Civics for Adults Update, Oct 2, 2020

Because we are in a pandemic, an election season, and an especially complex and contentious election season, updates may be a bit more frequent this month and next. Plus, workshops are being added quickly. Please see the Schedule page on www.civicthinker.info for the latest workshop info, and the Facebook page [in sig file] for latest informational updates.

Upcoming Workshops! *[Libraries open up out-of-district registration beyond district at varying times.]*
More coming soon!

Still lots of spots available for the Elections and Campaign Finance workshop next week where I will talk about efforts to limit or expand voting options around the country, as well as many other current topics! Spread the word!

Beyond Voting: Elections and Campaign Financing

Voting as Constitutional right(?), Voting Security, Voter Suppression, Alternative Voting Systems, Redistricting, Electoral College, Campaign Financing, Tracking Money/Campaign Finance Databases, Public Financing of Elections.

October 6. 6:30-8:00 Sponsored by Bethany Community Library.
Registration link: https://wccls.bibliocommons.com/events/5f29ec8767d14c2e00bd6036
October 28. 6:00-7:30 Sponsored by Bandon Public Library.
Contact sponsor if you are in district; out-of-district registration link TBA.

The Constitution: Fulfilling Democracy's Promise?

We'll look at the Constitution's creation, trace major changes to its interpretation, and then examine some structural limitations. We'll puncture some myths and develop a perspective that helps evaluate its meaning more thoughtfully in light of contemporary concerns.

October 15. 6-7:30. Sponsored by Sherwood Public Library.
Registration link: https://wccls.bibliocommons.com/events/5f5fd0256b896d4500367356
October 27. 6-7:30 Sponsored by League of Women Voters - Umpqua. Contact sponsor if you are in district; out-of-district registration link TBA.

Misinformation, Fake News and Political Propaganda

Are you overwhelmed with messages from politicians, news sources and other media? Distinguish truth from fiction using real-world examples. Become your own "factchecker"! Also, how to find accurate information.

October 13, 10-11:30 Sponsored by Cook Memorial Library. Registration link:
https://www.eventbrite.com/e/misinformation-fake-news-and-political-propaganda-tickets-122749961439
October 29, 6:30-8:00 Sponsored by Athena Public Library. Contact sponsor if you are in district; out-of-district registration link TBA.

Citizen Activism 101—Making Change Happen

None scheduled right now. Ask your library or community group to schedule!

Sampling of Facebook posts
Election Beat 2020: The mysterious voter registration deadline
"In the 1950s, 90% of Americans lived in states that closed their registration rolls two or more weeks in advance of Election Day, a few as much as a year in advance. The situation today is better, but not commendably so. Most Americans live in states where, if you wait until less than two weeks remains in the election to try to register, you're out of luck.

Officials in states with early closing dates say that it's necessary in order to prepare the paperwork in time for Election Day. In an earlier time, that claim made some sense. In the electronic age when the records are digitally kept and updated, it makes less sense. A dozen states smoothly manage to let their residents wait until the last minute. They allow residents to register when they go to the polls on Election Day.

Early closing dates are partly intended to depress the turnout of groups — particularly the poor, racial and ethnic minorities and newer immigrants — who are less likely to be aware of the deadline. And it works. Although other factors are also involved, states with early deadlines have voter turnout rates that are more than 10 percentage points lower than states that employ same-day registration"

https://journalistsresource.org/studies/politics/elections/election-beat-2020-voter-registration/?utm_source=Journalist%27s%20Resource&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=4ddf2cb1e4-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_01_28_02_40_COPY_01&quot%3B%20target&quot%3B_self&quot%3B&utm_term=0_12d86b1d6a-4ddf2cb1e4-80393525&fbclid=IwAR0VPvYUE4Qb2adZfmQV3ib01pvXnBe8mRl0taq5NYv2ntxIHrGXMXqfj7I
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Mail Voting: What Has Changed in 2020
Good summary of where we are from the Brennan Center https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/mail-voting-what-has-changed-2020
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Four Ways to Safely Cast Your Ballot Without USPS
For your out-of-state friends here is some guidance on how they can cast a ballot without going to the polls OR using USPS.
https://www.democracydocket.com/2020/08/usps-delays/
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Can We Believe Our Ears? Experts Say To Heed Caution As Audio Deep Fake Technology Advances
More on deepfakes - a sincerely, serious, danger during this election time.
https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2020/09/28/deep-fake-video-audio
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The Legal and Political Fight Over Amendment 4, Granting as Many as 1.4 Million Florida Felons The Right to Vote
CBS' 60 Minutes did a great report on the push-pull of voting rights for ex-felons in Florida - one of a handful of states that had until recently taken away the right to vote, for life, for most ex-felons. In 2018, a measure passed by almost 2/3rds of voters to change this. Since then, laws and court cases have gone back and forth and the Supreme Court may ultimately weigh in. A fascinating look into how we DON'T have a Constitutional right to vote.
https://www.cbsnews.com/news/amendment-4-florida-felony-voting-rights-60-minutes-2020-09-27/?fbclid=IwAR2zyrtoUi1GNdmXjNQOFA9VOq5Bu_7ycfFgTLg3dmT6O8ZuF_vpbqqljNM
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Judge says ending 2020 census on Oct. 5 might violate her order
Stopping important Census functions early - to say nothing of ignoring a court order - by a federal agency - is unacceptable. The Census determines how billions of dollars are spent and also how Congressional districts are apportioned among the states. The Census is a Constitutional mandate for very good reasons.
https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/commerce-secretary-ross-says-2020-census-will-end-oct-5-n1241298?fbclid=IwAR1oMhNjsYYcuRP_J8kwWMX4TyF8SxnCl-j3Qu5D7nEtnaCvbmeQeNZAraE