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CARNEGIE REPORTER



**ELECTION
VOLUNTEER**

THE VOTING ISSUE
People. Protections. Participation.

The Hushed Moments of Democracy

I was reminded this November, as I once again made my way to my local polling place in the nearby high school gym, of the hush surrounding the actual moment when we, the citizens of this nation, cast our ballots. It is a powerful moment. For me, it felt as if the entire political-media complex, though deeply vested in my decision, still couldn't follow me into the booth to force my choice. That moment of silence remains a moment of truth, and each election I depart feeling a bit ennobled — that it all still matters, the casting of ballots by me and millions of others across the nation, in silent moments at kitchen tables, post offices, high school gyms, and old armories.

Something else has been happening recently. More people have been talking about the fragility of democracy and the urgent need to ensure its functioning existence. Through this awareness, and because of the tireless efforts of our secretaries of state, America held a largely safe and certifiable midterm election in November. That does not happen — nor will it continue to happen — by accident.

Welcome to the Winter 2022 edition of the *Carnegie Reporter*, The Voting Issue, where we step into one of the most sacred places in American democracy, the place where its citizens exercise their right to vote.

In this issue we invite you into a celebration of the people that make federal, state, and local voting possible and a discussion of voter protections and participation that are needed to maintain and guarantee a healthy democracy.

We also welcome the new president of Carnegie Corporation of New York, Dame Louise Richardson, newly arrived from the University of Oxford, which she has led for seven years. During her tenure, she spearheaded efforts to partner with AstraZeneca to develop, manufacture, and distribute the Oxford coronavirus vaccine — and distribute it globally at the cost of production. She also significantly increased the socioeconomic and ethnic diversity of the university's undergraduate student body. She is a noted political scientist and scholar in her own right, and you can read some of her compelling thoughts on democracy and polarization in these pages.



Learn more about key areas of our work and the work of our grantees.

Also in this issue:

- Governor Thomas H. Kean, two-term governor of New Jersey from 1982 to 1990, chair of the 9/11 Commission, and chairman of the Corporation's board of trustees, calls for a return to bipartisanship, writing of the need to find a way to respect each other again, to talk to each other again, and to become colleagues who can work together on the nation's problems.
- Sue Dorfman, an American photojournalist passionate about capturing the extraordinary mosaic that is Election Day in this country, shares her inspiring work from this year's election season.
- The Brennan Center's Michael Waldman writes on the enduring power of the vote, and the central ideal of our founding: that government is legitimate only when it rests on the "consent of the governed."
- E. J. Dionne Jr. and Miles Rapoport suggest a dozen ways to increase voting.
- Heather McGhee describes how universal civic duty voting would change American participation in elections, and the Corporation's Geri Mannion discusses what philanthropy can do to protect and expand voting rights.
- And lest we forget what is at stake, historian and Andrew Carnegie Fellow Timothy Snyder shares 20 sobering lessons for fighting tyranny.

This summer, colleagues and I were reminded of the extraordinary experiment that is America, as we joined people from 60 nations in the Great Hall of Ellis Island as they were sworn in as new American citizens. It was another hushed moment. The pledge from these new citizens to exercise their responsibility to protect and participate in this democracy was followed by an eruption of joy and pride — and a certain sense of awe from those of us in attendance. Nearby, in the Ellis Island Immigration Museum is a photograph of people who were likely known by my great-great-grandparents.

We stand on the shoulders of giants, in this nation of immigrant and indigenous citizens, and it is a good thing to remember that we do this together, in the roaring silence of every cast ballot.

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On the Cover

Lancaster, Pennsylvania | November 8, 2022

An election volunteer double-counts the number of absentee ballots in her stack before opening the envelopes. CREDIT: © 2022 SUE DORFMAN

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A Greeting from Our New President

As she transitions from a distinguished career in higher education into her new role as the 13th president of Carnegie Corporation of New York, Dame Louise Richardson writes about the opportunity and obligation of philanthropists to use wealth wisely and to act with speed and flexibility, unhindered by partisanship, and with an eye toward those who are being overlooked

By **Dame Louise Richardson**

Andrew Carnegie's *Gospel of Wealth* is as relevant today as the day it was written more than 130 years ago. Toward the end of his life, he resolved, in his own words, "to stop accumulating and begin the infinitely more serious and difficult task of wise distribution." He used his wealth to create, among other institutions, Carnegie Corporation of New York to support education and promote peace in order to do real and permanent good in the world. It is a great privilege and an even greater responsibility for us today to use his wealth wisely to achieve the immutable objective of improving the world around us.

There has never been a time of greater need for philanthropy. The pandemic has eroded years of progress in reducing educational disadvantage, war is raging in Europe, and economies are reeling from the twin effects of the pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Increasing polarization in countries around the world has exposed the fragility of democracy. Meanwhile, droughts, floods, and wildfires have reinforced the urgency of the global climate crisis. Philanthropists have an opportunity and a responsibility to act; we can often do so with greater speed and flexibility than governments, unhindered by partisanship, and can help to identify those missed out by government interventions.

Like Andrew Carnegie, and like my beloved predecessor, Vartan Gregorian, I believe in the transformative power of education. Like them I see education both as an end in itself and as an engine of social mobility. It was for me. I was able to fund my own undergraduate education in Ireland by working two jobs during term, and full-time during the holidays. But my entire graduate education in the U.S. was funded by scholarships provided by generous philanthropists. I would never have gone to graduate school, or had the career I have had, without them.

Until now I have spent my career in universities. I left Tramore in County Waterford, Ireland, shortly after my 17th birthday to hitchhike to Trinity College Dublin, and I have been at universities ever since. I have watched the life chances of my scholarship students being transformed before my eyes. I've also seen firsthand the lasting impact of philanthropy on institutions. At Oxford, gifts given six, seven, and eight hundred years ago to create colleges are still providing for those colleges today. I believe that there is simply no greater investment than education. I have also seen how philanthropists rapidly appeared to back some little-known Oxford medics as they sought to develop a vaccine for COVID-19. Thanks in part to their support, the team developed a vaccine that by the end of 2021 had been distributed over three billion times and had saved an estimated 6.3 million lives.

The scale of the global problems we face is beyond the ability of any one foundation to redress. We know how devastated Carnegie was by the outbreak of the First World War in spite of all his efforts to try to prevent it. But we can and we must make a difference. By being focused in our interests and targeted in our interventions, by marshalling other foundations to join us when the needs are greater than we can provide, by being disciplined in evaluating the impact of our work, we can fulfill our responsibility wisely to distribute our resources for social good.

As Carnegie said: "All we can profitably or possibly accomplish is to bend the universal tree of humanity a little in the direction most favorable to the production of good fruit under existing circumstances." I am fully confident that with our dedicated board of trustees, our talented and committed staff, and the support of the broader Carnegie family, this is the very least that we will achieve. ■

Dame Louise Richardson, a trustee of Carnegie Corporation of New York since 2013, joined the Corporation as its 13th president in January 2023. She served most recently as vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford from 2016 to 2022.

It is a great privilege and an even greater responsibility for us today to use Andrew Carnegie's wealth wisely to achieve the immutable objective of improving the world around us.

Dame Louise Richardson Is Ready for Her Next Challenge

The new president of Carnegie Corporation of New York, the foundation’s first woman in the role, talks with Emmy Award-winning journalist and long-serving Corporation trustee Judy Woodruff – about growing up as a tomboy in rural Ireland, the expectations of women, the dangers of binary thinking, the importance of reclaiming the center, and much more, including the role philanthropy played in her own education as the first in her family to go to college

Judy Woodruff: It is my great pleasure to be spending some time with Dame Louise Richardson, who is about to become the 13th president of Carnegie Corporation of New York. Louise, it’s wonderful to be talking with you.

Dame Louise Richardson: It’s a pleasure.

Woodruff: You are a political scientist. You have specialized in the study of terrorism, but you’ve studied much more broadly than that. You’re returning to live in America after 14 years, seven years as vice-chancellor of St. Andrew’s in Scotland, and most recently as vice-chancellor at the University of Oxford. This is a big question: What does the world look like to you?

Richardson: Well, it is a big question. I think the answer is very different than it would have been a few years ago. The world is a frightening place at the moment, what with the aftereffects of the pandemic, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the daily accumulating evidence of the ravages of climate change, and the fragility of democracy being exposed. And yet, I’m a perennial optimist.

Woodruff: So, you are taking over this great institution, one of the great philanthropic institutions in the world, Carnegie Corporation of New York, at a time when we are still in the pandemic. You’ve had experience at the



Louise Richardson pictured at her local convent school for girls in Tramore, Ireland.

University of Oxford with the development of a vaccine. What is your perspective at this point on the COVID pandemic?

Richardson: Well, I think there are many lessons from the pandemic. The first is that we cannot afford to ignore risks that we know are facing us, things like antimicrobial resistance, things like climate change. The pandemic, for all of its difficulties and tragedies that occurred as a consequence, really showed just what science can do. The fact that we went from nothing to several effective vaccines in a

year is pretty spectacular, a real testament to the power of the human spirit, the human intellect, and to global collaboration among scientists. We showed what we can do, but we should have been better prepared than we were.

Woodruff: There is the science and certainly the public health aspect of this pandemic, but there is also the human aspect of it. You are moving to New York City, moving back to the United States. How do you think we have all taken on board what has happened?



Louise Richardson spoke on the philanthropic pursuit of real and permanent good at the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy ceremony in October 2022. CREDIT: FILIP WOLAK

Richardson: I think we have been really shaken by the pandemic. So much of our strength as a community comes from relationships with one another. And yet, unfortunately, during the pandemic, we were forced to separate, to be suspicious of relationships, of physical proximity, and that was damaging. Then on the educational front, I think we have gone back years in terms of the work that had been done to reduce inequalities in education. For so many students, school is such a wonderful opportunity, but the pandemic exposed the deep inequalities in our society in a way that was really quite tragic. I think now our work is really cut out for us to try to redress the loss of years of education especially among the most disadvantaged.

Woodruff: I have been reminded a number of times recently, how today’s college students, many of them, were born after 9/11. And I think you have said that your worldview is different from that of your three children. What did you mean by that?

Richardson: Well, by that, I mean, I grew up in rural Ireland. Popular Irish history is a long story of oppression by Britain, in which the good guys usually lose the battles. Whereas my children grew up in America, where they believed in progress and the virtue of the U.S., and the good guys win the wars. That was a very different perspective. I think American children today might have a different perspective than my children have, because of

the impact of 9/11, because of the impact of the economic crisis in 2008, and because of Black Lives Matter.

Woodruff: Let’s go back to earlier and talk a little bit about what it was like in County Waterford, Ireland. You were one of seven — three brothers, three sisters — raised in the same house as your mother, your grandmother, and your great-grandfather. You were the first in your family to go to college. Tell us what Louise was like, as a little girl and what life was like.

Richardson: Well, I had an older brother, and he seemed to get all the advantages. That always annoyed me. So, I was a tomboy early on. But it was an idyllic childhood really, growing up in a small seaside town where we just ran free all day, and you knew or were related to pretty much everyone. There was just one local convent school for girls, and one that the brothers ran for boys, and you walked to school, you walked home for lunch and back to school afterwards.

I believe birth order is very important in one’s development and being second of seven has had a huge impact on me. If you are one of seven kids, you know you are not the center of the universe. Everything has to be negotiated with your siblings, with whom you are sharing a bed, sharing a bedroom.

I am so looking forward to it. I expect I am going to discover all sorts of extraordinary people out there doing amazing work. My task will be: How do we help them do more of it?

The expectations for women or girls were utterly different than for boys. The expectations of my brothers were so different from my own. I once asked my father, “What are your ambitions for your four daughters?” and he stopped. He hadn’t thought about it. And he finally said, “Well, that at least one enters the convent and that none end up on the shelf,” by which he meant unmarried. My father was an absolutely wonderful human being. I don’t mean that as a criticism. It was just the view of the people of his generation. There was absolutely no expectation that I would do anything other than get married. But I read a lot, and much as I loved the place, I wanted to leave. I did leave shortly after my 17th birthday. I went to university in Dublin.

Woodruff: So you flew the coop so to speak, and we see what happened. In your book *What Terrorists Want: Understanding the Enemy, Containing the Threat*, published about 15 years ago, you write that you came from a background that has produced many terrorists, and you have spent your career trying to understand them. Talk about that.

Richardson: I grew up close to a Gaeltacht, a region where Irish is spoken and is the medium of instruction in schools. I was a passionate Irish speaker, for a time speaking it in preference to speaking English. The version of Irish history that we learned at school was such a one-sided version. It was really sympathetic to Irish Republicanism. When I got to Trinity College, which was a Protestant institution and most of the professors at the time were British, not Irish, I learned an entirely different version of Irish history. I became fascinated by how two sets of people — well-meaning, decent, good people — could have diametrically opposed interpretations of the same historical events in this tiny little island.

When I came to America and studied terrorism, I felt the literature was pretty terrible, because it just saw terrorists as one-dimensional bad guys and psychopaths, and I thought it was much more complicated than that. I wanted to understand how do these people who were warm, kind, good parents, good teachers, upstanding members of the community, decide to join a terrorist group to commit atrocities that violate every ethical code?

I believed that especially if we want to counter terrorists effectively, we have got to understand what motivates them. I was subject to some criticism for this because people confused my effort to understand the enemy with support for them. But not at all. One has to understand them in order to counter them effectively.

Woodruff: When you first came to America, philanthropy played such a big role.

Richardson: Oh absolutely. I would not have the education I have had without the support of generous philanthropists. I first came to America on a scholarship from the Rotary Foundation. I was completely taken with the meritocratic ethos, the can-do attitude, the fact that you could be smart and it was cool — which it really wasn’t, certainly as a girl, where I came from — and I really loved that.

So, I went back to Trinity and resolved that I was going to come back to America for graduate school. I got another scholarship to come back to America first for a master’s degree, and then I got another scholarship to Harvard to get a PhD. There was simply no question I could have afforded any of that.

Undergraduate education was relatively inexpensive, so I worked two jobs and paid my own way. I worked shelving books in the library every morning, six mornings a week, early in the morning before the library opened in Trinity College. And then I worked as a cocktail waitress four nights a week in the Burlington Hotel in Dublin. I was also able to work during the holidays, so I could afford to finance my own undergraduate education.

But when it came to graduate school, it was fully financed by generous philanthropists. I always had lots of extra jobs just because if you don’t come from means you never have confidence that there will be money there if you need it. At UCLA, I got free room and board from a couple whose house I cleaned, until I realized how much money you could make as a research assistant and as a teaching assistant.

Woodruff: But now you’ve got all these skills under your belt —



Louise Richardson (second from left), then vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford, at the University of Michigan Bicentennial Colloquium in 2017 with (l-r) Drew Gilpin Faust, then president of Harvard University; Peter Salovey, president of Yale University; and Nicholas B. Dirks, then chancellor of the University of California, Berkeley. CREDIT: AUSTIN THOMASON, MICHIGAN PHOTOGRAPHY, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Richardson: Absolutely. I am the best waitress.

Woodruff: You have been the first woman vice-chancellor at St. Andrew’s University and of the University of Oxford. You are now the first woman to lead Carnegie Corporation of New York. You have said that you hope for the day when we won’t even make a big deal out of the fact. Do you think such a time is actually going to come?

Richardson: Oh, I think it is, definitely. It has taken a lot longer than I would have liked or any of us would have expected. If you think of my mother’s generation, what I have achieved would have been inconceivable in her generation. I really look forward to the day when the fact that a leader is a woman is not an issue. One of my personal goals is always to be succeeded by a woman. And I think as that happens more and more, we will seed more and more women to the top levels of universities and public broadcasting and industries and indeed governments. It is taking far longer than it should have, but I think we will get there.

Woodruff: You have been in education your entire professional life. What makes philanthropy interesting to you?

Richardson: Well because the needs are so great. You have very real problems in this city, in this country, and indeed globally. Governments have vast resources, but they are also partisan. Philanthropists have the flexibility to see a problem and step in and do something about it quickly without any partisanship.

Woodruff: How do you think running a foundation like the Corporation will be different from running an educational institution?

Richardson: There will be a difference of scale. I have been leading a very singular institution where I am responsible for about 50,000 people. I love the idea that I will know everybody who works here. I am a strong believer in the power of community, of people working together. If you have 100 people working together, it is much easier to figure out who you want to collaborate with beyond the group. Some of the problems we are talking about are much bigger than any one foundation can effectively address, but one could imagine persuading other foundations to target the same problem and working on it together.

Woodruff: I want to ask you about civil discourse, how we treat one another in our communities and across political divides. Right now, we are in a very divided time in the United States. How do you as a political scientist look at this?

Richardson: It is horrifying to see the polarization in this country that I love. We are seeing it to a lesser extent in other countries, but the U.S. seems to be in the forefront. I think it is deeply troubling, and I very much hope that foundations will get together to try to reclaim the center, because the center ground is where we make progress.

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The Augustinian precept *audi alteram partem* – listen to the other side – should be our motto.

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Woodruff: I remember a line in your address at the Oxford Union, that you haven't gotten a good education unless you've been disabused of everything you've ever thought, or at least begin to question it.

Richardson: Yes, I've long argued that education is as much about robbing students of their certitudes as about the facts that it imparts. The Augustinian precept *audi alteram partem* – listen to the other side – should be our motto. You have to listen to the other point of view. And if you disagree with it, try to change their mind. But above all, you have to be open to having your own mind changed too.

Woodruff: You have called social media “the pillory of modern times” and you talk about binary choices. What do you mean by that?

Richardson: Well, I mean seeing the world in black and white. This goes back to my study of terrorism because the one characteristic that terrorists invariably share is seeing the world in Manichean terms, black and white, good and evil. I think we should get out of this binary thinking. The world is complicated.

Our kids spend their time on computers where they like or dislike, thumbs up, thumbs down, which really encourages binary thinking. The punishment of the pillory was when somebody did or said something objectionable, they were held up for public opprobrium and ridiculed. That is what is happening now on social media. I am a passionate defender of free speech, but this kind of toxic, abusive trolling, which often leads to self-censorship and occasionally to self-harm, we don't have a handle on it, and I think we need to.

Woodruff: I was really struck by this metaphor. There is nothing in the middle.

Richardson: There is that wonderful line from Yeats, “The center cannot hold. The best lack all conviction, while the worst are filled with passionate intensity.” That is where we are getting to.

Woodruff: You have also described truth as an aspiration, rather than a possession.

Richardson: I am stunned by this concept of *my* truth and the notion that there is one infallible perspective, and it is the only right one, and it is mine. I think we should be striving to ascertain the truth rather than claiming to own it.

Woodruff: One of your many accomplishments at Oxford was creating greater access to higher education among people who are disadvantaged. It was one of the achievements that the late Queen Elizabeth cited when she appointed you Dame Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

Richardson: There remains a lot of social inequality in Britain, including in Britain higher education, but I think we have made real strides, and I am enormously proud of that. We have gone from 10 percent of students from disadvantaged backgrounds to 23 percent in seven years so it shows what you can accomplish when you marshal people behind a goal. I can rattle off all the statistics, but the statistics don't capture the gift of a transformed life. How do you quantify that?

Woodruff: They are just so impressive, the changes that have taken place. It is also an enormous problem. How can private philanthropy make a dent in it?

Richardson: The problem is actually bigger than private philanthropies can address alone. The problem is that so many young people are falling off the educational ladder long before it is time to make a competitive application to university. We need to invest in education right from the very beginning and keep that investment going. There is nothing more important.

Woodruff: Andrew Carnegie was among the ultrarich who acknowledged that economic inequality was a problem in his time. It eventually prompted him to give away his fortune. But people are still skeptical about philanthropy. What do you say to those who wonder what foundations and organizations like the Corporation do?

Richardson: Well, I think they should judge us by our work. We should be able to point to what we have done with the legacy and the improvements we have made. If we can't, we are doing something wrong. I do think we have a real responsibility to be serious about what we do and ensure that we are being effective.



During an investiture ceremony at Windsor Castle in December 2022, Louise Richardson receives her insignia from King Charles III for her appointment as a Dame Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire by the late Queen Elizabeth II in June. Pictured in the background (l-r) are Richardson's daughter Ciara Jevon, mother Julie Richardson, and husband Dr. Thomas Jevon. CREDIT: PA MEDIA

Woodruff: You have had time to examine Andrew Carnegie's legacy as a member of the board and now the president. What do you think his legacy is? What did he accomplish?

Richardson: I think his book *The Gospel of Wealth* is just so important. Carnegie thought about his wealth, and what his responsibilities were — that wealth is not to feed your ego, it is to feed the poor, to feed the hungry, and to help those who need help. That message is just as important today. I do think there is gravely inequitable distribution of wealth. One could reasonably argue that nobody should have that much wealth, but the reality is, many people do, so let's encourage them to spend it improving the lot of others, as Andrew Carnegie did.

Woodruff: So, what do you think an organization like Carnegie Corporation, which has a lot of resources but limited, can do on its own and in combination with other philanthropic organizations to make a difference in the world?

Richardson: Well, I think that is the task. I hope to spend my first few months consulting with our board and with the staff and just questioning everything we do, asking: “Are we targeting this correctly? Should we be more disciplined? Should we shift our areas of focus? Who else is working in these areas?” What we want to do is find areas — a niche — that need help where people are not pouring in money. That is the real task for a foundation

today: to make sure that we're just being as disciplined, as targeted, as focused, and as flexible as we can be. We have to be realistic in what we can achieve, but we have lots of opportunity to make a difference.

Woodruff: What is inside Louise Richardson as she looks at this next challenge?

Richardson: I am so looking forward to it. I expect I am going to discover all sorts of extraordinary people out there doing amazing work. My task will be: How do we help them do more of it?

Woodruff: Louise Richardson, congratulations again as you begin your tenure as the 13th president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Richardson: Thank you so much, Judy. ■

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Dame Louise Richardson, a trustee of Carnegie Corporation of New York since 2013, joined the Corporation as its 13th president in January 2023. She served most recently as vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford from 2016 to 2022. **Judy Woodruff**, a senior correspondent and former anchor and managing editor of *PBS NewsHour*, received the Emmy Award for Lifetime Achievement in Television News in 2022. She served on the Corporation's board of trustees from 1995 to 2003 and from 2013 to 2022.

This article is a transcript of a video conversation and has been edited for length and clarity. To learn more and to watch the video, visit carnegie.org/RichardsonConversation.

The Importance of Bipartisanship

The chairman of Carnegie Corporation of New York's board of trustees argues that continued polarization is one of the most serious problems affecting democracy in the United States today. We need to find a way to respect each other again, to talk to each other again, to become friends again, and to become colleagues who can work together on the nation's problems

By **Thomas H. Kean**

Some years ago, I was having dinner with former vice president Walter Mondale. He mentioned to me that he did not understand how they ever got anything done in Washington. He said that when he was in the Senate, there were about 30 senators, a combination of so-called "Rockefeller" Republicans and Blue Dog Democrats. People like Charles Percy on the Republican side and Sam Nunn for the Democrats. Every time they got stuck, Mondale recalled, they went to those people and around them they built compromises. Every important bill for a period of almost 30 years had their fingerprints. They were the center, and around the center the most important bills became law.

Compare that to today. Centrists are down to at most two or three in each party. The center no longer exists. Moderates are almost extinct, and when they do run, they are usually beaten in the primaries by people from the far left or the far right. For the first time, major bills are passing without any bipartisan support. The lack of civility in Congress reflects that of the general population.

This continued polarization is one of the most serious problems affecting democracy in the United States today.

Political parties are not talking to each other. They are not looking for agreements; they are attacking each other instead of compromising with one another. It is becoming harder and harder to get anything done.

In these circumstances, democracy is in trouble. We need to find a way to respect each other again, to talk to each other again, to become friends again, and to become colleagues who can work together on the nation's problems.

As a member of an old political family and as a politician myself for a number of years, I have not seen much good that was not bipartisan. As a state legislator in the New Jersey General Assembly, as a Republican two-term governor of New Jersey, and as chair of the 9/11 Commission, I always insisted on reaching across the aisle because of my deep belief that only bipartisan efforts will stand the test of time and best serve this country's needs.

When I was elected one of the youngest speakers in the New Jersey General Assembly, there was no majority. There were 49 Republicans, 50 Democrats, and one Independent. I told both parties that I would not post a



Former New Jersey governor Thomas Kean, left, and former Democratic congressman Lee Hamilton attend a hearing of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, in Washington, D.C., March 23, 2004. Kean served as chair and Hamilton as vice chair of the commission, which worked to prepare a complete account of the September 11 attacks, as well as recommendations. The bipartisan commission released its public report in July 2004. CREDIT: CHRIS KLEPONIS/BLOOMBERG VIA GETTY IMAGES

bill unless it had a Democratic sponsor and a Republican sponsor. This was unprecedented, but it turned out to be one of the most effective legislatures in the history of the state. Everybody had to get along, because if they wanted a bill passed, they had to find somebody on the other side of the aisle to do it with them.

It was a little easier in those days. We always went out to dinner after the session, and nobody asked what your party was before they pulled out your chair. We went to each other's funerals and weddings. We knew each other's spouses and families. These days people can serve in the House of Representatives for 10 years and hardly know people in the other party. They work in Washington Tuesdays through Thursdays. At night, they have fundraisers for their own parties. They don't socialize with the other party, and they don't know each other's families. Cross-party breakfasts and dinners and social engagements make governing a lot easier.

I served as governor for eight years, yet my party never had a majority in the state senate. During my term, the Democrats never blocked a major bill or a major appointment. We worked together, and we shared the credit. This approach worked as I was reelected by the largest majority in state history.

When I chaired the 9/11 Commission, we spent a long time getting to know each other. We were five Democrats and five Republicans. Once we had formed relationships, we got into the real work. When we started, I made a rule for the commission that no Republican ever sat next to another Republican and no Democrat ever sat next to another Democrat at committee meetings or in the public hearings. I wouldn't appear on major television or radio shows unless I could bring my Democratic vice chair Lee Hamilton with me. Having set that precedent, I asked other commissioners to do the same, to take someone from the other party — sort of like Noah's Ark, we appeared two by two.

The 9/11 Commission produced a unanimous report. It was essential that we be unanimous because we were going into a presidential election and both parties at the time were ready to cast blame. It was necessary that we agree on what went wrong and how the attack was allowed to happen. Using the facts, we made recommendations that were controversial but allowed us to take steps to make sure the country was never that vulnerable again. We made 41 recommendations, 40 of which were approved in a bipartisan manner by Congress. Our report is still a textbook in schools and colleges 20 years later. I don't think anything comparable has been done since.



Thomas H. Kean photographed with his late wife, Debbie Kean, on election night, 1981, at the Holiday Inn in Livingston, New Jersey. CREDIT: EAGLETON CENTER ON THE AMERICAN GOVERNOR AT RUTGERS UNIVERSITY—NEW BRUNSWICK

We are an unusual country. Our ancestry comes from many different people all over the world. We have been held together by a few documents and symbols for the past 200 years. Now we are arguing about some of these things. Meanwhile our diversity is increasing, not decreasing. Unless we can share some common beliefs and values and recreate a center from which we can compromise, it will be hard to progress or perhaps even survive.

There is so much to be done, but people must be willing to do it. It starts with listening to each other. It starts with respecting each other. We must bring people together on every occasion that we can. We need to start bringing back relationships. In politics we should show our willingness to support those who are willing to compromise.

When you disagree with someone, the key is to listen to them. And then you reason with them. No matter how crazy somebody's idea is, talk to them. Find out what you have in common. Because there are things that you have in common. Out of that simple act, I think we can start to rebuild trust — in the country and in each other. ■

Thomas H. Kean is chairman of the board of trustees of Carnegie Corporation of New York. He served as governor of New Jersey for two terms from 1982 to 1990. He also chaired the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, known as the 9/11 Commission, which was responsible for investigating the causes of the September 11 attacks and providing recommendations to prevent further terrorist attacks.

Governor **Thomas H. Kean** first joined the Corporation's board of trustees in 1991, serving twice as chairman. When Carnegie Corporation president Vartan Gregorian, Kean's close collaborator, died suddenly on April 15, 2021, Kean provided advisory guidance and leadership, working alongside the board's vice chairman, Janet L. Robinson, retired president and CEO of the New York Times Company, and the foundation's staff until Dame Louise Richardson joined the Corporation as president in January 2023. A new PBS documentary *Are We Safer Today?* highlights Kean's bipartisan leadership of the 9/11 Commission as the members of the commission explore their historic work and its ramifications for today.

Some of the fundamental questions before us are: Do we have a democracy as we say we do? Do people see themselves reflected in it? And are we giving them opportunities or avenues to engage?

— **Chris Melody Fields Figueredo**
Executive Director, Ballot Initiative Strategy Center

The Fight to Vote — It's at the Heart of American History

Politics may be messy, but, as the Brennan Center's Michael Waldman argues, the struggle for the right to vote is never over

By **Michael Waldman**

The fight for the vote has been driven, above all, by the aspirations of those who seek to make their voices heard. It has never been a smooth glide. At every step of the way, entrenched groups, fearing change, have fought back and tried to reduce the opportunity for political participation and power.

Until recently, simmering anger did not translate into a full mobilization for action across society. At other times in American history, such as the Progressive Era or the civil rights movement, millions of citizens came together in a profusion of efforts at the local, state, and eventually the national level. They formed organizations, filed lawsuits, wrote books, staged marches, raised funds, even went to jail.

Now once again a growing number of Americans realize that the very tenets of our democracy are at stake. The Roman Republic lasted for four centuries, longer than our own government. It was battered in 133 BC by Tiberius Gracchus, a wealthy, bumptious populist who proposed greater economic and political equality but stirred

violence among his supporters and overrode the republic's norms and election rules. For Gracchus, it ended poorly: he was murdered during a riot. But the damage had been done. Ever more brazen attacks on the republic's institutions, often in the name of the people, followed for decades. Julius Caesar was smarter than Gracchus, and when it came his time to seize power, more ruthless. His successor, Augustus, ended the republic.

And yet the convulsions of our time may be labor pains for a new, more hopeful, more equal, and diverse country. Few nations undergo demographic change of such velocity without disruption. The 2020 census not just showed that Latinos now are nearly 19 percent of the population, with Asians doubling their share over two decades to nearly 6 percent, but that the number of people only identifying as white in the United States actually fell, something that had never happened since the first census in 1790. These changes have produced a backlash, of course. But they also point toward a renewed America, a multiracial democracy held together by commitment to common ideals.



Sumter, South Carolina | November 3, 2022 Dr. Brenda Williams casts her ballot during early voting. Williams and her husband, Dr. Joseph Williams, registered hundreds of their patients as new voters. CREDIT: © 2022 SUE DORFMAN

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The fight for the vote over the years has been more than a clash of classes, parties, factions, races, and interests. It has been a long drive, stumbling, retreating, but ultimately in one direction: toward fulfilling that ideal.

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One positive sign comes from the rise in participation itself. For years, American voting rates stubbornly remained among the lowest in the democratic world. In 2016, in the first edition of my book *The Fight to Vote*, I surmised that our social forces — television saturated, isolated, with millions “bowling alone,” even the secret ballot itself — all dampened turnouts. (Imagine a rule that said you could root for any sports team of your choice — but only in private, without heading to a bar, watching a game with friends, tailgating at a stadium, or cheering in the stands. Active support for teams would wither.) One great task for this generation, I wrote, was to find a way to make political engagement as celebratory and compelling for those who rarely see thousands of other like-minded people in the flesh at a rally or parade. That was all before the Trump explosions of 2016, the women’s march of 2017, the surge of suburban women to the polls in 2018, producing a Democratic sweep, or the Black Lives Matter movement of 2020, and the extraordinary jump in participation in both parties. Once again Americans are holding the equivalent of torchlight parades.

And as in earlier eras, democracy itself has become not just the means for expression but a cherished value and urgent goal. In 2020, the election was saved by businesses and judges and journalists and public health experts, by community activists by the thousands, and by hundreds of thousands of citizens who scrambled and improvised to make sure a safe election took place. Our democracy will only sustain if that mobilization continues. As during the American Revolution and other times when the push for representation became a public creed, the ideal of our founding — that government is legitimate only when it rests on the “consent of the governed” — must remain a fighting faith for millions. Two centuries of activists, from Ben Franklin and Frederick Douglass to Alice Paul and John Lewis, found joy and purpose in doing so.

American politics can be dispiriting — it’s a messy, jarring, jumbled patchwork of candidates, causes, and elections. But at stake is more than just an effort to craft a workable self-governing republic. Democracy has embedded within it a moral sense — that every individual is of equal worth and has the agency to shape the most important institutions affecting his or her life.



Benton Harbor, Michigan | August 4, 2022 A freshly painted mural reminds residents that “Your Vote Matters.” CREDIT: © 2022 SUE DORFMAN

If the American creed is to mean anything, it is that the basic glue holding the country together is the aspiration set out by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence. The fight for the vote over the years has been more than a clash of classes, parties, factions, races, and interests. It has been a long drive, stumbling, retreating, but ultimately in one direction: toward fulfilling that ideal. So we should all regard it as not just wrong but fundamentally illegitimate, indeed un-American, for anyone to try to make it harder for another American to vote. This fight over first principles should no longer surprise us. In fact, it is typical, and understandable.

It turns out John Adams was right in 1776: “there will be no end of it.” Once again the story of American democracy is being written. The fight to vote is at the heart of American history. It is up to all of us to advance that fight and keep it at the center of debate today, where it belongs. ■

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Michael Waldman is president of the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law.

This is an edited excerpt from Michael Waldman’s book *The Fight to Vote* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2022).

Protecting and Advancing the Right to Vote

Carnegie Corporation of New York grantees are using a range of strategies in response to the changing conditions of voting in America. The challenges are as old as the United States itself – from voter intimidation to low registration rates to a proliferation of laws that limit the right to vote. As more responsibility falls to individual voters, Corporation grantees are working to expand options to make voting easier, more accessible, and more convenient

By **Abigail Deutsch**

From DJs and dancing to fish fries, barbecues, bubbles, and photo booths, voting sites throughout North Carolina took on a decidedly festive air during the 2022 midterm election. But all that fun was strategic – a response to heightened concern about voter intimidation. “We know one of the most effective forms of de-escalation is people power,” says Serena Sebring, executive director of Blueprint NC (North Carolina) – an organization operating within the umbrella of State Voices, a Carnegie Corporation of New York grantee – which organized the events. “Having people present and setting a tone of celebration raises the entry level for wanting to disrupt or terrorize people.” This year, she explained, voters’ fears of disruption were especially strong in the wake of the 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol, ongoing mass shootings, and a local history of voter suppression.

Over the years, organizations like Blueprint NC have engaged a range of strategies in response to the changing conditions of voting in America. Challenges in this area are as old as the United States itself, and grantees

are contending with problems ranging from voter intimidation to low registration rates to a proliferation of laws that limit the right to vote.

Recently, despite these difficulties, turnout has been rising: the 2018 midterm election drew 50.3 percent of the voting-eligible population, the highest for a midterm in four decades. And at 66.8 percent, the 2020 elections saw the highest proportion of voters for a presidential election in over a century. Votes are still being counted for the 2022 midterms, but experts believe that a smaller proportion of Americans voted than in 2018. “In some states, voter enthusiasm exceeded the high mark set in 2018,” the *Washington Post* reported, with competitive races often seeing higher turnouts. In other places, it fell far short of those levels.

These mixed results raise a question that has motivated the Corporation’s investments in democracy for years: “Why aren’t we doing whatever we can to make it easier for people to turn out and vote?” asks Geri Mannion, managing director of the Corporation’s Strengthening



Lancaster, Pennsylvania | November 8 An election volunteer removes absentee ballots from their inner envelopes, checks that there are no stray marks or more than one circle filled in for each candidate field, and then flattens the ballots for processing. CREDIT: © 2022 SUE DORFMAN

U.S. Democracy program. “For instance, why not get Americans automatically put on the rolls when they are still in high school, so that when they are 18, they get a letter that says, ‘Congratulations, you are now a voter’? It could be done easily.” In the absence of such blanket policies, more responsibility falls to individual voters – and to the organizations that encourage them to vote.

2020: A Remarkable Year for the Census and Presidential Election

Even before the pandemic struck, it was clear that 2020 would be remarkable for civic engagement groups. The year promised not just a presidential election but also a census, and Corporation grantees were working hard to ensure a fair and accurate count. According to Gary Bass, who chairs the Census Equity Initiative as senior advisor and executive director emeritus of the Bauman Foundation, the census requires years of preparation. “It takes a decade: the way questions are formed, the amount of money Congress provides, the testing of the census and online aspects to make sure there isn’t a digital divide. And then, how do you grapple with the consistent problem of historically undercounted populations?” The decennial process determines how many seats each state can claim in the House of Representatives, how much federal funding local communities receive, and

other crucial outcomes for the next 10 years. One such outcome is especially key to voting: the census provides population counts that help localities redraw their district boundaries for congressional and local elections. Bass notes that “census data are also used to determine the availability of multiple languages for election assistance so that people have ballot or other election materials in their native language.”

During this high-stakes time, the pandemic added a new twist for pro-voting organizations, which rely on face-to-face contact with citizens. Social-distancing protocols forced activists to switch to a digital approach; they used Zoom, texting, and social media to canvass, register voters, and get out the vote. They also used digital means to keep voters apprised of shifting rules around voting. The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO), according to chief executive officer Arturo Vargas, relied on media partners and social media to conduct a “massive voter education campaign.” Using Telemundo, Facebook, and Twitter, they updated Latino voters on such matters as how to obtain absentee ballots and how to complete them correctly.

The pandemic didn’t stop innovative civic engagement groups from making inroads with new populations. In 2020, *Vot-ER* found that when a health professional provides information to their community about voter

The Corporation has invested in a wide range of ways to make voting easier, more accessible, and more convenient in order to ensure that people — especially people with busy lives, with children, with disabilities, with two or three jobs — should be able to vote, without being limited to a particular time period on a Tuesday.

— Geri Mannion, Managing Director, Strengthening U.S. Democracy, Carnegie Corporation of New York

registration, a person otherwise thought of as unlikely to vote is 20 percent likelier to do so, according to executive director Aliya Bhatia and TurboVote data. Since its founding that year, Vot-ER has provided materials to more than 30,000 health-care professionals in 700 different hospital and clinical sites — 73 percent of participating sites primarily serve the uninsured and 49 percent serve rural communities. During the pandemic, health-care professionals witnessed firsthand how marginalized people were disproportionately affected because of “nothing to do with individual decisions but with a broken system,” says Bhatia. “Our health systems are heavily influenced by decisions that policymakers make, and so much of what health-care professionals can do is a result of what policy allows them to do. Their desire to provide effective care has made health-care professionals more aware of the importance of their vote and their patients’ votes.”

And in 2020, when some 1.5 million people registered to vote on National Voter Registration Day (NVRD), the annual voter registration holiday, both local and national partners played a role. “Large companies are buying into and finding it important to participate in the civic engagement process and remind people to vote,” says Debi Lombardi, former program director of NVRD.

All these efforts contributed to a sky-high turnout. An unprecedented percentage of voters cast a ballot for the first time, a third of the country voted early, and the 2020 electorate became the most racially diverse in history: Black voter turnout rose 3 percent from the last presidential election, and Asian American Pacific Islander voter turnout increased an astonishing 39 percent.

But in the wake of these successes, some Americans — encouraged by outgoing President Trump, who falsely claimed his loss was illegitimate — cast doubt on the

results of the election. Allegations of voter fraud led to numerous audits of election results. According to the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol, of the 62 cases brought by Trump and his allies, only one was successful. Twenty-two of the judges who oversaw those cases were appointed by Republican presidents, including 10 who were appointed by Trump himself. Election officials called the 2020 election “the most secure in American history.” In this context, the midterm results may seem encouraging: turnout was high, and multiple pro-democracy secretaries of state triumphed against election deniers. These officials will oversee the next elections in states such as Michigan, Arizona, and Georgia.

A Shifting Legal and Political Landscape

In addition to being secure, the 2020 election was also one of the friendliest to voters — thanks to a host of new state laws. Since in-person voting created just as much COVID risk as in-person organizing, states took steps to expand options. According to the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law, many states made it easier to vote by mail — whether by pushing back deadlines for ballot receipt or by expanding eligibility. Ballot drop boxes facilitated the process. Harris County in Texas attracted applause, and consternation, by offering 24-hour drive-through voting. (In 2022, the Texas state legislature discontinued this practice.)

This expansion of options was in line with years of efforts, on the part of Corporation grantees, to make voting more accessible. “The Corporation was an early supporter of research and advocacy that led to the National Voter Registration Act of 1993,” Mannion notes, “and since then, the Corporation has invested in a wide range of ways to



Bedford, New Hampshire | September 13, 2022 Voters line up on primary day in the Granite State. New Hampshire does not have early voting, but the state does have same-day voter registration. Moreover, primary voters in New Hampshire can change their party affiliation for that day — and then change it back after casting their ballot. CREDIT: © 2022 SUE DORFMAN

make voting easier, more accessible, and more convenient in order to ensure that people — especially people with busy lives, with children, with disabilities, with two or three jobs — should be able to vote, without being limited to a particular time period on a Tuesday.”

The new policies proved particularly useful for some of the low-propensity groups with whom grantees work. Studies indicate that working-class voters find it more challenging to vote in person on Election Day because of work schedules and transportation needs, among other factors — and that community includes most Latino voters, says Clarissa Martinez de Castro, vice president of the Latino Vote Initiative at UnidosUS. “Early voting and vote by mail are important options,” says Martinez de Castro, “and remarkable turnout among Latino voters in 2020, powered by community registration and get-out-the-vote efforts, was supported by greater use of these alternatives.” Latinos cast 16.6 million votes in 2020, a 30.9 percent increase over the turnout in the last presidential election, according to the UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Institute.

Similarly, Sarah Jaynes, executive director of the Heartland Fund, highlighted the benefits of mail-in voting for the rural people her organization serves. Often, a large geographic area relies on a single polling place located a long drive from people’s homes and workplaces, she says.

Further, for rural people of color, waiting on long lines in such settings can feel uncomfortable. By contrast, the expansive measures of 2020, according to Jaynes, were “extremely helpful.”

Yet the 2020 election — while “a civic miracle in many respects,” notes Wendy Weiser, the Brennan Center’s vice president for democracy — had “some serious warts,” including a large gap in turnout by race. According to Weiser, 71 percent of white voters voted, whereas 58 percent of people of color did — the kind of gap that Thomas Saenz, president and general counsel of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), describes as “large enough to be outcome determinators.” In the years since 2020, some of the expansive voting legislation has remained in effect. California, for instance, mails its citizens ballots and offers readily available drop boxes and early voting days, says Saenz. Many other states have moved to permanent no-excuse absentee ballots or increased early voting opportunities.

But multiple states have passed laws making it harder to vote. Some have limited the mail-in voting option that proved so successful during the pandemic, whether by reducing the number of drop boxes or by imposing stricter identification requirements for mail-in ballots. Others have cut early voting days or purged voters from rolls.

These developments are part of a longer pattern. Since 2011, laws eroding voting rights have proliferated, abetted by recent Supreme Court decisions, such as *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013) and *Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee* (2021), which have made such laws harder to fight in court. “We’ve not seen anything like the volume we’ve seen after the 2020 election,” Weiser says. “It’s really supercharged, a significant escalation in terms of volume and severity.” In addition, the Brennan Center has been tracking a new subset of laws, which have multiplied in 2022, that attack the election process itself — laws that make it easier for “partisans to meddle in election administration or vote counting,” says Weiser, “or to attack the people or processes that make elections work.”

Also on the rise are the number of bills that would change the ballot measure process, which allows citizens to collect petition signatures and add a law, question, or issue to a statewide or local ballot for popular vote. In 2017, the Ballot Initiative Strategy Center tracked 33 bills that would change the process, according to Chris Melody Fields Figueredo, executive director of the center; in 2021, it tracked 146 such bills, a 300 percent increase. 2022 has seen the introduction of 109 bills; 58 would have restricted the ballot measure process. “We often talk about the three branches of government: executive, judicial, legislative. It is my opinion that we are remiss to not include a fourth branch of government: the people,” Figueredo says. “We believe a thriving democracy must include ballot measures. Some of the fundamental questions before us are: Do we have a democracy as we say we do? Do people see themselves reflected in it? And are we giving them opportunities or avenues to engage?”

Meanwhile, another Supreme Court case looms on the horizon: *Moore v. Harper*. The case rests on an idea called “independent state legislature theory.” Widely discredited by experts, the theory argues that the Constitution grants state legislatures nearly total control over federal elections. Adoption of the theory could mean important provisions of state constitutions — such as gerrymandering bans and the right to a secret ballot — would no longer hold. The Supreme Court heard oral arguments on December 7, 2022, with a decision to follow.

Against this bevy of legal developments, Carnegie grantees have needed to educate — and to litigate. The Brennan Center has filed an amicus brief in *Moore v. Harper* describing the theory as “radically at odds with how elections have been run in the United States for centuries” and arguing that it would cause chaos in elections nationwide and “endanger or disrupt vast amounts of law, policy, and practice.” Organizations like MALDEF have filed lawsuits against a range of efforts to restrict the vote, such as voter purges and violations of the National Voter Registration Act. The Native American Rights Fund has sued over issues including

ballot collection, registration limitations, and a matter especially important to Native Americans living on reservations: home address requirements for voters. This prerequisite was litigated in North Dakota from 2016 to 2020, and Arizona just passed a new address requirement, according to Matthew Campbell, deputy director of the Native American Rights Fund. “In Arizona, the state legislature is aware that those don’t exist on many reservations, so they’re creating a requirement that is impossible to meet.” As laws shift, grassroots organizations have needed both to keep voters abreast of such changes and to think strategically about how to handle them.

Threats to voting have been arriving from outside the legal system, too. In the last couple of years, notes Page Gleason, senior program officer of the State Infrastructure Fund, based at NEO Philanthropy, there has been a “huge uptick” in threatening behavior at voting locations, a “demonstrable difference in people showing up to polls with guns and dogs.” A number of leading activists, she says, have received death threats or have been “doxxed” — meaning they have had their personal information, such as addresses and names of family members, published online without their consent. Some have hired private security firms. In Michigan, according to Erica Teasley Linnick, vice president of the State Infrastructure Fund, some voters received robocalls informing them that if they voted by mail, debt collectors, the police, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention would receive their information. The people behind the calls were “prosecuted — but you can’t unring the bell,” she points out. “If you hear something that scared you, you think: ‘I don’t need to vote that badly.’”

A “violent political culture” distinguished this midterm election from that of 2018, says Jaynes. In response to these developments, foundations such as Carnegie Corporation of New York fund national voter-protection hotlines in four languages, staffed by lawyers and election experts whom grantees support. Additionally, the Brennan Center put out a guide called *Voters Should Not Be Intimidated*, which cites the laws that prevent certain kinds of intimidation. The idea, Weiser says, is to make voters “confident the law is on their side.”

Meanwhile, an overlapping problem has been on the rise: disinformation. Disinformation may cover the voting process — for instance, “misleading low-propensity voters into thinking Election Day is *not* Tuesday, November 8 — or telling them their precinct has changed when it hasn’t,” says Saenz. Or it may cover substance, “falsities about candidates or measures.”

Certain communities are more vulnerable to disinformation than others, such as rural communities, according to Jaynes, which often lack local newspapers. Rebecca Carson, director for Inclusive Democracy

Programs at Four Freedoms Fund, also at NEO Philanthropy, explains that any community of new voters — particularly new-citizen voters from immigrant communities — tends to be at risk, because they have more information to absorb than experienced voters. Most Latino voters get their information about elections from social media, particularly YouTube, according to Vargas, CEO of NALEO, rather than traditional news channels. They can also receive disinformation in two languages — and Spanish-language disinformation is harder to track.

The Four Freedoms Fund’s grantees are responding to this problem in a number of ways. According to program officer Juliana Cabrales, Chinese for Affirmative Action has launched a fact-checking website designed to combat the proliferating false narratives on such platforms as WeChat. NALEO has launched a campaign called *Defiende la Verdad*, which Vargas describes as “an effort to educate community leaders on recognizing misinformation and disinformation in the civic engagement space and reporting it to a tool we call Junkipedia.”

Young voters have a complex relationship with disinformation: on the one hand, they are new to the system, and “a lot of times they don’t know what they don’t know as new voters unfamiliar with the process,” according to Carolyn DeWitt, president and executive director of Rock the Vote. On the other hand, they are deeply familiar with the online landscape, and thus often perceive it more skeptically than their elders. For that reason, Rock the Vote has encouraged young voters to help older family members sift through online information — there is “opportunity for teamwork there,” says DeWitt, “that is multigenerational.”

Moving Forward

The singular experiences of the 2020 election had direct effects on the 2022 midterms. Many voted differently: Latinos, for instance, “had traditionally tended to vote in person on Election Day,” notes Martinez de Castro. But according to polling data from late October 2022, just a third of Latinos were planning to vote on Election Day, and of the remaining two-thirds, half were planning to vote early and half by mail, she says. Those trends were strengthened by the pandemic, when grantees like UnidosUS “did a lot of work to make sure people were aware of those other options.”

For civic engagement groups, says Alexis Anderson-Reed, chief executive officer of State Voices, “2020 forever changed how we will organize and register voters. Prior to 2020, everyone knew digital was important, but now it is central to everything,” and groups are seeking the best ways to incorporate digital techniques and technologies into their work. Gleason describes the current model as a new hybrid “layered” approach, one that combines digital and in-person strategies.

Maya Wiley, president and chief executive officer of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, highlights another development: a new model of ongoing, collaborative relationships among civic engagement groups of all stripes. While groups have long worked together, the exigencies of 2020 — from the pandemic to the census count to the presidential election — prompted them to “break down silos” and unite in a deeper and longer-lasting way. “So now,” she said shortly before the midterm election, “we’ve got a boiler room on election protection, and we could do that because of the trust we’ve built across groups since 2020. The boiler room has people coming back together from unions, think tanks, messaging, legal, locals — all the tracks.”

The 2020 election morphed the election-year calendar, too. The counting of ballots went on for weeks after Election Day, and audits based on unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud stretched on for months. This aftermath, like the run-up to the election, took a toll. “We are experiencing some downstream effects of that now,” says Carson of Four Freedoms Fund. Similarly, Gleason describes a sense of depletion stemming from challenges like disinformation and antidemocracy bills, for organizers and voters alike. Everyone is “frustrated and confused and tired. That is one of the intents of these blatant and subtle attempts to suppress the vote.”

Yet these difficulties aside, “early data from the 2022 election cycle indicate that many organizations reached record numbers of voters,” Carson points out. And perhaps even the challenges offer signs of hope. Anderson-Reed reflects on the high turnout of 2020, especially among young people and people of color, and the backlash against that participation, such as election denial and the limitations on voting options. “Why was there backlash?” she asks. “Because we have power. There wouldn’t be this much time, effort, and money put into attacking people’s right to vote if democracy didn’t work and folks in this country didn’t have power. It means we are doing something right. 2020 was just one example, but we see examples all across the country every single day.” ■

Abigail Deutsch’s writing appears in the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and many other publications. She teaches at the Columbia Journalism School.



How Could Universal Civic Duty Voting Improve American Democracy?

Heather McGhee describes how universal civic duty voting would give America a system in which everyone would count and how the voting electorate would look far more like America

By **Heather McGhee**

Universal civic duty voting is the idea that every American citizen, as part of her basic civic duties, be required to participate in our nation's democratic life.

Universal civic duty voting would give us a system in which everyone would count, and the people who represent us would have to speak to all of us. The percentages of poor and working people, of young people, and of people from all communities of color participating in voting would jump immediately if universal civic duty voting were adopted, and the voting electorate would look far more like America.

Many positive ripple effects would emerge from this one major change. All jurisdictions — federal, state, and local — would have incentives to enact a set of “gateway reforms” (such as same-day registration and early voting), which would make it more possible and convenient for voters to fulfill their new legal responsibilities.

In addition, I expect a wide range of institutions would respond by promoting participation. Schools would increase their commitment to civic education. Companies would make sure their employees could fulfill their now-required civic duty. Civic and community organizations would make it a larger part of their activities and culture. Media and communications platforms would redouble their efforts to make sure people knew what to do.

Lawrenceville, Georgia | November 2, 2022 Voters fill the booths at the early voting site located in Gwinnett County's Voter Registrations & Elections Beauty P. Baldwin Building. CREDIT: © 2022 SUE DORFMAN

But if everyone were voting, guaranteed, campaigns would have to craft messages that appealed to everyone, and voter suppression would become a thing of the past. And — call me an optimist — I think citizens would respond as well. Young people would develop the voting muscle much earlier, and people would educate themselves, both about procedures and about issues and candidates, in order to be able to fulfill their legal responsibilities. It would become part of the culture, like filling out the census, paying taxes, registering for selective service, and serving on a jury.

The nature of political campaigns would change, too. Now so much of campaigns are about finding “your” base and getting them to turn out. And, as we have seen all too often, if you can depress the other candidate’s or party’s base — either by erecting legal or procedural barriers, by negative campaigning, by misinformation, or even by intimidation — well, that’s fine, too.

But if everyone were voting, guaranteed, campaigns would have to craft messages that appealed to everyone, and voter suppression would become a thing of the past. And — call me an optimist — I think citizens would respond as well. Young people would develop the voting muscle much earlier, and people would educate themselves, both about procedures and about issues and candidates, in order to be able to fulfill their legal responsibilities. It would become part of the culture, like filling out the census, paying taxes, registering for selective service, and serving on a jury.

In their book *100% Democracy: The Case for Universal Voting* (The New Press, 2022), E. J. Dionne Jr. and Miles Rapoport have done all of us a great service by making the case for this game-changing policy as no one has done before. Universal civic duty voting should become a staple of the agenda of organizations trying to improve American democracy, and I hope some truly forward-looking cities and states will embrace and enact the idea, thereby fulfilling their role as laboratories of democracy. I look forward to being a part of this conversation, and

I have no doubt that if we can make a democracy that truly reflects the sum of us, we will find our “solidarity dividend,” and we will indeed all prosper together. ■

Heather McGhee is an expert in economic and social policy and the best-selling author of *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together* (One World, 2021). She is the former president of the inequality-focused think tank Demos and currently chairs the board of Color of Change, the nation’s largest online racial justice organization.

This excerpt originally appeared in *100% Democracy: The Case for Universal Voting* by E. J. Dionne Jr. and Miles Rapoport. Copyright © 2022 by E. J. Dionne Jr. and Miles Rapoport. Foreword © 2022 by Heather McGhee. Published by The New Press. Reprinted here with permission. Carnegie Corporation of New York funded some of the research that led to the publication of the book.

Universal civic duty voting is what Australians refer to as “compulsory attendance at the polls.” More than two dozen countries have some form of civic duty voting that is required by law. Mandatory voting policies in Australia, Uruguay, and Belgium led to voter turnout in the 90 percent range in the 2000s.

A Dozen Ways to Increase Voting in the United States

E. J. Dionne Jr. and Miles Rapoport propose 11 gateway reforms to pave the way for universal civic duty voting

By **E. J. Dionne Jr.** and **Miles Rapoport**

For decades, Carnegie Corporation of New York has supported grantees that have developed and advocated for the policies to increase voting in the United States described by E. J. Dionne Jr. and Miles Rapoport in their book 100% Democracy: The Case for Universal Voting with a foreword by Heather McGhee (The New Press, 2022). These policies, which have been tested and evaluated over the years, have come from organizations such as the Brennan Center for Justice, the Common Cause Education Fund, Demos, and Human SERVE. The unprecedented voter turnout in the 2020 election, during a pandemic, saw voters use many of the methods of voting outlined in the following excerpt from 100% Democracy, allowing them to vote safely and make their voices heard. — Geri Mannion, Managing Director, Strengthening U.S. Democracy, Carnegie Corporation of New York

Universal civic duty voting is a logical leap forward from the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and it would provide much-needed protections to the right to vote. Our proposal is designed to vindicate the liberating purposes of the 1965 law and the rights guaranteed in the 14th and 15th Amendments of the Constitution. When the United States Supreme Court gutted key provisions of the Voting Rights Act in *Shelby County v. Holder*, it unleashed a new wave of voter suppression, rolling back advances once thought secure. A vibrant democracy movement, in turn, pushed back against the vote suppressors and worked actively for reforms that would increase participation.

A demand for universal civic duty voting is also a demand for such reforms, which would put an end to the cycles of inclusion and exclusion that have been part of our nation’s story from the beginning. As our polling has shown, many Americans worry that civic duty voting will not work unless it is implemented along with other changes to our system. We agree. A range of gateway reforms is inextricably linked to the successful introduction of universal participation.



Charlotte, North Carolina | November 3, 2022 Poll worker Margaret Davis explains the importance of voting to first-time voters Andre Caleca and Caroline Ku while Andre’s father, Paul Caleca, looks on. CREDIT: © 2022 SUE DORFMAN

The example of Australia is instructive: that country’s system works well because the requirement to vote works in tandem with a range of voter-friendly policies. Election day is conveniently scheduled on a Saturday, for example. Registration and access to the ballot are made easy, and election officials are required to make energetic, affirmative outreach efforts to ensure that citizens are registered. Voting opportunities, including mail-in voting, early voting, and numerous polling places, are extensive. Because everyone must vote, the practice of intimidating people at polling places so they won’t vote is nonexistent. And the country’s system of election administration is nonpartisan and professional, reducing the opportunities and temptations to tilt rules and practices in favor of one side.

The reforms we propose build on the work of the voting rights and democracy movements, and they should be promoted by federal law. Gateway reforms fall into three categories: expanding opportunities to register, increasing the options for voting, and strengthening effective election administration.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES TO REGISTER

1. Same-Day Voter Registration

Historically, the requirement to register in advance of voting was enacted as an intentional hurdle to

participation, targeting the influx of immigrants in the late 19th and early 20th centuries while also preventing the extension of the right to vote for Black Americans. It has also for years been standard practice to rationalize deadlines cutting off registration well before election day as necessary to give election officials time to create accurate lists of eligible voters.

But technological advances and the digitization of voting rolls make this rationale for advanced registration anachronistic. Same-day registration encourages new voters to enter the process, and also allows existing voters to update or correct errors in their registrations. The procedure, first adopted in the mid-1970s in Maine, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, has consistently led to significant increases in voter participation, without any major problems of implementation. The number of states that offer same-day registration has grown dramatically. In 2020, 21 states and the District of Columbia offered people the opportunity to use it, and it made a difference; consistent with earlier studies, states with same-day registration had turnout rates 5 percent higher than states without it.

2. Automatic Voter Registration

Twenty states and the District of Columbia have adopted policies that automatically register citizens to vote and update an existing voter registration whenever a citizen

interacts with the state Department of Motor Vehicles and, in some jurisdictions, other governmental or social service agencies that collect citizenship information. Citizens typically are given the opportunity to opt out of registering, rather than being required to opt in. Oregon was the first state to move away from the opt-in model when the state implemented automatic registration in 2016. In that year alone, more than 225,000 residents were automatically registered through Oregon’s Department of Motor Vehicles. The process, still relatively new, has rapidly expanded. In cases where ineligible voters (such as noncitizens) are mistakenly added to the rolls, states should enact “safe harbor” provisions to protect those added to the rolls by mistake. California and Vermont have such provisions to protect noncitizens in the small number of cases where this has taken place. Since immigration is a federal responsibility, Congress should enact national protections along these lines as well.

3. Restoring the Right to Vote for Citizens with Felony Convictions

Nearly all states, thanks to significant progress achieved over the last decade, now allow citizens with felony convictions to have their voting rights restored after completion of their sentence. However, the policies concerning the way that probation, parole, and the payment of fines and fees are handled vary considerably across states, as the Florida battle showed. Entirely decoupling people’s right to vote from their incarceration status — as Maine, Vermont, and Washington, D.C., have done — would be a major step forward. At a minimum, a uniform standard that provides full restoration of voting rights after a person’s release from prison would remove this functionally and historically racist barrier to voting.

4. Online Registration

Forty states and the District of Columbia now allow people to register online. This cost-saving measure, first implemented in Arizona in 2002, has eased voting registration for many. The COVID-19 pandemic gave additional impetus for online registration, as options for in-person registration narrowed in 2020.

5. Preregistration of 16- and 17-Year-Olds

Twenty-three states now allow eligible young people to preregister before they are 18 years old. Their names are then automatically placed on the electoral rolls upon their 18th birthday. Preregistration allows schools the opportunity to engage and educate students in civics and voting in high school before they disperse to the workforce or to college. Some studies have shown that this early registration makes it more likely that young people will become voters when they reach voting age.

INCREASING THE OPTIONS FOR VOTING

States have also made significant progress since the days when voting was largely restricted to the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November — a vestige of a federal law enacted in 1845 based on the needs of farmers in what was then a heavily agricultural nation. The election of 2020, in which an astonishing 111 million people voted by means other than in person on that second Tuesday, shows just how far we have come from that anachronistic concept of voting.

6. Early Voting

Forty-three states and the District of Columbia now allow people to vote before election day. A 2020 study on the impact of early voting in Ohio by the *American Economic Journal* found “substantial positive impacts of early voting on turnout, equal to 0.22 percentage points of additional turnout per additional early voting day.” In the 2020 election, 25 percent of voters cast their votes early in person.

The number of days that early voting is permitted and how convenient the process is made vary greatly between states. For example, early voting in Florida must begin at least 10 days before an election, while Virginia enacted a law in the 2020 legislative session allowing 45 days of early voting. Expanded early voting was also one of the successful adaptations made during the COVID-19 crisis. Federal policies to require states to offer at least 15 days of early voting would be an important step in the right direction.

7. Vote by Mail

Expanding mail-in voting was a central focus of efforts to allow people to vote safely in the 2020 elections. In addition, many states sent ballot applications, or ballots themselves, to every voter in their jurisdictions. Although most states initially made the expansions applicable only for the pandemic year, a number of states have moved to make the expansion permanent. Sixteen states, either by legislation or in their state constitutions, still require voters to provide an excuse in order to vote by absentee. They should join the other 29 states and the District of Columbia in the move toward no-excuse absentee voting. Five states — Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, Utah, and Washington — have gone beyond no-excuse absentee ballots by sending ballots to all or almost all eligible voters. California did the same for the 2020 election, as did Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, Vermont, and the District of Columbia. The results of the mail voting expansion were dramatic. Forty-five percent of all voters voted by mail. While all states had increases in turnout compared to 2016, the states that had full or close-to-full voting by mail had a 9 percent increase in turnout, compared to a 5 percent increase in states that did not do so. Expanded mail-in voting should clearly be a permanent part of our election process.

8. Flexible Election Day Options

During the pandemic, many states invested in innovative efforts to make polling places safe. These efforts would be equally useful in a nation free of COVID-19. Curbside voting is one example: poll workers took ballots or portable machines to voters' cars, eliminating the need to stand in line. Some jurisdictions used mobile voting centers. The use of drop boxes grew dramatically, for both early and election day voting. It also seems obvious that the successes during the pandemic in recruiting and training a new generation of election workers should be replicated in calmer times. Widely available early voting also improves the experience for election day voters by reducing the number of voters who need to use a single polling place. The shortened lines and wait times achieved in 2020 should be the goal for every election.

9. Convenient Placement of Accessible Precincts and Vote Centers

The success of universal voting will also depend on the convenient placement of polling places and the effective use of vote centers. This can be especially important for rural and Indigenous voters who often need to travel long distances to cast a ballot — particularly in tribal lands, where access is now often severely limited. Quantity matters: all jurisdictions should place precincts and vote centers in enough places to ensure ease of voting for all citizens.

Voters with disabilities can have their right to vote impaired when voting sites lack wheelchair accessibility or present other physical challenges. All voting centers should meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements and allow people with disabilities maximum access and privacy in their voting process. Colorado currently conducts and releases audits that detail counties' compliance with federal accessibility standards in their polling places after each election, and the rest of the country should follow suit.

All these reforms make sense with or without universal civic duty voting. But a system that would require everyone to vote must do all it can to remove obstacles to citizens carrying out their responsibilities.

STRENGTHENING EFFECTIVE ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Even good election policies can be undermined if election administration does not inspire confidence among voters that their participation is valued and that their votes will count. Election administration had not been a topic that made anyone's heart beat faster, yet one heartening result of the 2020 pandemic election was the transformation of many election officials into national heroes. Like other essential workers — for essential they were — they deserved the acclaim. The honor we accorded them should inspire far more interest in the measures we need to take

to administer elections professionally and effectively, another essential step toward universal civic duty voting. Laws in some states to undercut the nonpartisan administration of elections must be challenged both through federal legislation and in the courts. Election subversion has become as significant a threat to voting rights as voter suppression.

10. Maintenance of Voting Lists

Every jurisdiction must maintain accurate and up-to-date voting lists. Even with civic duty voting in place, it will be necessary to guard against overly aggressive purging policies, which often remove eligible voters from the electoral rolls. Aggressive purges have resulted in major legal battles in a number of states, as recounted earlier. States should carefully follow the list management procedures specified in the National Voter Registration Act and engage in careful cross-state cooperation through the Electronic Registration Information Center.

11. Adequate Funding of Election Administration

The funding of elections became a major issue during the COVID-19 crisis, and substantial federal support on an ongoing basis will be required to make voting accessible to all citizens. Elections are typically an afterthought in local budgeting. This must change. Together, all levels of government must come to see investments in the election process as critical investments in democracy itself.

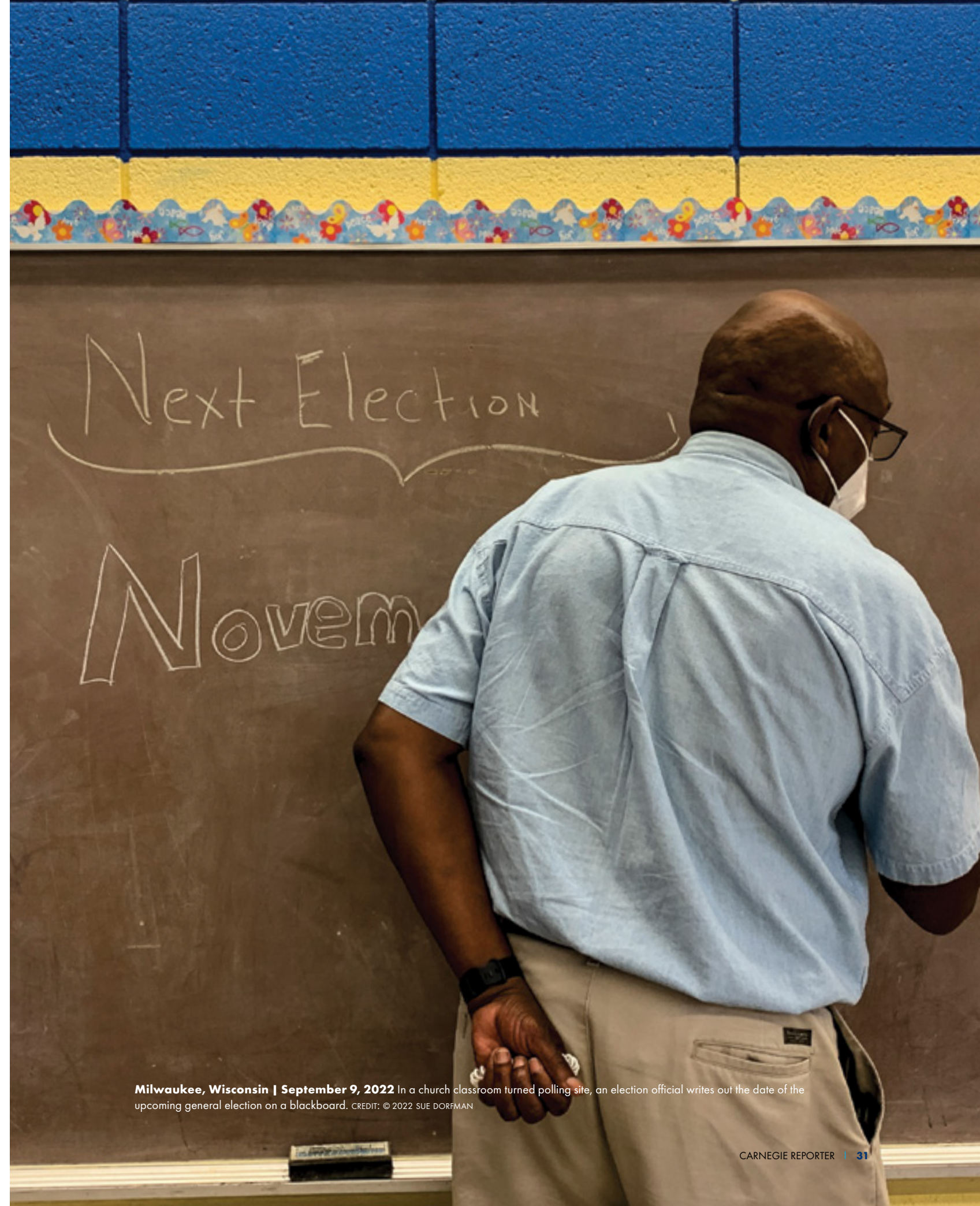
BUILDING ON 2020

The registration and voting reforms advanced by organizers, advocates, and forward-looking election officials are encouraging and important. They have had real effects on turnout. Expanded voting opportunities in blue, red, and purple states are positive steps toward increased participation. Embracing and building on these achievements — and, yes, resisting efforts to roll them back — will improve American democracy now, and give universal civic duty voting its best opportunity to succeed. ■

E. J. Dionne Jr. is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, a syndicated columnist for the *Washington Post*, university professor at Georgetown University, and visiting professor at Harvard University.

Miles Rapoport is executive director of *100% Democracy: An Initiative for Universal Voting* and the senior practice fellow in American democracy at the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the Harvard Kennedy School. He formerly served in the Connecticut state legislature and as secretary of the state. He is a past president of Demos and of Common Cause.

This excerpt originally appeared in *100% Democracy: The Case for Universal Voting* by E. J. Dionne Jr. and Miles Rapoport. Copyright © 2022 by E. J. Dionne Jr. and Miles Rapoport. Foreword © 2022 by Heather McGhee. Published by The New Press. Reprinted here with permission. Carnegie Corporation of New York funded some of the research that led to the publication of the book.



Milwaukee, Wisconsin | September 9, 2022 In a church classroom turned polling site, an election official writes out the date of the upcoming general election on a blackboard. CREDIT: © 2022 SUE DORFMAN



What Can Philanthropy Do to Protect and Expand Voting Rights?

The latest efforts to suppress the votes of Americans demand that philanthropies across causes, from environment and education to health care, do more by continually supporting the expansion and protection of voting rights – and not just at election time, writes the Corporation’s Geri Mannion

By **Geri Mannion**

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania | May 17, 2022 Kendall Alexander places her absentee ballot in a drop box on Pennsylvania’s primary day.
CREDIT: © 2022 SUE DORFMAN

More than 158 million Americans voted in the 2020 election — a record number despite the challenges posed by a global pandemic. But rather than celebrating this development as a victory for democracy, many government leaders have responded with a slew of proposals aimed at making it harder to vote.*

Since 2020, these measures have restricted voter access by cutting back on extended early voting hours, eliminating drive-through voting, and prohibiting election officials from sending mail-in voting applications to voters. Many of these efforts specifically target people of color, relying on false claims of rampant voting fraud as justification. But the clear effect is to reduce voting access across party lines for huge portions of the electorate — Black and brown, young and old, urban and rural.

Such policies are bad for our democracy and would pose real harm to communities that are central to the work of many foundations. No matter what issues our organizations focus on, we will get better results if all Americans can participate equitably in our democracy and hold our government leaders accountable.

Philanthropy has a long and distinguished record of standing up for the voting rights of vulnerable populations, including in recent decades. Foundations supported bipartisan efforts that resulted in the enactment of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 and the Help America Vote Act of 2002. After the 2013 Supreme Court decision *Shelby County v. Holder* stripped important provisions from the Voting Rights Act of 1965, grantmaker-led efforts supported voting-rights litigation, voter protection, and policy research aimed at ensuring the voices of all eligible voters are heard.

But the latest wave of efforts to suppress the votes of Americans demands that philanthropy do more. In 2019, Carnegie Corporation of New York published *Voting Rights Under Fire*, a report that highlighted the work of the heroic lawyers, grassroots activists and organizers, coalition and movement builders, and everyday citizens who are following in the footsteps of earlier generations that fought to protect and expand Americans' voting rights. We also looked at the many ways philanthropy can engage in this urgent work.

One of our conclusions was that this is an area all foundations should embrace — not just those whose primary focus is protecting democracy or promoting civic involvement. The ability to vote freely and fairly is fundamental to the efforts of all grantmakers, whether we focus on the environment, health care, or education or work at the local, state, or national level.

*The 2022 midterm elections also indicate a much higher turnout than is usual in off-year elections, with 40.7 million citizens voting before Election Day.

So how can philanthropy make a difference in this moment when Americans' voting levels are up, and it is clear voters want their voices heard? Here are a few ideas:

Don't think about these issues only at election time. Local, state, and national groups need flexible, reliable support year in and year out to counter regular assaults on voting rights that one lawyer with the Southern Coalition for Social Justice compared to “a big game of whack-a-mole.” Yet many organizations reported a pronounced drop in funding after the 2020 election cycle. A Corporation grantee who works on voting issues across the country shared that her organization's projected income for election protection, advocacy support, voter registration, and related work saw a 40 percent decrease in 2021.

Declines like these work against the goal of building a stronger, healthier democracy. Boom-and-bust cycles of election-related funding don't allow groups to build the lasting infrastructure needed to respond to challenges and opportunities as they arise, especially in the years between big elections when lawmakers often try to undermine voter protections when they think people won't notice.

Join with other grantmakers. Pooled funds such as the State Infrastructure Fund, which is operated by NEO Philanthropy, allow grantmakers to coordinate their resources and work together to increase civic participation and promote voting rights for marginalized people. Few foundations have the staffing or expertise to determine which state and local groups to support, so funds of this type can do that work for them, assuring money goes where it's needed most.

Grantmakers can also join collaboratives that reflect their missions or target populations. For example, the Heartland Fund concentrates on the challenges facing rural communities when it comes to civic engagement and voting. One of those challenges is that county governments in many rural areas are making voting harder by reducing the number of polling places. In seven counties in Georgia, major polling place reductions resulted in one polling place serving voters across hundreds of square miles. Studies have shown that the further voters have to travel to a polling place, the less likely they are to vote.

Support local voter engagement. Most of the media interest in U.S. elections revolves around federal-level races: who will be president and who controls Congress. But local races — city council, mayor, district attorney, school board, for example — often impact voters more directly. Yet, downticket races usually have very low voter interest, and there is often a drop-off as citizens choose to skip over voting for offices or candidates they know little about. Foundations, especially at the local level, could invest more on voter education about why local- and state-elected officials are so important. This year, many voters

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No matter what issues our organizations focus on, we will get better results if all Americans can participate equitably in our democracy and hold our government leaders accountable.

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learned about the importance of the secretary of state, who usually oversees elections. All of the candidates for secretary of state in battleground states defeated candidates who denied the legitimacy of the 2020 election. That bodes well for the 2024 presidential election and fair elections.

Support legal action and advocacy. Time and again, nonpartisan lawsuits and advocacy have proven their worth as essential strategies for protecting voting rights. But litigation is expensive. Groups filing strong cases need data, technology, expert witnesses, local partners, experienced lawyers, and more.

Right now, nonprofit public-interest litigation groups are working overtime to push back against antidemocratic policies that restrict voting rights in communities of color. Organizations such as the Native American Rights Fund are fighting requirements that voter IDs include a physical street address even though one-third of those living on reservations use post office boxes only. Cases like these are ongoing and will continue to need support whether or not an election is on the immediate horizon.

Many grantmakers can provide general operating support to groups that do this work and can invest in nonpartisan public education efforts highlighting the need for new protections.

Voting rights should not be a controversial or a partisan issue. However, foundations concerned about jumping right in can test the waters by funding civic engagement and get-out-the-vote efforts. They can also support more and better civic education programs in schools and communities so more Americans understand the power of their vote.

As philanthropy continues to consider how best to support the struggle for racial justice, voting rights and voter participation should be central to that work, both during elections and in the years in between. The record number of Americans who voted in 2020 in the middle of a pandemic is an achievement to build on. While the final turnout numbers for the 2022 midterm elections were not available at press time, it is clear that there continues to be enthusiasm among voters, especially in competitive races. Let's do more to support the people and organizations working at all levels to strengthen our democracy by protecting the right to vote and keep engaging the electorate. ■

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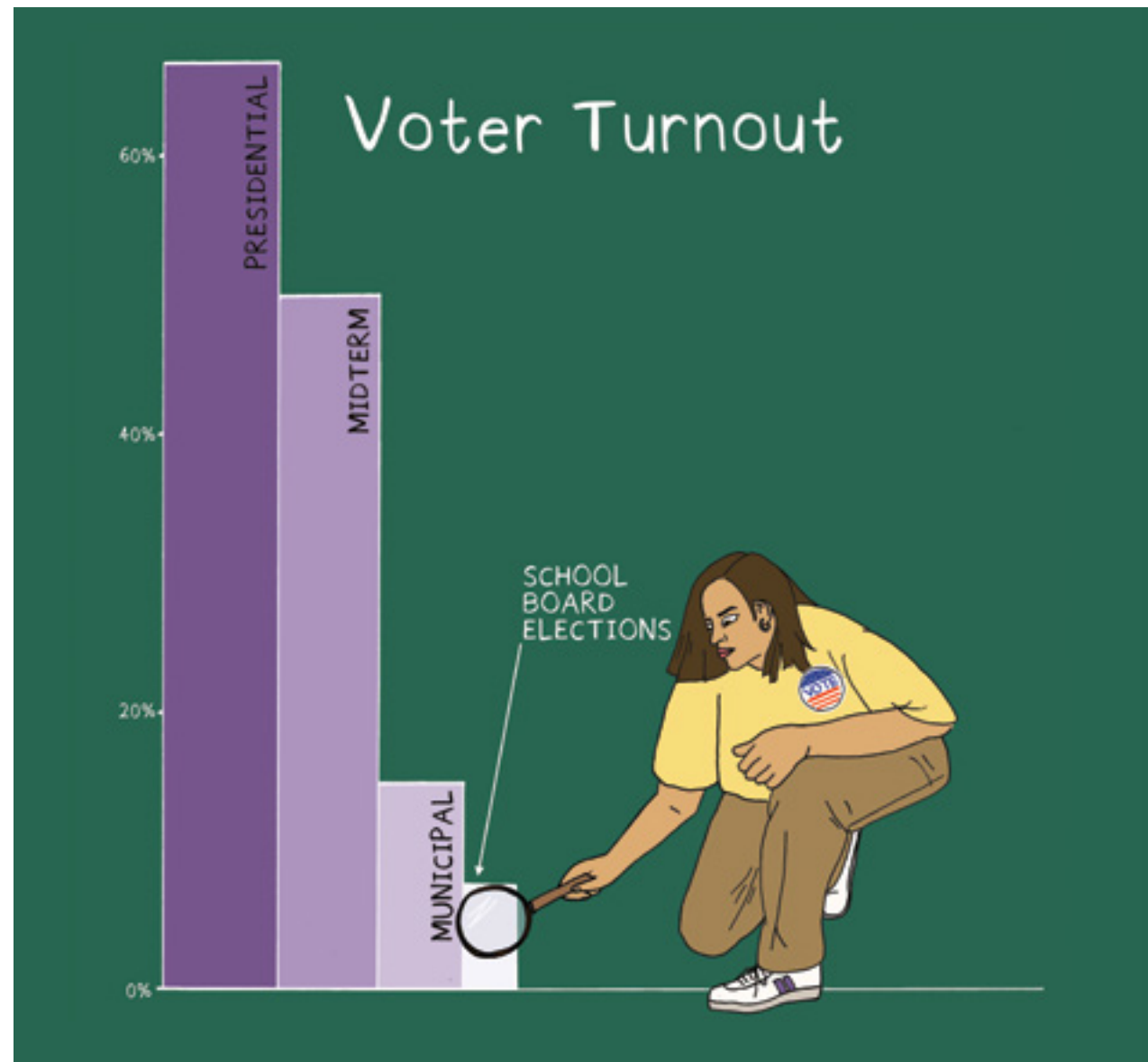
Geri Mannion is managing director of the Strengthening U.S. Democracy program and the Special Opportunities Fund at Carnegie Corporation of New York.

This article, which has been updated and edited, was first published online by the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*. Reprinted with permission.

All Elections Matter: Vote! & Vote Local!

Illustrations by **MONA CHALABI**

Text by **Kelly Devine**



Voter Turnout Data and Sources

Presidential: 66.8 percent | *America Goes to the Polls 2020*, Nonprofit VOTE and U.S. Elections Project

Midterm: 50.3 percent | *America Goes to the Polls 2018*, Nonprofit VOTE and U.S. Elections Project

Municipal: less than 15 percent | “Who Votes for Mayor?” Portland State University

School Board: 5–10 percent | National School Boards Association



Eligible Americans exercising their right to vote are vital to a strong, representative, and enduring democracy. One way to strengthen democracy is to increase voter turnout at all levels. For several decades, Carnegie Corporation of New York has supported grantees that have developed and advocated for policies to increase voting and voter participation of all citizens, especially among those least likely to vote.

All elections matter. To illustrate this point, we commissioned data journalist Mona Chalabi to help visualize the gaps in voter turnout among national and local elections: 66.8 percent in the 2020 presidential election, 50.3 percent in the 2018 midterm elections, less than 15 percent for municipal elections, and 5–10 percent for local school board elections.

We know very little as a country about who votes in local elections and how key demographics like race, age, income, and education are related to voting patterns and behavior. Important decisions are made at the local level — core services like police and fire departments, transportation, housing, libraries, drinking water, public schools, and elections. A project of Portland State University funded by the Knight Foundation in 2015 that looked at municipal elections found that in 20 of America’s 30 largest cities voter turnout for electing community leaders, like mayors and city councilors, was less than 15 percent.

Locally elected school board members compose the largest group of elected officials in the country and yet the National School Boards Association (NSBA) estimates

ON THE LINE: DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

Photojournalist Sue Dorfman has traveled the country documenting individuals as they exercise their right to vote – from New Hampshire to Nevada, from urban Atlanta to small-town Wisconsin. The visual stories she’s captured are as varied as they are inspiring

Text and photos by **Sue Dorfman**

For nearly three decades I have documented and interviewed people as they participate in the foundations of our democracy: voting and helping others to vote. Registering voters, knocking on doors, canvassing voters, attending rallies, administering elections, working the polls, watching the polls, counting ballots, and standing in line and voting – people exercising their belief that each and every voice matters. As a photojournalist *and* as an active voter, they inspire me.

I was in the first wave of 18-year-olds eligible to vote. My college made it easy with a polling station set up in the student union. I didn’t give much thought to the idea that my experience as a voter might differ from that of people in other parts of the country. That is, until I went to Selma to photograph the efforts of a group who came down to register voters, two decades after the passage of the Civil Rights Act.

I returned to the South, this time to Mississippi, twice in subsequent decades. The first time for a documentary that focused on the history of people struggling and dying for the right to vote. The second time was for the closely contested 2018 Senate runoffs. I wanted to see whether voter participation in the Magnolia State had changed. And it had.

I became inspired to learn more. That trip launched my nonpartisan photojournalism project, Documenting Democracy, which tells the stories of those who work to advance, protect, and participate in the vote. Throughout 2020, much of it during the height of the COVID pandemic, I traveled more than 24,000 miles across two dozen states as well as the District of Columbia. I photographed that election cycle from the start of the Iowa caucus through the Georgia runoffs right up to Inauguration Day. I consciously focused on voters and election workers in both swing and fly-over states and in states where battles for representation and voting rights have been – and continue to be – fought.

The photographs that follow are selected from my most recent travels, which have continued through the 2022 midterms. I returned to several of the states I had photographed earlier to learn how voting protocols now differed due to legislative or public health changes. I wanted to hear how views on voting and democracy may have been impacted by the barrage of news stories focused on skepticism about the integrity of our elections.

My photographs attempt to capture the actions of individuals who believe in the power of the vote and the importance of participating in ways large and small to strengthen our democracy. ■

Locally elected school board members compose the largest group of elected officials in the country and yet the National School Boards Association estimates that voter turnout is closer to 5 to 10 percent for these elections.

that voter turnout is often just 5 to 10 percent for these elections.

According to a 2022 study by the National Bureau of Economic Research, nearly 90,000 school board members oversee the education of more than 50 million public school students, and have broad responsibilities for district governance that include the allocation of \$600 billion in expenditures. School board members typically receive little to no monetary compensation despite their influential role in the education process. Moreover, little to no data exists that tracks school board policy decisions.

In the last year, local school board decisions have made national headlines as school board meetings and decisions have taken on the tenor of culture wars – among them how history is taught, the banning of books, how to keep our schools safe, and mental health support for all students. In their efforts to keep politics out of the classroom, Campaign for Our Shared Future, a Carnegie

Corporation of New York grantee, offers a voter guide for local school board elections as well as guidance on how to effectively participate in decision-making at local schools.

While more than 90 percent of school board members are elected by their local communities, according to Pew Charitable Trusts, some cities, like Boston, Chicago (which will hold its first school board election in November 2024), and New York City, among others, are appointed by mayors or in some cases by governors. According to an NSBA survey, school board elections are not always held the same day as national or state elections. These “off-cycle” school board elections that are held on different days from state and national elections see particularly low turnout, according to the Brookings Institution.

Check out your state or local election office website for more information about elections that affect you, your family, your community, your state, and your country. All elections matter – vote! ■

A NOTE ON THE DATA: The United States does not have a federal clearinghouse or aggregate source for voter turnout data for various elections. For its article “Turnout Soared in 2020 as Nearly Two-Thirds of Eligible U.S. Voters Cast Ballots for President,” Pew Research Center succinctly explained the challenges of reporting voter turnout data in the U.S.

Measuring U.S. voter turnout is one of those things that seems intuitively straightforward but is anything but. U.S. elections are run not by a single national agency, as in many other advanced democracies, but by individual states and counties within states. There is not a central registry of eligible voters, no uniform rules for keeping registrations current, and no requirement to report vote totals in a consistent way.

All of which means that calculating turnout rates inevitably involves judgment calls – both in choosing which votes to include (the numerator) and the population against which to compare them (the denominator).

With guidance from Ben Deufel, vice president of Innovation, Learning and Impact at the Voter Participation Center, the

presidential and midterm election data that we cite is sourced from Michael P. McDonald, a professor at the University of Florida who is a leading expert on voting and the founder and director of the U.S. Elections Project. For the numerator, McDonald uses total ballots counted. For the denominator, he uses voting-eligible population, which he constructs by taking the voting-age population and subtracting noncitizens, those who cannot vote due to a past felony conviction, and mentally incapacitated persons. McDonald explained via email that two research assistants are currently collecting municipal and school board election data. “The municipal elections are not always conducted by election officials, rather, they are administered by the local government itself,” according to McDonald. “Part of the project is to document local practices on who runs local elections and what data are available.”

Mona Chalabi is a data journalist and 2023 New America Fellow whose work has been published in the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, and the *Guardian* where she serves as data editor.

Kelly Devine is director of content and publications at Carnegie Corporation of New York.

On the first day of early voting in 2022, a few dozen people were waiting in line for the doors to open at 8:00 a.m. Alvin Merriweather, who arrived early to be first in line, holds his voter ID and phone in his hand. When he started voting, Merriweather was required to pay a poll tax of \$1.00. Arkansas, unlike other states, did not require that voters pass a literacy test, nor did the state explicitly restrict Blacks from voting. Arkansas repealed the poll tax requirement in 1964, the same year that saw passage of the 24th Amendment, which prohibited the use of the poll tax in congressional and presidential elections. Merriweather has not missed an election since casting his first ballot.

Little Rock, Arkansas

October 24, 2022





Starting the day after voter registration ends, Ohio voters can cast their early in-person ballots at their county board of elections. Hamilton County, where Cincinnati is located, has close to 600,000 registered voters. In 2020, at the height of the COVID pandemic, the county's Board of Elections moved early voting to a cavernous hall that allowed for better social distancing. As of 2022, that space is now the county's permanent location for early voting. (Gone are the clear acrylic screens that separated voters from election workers when COVID was raging two years before.) Voter check-in stations line the edges of the hall, with dozens of poll workers available to sign in voters. At this first stop, the voter's ID is scanned and the information is verified in an electronic poll book. Voters then receive a paper ballot, which they mark up at one of the numerous polling booths (standing or seated). Ballot scanners line a back wall and election workers stand by, ready to provide assistance and answer questions. Early voting for the 2022 midterms exceeded that of 2018 in Hamilton County, with voters continuously entering the hall.

Cincinnati, Ohio

October 21, 2022



This is the second time that Korean-born Chang Sup Jung has voted in an election. The first time, Kay Kang, a volunteer with Asian Americans Advancing Justice, came with him to translate his ballot. Believing that as an American citizen, his vote mattered, he contacted Kang again and asked her to accompany him to the polls for the Georgia Senate runoff. Here, Kang explains how to put his paper ballot into the ballot scanner.

Duluth, Georgia

December 1, 2022





Mississippi does not have an official early voting period. However, the state does allow early in-person voting for a range of reasons, including for voters who are over the age of 65. Absentee voting by mail has more restrictions. Here, deputy clerk Devin Black explains the early voting process to Carol Blackmon, who went to the Hinds County circuit clerk office to cast her age-eligible early vote. Her first step: fill out the “Official Application for Absentee Elector’s Ballot.” Mississippi requires a witness’s signature for absentee voting applications and submissions, and the deputy clerk provided that service for Blackmon.

Jackson, Mississippi

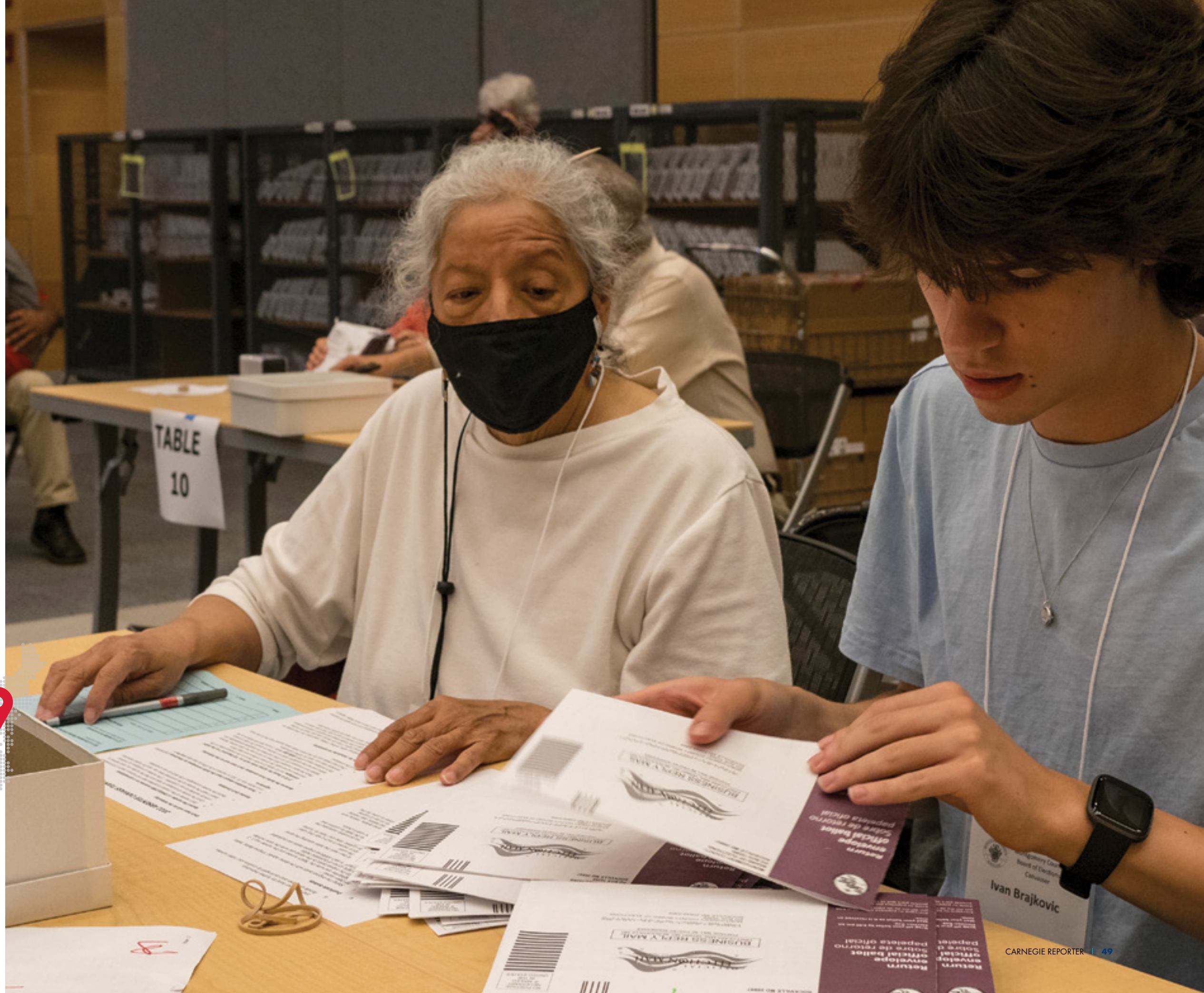
October 28, 2022



The canvassing — or counting — of mail-in ballots began two days after Maryland's Democratic and Republican gubernatorial primaries, which were held on Tuesday, July 19, 2022. The Montgomery County Board of Elections has a Student Election Worker Program that provides high school students with the opportunity to serve as election workers. Here, a student participant in the program partners with a seasoned election worker as they process envelopes in batches of 50. The team double-counts the number of envelopes, checks each outer envelope for a signature and the date it was received, removes each ballot from its envelope, and checks that the ballot can be tabulated. When the process is complete, the team will count and bundle the envelopes and put the ballots in a separate ballot folder.

Germantown, Maryland

July 21, 2022





On a hot summer day, thousands of people from the diverse Asian diaspora along with multicultural partners gathered on the National Mall in the nation's capital for the Asian American Unity March. Prompted by the rise of attacks on the Asian community, the rally sought to advance socioeconomic and cultural equity, racial justice, and solidarity. Speakers emphasized the need to stand together and to fight for change — to continue the push for full participation in democracy, including access to voting, citizenship, and civic power for immigrants and communities of color. The message: *Go vote for those who can't.*

Washington, District of Columbia
June 25, 2022





How Do Dictatorships Survive in the 21st Century?

A recent book coauthored by Andrew Carnegie Fellow Daniel Treisman asks why we still see new autocracies rising from the ashes. Early in the 21st century, the number of democracies surged past the tally of authoritarian states worldwide for the first time. By 2019, dictatorships outnumbered democracies

By **Sergei Guriev** and **Daniel Treisman**

Early in the twenty-first century, global politics hit a major milestone. For the first time, the number of democracies in the world surged past the tally of authoritarian states. As this seismic “third wave” crested, experts identified 98 countries with free government, compared to 80 still controlled by dictators. The optimism was infectious. New information technologies, globalization, and economic development seemed to be calling “time’s up” on strongman rule. As countries modernized, tyranny was becoming obsolete.

The celebrations did not last long. In fact, they hardly got started. Within a few years, the advance of freedom had petered out, yielding what some quickly termed a “democratic recession.” A dramatic financial crisis, born in the United States, sent the global economy crashing,

undercutting faith in Western governance. By 2019, the number of democracies had fallen to 87 while that of dictatorships was back up to 92. In the West, liberalism was proving little match for populism, while in the East, all eyes were turned to China’s meteoric rise. The millennial exuberance gave way to a sense of gloom.

The question is: how can dictatorships survive at all — and even prosper — in an ultramodern world? Why, after all the brutal manias of the twentieth century — from fascism to communism — have been discredited, do we still see new autocracies rising from the ashes? And what to make of the strongmen who are embracing tools of modernity, using Western technologies to challenge Western ways of life?

Today's strongmen realize that in current conditions violence is not always necessary or even helpful. Instead of terrorizing citizens, a skillful ruler can control them by reshaping their beliefs about the world.

In *Spin Dictators: The Changing Face of Tyranny in the 21st Century*, we attempt to explain the nature of current dictatorships. The book grew out of a mixture of research and personal experience. We both spent years tracking the rise of Vladimir Putin's system in Russia, through academic analysis and firsthand observation. His regime came to seem to us not unique but rather an exemplar of trends that were reshaping authoritarian states worldwide — from Hugo Chávez's Venezuela and Viktor Orbán's Hungary to Mahathir Mohamad's Malaysia and Nursultan Nazarbayev's Kazakhstan. Observers struggle with what to call these leaders. Some fall for their pantomime of democracy; others offer awkward analogies to historical strongmen, labeling Putin a "tsar" or President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan a "sultan." We see all these rulers as converging on a novel — though not unprecedented — approach that can preserve autocracy for a while in even modern, globalized settings. The key to this is deception: most dictators today conceal their true nature.

What Exactly Is a Dictatorship?

In the Roman Republic, where the term originated, "dictatorship" meant a temporary grant of absolute power to a leader to handle some emergency. These days, the word is used to refer to any nondemocratic government. It has become synonymous with authoritarianism and autocracy. A democracy, in turn, is a state whose political leaders are chosen in free and fair elections in which all — or almost all — adult citizens have the right to vote. A liberal democracy combines free elections with the rule of law, constitutionally protected civil liberties, and institutional checks and balances.

Before the twentieth century, no states were fully democratic. Even those that held free and fair elections denied most women the vote. Only five countries had universal male suffrage in 1900 — and not the United States, where African Americans were disenfranchised in the Jim Crow South. Besides a handful of restricted suffrage republics like the United States, most political systems fell into three baskets: monarchies, in which a king or queen ruled, sometimes constrained by a constitution and a partly representative parliament;

oligarchies, in which factions of the rich governed; and colonies, administered by a foreign power.

That changed in the twentieth century as democracy spread in three great waves. The first peaked around 1920 as new states splintered from the European empires destroyed by World War I and Western governments liberalized their voting rules. The second occurred between the late 1940s and early 1960s as the winners of World War II imposed democracy on the losers and former colonies in Asia and Africa held elections. The third wave — a true tsunami — started with Portugal's "Carnation Revolution" in 1974, picked up speed as communism collapsed around 1990, and reached its apex in the mid-2000s. By 2015, more than half of all countries — containing 53 percent of the world's population — were electoral democracies, and about one in four was a liberal democracy. Yet, even as democracy expanded, dictatorship did not disappear.

Twentieth-century dictatorships were diverse. Still, most shared certain features. In short, most dictators maintained power by repressing any opposition, controlling all communications, punishing critics, (often) imposing an ideology, attacking the ideal of pluralist democracy, and blocking most cross-border flows of people and information. The key principle behind all these practices was simple: intimidation. The typical twentieth-century autocrat was a dictator of fear.

Fear and Spin

Dictators have been changing. The classic tyrants of the twentieth century — Adolf Hitler, Josef Stalin, Mao Zedong — were larger-than-life figures responsible for the deaths of millions. They set out to build new civilizations within their tightly guarded — and sometimes expanding — borders. That meant controlling not just people's public behavior but also their private lives. To do that, each created a disciplined party and a brutal secret police. Not every old-school dictator was a genocidal killer or the prophet of some utopian creed. But even the less bloodthirsty ones were expert at projecting fear. Terror was their all-purpose tool.



Russian president Vladimir Putin addresses the opening plenary of the World Economic Forum in Davos on January 28, 2009. CREDIT: FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

However, toward the end of the century something changed. Strongmen around the world started turning up to meetings in conservative suits instead of military uniforms. Most stopped executing their opponents in front of packed football stadiums. Many flew to the annual business conference in the Swiss resort of Davos to schmooze with the global elite. These new dictators hired pollsters and political consultants, staged citizen call-in shows, and sent their children to study at universities in the West. They did not loosen their grip over the population — far from it, they worked to design more effective instruments of control. But they did so while acting the part of democrats.

Not all autocrats have made this leap. North Korea's Kim Jong-un and Syria's Bashar al-Assad would fit well into a scrapbook of twentieth-century despots. In China and Saudi Arabia, rulers have digitized the old fear-based model instead of replacing it. But the global balance has shifted. Among leaders of nondemocracies today, the representative figure is no longer a totalitarian tyrant like Josef Stalin, a sadistic butcher like Idi Amin, or even a reactionary general like Augusto Pinochet. He is a suave manipulator like Hungary's Viktor Orbán or Singapore's Lee Hsien Loong — a ruler who pretends to be a humble servant of the people.

This new model is based on a brilliant insight. The central goal remains the same: to monopolize political power. But today's strongmen realize that in current conditions violence is not always necessary or even helpful. Instead of terrorizing citizens, a skillful ruler can control them by reshaping their beliefs about the world. He can fool people into compliance and even enthusiastic approval. In place of harsh repression, the new dictators manipulate information. Like spin doctors in a democracy, they spin the news to engineer support. They are spin dictators.

A Powerful Idea

The West today faces a complicated challenge. In the world wars of the twentieth century and the Cold War, the enemies of freedom wore no disguise. Their military tunics, impassioned speeches, and public executions left little doubt about their true nature. The geopolitical dividing lines were drawn in black and white.

These days, the map is mainly shaded in gray. Except for a few strongmen like Kim Jong-un and Bashar al-Assad who oblige by playing the villain, most are harder to place. They blend in and erode international society from within.

Many today fear Western states will become more like spin dictator regimes — that our democracies will sink into spin. Some opportunistic politicians try for exactly that. They forge television and social media links to the unsophisticated and unhappy, while co-opting elite helpers. Such politicians have destabilized some fragile third-wave democracies and even some more established ones — like Venezuela’s — where the educated class was narrow and compromised.

In more developed, highly educated societies, what holds back aspiring spin dictators, we argue, is the resistance of networks of lawyers, judges, civil servants, journalists, activists, and opposition politicians. Such leaders survive for a while, lowering the tone and eroding their country’s reputation. But, so far, they have all been voted out of office to face possible corruption prosecutions. That was the outcome for Silvio Berlusconi and Donald Trump. No one can be sure this will always be the case. But if it is, the credit will go less to institutions per se than to those who defend them.

Internationally, Western societies are now linked to the dictatorships of the world by multiple capillaries. There is no safe way to opt out of the global system. A better goal is to make that system healthier and ensure it works in the West’s interest. This is a contest that can be won. Spin dictators would like their citizens to trust them and distrust the West. They thrive in a world of cynicism and relativism. But the West has something they do not: a powerful idea around which it can unite, the idea of liberal democracy.

This idea — although some today see it as tarnished — is, in fact, the West’s strongest weapon. Reinforcing the commitment to it is good policy both at home and abroad, which is why autocrats are so eager to stand in the way. Indeed, concern that the West may reinvigorate its democracy and set a strong example animates today’s fear and spin dictators alike. Both will throw up obstacles. But the only way to defeat an idea is with a better idea, and they do not have one. That spin dictators pretend to be democrats proves they have no vision to offer. They can only delay and discourage us for a while — if we let them. ■

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Daniel Treisman is a 2022 Andrew Carnegie Fellow, professor of political science at the University of California, Los Angeles, and a research associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research. His Corporation-funded fellowship aims to assess threats to today’s democracies — and devise strategies to strengthen them — by exploring the historical processes through which they emerged. **Sergei Guriev** is professor of economics and director of graduate studies in economics at Sciences Po in Paris and former chief economist at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

This article is an edited excerpt from *Spin Dictators: The Changing Face of Tyranny in the 21st Century* by Sergei Guriev and Daniel Treisman. Copyright © 2022. Reprinted by permission of Princeton University Press.

1. Do not obey in advance. Most of the power of authoritarianism is freely given. In times like these, individuals think ahead about what a more repressive government will want, and then offer themselves without being asked. A citizen who adapts in this way is teaching power what it can do.

2. Defend institutions. It is institutions that help us to preserve decency. They need our help as well. Do not speak of “our institutions” unless you make them yours by acting on their behalf. Institutions do not protect themselves. So choose an institution you care about and take its side.

3. Beware the one-party state. The parties that remade states and suppressed rivals were not omnipotent from the start. They exploited a historic moment to make political life impossible for their opponents. So support the multiparty system and defend the rules of democratic elections.

4. Take responsibility for the face of the world. The symbols of today enable the reality of tomorrow. Notice the swastikas and other signs of hate. Do not look away, and do not get used to them. Remove them yourself and set an example for others to do so.

5. Remember professional ethics. When political leaders set a negative example, professional commitments to just practice become important. It is hard to subvert a rule-of-law state without lawyers, or to hold show trials without judges. Authoritarians need obedient civil servants, and concentration camp directors seek businessmen interested in cheap labor.

6. Be wary of paramilitaries. When the men with guns who have always claimed to be against the system start wearing uniforms and marching around with torches and pictures of a leader, the end is nigh. When the pro-leader paramilitary and the official police and military intermingle, the end has come.

7. Be reflective if you must be armed. If you carry a weapon in public service, God bless you and keep you. But know that evils of the past involved policemen and soldiers finding themselves, one day, doing irregular things. Be ready to say no.

8. Stand out. Someone has to. It is easy to follow along. It can feel strange to do or say something different. But without that unease, there is no freedom. Remember Rosa Parks. The moment you set an example, the spell of the status quo is broken, and others will follow.

9. Be kind to our language. Avoid pronouncing the phrases everyone else does. Think up your own way of speaking, even if only to convey that thing you think everyone is saying. Make an effort to separate yourself from the Internet. Read books.

Twenty Lessons for Fighting Tyranny

Historian and Andrew Carnegie Fellow Timothy Snyder suggests ways to defend democracy with individual actions

By **Timothy Snyder**

10. Believe in truth. To abandon facts is to abandon freedom. If nothing is true, then no one can criticize power because there is no basis upon which to do so. If nothing is true, then all is spectacle. The biggest wallet pays for the most blinding lights.

11. Investigate. Figure things out for yourself. Spend more time with long articles. Subsidize investigative journalism by subscribing to print media. Realize that some of what is on the Internet is there to harm you. Learn about sites that investigate propaganda campaigns (some of which come from abroad). Take responsibility for what you communicate to others.

12. Make eye contact and small talk. This is not just polite. It is part of being a citizen and a responsible member of society. It is also a way to stay in touch with your surroundings, break down social barriers, and understand whom you should and should not trust. If we enter a culture of denunciation, you will want to know the psychological landscape of your daily life.

13. Practice corporeal politics. Power wants your body softening in your chair and your emotions dissipating on the screen. Get outside. Put your body in unfamiliar places with unfamiliar people. Make new friends and march with them.

14. Establish a private life. Nastier rulers will use what they know about you to push you around. Scrub your computer of malware. Remember that email is skywriting. Consider using alternative forms of the Internet, or simply using it less. Have personal exchanges in person. For the same reason, resolve any legal trouble.

15. Contribute to good causes. Be active in organizations, political or not, that express your own view of life. Pick a charity or two and set up autopay.

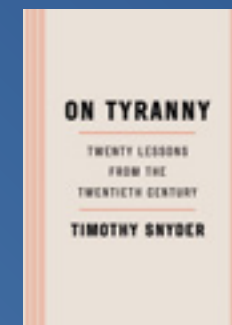
16. Learn from peers in other countries. Keep up your friendships abroad, or make new friends abroad. The present difficulties in the United States are an element of a larger trend. And no country is going to find a solution by itself. Make sure you and your family have passports.

17. Listen for dangerous words. Be alert to the use of the words *extremism* and *terrorism*. Be alive to the fatal notions of emergency and exception. Be angry about the treacherous use of patriotic vocabulary.

18. Be calm when the unthinkable arrives. Modern tyranny is terror management. When the terrorist attack comes, remember that authoritarians exploit such events in order to consolidate power. Do not fall for it.

19. Be a patriot. Set a good example of what America means for the generations to come.

20. Be as courageous as you can. If none of us is prepared to die for freedom, then all of us will die under tyranny.



From the book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* by Timothy Snyder. Copyright © 2017 by Timothy Snyder. Published by Tim Duggan Books, an imprint of Random House, a division of Penguin Random House LLC. All rights reserved.

Timothy Snyder, a 2015 Andrew Carnegie Fellow, is the Levin Professor of History at Yale University and the author of *The Road to Unfreedom*, *On Tyranny*, *Black Earth*, and *Bloodlands*.



Nana Aba Appiah Amfo, photographed during a visit to the Carnegie Corporation of New York offices, in June 2022. CREDIT: FILIP WOLAK

HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH IN AFRICA

Meet Nana Aba Appiah Amfo, the First Female Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana

Early in her career, Amfo received a research fellowship through the Corporation-supported African Humanities Program. Today, she tackles her landmark role “with the eye of the scientist and the heart of a humanist”

By **Syreeta McFadden**

Philanthropic investment in higher education and research in Africa — by Carnegie Corporation of New York and other foundations — has nurtured thousands of the continent’s scholars and academic leaders over the past decades, including Ghanaian linguist Nana Aba Appiah Amfo. Early in her career, Amfo received a research fellowship through the Corporation-supported African Humanities Program (AHP). In October 2021, in a landmark appointment, Amfo became vice-chancellor of the University of Ghana, the university’s first female vice-chancellor in the history of the institution since its founding in 1948.

For Amfo, the story is both personal and institutional. Awarded a postdoctoral fellowship from the AHP in 2008, she recently recalled her excitement as a young scholar then just setting out on her career: “At the time, especially on the African continent, it was rare to hear of postdocs for the humanities, and of organizations which would sponsor humanities research, pure and simple, no embellishment, no contriving to directly link research to policy implications, just research that expanded the frontiers of knowledge production.”

Philanthropy has figured prominently in facilitating Amfo’s success. From that early postdoctoral fellowship to subsequent training in academic leadership, support from foundations — in particular from Carnegie Corporation of New York under the visionary leadership of its late president, Vartan Gregorian — aided in forging a path not only for her scholarship in applied linguistics, but also for senior leadership roles in academia in Ghana. A little over a decade later as a pioneering fellow of the African Humanities Program, Amfo is now the first president of

the newly minted African Humanities Association, which is supported by the Corporation, reflecting the evolution of the former program to formalized organization.

From 2000 to 2010, Carnegie Corporation of New York was part of the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa (PHEA), a consortium of foundations initiated by Gregorian that worked to support the institutional development of African universities in nine countries, including their physical infrastructure, technological capacity, management systems, and gender equity. The Corporation provided leadership in the areas of academic support, institutional development (including library and archival support), information and communications technology, and enhancement of opportunities for women. In the 10 years following the end of PHEA, the Corporation gradually shifted its investment focus toward the continent’s intellectual infrastructure, particularly its academic staff and research capacity. Gregorian was also a strong supporter of higher education for disadvantaged women through a 10-year undergraduate scholarship program targeting women from poor communities.

Over the years, support from the Corporation’s Higher Education and Research in Africa (HERA) program has directly and indirectly shaped and supported the careers of academics like Amfo, whose trajectory as a scholar and leader at the University of Ghana has been undergirded by more than a decade of support from the Corporation. Public higher education on the continent is at a critical inflection point, and investment in human infrastructure is vital for African universities if they are to achieve sustainable growth as they vie to prepare future scholars, leaders, and entrepreneurs.

Africa has more people aged under 20 than anywhere else in the world — and the continent’s population is set to double to two billion by 2050. As governments race to reform and invest in education, the realities facing the modern university servicing this youthful population come into sharp relief. As student enrollment increases, it exacerbates the many challenges that higher education in Africa will confront, including aging faculty, insufficient numbers of PhD candidates prepared to instruct the next generation of scholars, and limited resources to support those scholars engaged in cutting-edge research and knowledge production.

HERA has supported the development and expansion of campus infrastructure and worked to strengthen postgraduate programs and opportunities while expanding additional opportunities for women scholars and researchers. The University of Ghana was one of the first of four universities that were awarded funds through HERA.

“HERA has contributed to developing the early-career researcher concept in Africa through listening to our African university partners,” said Claudia Frittelli, HERA program director. “When a PhD graduate returns to the university with a full teaching load and no time or budget for research, it defeats the purpose of obtaining an advanced degree for generating new knowledge. Carnegie’s support for postdoctoral and early career academics allows academics to develop their research skills while supervising the next cohort, a key function of strong universities.”



Born in 1971 in Kumasi, Ghana, Amfo is the eldest of four children and grew up in Sekondi-Takoradi, the western region of the country. Her parents were both teachers; her father later switched jobs to sports administration, but he continued to instill a passion for learning in his daughter.

“My dad just really believed that I could do anything that I wanted to do,” Amfo said, “and there was nothing stopping me.”

At an early age, Amfo demonstrated a facility with languages. Upon completion of secondary school and the requisite examinations, one of her instructors suggested she consider linguistics as a field of study. Ghana is a multilingual nation — boasting 80 languages spoken among its 31 million citizens — and recognizes 12 official languages.

“I don’t know what it was he saw, but he had mentioned that to me as something to think about,” Amfo said. “By the end of my first year at the university, I was certain that I wanted to pursue linguistics for a career — and that I wanted to remain in academia.”

At university, it was the linguist Florence Dolphyne who most influenced Amfo, later becoming a mentor whose distinguished career in academia presaged that of Amfo’s.

“She loved the discipline,” said Amfo. “She made the discipline enjoyable for me and for many others.”

Dolphyne became the university’s first female professor in 1965, and subsequently became the first woman appointed dean of arts. In 1996, she was named the first female pro-vice-chancellor.

“She’s been a long-standing mentor for me,” Amfo said, recognizing the ways in which her own career mirrors Dolphyne’s. “So essentially, I sort of walked that path to become the dean of languages. I became the second female pro-vice-chancellor for academic and student affairs after her, and then went on to become vice-chancellor to the university.”

Married soon after completing her bachelor’s degree, Amfo began graduate studies at Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim four months after giving birth to her son, followed by a second child, a daughter. She is quick to note the unwavering support of her husband and family.

“My husband was also extremely supportive,” Amfo warmly recalled. “Imagine me being pregnant and looking for grad school, and it was just the two of us in a foreign land, and there wasn’t a moment where he said, ‘Hey, what are you doing here? What’s going to happen? You’re going to have a baby and you are thinking about ...’ No, there was nothing like that. He was there to support me.”

Amfo graduated top of her class for her master’s degree, started lecturing at the University of Ghana in 2001, had her second daughter a year later, and went back to Trondheim to complete her doctoral studies. She received her PhD in 2007.

Amfo’s scholarship and research work is extensive, solidifying her role as a leader in the field of pragmatic linguistics. She has published nearly 30 journal articles and book chapters and has edited a number of books and conference proceedings. Her recent work has focused in the area of language and health, underscoring policy implications for the smooth operation and functioning of public services in multilingual Ghana. “We have realized that when working in a multilingual context, you have medical personnel and doctors who are trained without any consideration to language,” Amfo said. “They are posted to areas without any linguistic consideration, and within the medical settings we do not have trained interpreters, so we find people going into the hospitals and clinics and sometimes they require interpretation or translation.” Amfo explained, “We need to pay attention to that, and we need to support training for these situations.

Some people want to limit you as far as advocating for language requirements for health professionals and doctors. When we can combine all of these efforts, having some basic knowledge in another language and then also training interpreters to be part of the medical team, it’s really important.”

Amfo is the fourth female vice-chancellor in Ghana’s history. After her appointment appeared in the news, a bank employee told Amfo that he shared her photo with his daughter who mistakenly thought that she was an aunt. “You don’t get it,” he told his daughter. Remembering the exchange, Amfo laughed. For ordinary Ghanians, Amfo’s appointment is deeply meaningful, serving in many ways as a model for young girls and women.

“When I started lecturing, frankly, my ambition was not to become the vice-chancellor,” Amfo admitted in a recent interview. “I think as things went on and one thing led to the other, it became apparent at some point that, well, at least I was going to give this a try.”

Her time as a fellow with the African Humanities Program in 2009 proved to be transformational, and Amfo opened herself up to additional opportunities while balancing her scholarship and family life. For example, in 2012, the Corporation funded the International Women’s Forum Fellows Program, a three-part leadership program for emerging women leaders in business and academia. As part of this program, Amfo had the opportunity to shadow Carol Harter, former president of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) learning the ins and outs of university management and administration. Later, as dean of the School of Languages at the University of Ghana (2016–2019), Amfo hosted visiting scholars of the Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Program and the UG African Diaspora Fellowship Program — both programs were supported by the Corporation’s HERA program.

Amfo’s meteoric rise within university governance demonstrates how invaluable postdoctoral support programs can be for African academics — and especially for women academics.

Still, although moving in a positive direction, gender imbalances persist, and women faculty remain underrepresented in the continent’s leading universities. Moreover, too many young scholars leave their home nations to study and train abroad. This “brain drain” taxes a university’s resources at multiple levels: for example, instructor-to-student ratios balloon and vital scholarly research, which universities need to undertake to remain competitive, is stalled.

“The proportion of women academics,” Amfo observed, “is just about 30 percent. And as you can imagine, the higher you go up the ranks, the fewer women that you find.”

The need for continued foundation support for doctoral and postdoctoral training of the next generation of scholars at African universities is urgent. As faculty retire or age out, top-tier talent is lost to American and European institutions. HERA’s investment in African scholars and the institutions and programs they will create — *outside* of the old colonial system — is crucial to the future growth and expansion of Africa’s universities and to sustaining academic life on the continent.

Looking forward, Vice-Chancellor Amfo envisions the University of Ghana becoming competitive, essential, and innovative in the changing climate for higher education in a post-COVID world. “I have come to this job as vice-chancellor,” she has said, “with the eye of the scientist and the heart of a humanist.”

“We need to keep that at the center and not operate a faceless technological environment. The vision of my university is to become a research-intensive university,” she explained. “We are focused on that to ensure that we have created the enabling environment that will allow our researchers to thrive, to improve the quality of our graduate training, and to serve as a subregional hub.” Two words underline her administrative vision for the University of Ghana: *technology* and *humanism*.

“We exist as a university because of human beings, because of the society, because of our students, and because of our many stakeholders.”

Amfo’s many successes suggest a career strategy for future scholars seeking mutual support as they proceed with their postdoctoral training and research. She believes in continued mentorship for young scholars who wish to follow her path as a scholar and administrator. “Good mentorship will help you to achieve in five years what you would have otherwise achieved in 10 years because you have someone guiding you,” Amfo said. “Because I am the product of mentorship, I feel obligated to also support others.” ■

Syreeta McFadden is a writer and professor of English at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, City University of New York.

How Is Russia's Invasion of Ukraine Likely to Alter the Post-World War II International Order?

The dramatic global events unleashed by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and other fast-moving global trends require deep expertise to be understood and explained. Early in the war, a group of experts offered their perspectives on some critical global challenges

As a foundation with a historical commitment to improving the ability of the United States to understand international issues and foreign countries, Carnegie Corporation of New York solicited expert views on three critical questions provoked by Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022: How is Russia's invasion of Ukraine likely to alter the post-World War II international order? How can we avoid further escalation of the international conflict? And what knowledge is needed for the U.S. to navigate evolving foreign policy challenges?

This article addresses the first question through brief perspectives from experts on Russia, nuclear security, and international affairs more broadly, with each answer limited to 100 words or less.

In the spirit of the Corporation's mission to promote the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding, the responses shed light on developments that will impact national policies and international relations for the foreseeable future.

Deana Arsenian

Vice President, International Program, and Program Director, Russia and Eurasia, Carnegie Corporation of New York

Toby Dalton

Senior Fellow and Codirector, Nuclear Policy Program, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace | @toby_dalton

Russia's repeated aggression against Ukraine is increasing demands on U.S. "nuclear umbrellas" in Asia and Europe. South Korea and Japan are debating the idea of sharing U.S. nuclear weapons; Finland and Sweden are joining NATO. Pressures to expand the U.S. nuclear arsenal are growing, potentially reversing a three-decades-long trend of arms reductions and creating new dangers of nuclear use. With concerns about U.S. commitments to its alliances at an all-time high owing to the Trump administration's threats to withdraw, some U.S. allies may choose to develop their own nuclear weapons, with untold consequences for the international order.

Nancy Gallagher

Research Professor; Director, Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland, University of Maryland

President Biden vowed that "in the contest between democracy and autocracy, between sovereignty and subjugation ... freedom will prevail." Yet, governments representing half of humanity remain on the sidelines. Many are authoritarians who share Russian concerns that the West increases its security and advances its values at others' expense. For a unified international response, Biden should acknowledge these concerns and repudiate aggression as an acceptable response. He should explain how unified action against aggression by a coalition of countries with different forms of government will lead to a more inclusive and equitable rules-based international order.



A woman walks in front of a destroyed building after a Russian missile attack in the town of Vasylykiv, near Kyiv, on February 27, 2022.

CREDIT: DIMITAR DILKOFF/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Henry Hale

Professor of Political Science and International Affairs at George Washington University; Codirector of the Program on New Approaches to Research and Security in Eurasia (PONARS Eurasia)

It depends greatly on how the war ends. If Russia winds up with recognized territorial gains (de facto or de jure), a new "nuclear impunity" precedent will have been set that will incentivize a) more states to become nuclear and b) authoritarian nuclear states to use conventional force to settle their territorial disputes at the expense of states not covered by a nuclear umbrella. Among other things, this will harden a divide between NATO and non-NATO in Europe and likely lead to an expansion of Chinese influence in Asia. To the extent Russia fails, the opposite signal will be sent.

Siegfried S. Hecker

Senior Fellow Emeritus, Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University; Director Emeritus, Los Alamos National Laboratory

It has dramatically undermined the global nuclear order that has evolved since World War II. That order has been responsible for preventing the use of nuclear weapons, limiting the number of countries with nuclear weapons, and benefiting from clean nuclear electricity and nuclear medicine. The order was led by the United States, but it would not have been possible without strong support from Russia. Russia's shelling of a nuclear power station and its irresponsible incursion into Chernobyl's contaminated areas along with threatening to use nuclear weapons has turned Russia from a responsible state to a nuclear pariah.

Christopher Miller

Assistant Professor of International History, The Fletcher School, Tufts University | @crmiller1

The Russia-Ukraine War will change how countries think about economic interdependence. The theory that interdependence creates peace has a long history but it has not worked in explaining Russia's relations with Ukraine or with the West. With the U.S. and Europe now imposing tough sanctions on Russia and Russia using its energy exports as a tool of political leverage against Europe, many countries will reassess their trade, investment, and technological links with potential adversaries. The relationship between China and the West, for example, is likely to come under new pressure as policymakers assess the costs and benefits of interdependence.

Adam Mount

Senior Fellow and Director, Defense Posture Project, Federation of American Scientists | @ajmount

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is set to improve the ability of the United States and its allies to deter aggression with indirect means while paradoxically increasing investment in orthodox tools. The invasion has been ruinous for Russia — its economy devastated by punishment from governments and corporations, its military depleted in manpower, munitions, and support from the Russian public. Economic punishment and asymmetric warfare with advanced weapons should give any potential aggressor pause. At the same time, the United States will likely rededicate itself to nuclear deterrence and forward the presence of conventional forces that are already stretched too thin.

From Strategic Stability to Preventing Nuclear War

The Corporation's Sharon K. Weiner offers insights on the role of the nongovernmental sector in reducing nuclear threats, the need for public awareness of weapons programs and nonproliferation, and what she hopes to accomplish as a grantmaker

By **Sharon K. Weiner**



Thousands march for peace in Ukraine on February 6, 2022, in London. CREDIT: KRISTIAN BUUS/IN PICTURES VIA GETTY IMAGES

Sharon K. Weiner, associate professor at American University's School of International Service, joined Carnegie Corporation of New York in January 2022 as a senior resident fellow in the International Peace and Security program. Previously, Weiner served as a program examiner with the White House's Office of Management and Budget, where she was responsible for budget and policy issues related to nuclear weapons and nonproliferation. In addition, she has worked for the Armed Services Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has held research positions at the Los Alamos National Laboratory and at Princeton University's Program on Science and Global Security. She earned her PhD from MIT's Security Studies Program and was named an Andrew Carnegie Fellow in 2018.

Her current research project, *The Nuclear Biscuit*, is a virtual reality experience that allows one to act as the president of the United States during a nuclear crisis. The goal is to understand how people make decisions in a crisis involving nuclear weapons, where the consequences are extremely high and uncertainty great.

With her collaborator Moritz Kütt of the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg, Weiner is trying to determine whether people act according to the expectations of deterrence theory and engage in rational analysis, or whether individuals instead use one of any number of less than rational decision-making shortcuts, as predicted by behavioral psychology.

Weiner is the author of *Our Own Worst Enemy? Institutional Interests and the Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Expertise* (MIT Press, 2011) and most recently *Managing the Military: The Joint Chiefs of Staff and Civil-Military Relations* (Columbia University Press, 2022). The latter book offers an analysis of when the political power of the chairman of the JCS is maximized and can challenge civilian control of the military.

In the following Q&A, Weiner discusses the role of the nongovernmental sector in reducing nuclear threats, the need for public awareness of weapons programs and nonproliferation, what she hopes to accomplish during her time at the Corporation, and more.

William Pomeranz

Acting Director, Kennan Institute at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Three months of vicious fighting have confirmed that Putin wants to take Russia out of the post–World War II (and post–Cold War) international order. Putin clearly believes his view of Russian interests overrides the principle of sovereignty — the backbone of international relations. Moreover, the list of international institutions that Russia intends to leave — or has already left — continues to grow, including the World Trade Organization, the World Health Organization, and the Council of Europe. NATO may have emerged strengthened, but the rest of the international legal order that arose from World War II, Nuremberg, and Helsinki remains in decline and is unlikely to be revived anytime soon.

Stewart Prager

Professor of Astrophysical Sciences, Affiliated Faculty, Program on Science and Global Security, Princeton University

Public alarm at the threats of nuclear use by Putin could propel the fragile nuclear world order in either of two directions. It could induce nations to develop nuclear weapons for protection from invasions, stimulate weapon states to enhance nuclear capability, and accelerate the new nuclear arms race currently underway. Or it could be a wake-up call to move toward a world without nuclear threat. The Ukraine crisis opens an opportunity to fight for the latter. But, I fear and expect, at least in the U.S., that voices for the first direction will prevail, further eroding international nuclear arms control.

Todd Sechser

Professor of Politics and Public Policy, University of Virginia

Russia has given us a vivid reminder that nuclear weapons are not a magic wand. As the war began, Vladimir Putin made several nuclear threats — both explicit and implied. But the fear of nuclear escalation has not intimidated Ukraine into submission. Nor have these threats dissuaded the West from imposing crippling sanctions on Russia and providing military aid to Ukraine. If anything, Putin's nuclear bellicosity has only fueled the international backlash against Russia. The war has thrown a spotlight on the political limits of nuclear weapons, and dictators with nuclear ambitions should take note.

Henry Sokolski

Executive Director, Nonproliferation Policy Education Center | @nuclearpolicy

Ukraine's invasion hasn't altered the liberal postwar order nearly as much as it has catalyzed and revived two security concerns — Russian and Chinese animus against liberal self-rule and the spread and use of nuclear weapons — that prompted the order's creation. Russia's nuclear bullying and invasion of Ukraine (a nonweapons state Moscow pledged not to attack) and China's active acquiescence are reinvigorating NATO and America's Pacific alliances. Meanwhile, interest in nuclear weapons is growing among anxious nonweapons states. If this all sounds familiar, it should: It's life after 1949. The only question now (as before) is how this story will end.

Alexandra Vacroux

Executive Director, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University | @DCRES_Harvard

The war in Ukraine is a deep, self-inflicted wound to Russia and its global standing. Moscow's influence in the future world order will depend much more now on its willingness to serve as China's junior partner. The United States and China will be the poles around which other countries will gravitate for supportive geopolitical, military, and economic relations. The war's disruption of pandemic-frayed supply chains will drive countries and firms to consolidate trade ties around a single pole where possible. Europe's drive to diversify energy supplies away from Russia will provide a countervailing, if temporary, counterweight in support of globalization.

Jon Wolfsthal

Senior Advisor, Global Zero | @jwolfsthal

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there were hopes of ending the confrontational approach that divided Europe and fostering a system built on collective security and mutual prosperity. Russia's invasion of Crimea put those hopes on hold, but Moscow's illegal and unjustified invasion of Ukraine in 2022 has all but killed those ambitions. Instead, the result will be a hardening of nation-state-driven security, built around NATO in Europe and U.S. allies in East Asia. The ability of the United States to sustain these alliances and lead a collective defensive security alliance that reduces the prospects for military conflict will be severely tested in the years ahead. ■

Why did you decide to join Carnegie Corporation of New York as a senior resident fellow?

I grew up in rural Missouri in an area that would most likely have been destroyed by fallout had there ever been a nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union. Besides geography, my connection to nuclear weapons and security includes being a researcher, an educator, and a government bureaucrat. But in each case, I got a snapshot of issues related to nuclear weapons. Carnegie Corporation promised a much wider aperture. The Corporation has been involved in trying to reduce the risks of nuclear weapons since they were first used in 1945. Besides a deep history, grantees have provided important insights around issues ranging from strategic stability to preventing nuclear war to trying to understand how individuals see their own relationship to nuclear threats. Working at the Corporation is akin to being given a seat at a library with a profusion of books on the issue that matters to you most, including some that are rare or unpublished. I came to the Corporation because I get to read these “books” and because I expect to learn, engage with intractable problems, make new discoveries, and help others reduce the dangers of nuclear weapons.

There is also a selfish reason: I get the joy that comes from enabling this through grantmaking. My own research has benefited greatly from the Corporation, which funded the program at Princeton University where I got my very first post-PhD job. And my Andrew Carnegie fellowship allowed me to research and write my first book, which analyzed cooperative threat reduction between the United States and Russia and went on to win a prize from the U.S. National Academy of Public Administration. My current research project — The Nuclear Biscuit — is an ambitious and time-intensive effort that I never could have imagined undertaking had I not been a Carnegie Fellow. To provide these opportunities for others, and especially people who are underrepresented in the nuclear security field, is a privilege.

What has been the impact so far of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine on considerations of U.S. nuclear weapons policy?

Since the end of the Cold War, awareness and attention to nuclear weapons issues has tended to fade into the background. Periodically, some external event prompts a brief spat of attention. The attacks of 9/11 raised concerns about nuclear terrorism. A nuclear test by North Korea rejuvenates discussions of proliferation or missile defense, or the price tag on U.S. nuclear modernization goes up yet again and for a short time the cost of nuclear weapons gains traction. But Russia’s invasion of Ukraine means that the fundamental purpose of nuclear weapons is now in play. Was Russia emboldened to attack Ukraine because the fear of nuclear escalation kept the United States and NATO from engaging more overtly in this conflict? In other words, did nuclear deterrence enable

conventional aggression as is sometimes argued to be the case in the war Pakistan and India fought in Kargil? Or, alternatively, did nuclear weapons significantly increase the danger of even more catastrophic destruction because those weapons encouraged a competition in risk-taking and brinkmanship? Post-Ukraine, U.S. policymakers and civil society will have to weigh in on the fundamental purpose of nuclear weapons, including whether they should remain focused on deterrence of existential threats or if new, varied, and more nuclear options should be incorporated into otherwise conventional military planning. Should the threat of nuclear use be strictly limited and used only as a last resort, or is it acceptable or even desirable to continue to blur the line between nuclear weapons and conventional military options?

This debate on the fundamental role of nuclear weapons is a consequence of not just Russia but also China. Prior to Ukraine, there were already repeated arguments that Chinese nuclear modernization required a more nuanced, refined, and, according to some, larger U.S. nuclear arsenal. But treating China as a newcomer to the principle of deterrence known as “mutually assured destruction” seems to suggest that deterrence requires more than the ability to inflict hundreds of thousands of casualties on an adversary. Whether or not the same nuclear weapons, strike packages, and planning options deter China or both China and Russia is a debate that inherently calls into question the fundamental role of nuclear weapons in U.S. security.

What are you seeking to accomplish at the Corporation?

You mean besides helping to prevent nuclear war? That question would have sounded largely rhetorical until a few months ago. Certainly, I was aware of the Corporation’s focus in the 1980s on deescalating tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union but Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has elevated concerns about nuclear war once again. Identifying and enabling grantees to help reduce that risk has taken on a renewed urgency. But it’s not déjà vu all over again. Although the language used in the current crisis is reminiscent of that from the 1980s and indeed the 1950s, today’s political, bureaucratic, and social dynamics create new nuclear dangers while requiring innovation in crisis management.

But coming up with analysis and answers isn’t enough. That information must be shared. My previous time working in both the legislative and executive branches of the U.S. government gives me an appreciation for both the value of new ideas and alternatives but also an understanding of “the Blob” — that is, the relatively insular Washington, D.C., foreign policy community. I’d like to maximize the ability of that policymaking community to consider and learn from the ideas, analysis, and recommendations of our grantees.

What role can the nongovernmental sector play in reducing the danger of nuclear weapons? Isn’t this largely something for governments?

Deterrence and the threat to use nuclear weapons are justified by the U.S. government’s promise to protect Americans. In other words, the risks and dangers of nuclear weapons are intimately and irrevocably linked to people, even though decisions about strategy and military capabilities are the providence of government, usually with little input or oversight by average Americans. But everyone who lives in the United States has a right and responsibility to weigh in on nuclear issues. And the Corporation has a track record of funding efforts to help people use their voice to challenge status quo nuclear policies, suggest alternatives, and remind the government that the dangers of nuclear weapons are not hypothetical or confined to esoteric discussions among government bureaucrats in the United States, Russia, or any of the other seven countries that possess nuclear weapons.

The private sector and especially philanthropy also play a crucial role in advancing knowledge and holding accountable not just government decisions about nuclear weapons but claims that progress on reducing nuclear risks isn’t possible because of political roadblocks or a lack of feasible technical solutions. For example, it is groups outside of government that are studying the global effects of nuclear war, a subject that has been neglected by the U.S. government since the 1980s. When policymakers claimed that verification of arms control agreements wasn’t possible without revealing secrets about warhead design, it was academic researchers who proved them wrong. If you are under the age of 59 and grew up in the continental United States, you have not been exposed to fallout from a nuclear weapons test because of parents, not bureaucrats. At a time when the U.S. government claimed that aboveground testing was necessary for national security, it was concerns from parents about the accumulation of strontium-90 in their babies’ teeth that helped create momentum for that 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty.

Additionally, sometimes it is just easier to say things through means other than official channels. Exchanges that are out of the public spotlight, such as Track II dialogues, have a record of allowing people to explore ideas, be creative or even wrong, and ask for clarifications of meaning and intent. This is where communication takes place, rather than position-taking or grandstanding. Such conversations have produced ideas that became official arms control agreements, led to reductions in nuclear arsenals, and eased tensions between countries that in public remain adversaries.

The active involvement of civil society, nongovernmental organizations, scholars, and even philanthropists is not only helpful in reducing nuclear dangers, it’s necessary.

What is needed in terms of public awareness when it comes to nuclear weapons programs and nonproliferation?

We are lucky that for most people nuclear weapons don’t compete for attention with other issues or occupy much space in memory. When polled, most support disarmament or abolition, but aside from punctuated and sporadic attention via current events, nuclear weapons are usually not part of the public consciousness. My guess is few people appreciate that a handful of individuals can authorize the use of entire nuclear arsenals with few checks or vetoes and in less than 10 minutes. When they go to the polls, most votes don’t hinge on whether a presidential candidate can be trusted with the sole authority to launch nuclear weapons.

Yet deterrence — the strategy assumed to guide nuclear weapons decisions — presumes the president will rationally weigh the costs and benefits of any nuclear use before making a decision on behalf of all Americans. The reality — that people are prone to mistakes, misperceptions, and sometimes downright stupidity — seems to fade away. My own research using virtual reality to understand crisis decision-making shows that the norm is for people to act on gut feelings, without resolving uncertainties, and to then wish they had made a different choice. Public attention to nuclear issues tends to wax and wane with external events and the news. But U.S. nuclear strategy, plus the decision-making shortcuts and psychological biases that are part of being human, mean that the dangers of nuclear weapons are present, constant, and significant.

How do we get people to not only acknowledge these dangers but act to reduce them? Part of the answer lies in engaging new and diverse groups of people. When new perspectives engage with a subject, they often ask fundamental questions that “the experts” have learned to ignore. In the process, they identify assumptions we’ve made but failed to reexamine, “facts” that are really stories we’ve constructed to justify our choices, and places where the status quo no longer fits the world around us. Diverse perspectives also help us better understand when people engage with the dangers and risks that are present in their daily lives, when those risks get pushed to the back burner, and when they lead to paralysis and inaction. ■

Sharon K. Weiner is a senior resident fellow in the International Peace and Security program at Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Listening to Students to Improve Schools

Corporation grantee Transcend aims to facilitate deep listening of students' experiences, believing that the voices of young people should help inform educational decision-making

CREDIT: KLAUS VEDFELT/DIGITALVISION VIA GETTY IMAGES

How can we better listen to students as we work to improve schools? Transcend, a Carnegie Corporation of New York grantee that supports school communities to reimagine education, has developed a set of tools to help schools shift from an industrial model of education to an approach oriented toward equity, students' personal growth, and social justice. The nonprofit organization recently launched its Conversations with Kids tool kit, which includes resources and recommendations for talking to students about school. To model how it works, New York City high school students Mia Payne and Kenisha Mahajan sat down for a conversation with Jenee Henry Wood, Transcend's head of learning. Progress begins with deep listening to young people in encounters like this one, aiming to understand students' current experiences of school while raising their voices in educational decision-making.

Jenee Henry Wood: So Kenisha, tell me about something you're doing in school that matters a lot to you, and why.

Kenisha Mahajan: There are two things. First, I was really excited to take history courses, especially American history, as it's a direct product of the social injustices we experience in our everyday lives. My school has less than five percent Black and Latinx students, so I wanted to see how the teachers were adapting to being empathetic

to them and to presenting American history in a way that's fair to groups that aren't really represented in the usual stories. And I've had a pretty positive experience. I'm seeing certain administrators and teachers go out of their way to teach the different facets of American history, putting a progressive new curriculum within the framework of the dated larger curricula that are still in place.

The other important thing for me is my school newspaper. I'm an editor for the paper, and I feel like that is a real service to the school community. In your publication, you're able to pinpoint things that need change, you can say what you want to happen to address them. In the past year, we've written editorials about students' mental health, calling for policies we want to see implemented, or other opinion pieces — a lot of work representing a lot of different perspectives. I really like being able to put all those different voices out there.

Wood: How about you, Mia?

Mia Payne: I think of school projects that I get really into. If I put a lot of work into something, I feel very proud of myself. Right now, I'm taking AP Computer Science — and I never thought I would be a coding girl, but I love coding. I'm also working on ways to address student apathy from the pandemic and advocating for study sessions and student mental health.

Wood: Kenisha, what did you like most and what did you like least about remote learning?

Mahajan: I liked not having a commute. My commute was really long, three hours round trip every day. So that was exhausting, and then more work on top of it. Another thing I liked was that instead of having 10 class periods a day, we had five double periods, alternating to give us more flexibility on when to get work done. The school was listening to feedback from students about what was needed, because things we had done in person just weren't feasible anymore. It opened up more pathways of communication between the administration and students.

The thing I liked least about remote learning was there was no motivation to learn. Some days, you're at home, you're zoned out, or you're tired of, like, staring at a screen, so you don't pay attention. Some things about being in person make it really worthwhile, like learning from your peers, and being able to see your teacher after class, or just have the classroom atmosphere. It's not the same online. And last year my screen time was like 17 hours every day, which is insane. And then there's the lack of reward. You lose social life because in high school your social life is centered around school. The sense of community was really lost online.

Wood: Mia, can you make choices about what you're doing at school?

Payne: I don't feel like the school reflects my identity as a Black woman, so I try to bring Black studies into what we're doing. In my AP English Literature course, we were reading books like *Othello* and *Frankenstein* and Shakespeare, but nothing that I really related to. I wanted to read the great books that my peers were reading, not *Romeo and Juliet* and stuff like that. And then when in my classroom we did start talking about race, it was kind of casual, as if these discussions just happen every day in America. But no, they don't just happen. There's also a barrier that hasn't been addressed, a kind of uncomfortableness for white students in the room or for anyone who's not in the same place.

Wood: Does your school let you read other things?

Payne: The curriculum was already set. I asked my teacher about that because nobody in my class actually read *Frankenstein* — it was all SparkNotes. None of us were interested, and it was very hard to read. And so we were like, "What are other books we would actually read?" My friend who is in regular English, she has to write a social justice research paper and I'm like, "Oh, why am I not in that class?" I want to do those interesting things, stuff that I feel is helpful and beneficial to me.

They could do a summer survey asking, "These are the books the College Board covers, and what do you guys

feel like doing?" If you know what the students coming in will be interested in, you can still work with the books the College Board offers, but now students are going to be engaged, they're going to want to come to class, wanting that information, yearning for it.

Mahajan: There's a really wide array of courses I can take in my school, but the required ones are still pretty Eurocentric. A lot of teachers are like, "You're gonna read this book written by this old white guy, and we're going to talk about it." They're kind of forced to do that by the state and the curriculum, and there's conflict when they try to accommodate that while also listening to students. So there's definitely a huge disparity. I agree with Mia that students should have more agency over what they're being taught.

Wood: Some people say that school is not for reading about people who look like you or share your perspective, but for learning about things outside your experience. So why are we so hung up about identity?

Payne: Well, what do you think your child is forming eight hours a day if it's not their identity? But I'm really interested in other perspectives too. When I go out in the world, I'm going to be surrounded by people from all types of groups and demographics and I want to know about them and their experiences and their culture. That's what education is. In school, I found my identity, and now I'm trying to learn: What is it to be Black in America? Even some of my Black teachers are teaching a Eurocentric pedagogy. And that's frustrating.

Mahajan: Honestly, that's the entire point. For a large percentage of the population, the Eurocentric perspective is the same as theirs. But that's not the way the world works. The reason we have school is to transform you into a functioning human and a free thinker, but you can't do that unless you are exposed to a wide variety of perspectives. The white male canon is the basis for the society we live in — that's an objective fact. It's the basis for so many inequalities in our world. And unless we recognize those inequalities and try to remedy them, they're not going to be fixed.

Wood: So when do you get to be yourself at school, and what does that feel like?

Payne: When I'm writing. I really love poetry, and that's where I kind of found a voice. There's a lot of power in it and those words stick with you forever. When I write, I'm speaking from my heart and I'm being as vulnerable as I can be. It's not something I have to analyze. That's when I'm able to be myself.

Wood: Kenisha, does your school make you feel proud about your neighborhood, your home, or where you're from?

Mahajan: Maybe it's more like acceptance. My school is majority middle-class and low-income students, a large percentage first-generation immigrants like me. So there's a sense of camaraderie, even though it's a really competitive place, very academically driven. I see things break down when I'm assigned hours upon hours of homework, and there are other people who don't have outside responsibilities like chores or making dinner or working a job or caring for siblings. That makes the experience a lot harder. You do feel pressure to keep up with everyone. But no one at school ever really talks about these outside factors that might make school more stressful.

Payne: I'm grateful to go to a very ethnically diverse school, considering that the New York City school system is highly segregated. But we still have an all-white administration. So do you really understand my identity and what needs to be changed, or is it just an image thing? They do approach it, but it needs to be more dedicated.

Wood: Who loves and cares about you at school? And how do you know that?

Payne: It's my friends mostly. But I do have one or two teachers that I can go to and just vent to, who genuinely care how I'm doing in school — or in general.

Mahajan: Besides my friends, maybe no one. There's maybe one teacher I could talk to if I really needed to. But usually teachers don't ask a casual question like, how are you guys doing? Maybe it's more among STEM teachers versus humanities teachers. My English teacher is also the faculty advisor for our newspaper. So I have sat down a few times with him just to talk about things. And my history teacher shows a genuine interest in who students are. But there's not really any feeling that you can go and maybe sit down with them when they have a free hour just to talk.

Wood: That hurts my soul. I wish you both felt there were teachers in the building who loved you like your friends do. If you could make one change in your school that would make a significant difference, what would it be?

Payne: It would definitely be testing. It defines students because that's really what school is. That grade is what the community wants. It's not really about the information you have. Everything is just around this one little test. But maybe I could have presented in a very different way to show that I gained the skill you wanted me to gain from this unit. I know it's led to anxiety and suicides and some very alarming mental health. If we could reimagine the way that we assess students' knowledge and understanding, that would make a drastic change in the system.

Mahajan: For me it would be getting rid of advanced placement courses. I'm coming from a privileged standpoint of a school that has a lot of resources and can teach what they want to teach — and we have a lot of choices. But smaller schools can't do that, so they have to be very restrictive. Teachers who give electives are much more passionate about teaching and that makes for a better experience for everybody.

Wood: Are there spaces, perhaps even outside of school, where you feel listened to — seen and supported on your path?

Payne: The activities that I engage in outside of school are profoundly instrumental to my educational experience because they are typically where I intentionally place myself when the school system fails to provide me with the knowledge and experiences that would benefit me culturally. In particular, YVote, a nonprofit that fuels youth civic engagement, has been a program that not only exposed me to the root causes of issues such as criminal and environmental justice, but also equipped me with the tools and resources needed to combat these issues civically. For me, my work with outside organizations feels more purposeful and intentional compared to school, where everything is structured and it's a one-size-fits-all formula. And because it's such a massive and complex system, no one is willing to drastically challenge the status quo.

Wood: Ladies, I cannot tell you just how soul-filling and heart-filling our time together has been. I don't get to work with young people in my day-to-day anymore and you all have truly made me miss this. I appreciate your vibrancy, how thoughtful you are, how engaged in the outside world you are, and how deeply nuanced you are in your thinking. I've really seen brilliancy and complexity in your thought, in ways that have pushed my own thinking. This was a gift to me to get this time with you. Thank you both so much. ■

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Transcend and Carnegie Corporation of New York are grateful to New York City high school students Kenisha Mahajan and Mia Payne for taking the time to meet with Jenee Henry Wood and sharing their insights on their school experience.

At the time of the interview, **Kenisha Mahajan** was a junior at Stuyvesant High School in Manhattan, a writer, and a first-generation immigrant from India active in groups promoting racial justice and criminal justice reform, voting, and young people's civic engagement, including YVote, the Youth Civics Initiative, and Art and Resistance Through Education.

At the time of the interview, **Mia Payne**, a Bronx native, was a senior at Talent Unlimited High School in Manhattan. Interested in issues of criminal and environmental justice and computer literacy and a participant in YVote and other civic education groups, Payne recently served as one of four youth co-chairs on the education transition team for New York City Mayor Eric Adams.

As philanthropy continues to consider how best to support the struggle for racial justice, voting rights and voter participation should be central to that work, both during elections and in the years in between.

— **Geri Mannion**

Managing Director, Strengthening U.S. Democracy,
Carnegie Corporation of New York

NOTABLE EVENTS



On the 235th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution, 250 new U.S. citizens gathered, American flags in hand, to celebrate the “connection between the Constitution and citizenship.” CREDIT: CHRISTINE BUTLER



Less than a mile from the Statue of Liberty, immigrants from dozens of countries joined together to take the oath of American citizenship on September 17, 2022, in New York City. CREDIT: CHRISTINE BUTLER

COMMUNITY

A Naturalization Ceremony at the Great Hall of Ellis Island

On September 17, 2022, Carnegie Corporation of New York partnered with the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation for the naturalization ceremony of 250 new citizens in the Great Hall of Ellis Island. The ceremony took place on Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, commemorating the day 235 years prior when the United States Constitution was signed. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services celebrates this holiday and the following week by honoring the connection between the Constitution and citizenship through special events and the dissemination of resources for new and aspiring American citizens.

From 1892 to 1954, Ellis Island processed more than 12 million immigrants. On this September day, citizenship candidates from 57 different countries joined them. The celebratory event kicked off a week of special naturalization ceremonies across the country that welcomed around 20,000 citizens to the United States.

Dozens flocked onto ferries, sailing on the harbor and arriving at Ellis Island to be greeted by Lady Liberty. U.S. Attorney General Merrick B. Garland administered the oath of allegiance, speaking of his family’s own migrant journey to the United States as they fled religious

persecution — some of them arriving at Ellis Island many decades ago. Garland’s congratulatory remarks thanked those before him, and recognized the resilience of immigrants: “Thank you for choosing America as your home. Thank you for the courage, dedication, and work that have brought you here. Thank you for all you will do to help our country live up to its highest ideals ... and thank you on behalf of the generations of Americans who will come after you.”

The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation’s President and CEO Jesse Brackenbury also addressed the newly naturalized citizens, commending them on their choice to become Americans as they followed in the footsteps of generations who have done the same. Brackenbury referenced Andrew Carnegie’s legacy as an immigrant and visionary, as well as the Corporation’s continuous dedication to helping immigrants “become citizens who can participate fully in our democracy.”

The ceremony on Ellis Island served as a poignant, touching reminder of New York City’s lengthy history as a refuge for immigrants from all over the world arriving to the United States.



At the memorial service, which took place on April 13, 2022, at Carnegie Hall, Governor Thomas H. Kean spoke of his longtime friendship with Vartan Gregorian. CREDIT: FILIP WOLAK



The philanthropic community gathered on October 13, 2022, in New York City to celebrate the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy honorees. The awards, which have honored more than 65 philanthropists, were celebrating their 20th anniversary. CREDIT: FILIP WOLAK



Judy Woodruff has served as a member of the Corporation's board of trustees for two nonconcurrent terms: the first, from 1995 to 2003, and the second, from 2013 to 2022. Pictured here, Woodruff hosted the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative's 5th Anniversary at the New York Public Library. CREDIT: MIKE COPPOLA/GETTY IMAGES FOR AURORA HUMANITARIAN PRIZE



Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield and Carnegie Council president Joel H. Rosenthal in a candid conversation about her role in the U.N., diversity in global affairs, and more, hosted at Carnegie Corporation of New York. CREDIT: CELESTE FORD

IN REMEMBRANCE

Memorial Service for Vartan Gregorian

On April 13, 2022, Carnegie Corporation of New York and the family of Vartan Gregorian hosted a private memorial service and reception honoring his life and legacy. Gregorian served as the Corporation's president for 24 years until his sudden death on April 15, 2021.

The service included heartfelt remarks from friends, family, and philanthropic leaders while also paying homage to Gregorian's Armenian heritage. Former mayor of New York City Michael Bloomberg venerated Gregorian's contributions to the city; Ford Foundation president Darren Walker honored his philanthropic work; the New York Public Library's Tony Marx spoke to his dedication to the humanities; Sahag Baghdassarian evoked their shared childhood in Iran; and Governor Thomas H. Kean remembered their common commitment to Andrew Carnegie's vision.

Dignitaries in attendance were revealing of Gregorian's life of altruism and as a steward of Carnegie's legacy. Visuals of his life were interspersed with warm video messages, including a performance by Yo-Yo Ma and testimonials from Dame Louise Richardson, William Thomson, and others. The Corporation's Jeanne D'Onofrio and Natasha Davids shared the delight of working with Gregorian.

Raffi Gregorian delivered the eulogy on the family's behalf, and the late Reverend Calvin O. Butts III closed with a benediction celebrating Gregorian's spirit of generosity and service to humanity.

AWARDS

Celebrating the Recipients of the 2022 Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy

The 2022 Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy, hosted by the Carnegie family of institutions, honored five philanthropists for their extraordinary efforts to address global challenges: Manu Chandaria, Lyda Hill, Dolly Parton, Lynn Schusterman, and Stacy Schusterman. The awards aim to inspire a culture of giving by recognizing innovative philanthropists who are helping to make the world smarter, cleaner, healthier, and more equitable.

The inaugural Carnegie Catalyst Award was presented to World Central Kitchen for providing meals in response to crises worldwide. The organization's cofounder and board chairman, Rob Wilder, accepted the award. Established in memory of the late Vartan Gregorian, the award honors the transformative power of human kindness.

Honoring Andrew Carnegie's heritage as a Scottish immigrant, a bagpiper playing "Scotland the Brave" led the procession into the ceremony. Dame Louise Richardson welcomed guests and Judy Woodruff served as the master of ceremonies. The Cathedral Choir of the Abyssinian Baptist Church closed the evening by performing two songs, including "Light of a Clear Blue Morning," an original song by medalist Dolly Parton.

HONORS

Corporation Trustee Judy Woodruff Receives Emmy Award for Lifetime Achievement in Television News

Broadcast journalist and long-standing Carnegie Corporation of New York trustee Judy Woodruff has accepted the Emmy Award for Lifetime Achievement in Television News from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. The News and Documentary Emmy Awards ceremony took place on September 28, 2022, in New York City. Woodward has covered politics and other news for five decades at NBC, CNN, and PBS, including serving as chief Washington correspondent for the *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour* from 1983 to 1993. She returned to the *PBS NewsHour* in 2007, and in 2013, she and Gwen Ifill were named the first two women to coanchor a national news broadcast. After Ifill's death in 2016, Woodruff was named managing editor and sole anchor of the *NewsHour*.

Upon accepting the honor, Woodruff remarked, "In a moment when we are swimming in a sea of opinion, and thank God we can express opinion freely in this country, when our resources are stretched, and when there is a raging debate over what's true and what isn't, we in journalism have to continue to do the hard work every day of reporting, double-checking, vetting, and confirming."

Her honors and recognitions include more than 25 honorary degrees, as well as the Radcliffe Medal, the Poynter Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Journalism, and the Gwen Ifill Press Freedom Award, among many others.

EVENTS

A Conversation with U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield

On June 15, 2022, Carnegie Corporation of New York joined Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs for a conversation with the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Linda Thomas-Greenfield. Moderated by Joel H. Rosenthal, president of the Carnegie Council, the discussion revealed the ways the ambassador's life and career have exemplified the highest values of public service. In his welcoming remarks, Governor Thomas H. Kean compared her commitment to that of Andrew Carnegie's, shared through his investments in international law and international organizations over 100 years ago.

Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield spoke on the significance of diversity in the U.S. foreign service, the UN's relevance to everyday citizens, and the importance of civility. "Be kind. Just be nice, be compassionate, be decent to people, even if they're not decent to you," she remarked. "That has defined how I approach foreign policy, how I engage with my colleagues at the United Nations — friend and foe."

Thomas-Greenfield emphasized the value of creating a pipeline of students in the foreign service, calling on their perspectives, stories, and innovation to transform the future. After the conversation, the ambassador answered questions from students and young leaders. ■

CONTRIBUTORS

Mona Chalabi is a data journalist and 2023 New America Fellow whose writing and illustrations have been published in the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, and the *Guardian*, where she serves as data editor. Chalabi uses words, color, and sound to make complex data easier to understand. Her video, audio, and production work have been featured on Netflix, NPR, the BBC, and National Geographic.

Abigail Deutsch is a writer, editor, and educator whose work has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Poetry*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Harper's Magazine*, and many other publications. She teaches at the Columbia Journalism School.

Kelly Devine is director of content and publications at Carnegie Corporation of New York, responsible for overseeing digital, multimedia, and print content and publications to support the grantmaking goals of the foundation and its mission of advancing and diffusing knowledge and understanding. Prior to joining the Corporation, she served as editorial director and director of editorial and content strategy at the Institute for Advanced Study.

E. J. Dionne Jr. is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, a syndicated columnist for the *Washington Post*, professor of government at Georgetown University, and visiting professor at Harvard University. He is a frequent commentator for NPR and MSNBC. His books include *Code Red: How Progressives and Moderates Can Unite to Save Our Country* (2020) and *100% Democracy: The Case for Universal Voting* (2022). Before the *Post*, Dionne spent 14 years at the *New York Times*, where he covered politics.

Sue Dorfman is an independent documentary and human rights photojournalist, media strategist, and educator. She produced the documentary short *Dying to Vote*, and her photos have appeared in outlets such as ABC News, CNN, the *Guardian*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. She also photographs for ZUMA Press. Dorfman has been traveling across the country for nearly three decades — most recently in an RV nicknamed *Doc-cy*, short for her current photography project titled “Documenting Democracy.”

Sergei Guriev is provost and professor of economics at the Institut d'études politiques de Paris (Sciences Po). He is a research fellow at the Centre for Economic Policy Research as well as a member of the executive committee of the International Economic Association. From 2016 to 2019, he served as chief economist at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Jenee Henry Wood serves as Transcend's head of learning, where she shepherds the team's internal meaning-making and partners with external organizations to fuel the work toward reimagining education. She has been published by *USA Today*, *FutureEd*, *The 74*, and others. Before joining Transcend, she was the vice president of knowledge at Teach for America.

Former governor of New Jersey **Thomas H. Kean** serves as chairman of the board of Carnegie Corporation of New York. In 2002, he was named by President George W. Bush to lead the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States. The bipartisan commission's recommendations resulted in the largest intelligence reform in U.S. history. Kean also served as president of Drew University from 1990 until 2005.

At the time of the interview, **Kenisha Mahajan** was a junior at Stuyvesant High School in Manhattan, a writer, and a first-generation immigrant from India active in groups promoting racial justice and criminal justice reform, voting, and young people's civic engagement, including YVote, the Youth Civics Initiative, and Art and Resistance through Education.

Geri Mannion has directed Carnegie Corporation of New York's Strengthening U.S. Democracy program since 1998. Active in organizations that work to advance the organizational capacity of the philanthropic and nonprofit worlds, Mannion is a leader in a wide range of funder collaboratives, such as the Four Freedoms Fund and the State Infrastructure Fund, which focus on, respectively, immigrant integration and voting rights/integration.

Syreeta McFadden is a writer and professor of English at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, City University of New York. Her work has been featured in the *New York Times Magazine*, the *Nation*, *BuzzFeed News*, *NPR*, *Brooklyn Magazine*, *Feministing*, and the *Guardian*, where she had been a regular contributor. A former urban planner and housing development specialist, she is currently working on a collection of essays.

An expert in economic and social policy, **Heather McGhee** is the best-selling author of *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together* (2021). She is the former president of the inequality-focused think tank Demos and currently chairs the board of Color of Change, the nation's largest online racial justice organization.

At the time of the interview, Bronx native **Mia Payne** was a senior at Talent Unlimited High School in Manhattan. Interested in issues ranging from criminal and environmental justice to computer literacy, she is a participant in YVote and other civic education groups. Payne recently served as one of four youth cochairs on the education transition team for New York City Mayor Eric Adams.

Miles Rapoport is executive director of 100% Democracy: An Initiative for Universal Voting and the senior practice fellow in American democracy at the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the Harvard Kennedy School. Past president of both Demos and Common Cause, he has served as a member of the Connecticut House of Representatives (1984–1994) and as Connecticut secretary of state (1995–1999).

Dame Louise Richardson, a trustee of Carnegie Corporation of New York since 2013, joined the Corporation as its 13th president in January 2023. Before joining the Corporation, she served as vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford from 2016 to 2022. Prior to Oxford, she was principal and vice-chancellor of the University of St. Andrews in Scotland.

Timothy Snyder, a 2015 Andrew Carnegie Fellow, is the Levin Professor of History at Yale University and the author of *The Road to Unfreedom: Russia, Europe, America* (2018), *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* (2017), *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning* (2015), and *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (2010). His work has received the Hannah Arendt Award, the Leipzig Book Award for European Understanding, and an Award in literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Daniel Treisman is professor of political science at the University of California, Los Angeles, and a research associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research. Since 2014, he has been the director of the Russia Political Insight Project, an international collaboration that investigates political decision-making in Putin's Russia. In 2022, he was named an Andrew Carnegie Fellow.

Michael Waldman is president of the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law. He was director of speechwriting for President Bill Clinton from 1995 to 1999 and is the author of *The Fight to Vote* (2017; 2022) and *The Second Amendment: A Biography* (2014). His latest book, *The Supermajority: The Year the Supreme Court Divided America*, will be published by Simon & Schuster in June 2023. A member of the Presidential Commission on the Supreme Court, Waldman comments widely in the media on law and policy.

Julia Weede is the Corporation's chief communications and digital strategies officer, responsible for overseeing the foundation's internal and external communications. She has more than 30 years of experience in both the nonprofit and business sectors. Most recently, Weede was an executive vice president in charge of the education division at Edelman, where she helped leaders of organizations from around the world develop and implement communications, media relations, and digital and social media strategies.

Sharon K. Weiner, associate professor at American University's School of International Service, is a senior resident fellow in the Corporation's International Peace and Security program. Previously, Weiner served as a program examiner with the White House Office of Management and Budget. She has held research positions at the Los Alamos National Laboratory and at Princeton University's Program on Science and Global Security. Weiner was named an Andrew Carnegie Fellow in 2018.

Photographer **Filip Wolak** works closely with New York's major arts and cultural institutions. His work has been published worldwide in both print and digital media, and as an active pilot and flight instructor, he is able to combine both of his passions and create unique aerial photographs that have been exhibited in the U.S. and in his native Poland.

Broadcast journalist **Judy Woodruff** received the Emmy Award for Lifetime Achievement in Television News in 2022. She has covered politics and other news for five decades at NBC, CNN, and PBS, including serving as chief Washington correspondent for the *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour* from 1983 to 1993. She returned to the *PBS NewsHour* in 2007, and in 2013, she and Gwen Ifill were named the first two women to coanchor a national news broadcast. After Ifill's death in 2016, Woodruff was named managing editor and sole anchor of the *NewsHour*. A longtime trustee of Carnegie Corporation of New York, Woodruff has covered every presidential election and convention since 1976.

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin | August 9, 2022 A service dog waits for their person to finish voting in Wisconsin's primary election.

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One of 250 new citizens who took the oath of allegiance in the Great Hall of Ellis Island on September 17, 2022, in a naturalization ceremony sponsored jointly by Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation. CREDIT: CHRISTINE BUTLER