provides a foundational knowledge of American constitutional democracy while crafting your own civic voice and identity.



### Teaching for Change

Offers professional development, develops lessons, and curates resources to help classroom teachers supplement pre-K-12 curriculum.



### Rethinking Schools

Nonprofit publisher and advocacy organization dedicated to sustaining and strengthening public education through social justice teaching and education activism.



### Bridging Differences Course

Learn research-based strategies for better relationships, dialogue, and understanding across divides.



### The Civics Secures Democracy Act of 2021

Protects the health of our constitutional democracy by prioritizing American history and civics in our nation's schools.

HR1814: S879:

## CCDD Monthly Takeaways

By Vivian Lowery Derryck

Dr. Danielle Allen, renowned democracy scholar and then-candidate for governor of Massachusetts, stepped out of her candidate's role and offered us a perspective on the current state of U.S. democracy in CCDD's February meeting. Below are some takeaways relevant to CCDD's mission:

1. Local level engagement is the starting point and centerpiece for rebuilding trust and restoring citizen faith in democracy.
2. Efforts to build communities should begin by focusing on issues of local importance.
3. The states are a crucible for grassroots democracy experimentation and innovation.
4. The states are essential actors in shaping the voting process, so citizens should participate as fully as possible in developing state election laws.
5. Many American youth are disengaged from the body politic. (In fact only 30% of those 40 and younger think that it's essential to live in a democracy as opposed to 70% of that age group believing democracy was the best way of life pre-World War II.) We must find new ways to reach out to the under-40 generations.
6. We need to pay close attention to social media, both to respond to false statements and to use the platform as a key means of sending our messages, especially those targeting young people.
7. We need to invest heavily in civic education from pre-school through university.
8. We must reestablish an American moral compass with values of truth, integrity, honesty, inclusion and love of country.
9. Be optimistic—Americans across the country are working to strengthen local communities and our foundational institutions.

## Contact Your Representatives

### House of Representatives:

- [US House of Representatives](#)
- [Directory of Representatives](#)—Includes committee assignments.
- [Office of the Clerk – U.S. House of Representatives](#)

### Senate

- [US Senate](#)
- [Office of the Secretary of the Senate](#)

### General

- [Congress.gov](#)—Information about Members of Congress and legislative activity.
- [GovTrack.US](#)—Non-governmental source which can be used to find members of Congress and track bills.

## Safeguarding Our Democracy: Six on the Sixth

We love the U.S.A, so January 6, 2021 was a sad day for our country. To move forward as one nation we need a fact-based investigation like the one the bipartisan January 6 House Select Committee is holding. If we know what went wrong we can take steps to fix the problems. But the first step is getting a full picture of the events of the day.

The House Select Committee needs to know that it has the support of the American people. We ask that on the *sixth day of every month at 6:00pm* you commit to celebrating and safeguarding our democracy by sending a tweet or message to Members of Congress; joining neighbors on your street corner with signs in support of the January 6 Committee; going outside, banging on a pot and pan and chanting: "To safeguard our future, examine the past. We support the January 6 Committee."



*Click globe for more details on the Call to Action at bottom of article.*

Please click the following link to contribute content to the newsletter: [Newsletter updates](#)