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HUMANIST Monthly

A Publication of the Capital District Humanist Society
Connecting the Secular Humanist Community of Upstate New York, Western Massachusetts, and Southern Vermont

Sunday, September 13th, 2026

In Person at 12:30 PM and Online at 1:00 PM

Girls' Education in Afghanistan: How Charmaghz Is Defending the Right to Learn in the Most Challenging Place on Earth



Liz Robinson

Afghanistan is the only country in the world where girls are barred from attending school beyond 6th grade. Since the Taliban's return to power in 2021, more than 2.2 million girls and young women have been shut out of education. Charmaghz is a US nonprofit founded in 2018 by Afghan education activist Freshta Karim. For seven years, Charmaghz ran a Mobile Library program in Kabul that reached over one million child visitors. In 2025, the Taliban forcibly shut down the organization's in-person programs, and it refocused its mission to provide online education to Afghan girls and young women banned from school. This program will discuss how Charmaghz responded to that setback, and what it takes to defend girls' education in the most challenging place on earth.

Liz Robinson is the CEO of Charmaghz. She has worked with nonprofits in the international development and education sectors for over a decade, including across the Middle East, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. She first worked in Afghanistan in 2016, and is deeply committed to elevating and advancing education programs that transform children's futures, and the systems that shape them. Liz has a BA from Tufts University in International Relations and Economics, an MA from University College London in Education and International Development, and a Graduate Certificate in Early Grade Reading in Developing Countries from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

The program will be live, in person, and begins at 1:00 PM at Pinnacle Living at 45 Forts Ferry Road in Latham, NY. It is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be available at 12:30 PM before the speaker's presentation, but **PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN BEVERAGE**. Current paid CDHS members will automatically receive an invitation to the online meeting via email. If you wish to attend via Zoom or are not a current paid CDHS member, please email your request to CDHS.Albany@gmail.com no later than Friday, September 10th, to receive a link.

The Capital District Humanist Society provides a supportive community for exchanging ideas, heightening our knowledge of the world and ourselves, fostering moral and ethical growth, and promoting the principles of secular humanism. CDHS is a member organization for people with humanist values. Our values include commitment to free inquiry, rational thought, lifelong education, democracy, social concern, and fellowship.

Capital District Humanist Society, Inc.

Established 1986

Find us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/CapitalDistrictHumanistSociety>



CDHS is affiliated with:

The American Humanist Association (AHA)

Center for Inquiry (CSI)

Humanists International (HI)

The Secular Coalition for America (SCA)

On Sunday, November 8th, 2026, 12:30 PM (In Person) and 1:00 PM (Online)
The Capital District Humanist Society Presents:

Afrofuturism

Afrofuturism is a cultural aesthetic, philosophy, and artistic movement that explores the intersection of the African diaspora with science fiction, technology, and speculative fantasy. It re-examines the past and envisions liberated, empowered futures for Black life through a non-Western cultural lens. The movement spans across multiple creative disciplines to heal historical traumas and create agency.

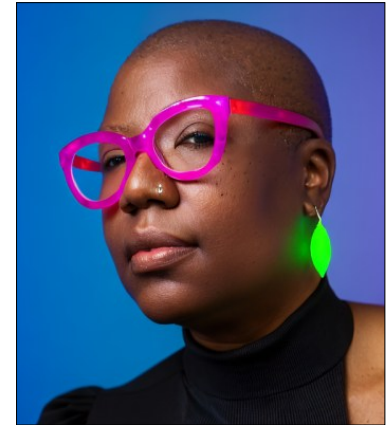
Dr. Aiesha Turman holds an Interdisciplinary PhD with a major in Humanities and Culture with certificates in Creative Writing and Women's and Gender Studies from The Union Institute & University in Cincinnati, OH. Her dissertation, [There's Always Been an Afrofuture: Black Women's Literature as Technology of Protest](#), explores the Black feminist literary genealogy of Afrofuturism and is part of her broader interest in Black pasts as the key to Black Futures.

She's taught English and Africana Studies at NY City College of Technology, Hunter College, Nassau County Community College, and is a new faculty member in the Writing & Critical Inquiry Program at the University at Albany.

Dr. Turman's research explores the rich intersections of African American history, culture, and speculative futures. Her work explores the lived experiences and cultural practices of African and African Diaspora communities through the innovative lens of Afrofuturism, envisioning future scenarios that center on Black experiences, histories, and imaginations.

As a trauma and memory theorist, she investigates the profound impacts of historical and contemporary traumas on individual and collective memory, examining how these memories are formed, represented, and reconciled. Through her interdisciplinary approach, Dr. Turman aims to illuminate the resilience and creativity of Black communities while addressing critical issues of identity, power, and social justice.

This program begins at 1:00 PM. Dr. Turman will present live and in person at Pinnacle Living at 45 Forts Ferry Road in Latham, NY. It is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be available at the in-person meeting before the speaker's presentation. **Please bring your own beverage.** Current paid CDHS members will automatically receive an invitation to the on-line meeting via email. If you are not a current paid CDHS member, request an email invitation to attend no later than Friday, August 7th, to CDHS.Albany@gmail.com.

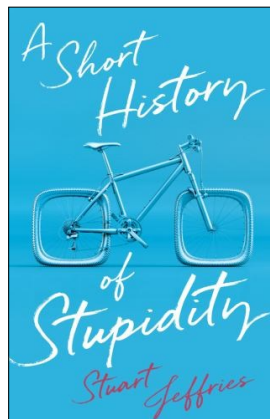


Aiesha Turman

Reminder: There will be no October meeting!

Next Meeting: Sunday, November 8, 2026

CDHS Book Group is reading *A Short History of Stupidity* by Stuart Jeffries. The group meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays.



Contact Frank Robinson if you would like to join the spirited and informative discussion.

CDHS Executive Council

Executive Director	Don Porterfield
Secretary	June Hendricks
Treasurer	Roland Tozer
Programs, Publicity	Fred Levine
Publications	Carol Quantock
Social Activities	Candace Fuller
Membership, Telephone	Heather Drinkwater
Meetup Coordinator	Fred Levine
Compliance	Vacant
Member at Large	Vacant

Appointed Positions

Hospitality	Sue Parry
Room Arrangements	Frank Robinson
Caring Network	Rosina Ansaldo

RECAP OF OUR AUGUST SPEAKER'S TALK

(by Frank Robinson)

Andrew Goodman's topic was "Uncovering Vladimir Putin's Inner Man." This was not an armchair analysis; Goodman detailed his personal interactions with Putin over several years beginning in 1992, while Putin was an official under Saint Petersburg's first post-Soviet elected mayor, Anatoly Sobchak. Goodman, a government official representing the U.S. consulate, was Putin's opposite number, hence their constant numerous meetings, getting to know each other well.

Putin's youth was described as violent and nasty; a self-described hooligan. Somehow, he succeeded in getting into the KGB, the Soviet "secret police;" but was posted to East Germany, a career backwater. That gig ended when the USSR fell; Putin managed to land on his feet in Sobchak's administration. Sobchak was later voted out, despite Putin's ballot-rigging for him, which Goodman actually witnessed. But Putin landed on his feet again, this time worming his way into Boris Yeltsin's national regime, by means of assuaging its desire to get hold of a certain Moscow property, which Putin managed to steal for them via his gangsterish connections. He later emerged as head of the FSB, the KGB's successor; then was named prime minister. Then managed to make a deal with Yeltsin, easing him out in return for a pledge of immunity. Thus did Putin become Russia's ruler at Millennium's end.

Meantime he and Goodman had had wide-ranging conversations. Goodman rated him no "conceptual thinker," with only "average intelligence at best." He's not a gambler but a planner, acting only when he feels confident of success. Thus, Goodman doesn't think the Ukraine invasion was some roll of the dice; rather, Putin ascribes the failure (so far) to poor planning — i.e., scapegoating. (There's another prominent leader who likewise always blames others for every failure.)

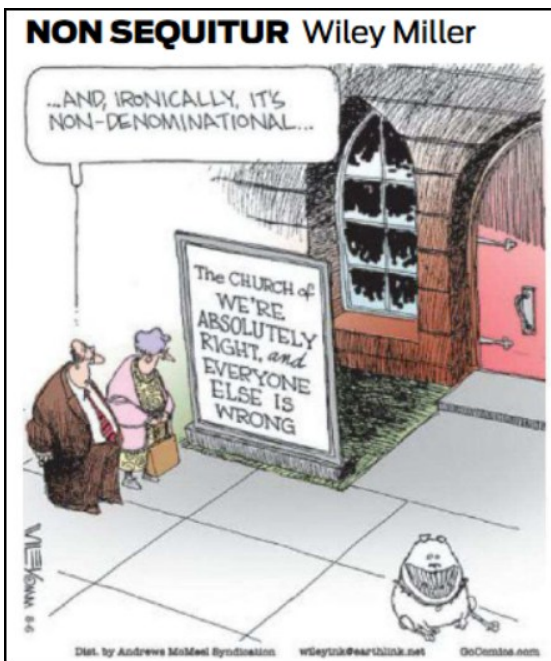
The Ukraine venture reflected Putin's world view of Russia as entitled to be a superpower equal to America, with other nearby nations properly subject to Russian dominance — "the natural order of things." He's always had a jaundiced view of the West, its leaders always only acting from self-interest. Ukraine was a particular target especially because Zelensky, before becoming president, did a TV comedy show which made mock of Putin.

Goodman talked about various speculations on the endgame. In brief, he opined that Putin will only go out "with his boots on."

A recording of this presentation can be found on the CDHS YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/GDSpFNrXtV0>.

Election for CDHS Executive Council Position

CDHS will soon be holding an online election for the Publicity/Programs position on our Executive Council. We will use the **ElectionBuddy** System for this online election. Voting will begin on September 20, 2026 and continue through October 20, 2026. Members should watch their email account for messages from mail.electionbuddy.com during the voting period (note that the system will send periodic reminders to those members who have not yet voted). The email will provide a unique link for each CDHS member to access their online ballot. Please note that each CDHS membership level (Individual, Family, Sustaining, Patron, or Life) is entitled to one vote. We will report the election results in the November Newsletter and via email. Please contact Don Porterfield at cdhs.albany@gmail.com if you have any questions about this election.



Join the bunch for lunch! We'll be returning to DinerTime, 813 Loudon Road, Latham, NY 12110 (<https://dinertimeny.com/latham-dinertime-food-menu/>) on September 17th at 12:00 Noon. In October, we'll meet on Thursday the 15th, also at Diner Time unless a change is made. If there is a change of location, you will receive a notification via email. Please let Rosina Ansaldo know by the Wednesday evening prior if you'll be joining them.

NOTE: If you know of a great local eatery, please don't be shy; recommend it! We'd like to give our local restaurants a chance by rotating them every few months and returning to the ones that get enthusiastic thumbs up. Please send ideas to Rosina Ansaldo. Thanks!

Report from the 2026 World Humanist Conference (WHC)

(by Don Porterfield)

I was privileged and proud to represent CDHS at the Humanists International WHC for 2026 in Ottawa, Ontario during the weekend of August 7th through August 9th. I joined over 500 humanists from 41 countries to renew contacts with humanists from around the globe and learn about their challenges and how they are dealing with them. The location of the 2026 WHC was originally planned for Washington, DC, but the organizers changed plans in mid-2025 when the actions and rhetoric of the current American administration posed concerns about whether potential attendees would be denied visas to enter the US. Despite the change of venue about a dozen potential attendees, mostly from Africa and Southeast Asia, were unable to obtain visas to visit Canada.

The theme of the 2026 WHC was “Humanism as Resistance.” In keeping with the theme, the speakers, panel discussions, and other presentations focused on:

- Reminding attendees of the issues Humanists face around the globe;
- Actions that members are taking or planning to resist these trends; and
- Ways in which each of us can use resistance to showcase our Humanist principles.

Issues Humanists are Facing

Humanists around the globe are facing a variety of issues. Many of these are occurring globally with others focused in areas where Humanists represent a very small minority of the population. Several speakers noted that these trends have been growing for decades and have some very deep pockets providing financial support. These issues include, but are not limited to:

- *Religious and Cultural Extremism* – These issues include the rise of authoritarianism in governments around the globe and the increasing influence of Christian nationalism and other fundamentalist beliefs.
- *Blasphemy Laws* – Many countries still have blasphemy laws on the books. These laws are often used to selectively punish those that speak freely about their humanist beliefs or against religion.
- *Anti-LGBT Laws* – These laws are often supported by fundamentalist religious groups and seek to vilify those that don’t share their values.
- *Anti-Feminist Movements* – These movements are gaining traction in the “manosphere” through the proliferation of podcasters with misogynist themes.

Ways Humanists Are Resisting

Humanists are not just sitting on our hands in the face of all these issues. Instead, the humanist community is resisting using a variety of methods, some of which include:

- *Freedom of Thought Report* – This report, which is published periodically by Humanists International, assesses every country in the world on the basis of human rights and the legal status with regard to humanists, atheists, and the non-religious.
- *Science Calendar* – This educational initiative by the Romanian Secular-Humanist Association is designed to promote science education, critical thinking, and historical scientific achievements. It is provided to public schools to offer a counterpoint to the religious calendars that are ubiquitous in schools throughout Romania.
- *Atheist Billboards in Ghana* – The Humanist Association of Ghana, with support from the Freedom From Religion Foundation, put up billboards in Accra to remind the 1.1% of the population that are non-religious that they are not alone.
- *Supporting Aspiring and Rising Humanist and Secular Social Media Influencers* – The American Humanist Association is investing in aspiring social media influencers (podcasters, YouTube content creators, TikTok artists, etc.) that espouse Humanist principles in order to boost the number of their followers. This effort copies similar tactics by the right that invested in conservative voices such as Charlie Kirk.

What Each of Us Can Do to Resist

All the speakers had great ideas about the things we can do as Humanists to resist. While there are too many suggestions to repeat all of them here, some of the ideas that I’d like to share include:

- It is better to resist now than mourn later.
- Although it may seem like we are fighting the same battles over and over again, we should “just toughen up” and get on with the work.
- Whenever possible, we need to avoid “either or” thinking and be willing to work with other groups toward a common goal, even if we don’t agree with everything the other group espouses.
- In order to be part of a community we need to contribute through our actions and look for opportunities to connect with others.
- It is up to each of us to be informed, ask questions to help us understand the positions of others, and continue to “push the rock up the hill” just like Sisyphus.

Vive la résistance!

September Social: September 12

Did you know there is a castle in the Capital District? There is, and it's located at 809 Township Road in Altamont. The Castle Breitenbach: Art Museum and Sculpture Park will be our Social on September 12th. We will meet for lunch at Maple on the Lake and then go on to the Castle. Please consider going either or both activities. Their website links are below for you to find out more details.

Date: 9/12/26

Lunch time: 11:30 AM — Maple on the Lake: 141 Warners Lake Road, East Berne, NY 12059 (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063497262756>)



Castle Breitenbach: 1:30 PM — Castle Breitenbach: 809 Township Road, Altamont, NY 12009 (<https://castlebreitenbach.org/index.html>)

IMPORTANT! What you need to know about the castle:

1. There are 8 steps to get into the castle.
2. The artwork is down a basement flight of stairs.
3. The castle is not handicapped accessible.
4. There are sculptures outdoors on an unpaved walking path.
5. A donation of \$10.00 would be appropriate.



Please email Dee Fuller at candacelf13@gmail.com by September 9, 2026 if you plan to go to one or both activities and indicate which one(s) you'll attend.

October Social: Commemorating America's 250th Birthday in Revolutionary Schenectady

"The American Revolution is a pivotal moment in the history of this city and our nation. Come explore a conflict that sundered families and communities alike. For the people who lived at this perilous time, what did it mean to be a Patriot? Join us for this afternoon walking tour of Schenectady's revolutionary past."

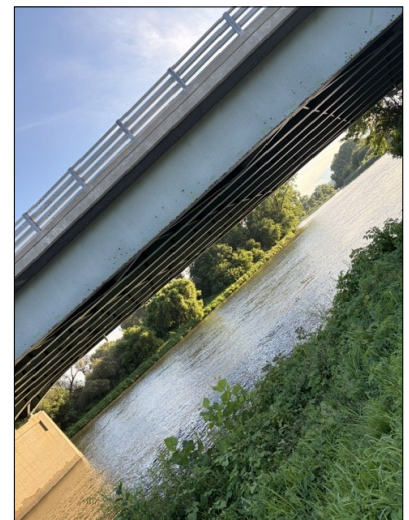
The tour will meet at the Schenectady County Historical Society at 32 Washington Avenue on **October 24, 2026**. It has a small parking lot that can accommodate only a handful of cars. Beyond that, guests will have to find on street parking nearby. The tour typically lasts about 1.5 hours so we will start at 2:00 PM and wrap up around 3:30 PM. We'll walk about a mile over the course of the tour.

Our socials often offer an opportunity to gather for a meal before the activity. We will meet at a restaurant to be determined at 11:30 AM-12:00 noon and then proceed to the SCHS. You are welcome to sign up for one or both. Please email Dee Fuller at candacelf13@gmail.com by **October 21st** and indicate the activity you will be attending.



Photos from August's Social at Jumpin' Jacks

There was a large crowd of people attending the evening water skiing show at Jumpin' Jacks on Tuesday, August 18th. Five CDHS members joined in to cheer on the amazing show of very talented skiers. The weather cooperated nicely: pleasant with no sudden rain showers or storms.



The Biggest Issue in the Midterm Elections

(by Robert Reich, Substack, September 1, 2026)

Friends,

The earnings of America's largest corporations — the S&P 500 — surged by an astounding 53 percent over the past year. But most Americans are losing ground. Wages have barely risen — yet a tomato today costs 40 percent more than it did just a year ago. Gas now costs an average of more than \$4.50 a gallon. Renting an apartment is 54 percent more expensive than it was in 2017. Housing prices are up 60 percent since 2019. Families will spend \$120 more on electricity this year than last year. Credit card debt is up 63 percent since just 2021. Add in so-called “convenience fees” popping up everywhere, along with “shrinkflation” where companies deceptively shrink product sizes while charging the same or even more — and what do you get? An economy that's clearly, wildly, unambiguously unaffordable.

A widely watched measure of consumer confidence slipped in August as consumers fretted about future economic conditions, the Conference Board said this past week.

Why the widening gap between how well big corporations are doing and how poorly average Americans are doing? Three reasons:

1. Big corporations are monopolizing their markets, raising prices as they pocket bigger profits.

A major part of the affordability crisis is directly related to monopoly power. As big corporations raise prices, the typical working family has to struggle even harder.

A good rule of thumb is that when four or fewer giant corporations dominate a market, it's relatively easy for them to informally coordinate their prices so they all make bigger profits while leaving consumers with less choice. This is now the case across much of the American economy.

Walmart now controls almost a quarter of the nation's grocery market and dominates retail sales. Walmart sells more than half of all groceries in close to 40 metropolitan areas across America.

Amazon, meanwhile, dominates e-commerce in general and many specific lines of business. The corporation sells about 80 percent of all e-books and 71 percent of all print books sold online.

It's the same for more specialized retail. One company, Luxxotica, dominates the manufacture and retail of eyeglasses. Two companies control 60 percent of the entire U.S. mattress market.

Four major companies — Tyson Foods, Cargill, JBS USA, and National Beef Packing Co. — now control about 85 percent of U.S. meat processing.

Four major carriers control around 70 percent to 80 percent of domestic flights and the overall airline market.

Four corporations control roughly 85 percent of U.S. corn seed sales and 75 percent of soybean seed sales.

Three primary providers control approximately 80 percent of the mobile telecom market.

And then there are Apple, Amazon, Google (Alphabet), Facebook (Meta), Nvidia, and Microsoft — which are taking over everything. In a few years, their AI may own, do, and profit from the entire economy.

Appropriate response: Antitrust enforcement! Plus new and more comprehensive antitrust legislation that enables regulators to break up the biggest corporations and make it harder for them to merge or acquire others.

2. High corporate profits are reflected in record stock market values, but only the richest are benefiting from the soaring stock market. That's because the richest 1 percent of Americans own about half of the value of all shares of stock; the richest 10 percent own over 90 percent.

As a result, the richest 10 percent are feeling wealthier and spending more. But the bottom 90 percent are not.

In fact, a growing portion of the American workforce is sinking. It's not just that their wages aren't keeping up with prices. A quarter of them don't even have jobs that pay enough to keep them out of poverty.

An old friend, Gene Ludwig, has been measuring the true rate of unemployment — defined not only as percent of people unemployed but also those who are working part-time who'd rather have a full-time job, people too discouraged even to look for work, and those not earning enough to keep them out of poverty.

This true rate of unemployment grew 0.2 percentage points in July, from 24.7 percent to 24.9 percent of the working-age population of the United States — the fourth consecutive month of these negative increases, which are up 0.8 percentage points since the start of the year.

Think about it. Almost a quarter of everyone in the U.S. who's able to work and wants to work cannot find a job that pays them enough to keep them out of poverty.

Appropriate response: A minimum wage of \$20 an hour, a universal basic income, and a universal job guarantee.

3. Tariff refunds are providing a big, temporary subsidy to large corporations. They had passed the costs of those tariffs on to their consumers in higher prices, but consumers aren't receiving the refunds.

This isn't nearly as large an issue as the first two, but it's not nothing. The Wall Street Journal reports that tariff refunds are likely to account for more than 4 percent of third-quarter economic growth. Apollo Global Management estimates that the refunds to corporations will add about 0.2 percentage point to the Atlanta Fed's growth forecast of between 4 percent and 5 percent.

Appropriate response: Require that corporations pass on the refunds to consumers in the form of lower prices.

The increasing wealth and power of big corporations and the increasing financial distress of most American families will be the biggest issue in the upcoming midterms.

Honor Dolly; March for Justice; Voice Your Opinion

(from *The Contrarian*, Substack, August 27, 2026)

Democracy is not a spectator sport. Whether you want to exercise your right to vote, join a protest, call your elected officials, run for office, or keep tabs on the week's hottest issues and protests, *The Contrarian* has suggestions for getting involved.

Here are some top suggestions for non-violent and lawful activism in the days and weeks ahead. These are heated times; please stay safe.

Honor Dolly Parton

We lost a transcendent American this past week with the death of Dolly Parton, who inspired generations with her music, her philanthropy, and a moral clarity that bridged the divides of our politics. Perhaps Parton's greatest legacy is her Imagination Library project, which has encouraged literacy and lifelong love of reading by giving away more than 300 million books to children across America and other countries. Visit [ImaginationLibrary.com](https://www.imaginationlibrary.com) and the nonprofit Dollywood Foundation to help keep Parton's legacy thriving.

Oppose Exorbitant Visa Fees

The Trump administration is again attempting to turn visas for high-skilled workers into a racket, proposing to charge \$100,000 for each H1-B visa applicant. A federal judge previously struck down an executive order that Donald Trump issued, imposing a similar exorbitant charge, as an illegal tax. But Trump is now seeking to enact this fee through a regulation. The public can [comment](#) on the proposed rule — which would affect the availability of skilled workers in fields from healthcare and advanced research to programming and tech. Speak out through September 24.

Take in a Showing of 'Rocky Horror'

The legendary actor Tim Curry also died last week. One of his defining roles was portraying mad scientist Dr. Frank-N-Furter in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, which became a midnight cult classic at indie movie houses across the country — providing a safe haven for members of the LGBTQIA+ community and cultivating a loyal fanbase of misfits and contrarians. Check the independent theaters in your community for a showing — and buy some extra popcorn.

Preserve the 'Roadless Rule'

The Trump administration is attempting — again — to open pristine stands of federal forest to logging and development roads. The Department of Agriculture recently announced it is attempting to rescind a landmark 2001 "Roadless Rule" that protects nearly 45 million acres of national forest from resource exploitation.

The administration is dressing up this giveaway to logging and mining companies as a way to reduce wildfire risk. However, according to the Center for Western Priorities, the move would actually "degrade drinking water, fragment wildlife habitat, and increase the Forest Service's \$10 billion road maintenance backlog." You can [comment](#) on the proposed regulation through September 21.

Participate in National Voter Registration Day

The Trump administration, in league with the Supreme Court, continues to diminish voting rights and seeks to meddle in our elections. Help make the midterms "too big to rig" by celebrating National Voter Registration Day, a "civic holiday dedicated to celebrating our democracy," on September 15. The [NVRD website](#) offers resources on understanding your ballot and encouraging your community members to exercise their voting rights. A handy tool can help you register in your state.

Turn the South Blue

Join [Run for Something](#) and [YALLvote](#) on September 15 for a virtual learning session on transforming the South from red to blue. You'll hear from state representatives, community members, and leaders including Amanda Litman and Amanda Nelson on topics ranging from running for office to activating your digital community.

Join 'Hands Off Our Vote'

[Indivisible](#) has mounted a campaign to empower citizens against voter suppression efforts and even election interference in the midterms. The group warns of the MAGA administration: "It's going to be no-holds-barred from them this year as they try desperately to block free, democratic elections." Check out the group's 19-page election-protection toolkit for actions and strategies to ensure fair elections in November.

Vote Like Your Nation Depends on It

The "November" midterms actually begin as early as September in some states, with early voting set to start in just weeks. Opportunities differ by jurisdiction, so check out [ElectionInnovation.org](https://electioninnovation.org) for a state-by-state breakdown of how to cast your ballot early, whether in-person at an early voting center or by mail. [Vote.org](https://vote.org) also offers an early-voting calendar. Check your voting details at [Vote411.org](https://vote411.org) and make a plan to cast your ballot.

Thousands Rally at Lincoln Memorial to Defend Voting Rights

Civil rights leaders say this is the first march since the Supreme Court gutted a core Voting Rights Act protection.

(by Sky Sandoval, [Nation of Change](#), August 28, 2026)

Thousands gathered at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. on August 28 for the “March on Washington 2026: Defend the Vote,” a rally marking the 63rd anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The event began at 9 a.m. and was organized by the National Action Network and the Drum Major Institute, alongside nearly 100 partner organizations including the NAACP, FairVote, Everytown for Gun Safety and Democracy Forward.

The march was co-chaired by Rev. Al Sharpton, founder of the National Action Network; Martin Luther King III; and Arndrea Waters King, daughter-in-law of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and president of the [Drum Major Institute](#). Rep. Yvette Clarke of New York, chair of the [Congressional Black Caucus](#), confirmed her attendance, with other caucus members expected to join her, according to Washington City Paper. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Sen. Bernie Sanders and Virginia Gov. Abigail Spanberger were also announced as speakers.

Organizers said the march was called in direct response to the Supreme Court’s April 29 ruling in *Louisiana v. Callais*, a 6-3 decision that struck down a Louisiana congressional map drawn to comply with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The ruling has prompted several Southern state legislatures to consider or enact new maps eliminating majority-minority districts ahead of the 2026 elections. The demonstration’s stated focus areas were voting rights, economic dignity and affordability, according to the National Action Network’s event page.

“We’ve been doing these marches for years, but this is probably the most important because this is the first year we are marching that the voting rights bill has been nullified by the Supreme Court,” Sharpton said, according to an Associated Press wire report.

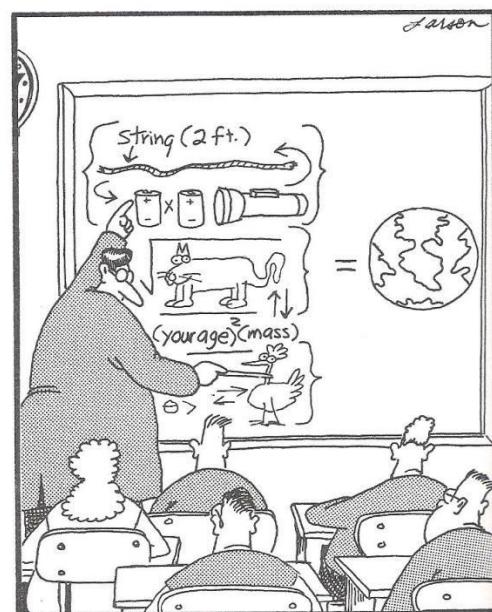
Louisiana Rep. Cleo Fields, whose majority-Black congressional district was central to the case, told the crowd: “This march is about people who refuse to be counted out. When the courts and the legislature broke apart District 6, they did not just redraw lines.” NAACP President Derrick Johnson also spoke, saying: “We will not stand idly by while the voices of the people are silenced. We must protect every eligible citizen’s right to cast their ballot.”

Martin Luther King III said the march was meant to demonstrate “unity to defend the right to vote,” according to Washington City Paper. Arndrea Waters King, in a statement carried by the same outlet, said: “We cannot take the right to vote for granted, nor can we accept a democracy where some voices are heard while others are silenced.”

The original 1963 March on Washington, at which Dr. King delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech from the same steps, drew an estimated 250,000 people. This year’s march comes roughly ten weeks before the November 2026 midterm elections, which organizers cited as a reason for the timing.

The rally follows a series of legal and legislative fights over voting access since the *Callais* ruling, including litigation over state redistricting maps and challenges to mail-in ballot rules that have moved through federal courts this year. Organizers framed the march as part of a broader mobilization effort tied to voter registration and turnout ahead of the midterms.

The event was scheduled to run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Lincoln Memorial, with speakers drawn from labor, faith and civic organizations in addition to the co-chairs.



Creationism explained

Facts? Trump Doesn't Need No Stinkin' Facts!

(by Jennifer Rubin, *The Contrarian*, via Substack, August 27, 2026)

A regime that rails against “DEI,” decries “fake news,” and claims devotion to meritocracy has stocked its ranks with overwhelmingly white, incompetent sycophants who routinely fail to back up outlandish, vindictive allegations with facts. The result is serial failure and humiliation.

The problem is evident in serial court debacles. CNN reported on U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia Jeanine Pirro’s recent humiliation — a second trial defeat — in failing to convict an alleged high-profile MS-13 gang mastermind. Her loss fits the former Fox TV host’s pattern of unprecedented defeats (also evident in DOJ’s unprecedented record of getting “no bills” from grand juries) that has stunned legal experts. “An increasingly alarming number of cases have fallen apart this year in DC’s federal court — even when the cases appear to be strong arguments against violent crime, relatively straightforward to prove, and tried by experienced prosecutors,” CNN wrote. In nearly a dozen criminal cases, two defendants were acquitted and four ended in mistrials with “jurors reporting in courtroom notes that they deliberated ‘hopelessly’ and were in complete ‘impasse.’”

That failure rate is unmatched by prior administrations but typical in the Trump regime’s often vindictive prosecutions. Despite Attorney General Todd Blanche’s wild accusations, many cases are shockingly devoid of evidence, ensuring defeat before even reaching a jury. Hence, the D.C. district court just granted the DOJ’s motion to dismiss the bogus “vandalism” case against former Olympic canoeist David Hearn, falsely accused of destroying the lining on the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool (which — no surprise! — actually resulted from the no-bid contractor’s error).

Wild accusations from Donald Trump and his minions; no facts; no case. That is the pattern in a slew of vindictive investigations/prosecutions (e.g., mortgage “fraud” cases against Letitia James, a “perjury” case against James Comey, a baseless investigation into former Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, a threatened investigation of Sen. Adam Schiff). Remember when Blanche publicly declared there was plenty of evidence of criminal intent to bolster his bizarre indictment of Comey because he reposted an image of seashells? Now? Crickets. The case, widely regarded as preposterous, is expected to be dismissed.

Trump and his minions’ utter failure to back up wild accusations extends well beyond courtrooms. Whistleblowers, for example, now reveal the Trump regime lacked facts to sustain its vendetta against colleges and universities for alleged antisemitism, its go-to cudgel for attacking academic independence and diversity efforts.

As the New York Times reported:

Trump administration officials ignored the recommendations of their own investigators as they pushed to find civil rights violations at three Ivy League universities.... The Aug. 17 account came from a former Department of Justice civil rights lawyer, Haley Van Erem, and colleagues whose names were redacted, who said they were assigned in 2025 to an administration task force on antisemitism.

In a report from Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee, whistleblower lawyers confirmed the Trump crew used antisemitism “as a pretext to cut federal grants to pressure Brown, Columbia and Harvard.”

Judiciary Committee Ranking Member Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-MD) denounced the DOJ in an August 18 letter:

Trump Administration officials abandoned their duty as government lawyers to impartially investigate the facts and apply the law. Instead, they used the legitimate goal of investigating antisemitic discrimination on campus as a pretext for retaliating against, and punishing, universities, faculty, and students for engaging in protected speech disfavored by President Trump and his Administration. In other words, you seem to have overseen a large-scale fraud perpetrated against the American people and our universities, attacking disfavored groups on knowingly false grounds and exacerbating fear and division among different groups in our society.

(Brown and Columbia, which already capitulated to DOJ’s threats, might consider trying to unwind the settlements based on supposedly baseless accusations.)

In a similar vein, Trump’s flunkies have never produced evidence to back up his incessant claims of massive noncitizen voting. Following Trump’s widely panned Oval Office speech regarding alleged noncitizen voting, the big document “reveal” turned out to be a bust. As The Guardian reported, data “described electronic voting machine vulnerabilities, foreign access to state voter registration data and foreign digital manipulation strategies ... [but] no evidence Beijing altered the 2020 vote, which Trump lost.” More recently, a bogus report from the Census Bureau fashioned by an outside MAGA-friendly outfit to bolster specious voting fraud claims proved to be essentially worthless.

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And now, the New York Times reported, "A month after the Trump administration declared without evidence that thousands of noncitizens had illegally registered to vote in Nevada, officials with the Department of Homeland Security were unable to substantiate the claim." Trump's wild accusation that "278,000 noncitizens registered to vote in four states, including an exact number of 15,903 in Nevada," turned out to be — surprise ! — nonsense. DHS officials let on during a meeting that "they had identified just 185 potential noncitizens in the state so far," a minuscule percentage of registered voters.

In contrast to its baseless cascade of allegations and accusations, the Trump team melts down when confronted with disagreeable, quantifiable proof that refutes its propaganda, as it did when the Center for American Progress produced a report showing "his deployment of the National Guard to cities across the country has had little effect on reducing violent crime," the New York Times reported. Trump's personal lawyer then threatened to sue CAP for \$5 billion (yet to be filed as of this writing), the "latest effort to use the legal system to punish critics for voicing unflattering facts and opinions generally protected by the First Amendment."

In response to the blatant effort to chill speech and saddle it with crippling legal costs (as the Federal Trade Commission tried, one may recall, with Media Matters), CAP President and CEO Neera Tanden defiantly defended her organization's "rigorous, evidence-based research and analysis" in a written statement:

Based on an analysis of crime data, our report demonstrated facts about the National Guard deployments that are inconvenient to the Trump administration. Since its inception, CAP has published analysis of the impact of government policy under Democratic and Republican administrations.

This threatened lawsuit's attack on facts and evidence is baseless. A fundamental protection of the First Amendment is to allow for the publication of facts and analysis that are contrary to the arguments and claims of any administration.

She vowed not to "cower nor bend" to Trump's authoritarian bullying. It was gratifying to see right-leaning think tanks, including the Cato Institute and the Niskanen Center, denounce the attack on free speech.

In sum, Trump's accusations, whether in court filings, presidential addresses, policy declarations, or legal threats, do not deserve any presumption of good faith. This gang's attacks on enemies and in support of its own twisted agenda routinely lack substantiation. Moreover, its attacks on foes who do have the facts amount to nothing more than fascist bullying.

It's long past time for legacy media to inform Americans that the regime routinely lies about perceived adversaries. When it comes up with new allegations, it would behoove reporters to remind Americans of its well-established habit of fabulist claims and baseless accusations.



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