



# DEMOCRACY DEFENDERS

November 2021

Concerned Citizens Defending Democracy

*Promoting Democratic Institutions, Deliberative Dialogues, and Racial Justice and Reconciliation  
By Building Bridges and Strengthening Partnerships*  
<https://www.cddus.org/>

## Events of Interest

### [Amid political polarization, cultural change, and economic angst: What does it mean to be an American today?](#)

Webinar recording link from November 1, 2021

A new and extensive national survey of more than 2,500 Americans reveals a great deal about Americans' attitudes about racial and religious pluralism, immigration, political parties, trust in institutions, the stories we tell about ourselves, and the history we teach our children. Hosted by Brookings and PRRI.



PRRI 12th annual **American Values Survey** link below:



### [2021 Virtual National Humanities Conference](#)

November 3, 4 & 12, 2021; between 12-7pm ET (\$)

Annual conference brings together stakeholders to explore approaches to deepening the public's engagement with the humanities. Hosted by The Federation of State Humanities Councils and the National Humanities Alliance.



### [Imagining a World Without Poverty: The Promise of Guaranteed Income](#)

November 14, 2021, 1-2:30pm PT / 4-5:30pm ET

Fall 2021 Community & Economic Development Forum on Guaranteed/Basic Income. Hosted by San Francisco Black & Jewish Unity Coalition.



### [2021 Truth and Transformation Conference](#)

Recordings from October 14-15, 2021

Conversations centered around this year's theme "Reflecting On A Year of Promises." Hosted by Harvard Ash Center.



### [Rural Assembly: Rural Woman Everywhere](#)

Recordings from October 19-20, 2021

Celebrating the contributions and leadership of women across the countryside. Hosted by Center for Rural Strategies.



### [For More Events Near You - Please click link:](#)



## Opinion

By Robert J. Berg

A few weeks ago we in CCDD discussed the pending Federal election reform laws. At that time we identified needs to counter not only state pursuit of biased hyper-aggressive partisan redistricting, but a new tactic: the efforts to elect candidates favorable to implementing new twisted state laws such as giving legislatures the right to over-rule the electorate. But what do you do about incumbents who hold election rule authority now, such as state government secretaries of state? The sad answer, according to CNN, is that you go after those incumbents, threaten their lives and try to hound them out of office, clearing the way for a "favorable" person to take their place. *Who knew that one of the most dangerous occupations turns out to be people trying to run honest elections?*

It is already a Federal legal violation to intimidate Federal election officials. Since these state authorities have central roles in assuring fair Federal elections, one wonders if it would be possible to extend the Federal legal umbrella to cover State officials as well. In the meantime, as the recent Congressional testimony of US Attorney General Merrick Garland made clear, Congress must give the Department of Justice financial resources to greatly gear up their operations to protect us in so many important ways, including enforcing the already existing Federal election laws. See link for a discussion on the status of U.S. voting rights, what is being done to address these challenges, and some suggestions on what we can do.



## CCDD Monthly Takeaways

Mel Hardy presented a summary of an essay in process entitled: "Art, Politics and The Creative Class -- Honest Brokerage, Non-profit Capitalization, and Recommendations for Action." He started with a thesis to include: urgency about the mid-terms; social mobility required for diversity and inclusion; and a redefined creative class as foundational to foster a sense of national identity and solutions to complex problems in governance. Hardy lifted the concept of our museums and libraries as distinctively capitalized in our political economy and respected "Honest Brokers" in defending democratic ideals and principles. Suggestions for action were presented. Contact Mel Hardy by text at 202-630-4635 with Subject reference: Art and Politics, and your email address, for more information.

Our meeting also included the following presentations:

- [Dr. Carolyn Lukensmeyer](#) presented a fact-filled overview on Civil Discourse and the Deliberative Dialogue/ Deliberative Democracy and offered practical strategies to have conversations with people of different viewpoints..
- [Mary Chaffee](#) presented a case study on election advocacy and organizing to get appropriate officials on the ballot and elected , with an emphasis on local elections, especially school boards..

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## Voting Information

### VOTE411

Election information: register to vote, find your polling place, ballot info, etc. Brought to you by the League of Women Voters Education Fund.



### NGOs active with ideas and action

Our Common Purpose



Common Cause



The Brennan Center for Justice



Harvard Kennedy School Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation



The Voting Rights Lab (re: state voting rights reporting)



Fair Fight (Stacy Abrams' organization)



Fair Election Center



Project Democracy (re: threats to democracy)



### Resources on redistricting

National Democratic Redistricting Committee PAC (re: legal action)



Princeton Gerrymandering Project (re: grading)



538 (re: state tracking)



### Key legislation

The Freedom to Vote Act of 2021 (S.2747)



The John Lewis Voting Rights Act of 2021 (H.R.4)



## Article

### How The Bobos Broke America

The creative class was supposed to foster progressive values and economic growth. Instead we got resentment, alienation, and endless political dysfunction. By David Brooks from *The Atlantic*.



Please provide any comments or suggestions to:

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

## News from Members & Partners

### San Francisco Black-Jewish Unity Coalition

Health and General Welfare Committee's focus is to advocate for and partner with organizations to support local, underserved communities' access to health care, nutritional education and healthy foods, housing security, safe spaces for physical activity, and mental health and substance abuse services. They have been making great strides supporting and/or commenting on many related local initiatives and bills. Please see website for more information.



### Braver Angels: Building a House United

Braver Angels is a national citizens' movement to bring liberals, conservatives and others together at the grassroots level to bridge the partisan divide and strengthen our democratic republic. They also offer online workshops, skills training, and debates. Forwarded by Mel Hardy. Please see website for more information.



## Additional

### Bridging Differences Course

Learn research-based strategies for better relationships, dialogue, and understanding across divides. Hosted by UC Berkeley.



### We the People: Civic Engagement in a Constitutional Democracy Course

Gain a foundational knowledge of American constitutional democracy while crafting your own civic voice and identity. Hosted by Harvard University.



## International Corner

*The current challenges to democracy are a global issue.*

### United Nations International Day for People of African Descent

Dorothy Davis, Congressional Black Caucus Institute and Global African Diaspora Initiative Representative to the United Nations, was the keynote speaker at this historic event in Costa Rica, where the General Assembly of the UN adopted a resolution to establish a permanent forum which seeks full political, economic and social inclusion of people of African descent.



### A Necessary Fresh Start for Haiti

Vivian Lowery Derryck wrote an article urging stakeholders to come together and use previously tested strategies to finally put Haiti on a path towards democracy and political and economic stability.



### Knight of the National Order of Mali Ceremony

Vivian Lowery Derryck was honored, with two other Americans, to be named a Knight of the National Order of Mali in recognition of her decades-long work to restore Mali's fragile democracy, especially by building strong, enduring civil society partnerships..



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