



Local Civics for Libraries

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**Indiana Libraries and Literacy
Symposium April 12, 2024**



Introduction

Can Civics Save Democracy?

Can teaching civics in schools help break down barriers in American society?

Mar 1, 2021 6:25 PM EDT

Menu

PBS
NEWS
HOUR



Popular Latest *The Atlantic* Sign

IDEAS

Can Civics Save America?

Teaching civics could restore health to American democracy, or inflame our mutual antagonisms.

By George Packer





Civic Literacy: Common Definition

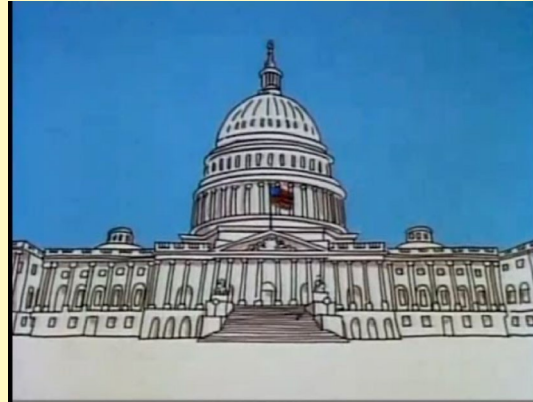
“Civic Literacy is the knowledge of how to actively participate and initiate change in your community and the greater society. It is the foundation by which a democratic society functions: Citizen Power as a check and as a means to create avenues for peaceful change.”

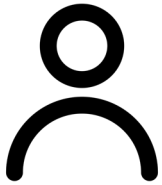


Civic Instruction: Always Federal to Local



Schoolhouse Rock: Fun but still Federal level!





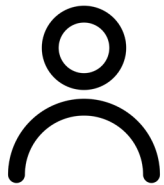
**City
Government**
Mayor
City Council

**County
Government**
Sheriff
Superintendent

**State
Government**
Governor
Secretary of
State

**Federal
Government**
President
Congressperson



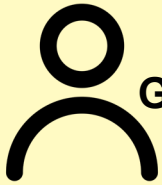


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**WE EAT
LOCALLY**

**WE SHOP
LOCALLY**

**NOW LET'S
VOTE
LOCALLY**



Budgets that are controlled at the City and County Level:



Neighborhood
Safety,
Crime Prevention,
Speeding & Graffiti



Building Permit,
Rezoning Property,
Property Taxes



Public
Transportation,
Buses & Streetcars,
Street Repairs



Trash in Parks,
Neighborhood &
After School
Programs

Budgets that are controlled at the City and County Level:

- Police/Fire
- Elementary and High School
- Parks and Recreation
- Streets/Public Transportation
- **Public Libraries**

LOCAL ACTION
IS THE MOST
EFFECTIVE ACTION

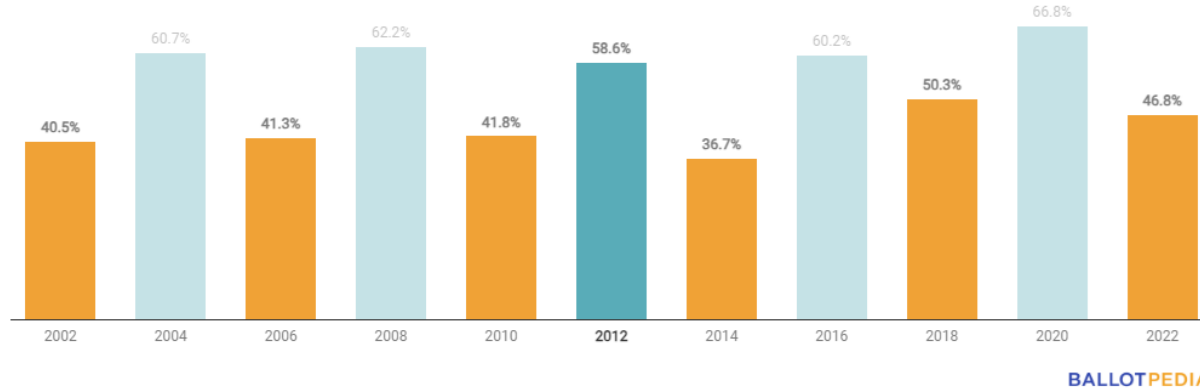
Civic Literacy: One Outcome-Voting

Historical voter turnout rates

See also: [Voter turnout in United States elections](#)

Voter turnout rates, 2002-2022

Showing nationwide voter turnout rates in **midterm** and **presidential** elections since 2002. The rate used here is an expression of total ballots cast divided by the total number of eligible voters.

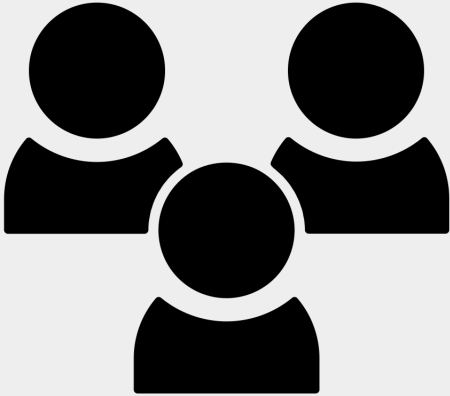


Voting Turnout is at an all time high. In the November 2020 elections 66.3% of the voting age population voted. The last time it was this high was 1908-120 years ago.

**Local Civic for Libraries provides training on
local civic power for Librarians, Educators,
and the Community.**

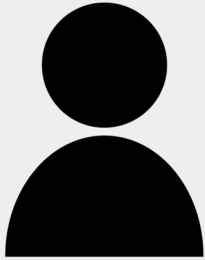
**Why? Because the majority of the everyday
environment is BUDGETED by local governments,
including Libraries!**

Civics: Pick your Community

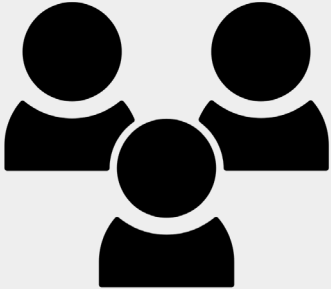


- **What is my Community? Remember to start small.**
- **Pick the smallest community. Is it your friends, family, apartment building, neighborhood block, school, church, or affinity group?**

Larger Issue: Criminal Justice



- Who controls the prison system in my city, county and state? Is it public or privately run?
- What elected official decides who go to prison, for how long and who gets paroled? County Attorney, Sheriff etc.



- I can elect a new Sheriff. We did [Sam Cogen](#). first time in 30 years!
- I can elect a progressive DA like [Philly DA!](#)
- I did I helped elect [Laura Conover for Pima County Attorney](#).

Immediate Needs for Libraries

- Future Proofing against Book Bans
- Serving on School & Library Boards
- Creating proactive policies that will protect us from malicious actors: Moms for Liberty



POLITICS

is not a game.



MyRolodex Exercise

myRolodex Exercise

- Life will get busy
- We all competing priorities so this is to be ONE STOP shop for the City.County, State and Federal Elected Officials
- Which Elected Officials or Committees etc can help you solve your issue/problem.




myRolodex Example: District Attorney

	Name	
	Project Idea	The Who and Why and the Vote for Alameda County District Attorney this June 7, 2022

CITY AND COUNTY CONNECTIONS:

Who?	Alameda County Registrar of Voters.	How?	Tim Dupuis Phone: 510-272-6973
Why?	Runs all election in County		
Who?	City of Oakland Public Attorney	How?	Barbara Parker Phone: 510-238-3815
Why?	Known as fair and open to questions		

myRolodex Example: Elections

 STATE CONNECTIONS:			
Who?	Paul is the State Representative for my district.	How?	Paul Evans, Email: rep.paulevans@oregonlegislature.gov
Why?	(We also went to college together a long time ago.)		
Who?	The Secretary of State	How?	Email Shemia.FAGAN@sos.oregon.gov
Why?	Overssee elections and fraud. The frontline for free and fair elections.		



Name	
Project Idea	

🏠 CITY AND COUNTY CONNECTIONS:

Who?		How?	
Why?			
Who?		How?	
Why?			

🗺️ STATE CONNECTIONS:

Who?		How?	
Why?			
Who?		How?	
Why?			

✉️ FEDERAL CONNECTIONS:

Who?		How?	
Why?			
Who?		How?	
Why?			



Created by Mary Evangeliste for San Jose State University Civic Literacy Info 281 and [Indiana Libraries and Literacy Symposium](#)
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**Know who controls
the Library Budget**

are they elected?

appointed?



**Who
controls
your
library
budget?**

Is it shrinking?
expanding?

- Who's on the Library Board?
- Who's on the School Board?
- Do you know anyone who wants to run for the Library Board? the School Board?



**Think about the news
you consume. Are they
reporting facts, giving
their opinions
(pundits), or only
focusing on spectacle
and tragedy?**





**MATCH
ACTION
TO
ENERGY**

SOCIETY OF THE SPECTACLE by GUY DEBORD

In terms of the news:

"passive identification with the spectacle
supplants genuine activity"

*In everyday life this means instead of action we
passively consume news and talk with people
about it.*

How can we compete with the Society of the Spectacle?

- **Stay focused on issue**
- **Work smart and small**
- **Build local knowledge**

***Anti-book banning
and local elections
toolkits!***



FOR THE PEOPLE
a leftist library project

RUN FOR SOMETHING

**SOLUTIONS
JOURNALISM
NETWORK**

LOCAL PROGRESS



*Resources and
organization
working on these
issues*

BOLTS

BALLOT PEDIA

BRENNAN
CENTER

FOR JUSTICE



CIRCLE