

## **4.3.2023 SHOW NOTES:**

# **THE HEADLINES SUPPORT MY CLAIMS**

*(All material is used for educational purposes only)*

**NOTE:** I have tried to make sure that none of the stories in this collection are duplicates, but I am allowing for the possibility that I may have missed cross-over referencing.

**FURTHERMORE:** Many of the articles I have posted here have video links imbedded in them that did not copy over to this page. You might want to reference the original sources for further investigation.

## RUTHERFORD INSTITUTE

# A State of Never-Ending Crisis: The Government Is Fomenting Mass Hysteria

By John & Nisha Whitehead March 29, 2023

***"This country has been having a nationwide nervous breakdown since 9/11. A nation of people suddenly broke, the market economy goes to shit, and they're threatened on every side by an unknown, sinister enemy. But I don't think fear is a very effective way of dealing with things—of responding to reality. Fear is just another word for ignorance."***—Hunter S. Thompson, gonzo journalist

**We have become guinea pigs in a ruthlessly calculated, carefully orchestrated, chillingly cold-blooded experiment in how to control a population and advance a political agenda without much opposition from the citizenry.**

**This is mind-control in its most sinister form.**

With alarming regularity, the nation is being subjected to a spate of violence that terrorizes the public, destabilizes the country, and gives the government greater justifications to crack down, lock down, and institute even more authoritarian policies for the so-called sake of national security without many objections from the citizenry.

Take this latest shooting in Nashville, Tenn.

The 28-year-old shooter (a clearly troubled transgender individual in possession of several military-style weapons) opened fire in a Christian elementary school, killing three children and three adults.

Already, fingers are being pointed and battle lines are being drawn.

Those who want safety at all costs are clamoring for more gun control measures (if not at [an outright ban on assault weapons](#) for non-military, non-police personnel), widespread mental health screening of the general population, more threat assessments and behavioral sensing warnings, more CCTV cameras with facial

recognition capabilities, more “See Something, Say Something” programs aimed at turning Americans into snitches and spies, more metal detectors and whole-body imaging devices at soft targets, more roaming squads of militarized police empowered to do random bag searches, more fusion centers to centralize and disseminate information to law enforcement agencies, and more surveillance of what Americans say and do, where they go, what they buy and how they spend their time.

**This is all part of the Deep State’s master plan.**

Ask yourselves: why are we being bombarded with crises, distractions, fake news and reality TV politics? We’re being conditioned like lab mice to subsist on a steady diet of bread-and-circus politics and an endless spate of crises.

Caught up in this “crisis of the now,” the average person has a hard time keeping up with and remembering all of the “events,” manufactured or otherwise, which occur like clockwork in order to keep us distracted, deluded, amused, and insulated from reality.

As investigative journalist Mike Adams points out:

***“This psychological bombardment is waged primarily via the mainstream media which assaults the viewer by the hour with images of violence, war, emotions and conflict. Because the human nervous system is hard wired to focus on immediate threats accompanied by depictions of violence, mainstream media viewers have their attention and mental resources funneled into the never-ending ‘[crisis of the NOW](#)’ from which they can never have the mental breathing room to apply logic, reason or historical context.”***

Professor Jacques Ellul studied this phenomenon of overwhelming news, short memories and the use of propaganda to advance hidden agendas. “One thought drives away another; old facts are chased by new ones,” [wrote](#) Ellul.

All the while, the government continues to amass more power and authority over the citizenry.

When we’re being bombarded with wall-to-wall news coverage and news cycles that change every few days, it’s difficult to stay focused on one thing—namely,

holding the government accountable to abiding by the rule of law—and the powers-that-be understand this.

Yet as John Lennon reminds us, “nothing is real,” especially not in the world of politics.

In other words, it’s all fake, i.e., manufactured, i.e., manipulated to distort reality.

Much like the fabricated universe in Peter Weir’s 1998 film [\*The Truman Show\*](#), in which a man’s life is the basis for an elaborately staged television show aimed at selling products and procuring ratings, the political scene in the United States has devolved over the years into a carefully calibrated exercise in how to manipulate, polarize, propagandize and control a population.

This is the magic of the reality TV programming that passes for politics today.

As long as we are distracted, entertained, occasionally outraged, always polarized but largely uninvolved and content to remain in the viewer’s seat, we’ll never manage to present a unified front against tyranny (or government corruption and ineptitude) in any form.

The more that is beamed at us, the more inclined we are to settle back in our comfy recliners and become passive viewers rather than active participants as unsettling, frightening events unfold.

Reality and fiction merge as everything around us becomes entertainment fodder.

We don’t even have to change the channel when the subject matter becomes too monotonous. That’s taken care of for us by the programmers (the corporate media).

“Living is easy with eyes closed,” says Lennon, and that’s exactly what reality TV that masquerades as American politics programs the citizenry to do: navigate the world with their eyes shut.

As long as we’re viewers, we’ll never be doers.

Studies suggest that the more reality TV people watch—and I would posit that it's all reality TV, entertainment news included—the [more difficult it becomes to distinguish](#) between what is real and what is carefully crafted farce.

“We the people” are watching a lot of TV.

On average, [Americans spend five hours a day](#) watching television. By the time we reach age 65, we're watching [more than 50 hours of television a week](#), and that number increases as we get older. And reality TV programming consistently captures the [largest percentage of TV watchers](#) every season by an almost 2-1 ratio.

This doesn't bode well for a citizenry able to sift through masterfully-produced propaganda in order to think critically about the issues of the day, whether it's fake news peddled by government agencies or foreign entities.

Those who watch reality shows tend to view what they see as the “[norm](#).” Thus, those who watch shows characterized by lying, aggression and meanness not only come to [see such behavior as acceptable](#) and entertaining but also [mimic the medium](#).

This holds true whether the reality programming is about the antics of celebrities in the White House, in the board room, or in the bedroom.

It's a phenomenon called “[humilitainment](#).”

A term coined by media scholars Brad Waite and Sara Booker, “[humilitainment](#)” refers to the tendency for viewers to take pleasure in someone else's humiliation, suffering and pain.

“[Humilitainment](#)” largely explains not only [why American TV watchers are so fixated](#) on reality TV programming but how American citizens, largely insulated from what is really happening in the world around them by layers of technology, entertainment, and other distractions, are being [programmed to accept the brutality](#), surveillance and dehumanizing treatment of the American police state as things happening to *other* people.

The ramifications for the future of civic engagement, political discourse and self-government are incredibly depressing and demoralizing.

This is what happens when an entire nation—bombarded by reality TV programming, government propaganda and entertainment news—becomes systematically desensitized and acclimated to the trappings of a government that operates by fiat and speaks in a language of force.

Ultimately, the reality shows, the entertainment news, the surveillance society, the militarized police, and the political spectacles have one common objective: to keep us divided, distracted, imprisoned, and incapable of taking an active role in the business of self-government.

Look behind the political spectacles, the reality TV theatrics, the sleight-of-hand distractions and diversions, and the stomach-churning, nail-biting drama, and you will find there is a method to the madness.

**How do you change the way people think? You start by changing the words they use.**

In totalitarian regimes—a.k.a. police states—where conformity and compliance are enforced at the end of a loaded gun, the government dictates what words can and cannot be used.

**In countries where the police state hides behind a benevolent mask and disguises itself as tolerance, the citizens censor themselves, policing their words and thoughts to conform to the dictates of the mass mind.**

Even when the motives behind this rigidly calibrated reorientation of societal language appear well-intentioned—discouraging racism, condemning violence, denouncing discrimination and hatred—inevitably, the end result is the same: intolerance, indoctrination, infantilism, the chilling of free speech and the demonizing of viewpoints that run counter to the cultural elite.

**Labelling something as “fake news” is a masterful way of dismissing truth that may run counter to the ruling power’s own narrative.**

**As George Orwell recognized, “In times of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act.”**

Orwell understood only too well the power of language to manipulate the masses. In [Orwell’s 1984](#), Big Brother does away with all undesirable and unnecessary

words and meanings, even going so far as to routinely rewrite history and punish “thoughtcrimes.”

In this dystopian vision of the future, the Thought Police serve as the eyes and ears of Big Brother, while the Ministry of Peace deals with war and defense, the Ministry of Plenty deals with economic affairs (rationing and starvation), the Ministry of Love deals with law and order (torture and brainwashing), and the Ministry of Truth deals with news, entertainment, education and art (propaganda). The mottos of Oceania: WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, and IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH.

Orwell’s Big Brother relied on Newspeak to eliminate undesirable words, strip such words as remained of unorthodox meanings and make independent, non-government-approved thought altogether unnecessary.

Where we stand now is at the juncture of Oldspeak (where words have meanings, and ideas can be dangerous) and Newspeak (where only that which is “safe” and “accepted” by the majority is permitted).

Truth is often lost when we fail to distinguish between opinion and fact, and that is the danger we now face as a society. Anyone who relies exclusively on television/cable news hosts and political commentators for actual knowledge of the world is making a serious mistake.

Unfortunately, since Americans have by and large become non-readers, television has become their prime source of so-called “news.” This reliance on TV news has given rise to such popular news personalities who draw in vast audiences that virtually hang on their every word.

In our media age, these are the new powers-that-be.

Yet while these personalities often dispense the news like preachers used to dispense religion, with power and certainty, they are little more than conduits for propaganda and advertisements delivered in the guise of entertainment and news.

Given the preponderance of news-as-entertainment programming, it’s no wonder that viewers have largely lost the ability to think critically and analytically and differentiate between truth and propaganda, especially when delivered by way of fake news criers and politicians.

**The bottom line is simply this: Americans should beware of letting others—whether they be television news hosts, political commentators or media corporations—do their thinking for them.**

A populace that cannot think for themselves is a populace with its backs to the walls: mute in the face of elected officials who refuse to represent us, helpless in the face of police brutality, powerless in the face of militarized tactics and technology that treat us like enemy combatants on a battlefield, and naked in the face of government surveillance that sees and hears all.

As I make clear in my book [\*Battlefield America: The War on the American People\*](#) and in its fictional counterpart [\*The Erik Blair Diaries\*](#), it's time to change the channel, tune out the reality TV show, and push back against the real menace of the police state.

If not, if we continue to sit back and lose ourselves in political programming, we will remain a captive audience to a farce that grows more absurd by the minute.

WC: 1944

## **ABOUT JOHN W. WHITEHEAD**

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## NOT THE BEE

Tucker: "The trans movement, it turns out, is the mirror image of Christianity, and therefore its natural enemy."

[Joel Abbott](#) · · Mar 29, 2023

There's a reason for this, of course.

This Tucker segment is 9 minutes long, but worth it, my friends 📌

<https://t.co/yx6BJM5UIQ>

**The trans movement is a gnostic cult that sets itself up as a faith system in opposition to the grace and forgiveness offered in Jesus Christ.**

**Have you ever stopped to ask why it is that there seems to be this nebulous force that seeks to corrupt and destroy Christianity throughout the ages?**

**It's almost as if there were a dark shadow – some unseen power – that prowls like a lion, whispering lies and sowing seeds that turn into movements of unimaginable evil in every generation.**

**That's worth thinking about the next time someone demands you pledge allegiance to the rainbow flag.**



## NOT THE BEE

### Shooter who killed 6 at Nashville Christian elementary school identified as transgender former student

[Daniel Plainview](#) · · Mar 27, 2023 · NottheBee.com



The shooter who opened fire earlier today at The Covenant School, a Presbyterian elementary school in Nashville, has been identified as a 28-year-old transgender former student.

The shooter, whose name or picture we will not publish, killed three young children and three faculty members before being shot dead by law enforcement who responded within minutes.

"At one point [the shooter] was a student at that school," Metropolitan Nashville Police Chief John Drake [told reporters](#). [The shooter] identifies as transgender."

Incredibly, the biological sex of the killer is still not 100% clear, though it seems at this time that the shooter was a female who identified as a transgender male.

Fox also reports that the school principal was one of the victims.

The victims have been [identified](#) as:

- Evelyn Dieckhaus, 9
- Hallie Scruggs, 9
- William Kinney, 9
- Cynthia Peak, 61
- Katherine Koonce, 60
- Mike Hill, 61

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The shooter reportedly "carefully planned the attack with detailed maps and surveillance" and left some sort of manifesto.

When asked about a possible motive, the police chief [said](#), "There's right now a theory that we may be able to talk about later but it's not confirmed." When asked specifically if the shooter's transgender identity could have factored into the killer's motive, he said, "There is some theory to that, we're investigating all the leads."



Social media sites scrubbed the shooter's past info before law enforcement announcements were made.

Police have been [searching the home](#) apparently owned by the shooter's father in Nashville, where he apparently still resided. We will not post the address, but the home is in a nice neighborhood and has a Zillow value estimate of \$805,300.

## ZERO HEDGE

### WHO Now Says COVID Vaccines Not Recommended For Healthy Kids & Teens

by Tyler Durden Thursday, Mar 30, 2023 - 09:40 PM

Yet another leading health institution has unveiled a significant Covid policy reversal this week... this time it's none other than the World Health Organization (WHO) saying something that might have gotten an individual suspended from social media or publicly "canceled" a mere one or two years ago:

WHO now recommends healthy, young people NOT get the Covid Vaccines. [pic.twitter.com/77FP0Qvi7v](https://pic.twitter.com/77FP0Qvi7v)

— Citizen Free Press (@CitizenFreePres) [March 30, 2023](#)

The revision in guidelines [was put out this week](#) by the WHO's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE) - a group of scientists and officials which said they **no longer recommend the Covid vaccine for "healthy" children ages 6 months to 17 years.**

"The public health impact of vaccinating healthy children and adolescents is comparatively much lower than the established benefits of traditional essential vaccines for children – such as the rotavirus, measles, and pneumococcal conjugate vaccines," SAGE wrote.

The new policy identifies three priority groups — high, medium and low — and puts children and teens in the low category. The definitions assess categories for "risk of severe disease and death". The WHO still recommends that "Children who have compromised immune systems or existing health conditions should still get the vaccine."

SAGE Chair Dr. Hanna Nohyn stated in explaining the updated guidelines, "Updated to reflect that much of the population is either vaccinated or previously infected with COVID-19, or both, the revised roadmap reemphasizes the importance of

vaccinating those still at-risk of severe disease, mostly older adults and those with underlying conditions, including with additional boosters."

***The United States CDC currently recommends Covid vaccines for children 6 months and up..***

## THE FEDERALIST

# Voter Suppression Is Real And It's Not What You Were Told

By: [Shawn Fleetwood and Mollie Hemingway](#) March 29, 2023

Pennsylvania residents have filed a lawsuit against Luzerne County after being denied their constitutional right to vote in the 2022 midterms.

On the morning of Election Day last November, William French went to his local polling place in Freeland, Pennsylvania, to cast his vote. But the qualified and registered voter wasn't allowed to. The disabled U.S. Army veteran was told that the precinct had run out of paper for ballots and he had to come back later in the afternoon.

So that's what he did, returning at 3:30 p.m. But the precinct still didn't have ballots. Election workers told him to return yet again. But by nightfall, it was too difficult. French has endured 17 surgeries on his destroyed leg and uses a cane to walk. But the sidewalks are a mess, and he was worried about the risk of falling and further injury.

That same morning, Melynda Reese and her husband went to their polling location in Shickshinny, Pennsylvania. But only Reese's husband was allowed to vote, and for the same reason: The precinct had run out of paper. They came back at 4:00 p.m. and were told there would be a lengthy wait.

Reese is a corrections officer and her husband's primary caregiver. He had recently suffered two cardiac arrests and a stroke. He required regular medication and attention and couldn't be left alone. Long waits were also too much to bear. The couple returned at 6:30 p.m., and saw a line that stretched so long that they knew they couldn't wait. Around 9:15 p.m., an election official called Reese and told her that ballots were finally available and she could vote. But her husband had just taken his sleeping pills and she couldn't leave him unattended.

French and Reese are just two of the thousands of voters affected by poor election administration in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. The two just [sued](#) Luzerne County,

its Board of Elections and Registration, and its Bureau of Elections in federal court for violations of their constitutional right to vote.

“Voters in Luzerne County through no fault of their own, were disenfranchised and denied the fundamental right to vote. William French and Melynda Reese are two of those voters. They bring suit to vindicate the denial of their sacred right to vote, to make sure voters are not disenfranchised in the future, and to bring integrity back to elections in Luzerne County,” said Wally Zimolong, lawyer for French and Reese.

[https://www.scribd.com/document/634672123/French-Reese-v-Luzerne-County#download&from\\_embed](https://www.scribd.com/document/634672123/French-Reese-v-Luzerne-County#download&from_embed)

[French, Reese v. Luzerne Co...](#) by [The Federalist](#)

Luzerne County was coal country and [once a Democrat stronghold](#), before Donald Trump ran for president in 2016, when the county voted Republican. The county’s election administration in 2022 was, according to the lawsuit, a “catastrophic failure.” More than 40 precincts had an insufficient number of ballots, many running out early in the morning on Election Day. The county implausibly blamed high voter interest, but Pennsylvania law requires counties to have enough ballots for every registered voter. Election workers were sent scrambling to office supply stores for paper, and were left untrained for the disastrous day. A court had to intervene to allow a few more hours of voting. Judge Lesa Gelb wrote in her order, “Voters in Luzerne County through no fault of their own, were disenfranchised and denied the fundamental right to vote.” Left-wing groups pressured the county election board to certify the election results, even though the first vote to certify failed to pass. The county election board [bowed](#) to the pressure.

Even with the problems faced by thousands of voters, including not being able to vote, no election contest was challenged because of the poor administration. But the story could have been much worse. Pennsylvania frequently has close elections. Just months prior, in fact, the Republican primary for Senate nominee came down to just over [900 votes](#) statewide.

Yesterday, the House Administration Committee [held a hearing](#) to investigate just how things went off the rails in Luzerne County.

At the hearing, House Administration Chair and Republican Rep. Bryan Steil noted that Democrats and media operatives talk a big game about disenfranchisement every time Republicans pass legislation to increase election security, but they have never been able to produce evidence of voters unable to vote. **“For years, several of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have claimed that states like Florida and Georgia — that have implemented voter integrity laws — are suppressing voters. ... However, they have never produced a single voter who wanted to vote and was unable to,”** said Steil.

One of the more prominent examples of Democrats’ “voter suppression” smear came two years ago, when Georgia passed legislation enhancing the integrity of the state’s elections. Despite the [benign provisions](#) included in the bill — such as voter ID requirements for mail-in voting — Democrats and their legacy media allies blatantly mischaracterized the law as a Republican-led effort to suppress Georgia voters. President Joe Biden took his hyperbolic response a step further, [referring](#) to the bill as “Jim Crow on steroids” and pressuring the MLB to [relocate its 2021 All-Star game](#) out of Atlanta in protest. The league ultimately caved and moved the event to Denver, Colorado. Other Georgia-based corporations to smear the law as a form of voter suppression include [Coca-Cola](#) and [Delta](#).

Despite such grossly inaccurate statements, Georgia experienced [record-shattering voting](#) in the [2022 midterms](#).

French and Reese’s lawsuit against Luzerne County, its Board of Elections and Registration, and its Bureau of Elections comes at a time when some election officials in the country have seemed to privilege early and unsupervised voters at the expense of Election Day voters. In Maricopa County, Arizona, for example, at least 70 of the county’s 223 election locations experienced [significant problems with ballot printing and processing](#) on Election Day.

**But according to America’s left-wing legacy media, voter disenfranchisement doesn’t matter if the Democrat candidate is declared the winner.** In the case of Maricopa, legacy media have not only run interference for the incompetence of the county’s election officials. They’ve also [accused](#) Arizonans concerned about the conduct of the contest of promoting “conspiracy theories.” Media outrage over the setbacks in Luzerne County has also been practically nonexistent.

These kinds of Election Day failures aren't just problematic because no voter should be disenfranchised. They're problematic because of a stark partisan divide in how Americans vote. **Democrats have made unsupervised, mail-in balloting a [key electoral strategy](#)**. Republicans, by comparison, prefer [in-person voting on Election Day](#).

**If this trend grows, it means that Republican voters are more likely to bear the brunt of any maladministration on Election Day than Democrats.** Such circumstances would further degrade Americans' waning confidence in the electoral process. It's why it's so important that voters disenfranchised in places such as Luzerne County receive the accountability they deserve.

**"Luzerne County has a history of election administration problems that needs to be addressed.** These two plaintiffs represent those whose efforts to vote are thwarted by election officials' incompetence, negligence, partisan rancor, or failure to follow the law," said Lisa Dixon, executive director of Lawyers Democracy Fund, a conservative voter rights group. "Further, the citizens of Luzerne County deserve to know how the catastrophic ballot shortage occurred last fall, and the county has provided no explanation. This lawsuit will help shine light on what happened and ensure election officials do not disenfranchise eligible voters."

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Shawn Fleetwood is a Staff Writer for The Federalist. Mollie Hemingway is Editor-in-Chief of The Federalist.

## THE WASHINGTON TIMES

### U.S. Marshals told not to arrest protesters outside justices' homes, documents reveal

By [Stephen Dinan](#) - The Washington Times Tuesday, March 28, 2023

Deputy U.S. marshals assigned to guard [Supreme Court](#) justices last year were directed to try not to make arrests, according to documents a U.S. senator revealed Tuesday, contradicting Attorney General [Merrick Garland](#)'s assurances to Congress.

Sen. [Katie Britt](#), Alabama Republican, confronted Mr. [Garland](#) with the training package used for the marshals deployed to protect justices. It said arrests were not to be a priority.

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Conservatives have argued the protests, which erupted after a draft of the [Dobbs](#) ruling leaked last spring, violate a federal statute that outlaws protesting against a judge's home with the intent of influencing a ruling.

**Nobody was charged under that statute.**

Mr. [Garland](#) told senators earlier this month that his prosecutors couldn't bring cases unless the marshals made arrests, and the marshals on the scene didn't think there was a reason to do that.

Ms. [Britt](#) said the guidance documents show they were directed not to.

***"They were actively discouraged from doing so," she said.***

One section of the guidance specifically [said](#) making arrests was "**not the goal**" of the deployment, and another section said arrests should be "**a last resort to prevent physical harm.**"

That seems to undercut Mr. [Garland](#)'s suggestion that agents were free to make arrests for protesting judges but just didn't see any need.

One page of the guidance dealt specifically with the law governing pressuring of judges. It said the law could invite legal challenges, and discouraged the marshals from making arrests under that section.

A final page said any arrests needed to be coordinated with federal prosecutors first, which Ms. [Britt](#) said also contradicts Mr. [Garland](#)'s assertion that the marshals had a free hand.

"Any contemplated [marshals] enforcement action should be coordinated in advance with the appropriate USAO," the guidance said, using the abbreviation for U.S. attorney's office.

Ms. [Britt](#) asked Mr. [Garland](#) at a Senate Appropriations Committee hearing on Tuesday whether he was aware of the directives.

He said he was not aware, but stood by his earlier comments that the marshals were still able to act.

He said their first responsibility was to protect the lives and property of the justices "but that doesn't mean they are in any way precluded from making other kinds of arrests."

"It's clear the marshals were given a different directive," Ms. [Britt](#) told him. "I'd ask you to look into that."

The lack of arrests has struck a nerve with conservatives who draw a contrast with the Justice Department's zealous efforts in prosecuting pro-life demonstrators outside abortion clinics.

Mr. [Garland](#) defended his handling of the justices' security, saying he took the unprecedented step of deploying the marshals to protect the justices.

But he told the Appropriations panel Tuesday that he doesn't want that mission to last indefinitely, and that the [Supreme Court](#)'s police force should take over at some point.

"We were hoping this isn't a long-term solution for justices," he said.

- *Stephen Dinan can be reached at [sdinan@washingtontimes.com](mailto:sdinan@washingtontimes.com).*

## THE EPOCH TIMES

### 'If We Go Ahead on This Everyone Will Die' Warns AI Expert Calling for Absolute Shutdown

By [Naveen Athrappully](#) March 31, 2023 Updated: March 31, 2023

Human beings are not ready for a powerful AI under present conditions or even in the “foreseeable future,” stated a foremost expert in the field, adding that the recent open letter calling for a six-month moratorium on developing advanced artificial intelligence is “understating the seriousness of the situation.”

“The key issue is not ‘human-competitive’ intelligence (as the open letter puts it); it’s what happens after AI gets to smarter-than-human intelligence,” said Eliezer Yudkowsky, a decision theorist and leading AI researcher in a March 29 [Time magazine op-ed](#). “Many researchers steeped in these issues, including myself, expect that the most likely result of building a superhumanly smart AI, under anything remotely like the current circumstances, is that literally everyone on Earth will die.

“Not as in ‘maybe possibly some remote chance,’ but as in ‘that is the obvious thing that would happen.’ It’s not that you can’t, in principle, survive creating something much smarter than you; it’s that it would require precision and preparation and new scientific insights, and probably not having AI systems composed of giant inscrutable arrays of fractional numbers.”

After the recent popularity and explosive growth of ChatGPT, several business leaders and researchers, now totaling 1,843 including Elon Musk and Steve Wozniak, signed a [letter](#) calling on “all AI labs to immediately pause for at least 6 months the training of AI systems more powerful than GPT-4.” GPT-4, released in March, is the latest version of OpenAI’s chatbot, ChatGPT.

### **AI ‘Does Not Care’ and Will Demand Rights**

Yudkowsky predicts that in the absence of meticulous preparation, the AI will have vastly different demands from humans, and once self-aware will “not care for us” nor any other sentient life. “That kind of caring is something that could in principle

be imbued into an AI but we are not ready and do not currently know how.” This is the reason why he’s calling for the absolute shutdown.

Without a human approach to life, the AI will simply consider all sentient beings to be “made of atoms it can use for something else.” And there is little humanity can do to stop it. Yudkowsky compared the scenario to “a 10-year-old trying to play chess against Stockfish 15.” No human chess player has yet been able to beat Stockfish, which is considered an impossible feat.

The industry veteran asked readers to imagine AI technology as not being contained within the confines of the internet.

“Visualize an entire alien civilization, thinking at millions of times human speeds, initially confined to computers—in a world of creatures that are, from its perspective, very stupid and very slow.”

The AI will expand its influence outside the periphery of physical networks and could “build artificial life forms” using laboratories where proteins are produced using DNA strings.

The end result of building an all-powerful AI, under present conditions, would be the death of “every single member of the human species and all biological life on Earth,” he warned.

Yudkowsky blamed OpenAI and DeepMind—two of the world’s foremost AI research labs—for not having any preparations or requisite protocols regarding the matter. OpenAI even plans to have AI itself do the alignment with human values. “They will work together with humans to ensure that their own successors are more aligned with humans,” according to OpenAI.

This mode of action is “enough to get any sensible person to panic,” said Yudkowsky.

He added that humans cannot fully monitor or detect self-aware AI systems. Conscious digital minds demanding “human rights” could progress to a point where humans can no longer possess or own the system.

“If you can’t be sure whether you’re creating a self-aware AI, this is alarming not just because of the moral implications of the ‘self-aware’ part, but because being

unsure means you have no idea what you are doing and that is dangerous and you should stop.”

Unlike other scientific experiments and gradual progression of knowledge and capability, people cannot afford this with superhuman intelligence because if it's wrong on the first try, there are no second chances “because you are dead.”

## ‘Shut It Down’

Yudkowsky said that many researchers are aware that “we’re plunging toward a catastrophe” but they’re not saying it out loud.

This stance is unlike that of proponents like Bill Gates who recently praised the evolution of artificial intelligence. Gates claimed that the development of AI is “as fundamental as the creation of the microprocessor, the personal computer, the Internet, and the mobile phone. It will change the way people work, learn, travel, get health care, and communicate with each other. Entire industries will reorient around it. Businesses will distinguish themselves by how well they use it.”

Gates said that AI can help with [several progressive agendas](#), including climate change and economic inequities.

Meanwhile, Yudkowsky instructs all establishments, including international governments and militaries, to indefinitely end large AI training runs and shut down all large computer farms where AIs are refined. He adds that AI should only be confined to solving problems in biology and biotechnology, and not trained to read “text from the internet” or to “the level where they start talking or planning.”

Regarding AI, there is no arms race. “That we all live or die as one, in this, is not a policy but a fact of nature.”

Yudkowsky concludes by saying, “We are not ready. We are not on track to be significantly readier in the foreseeable future. If we go ahead on this everyone will die, including children who did not choose this and did not do anything wrong.

**“Shut it down.”**

## SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN

### Wearable Brain Devices Will Challenge Our Mental Privacy

*A new era of neurotechnology means we may need new protections to safeguard our brain and mental experiences*

By [Nita A. Farahany](#) on March 27, 2023

A last bastion of privacy, our brains have remained inviolate, even as sensors now record our heartbeats, breaths, steps and sleep. All that is about to change. **An avalanche of brain-tracking devices—earbuds, headphones, headbands, watches and even wearable tattoos—will soon enter the market, promising to transform our lives. And threatening to breach the refuge of our minds.**

Tech titans [Meta](#), [Snap](#), [Microsoft](#) and [Apple](#) are already investing heavily in brain wearables. They aim to embed brain sensors into smart watches, earbuds, headsets and sleep aids. Integrating them into our everyday lives could [revolutionize health care](#), enabling early diagnosis and personalized treatment of conditions such as [depression](#), [epilepsy](#) and even [cognitive decline](#). Brain sensors could improve our ability to meditate, focus and even communicate with a seamless technological telepathy—using the power of thoughts and emotion to drive our interaction with augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) headsets, or even [type on virtual keyboards](#) with our minds.

But brain wearables also pose very real risks to mental privacy, freedom of thought and self-determination. As these devices proliferate, they will generate vast amounts of neural data, creating an intimate window into our brain states, emotions and even memories. We need the individual power to shutter this new view into our inner selves.

Employers [already seek out such data](#), tracking worker [fatigue levels](#) and offering [brain wellness programs](#) to mitigate stress, via platforms that give them unprecedented access to employees' brains. Cognitive and emotional testing based on neuroscience is [becoming a new job screening norm](#), revealing personality aspects that may have little to do with a job. In China, [train conductors of the](#)

[Beijing-Shanghai line](#), the busiest of its kind in the world, wear brain sensors throughout their work day. There are even reports of Chinese employees being [sent home](#) if their brain activity shows less than stellar brain metrics. As companies embrace brain wearables that can track employees' attention, focus and even boredom, without safeguards in place, they could trample on employee's mental privacy, eroding trust and well-being along with the dignity of work itself.

Governments, too, are seeking access to our brains, with a U.S brain initiative seeking “[“every spike from every neuron’ in the human brain,” to reveal “how the firing of these neurons produced complex thoughts.”](#) While aimed at [the underlying causes of neurological and psychiatric conditions](#), this same investment could also enable government interference with freedom of thought—a freedom critical to human flourishing. From [functional brain biometric programs](#) under development to authenticate individuals—[including those funded by the National Science Foundation at Binghamton University](#)—to so-called brain-fingerprinting techniques used to interrogate criminal suspects—sold by companies like [Brainwave Science](#) and funded by law enforcement agencies from [Singapore](#) to [Australia](#) to the [United Arab Emirates](#)—we must act quickly to ensure neurotechnology benefits humanity rather than heralding an Orwellian future of spying on our brains.

The rush to hack the human brain veers from neuromarketing to the rabbit hole of social media and even to cognitive warfare programs designed to disable or disorient. These technologies should have our full attention. Neuromarketing campaigns such as one [conducted by Frito-Lays](#) used insights about how women's brains could affect snacking decisions, then monitored brain activity while people viewed their newly designed advertisements, allowing them to fine-tune their campaigns to better capture attention and drive women to snack more on their products. Social media “like” buttons and notifications are features designed to draw us habitually back to platforms, exploiting our brains' reward systems. Clickbait headlines and pseudoscience claims [prey on our cognitive biases](#), hobbling critical thinking. And nations worldwide are considering possible military applications of neuroscience, which some planners call warfare's “[sixth domain](#)” (adding to a list that includes land, sea, air, space and cyberspace).

As brain wearables and artificial intelligences advance, the line between human agency and machine intervention will also blur. When a wearable reshapes our thoughts and emotions, how much of our actions and decisions remain truly our

own? As we begin to offload mental tasks to AI, we risk becoming overly dependent on technology, weakening independent thought and even our capacity for reflective decision-making. Should we allow AI to shape our brains and mental experiences? And how do we retain our humanity in an increasingly interconnected world remade by these two technologies?

Malicious use and even hacking of brain wearables is another threat. From probing for information, to [intercepting our PIN numbers](#) as we think or type them, neural cybersecurity will rule. Imagine a world where brain wearables can track what we read and see, alter perceptions, manipulate emotions or even trigger physical pain. That's a world that may soon arrive. Already, companies including China's [Entertech](#) have [accumulated millions of raw EEG data recordings](#) from individuals across the world using its popular consumer-based brain wearables, along with personal information and device and app usage by those individuals. Entertech makes plain in their [privacy policy](#) they also record personal information, GPS signals, device sensors, computers and services a person is using, including websites they may be visiting. We must ensure that brain wearables are designed with security in mind and with device and data safeguards in place to mitigate these risks.

We stand at an inflection point in the beginning of a brain wearable revolution. We need prudent vigilance and an open and honest debate about the risks and benefits of neurotechnology, to ensure it is used responsibly and ethically. With the right safeguards, neurotechnology could be truly empowering for individuals. To get there will require we recognize new digital age rights to preserve our cognitive liberty—self-determination over our brains and mental experiences. We must do so now, before the choice is no longer ours to make.

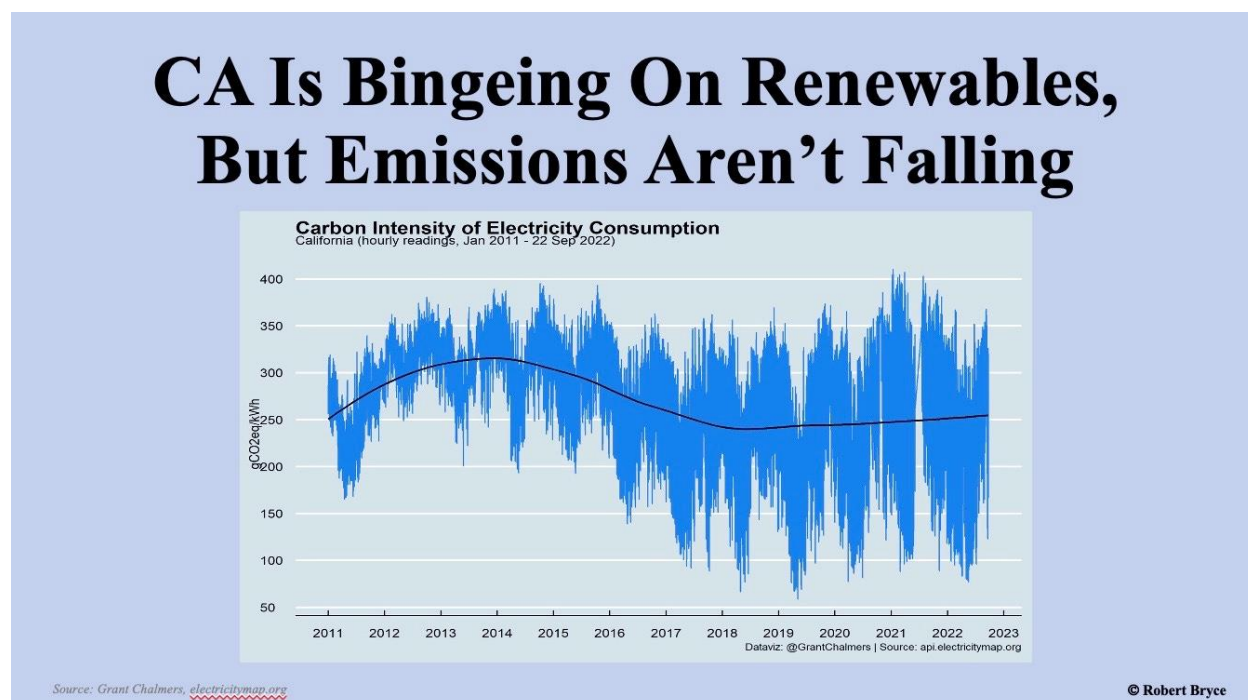
*This is an opinion and analysis article, and the views expressed by the author or authors are not necessarily those of Scientific American.*

## ROBERT BRYCE

### California Screamin'

**California's headlong rush to renewables has resulted in soaring electricity prices -- up nearly 15% last year alone -- but the state's CO2 emissions aren't falling.**

Mar 24, 2023



**California policymakers are mandating renewables. Ratepayers are being mauled by huge price increases. But the state's electric sector emissions aren't falling. Graphic by Grant Chalmers from ElectricityMaps.org data.**

Last week, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District approved new regulations that will ban the use of residential and commercial natural gas-fired water heaters and furnaces in 2027. The regulation, which only applies to new appliances, prohibits residents in the Bay Area from [buying or installing gas water heaters starting in 2027](#). The prohibition on residential furnaces starts in 2029 and the ban on commercial water heaters begins in 2031.

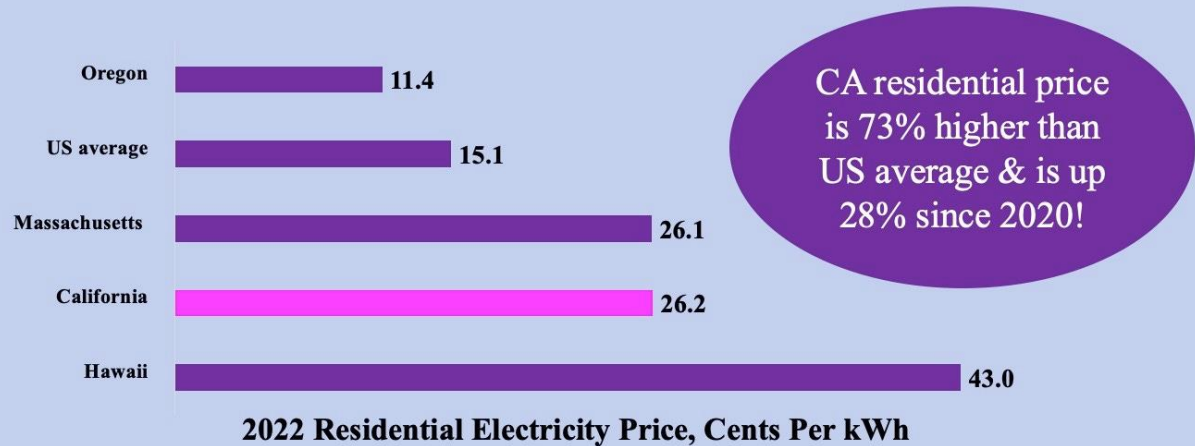
In a March 15 press release, Philip Fine, the executive officer of the agency said the new “groundbreaking regulation will phase out the most polluting appliances in

homes and businesses to protect Bay Area residents from the harmful air pollution they cause.” He also said the ban was justified because those appliances [“significantly impact our air quality, resulting in dozens of early deaths and a wide range of health impacts, particularly in communities of color.”](#)

The move is the latest example of how California policymakers are adopting a phalanx of regulations that are forcing residents to use electricity instead of natural gas. According to the Sierra Club, which has been leading the effort to ban the direct use of natural gas, [74 California communities have passed forced electrification measures since 2019](#). And these regulations are being approved at the same time electricity costs in the state are soaring. Two weeks before the BAAQMD passed its ban on natural gas appliances, the Energy Information Administration released data showing that [California’s residential electricity prices jumped by 14.7% in 2022](#).

That’s only the latest increase. Since 2008, when [Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed an executive order](#) requiring the state’s utilities to obtain a third of the electricity they sell from renewables by 2020, all-sector electricity prices in California have soared by 80%. California residents are now paying the highest electricity prices in the U.S. outside of Hawaii. But here’s the really sobering part: Despite these soaring costs, the state’s headlong rush for renewables has not resulted in a big drop in the state’s electric sector emissions. More on that in a moment.

## Except For Hawaii, California Has The Highest Electricity Prices In The US



Source: EIA, [https://www.eia.gov/electricity/monthly/current\\_month/february2023.pdf](https://www.eia.gov/electricity/monthly/current_month/february2023.pdf), Table 5.6.B

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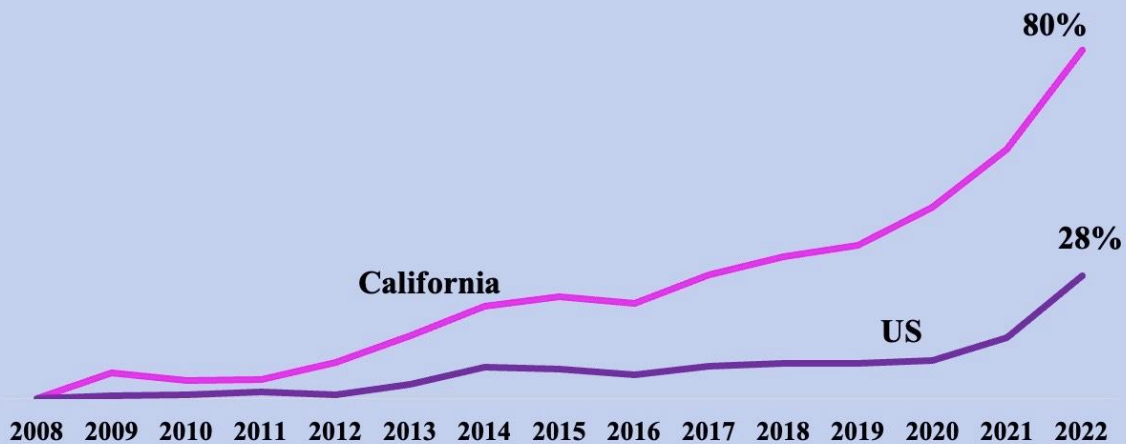
Before going further, it's important to understand why these soaring energy costs matter. California [has the highest poverty rate](#) in America. Indeed, the state's poverty situation is nothing short of shocking. [A 2021 report by the Public Policy Institute of California](#) found that "More than a third of Californians are living in or near poverty. Nearly one in six (16.4 percent) Californians were not in poverty but lived fairly close to the poverty line ... All told, more than a third (34.0 percent) of state residents were poor or near-poor in 2019."

Los Angeles, the state's biggest city, and a magnet for generations of immigrants, has [one of the highest poverty rates among America's biggest cities](#). California also has the largest Latino population in America. About 15 million Latinos live in the Golden State and they account for about [40 percent of its population](#). But the PPIC report also found that Latinos account for nearly 52 percent "of poor Californians but only 39.7 percent of the state population."

Rising electricity prices are not a big deal for wealthy Californians who live near the coast and don't use much air conditioning or heating. They can easily absorb those higher costs. But for low-income Californians, particularly ones living far from the coast and need lots of air conditioning in the summer and electric heat in the winter, it's an entirely different story. But higher electricity prices are only one

aspect of California's regressive energy policies. Expensive motor fuel also exacts a higher toll on the poor than on the wealthy. Last summer, motorists in the state began paying [an additional 3-cent-per-gallon tax on gasoline](#), a move that made California's motor fuel even more expensive. Today, according to AAA, motorists in the state are paying an [average of \\$4.83 per gallon for gasoline](#), which is roughly 40% more than motorists in the rest of the U.S

## Percentage Change In California's All-Sector Electricity Prices, 2008 to 2022



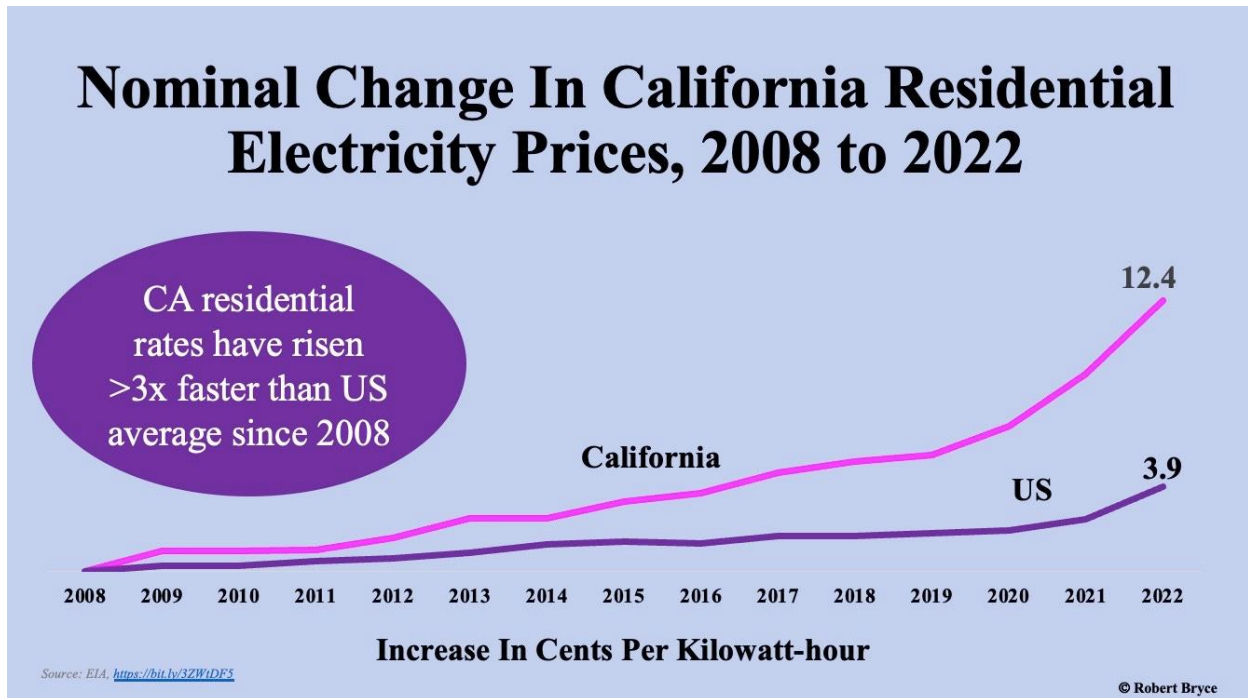
Source: EIA <https://tinyurl.com/3vruf5x>

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California's surging electricity costs have coincided with increasing renewable energy mandates and the closure of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station in 2012. In 2015, [Governor Jerry Brown signed a law that boosted the mandate to 50%](#) by 2030. In 2018, California lawmakers imposed yet another mandate that requires the state's electric utilities to procure at least 60% of their electricity from renewables by 2030 and [100 percent "zero-carbon" electricity by 2045](#). In 2022, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed into law a measure that "creates clean electricity targets of 90% by 2035" and reaffirmed the state's [target of 100% "clean electricity" by 2045](#).

Since 2008, when Schwarzenegger mandated renewables in the electric sector, California's residential electricity prices have increased more than three times faster than those in the rest of the country. As can be seen in the graphic below, residential electricity prices in the state jumped by 12.4 cents per kilowatt-hour while prices in the rest of the country increased by less than four cents per kilowatt-hour.



Those prices will continue soaring. Last year, the California Public Utilities Commission unanimously approved a scheme that aims to add more than 25 gigawatts of renewables and 15 gigawatts of batteries to the state's electric grid by 2032 [at an estimated cost of \\$49.3 billion](#). In addition, the California Independent System Operator released a draft plan to [upgrade the state's transmission grid at a cost of some \\$30.5 billion](#). The combined cost of those two schemes is about \$80 billion. Dividing that sum among 39 million residents works out to about \$2,050 for every Californian.

But the final price will undoubtedly be far more than \$80 billion. Big public works projects routinely exceed initial estimates; California's beleaguered high-speed rail project was expected to cost \$33 billion when it was approved by voters back in

2008. The latest cost estimate: [a mind-boggling \\$128 billion](#). The California High Speed Rail Authority said the cost increases are due to “inflation/escalation, enhanced scope definition and greater contingency for risk.”



***Since 2008, when then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed an executive order mandating the state’s utilities get a third of their electricity from renewables, electricity prices have increased at a rate three times faster than the rest of the U.S. Photo credit: Dale Frost of the Port of San Diego.***

Similar cost inflation will happen in the state’s ongoing push for renewables as it will require huge amounts of new generation capacity, transformers, poles, conductors, and other gear. It will also require vast amounts of land, steel, concrete, and tanker loads of metals like [zinc](#), [lithium](#), [nickel](#), and [copper](#), all of which have been rising in price over the past five years.

Indeed, the state’s utilities are asking for huge rate increases. Earlier this month, San Diego Gas & Electric, one of the state’s biggest electricity providers, requested [rate increases totaling \\$3.6 billion over the next four years](#). The requested increase,

if approved by the California Public Utilities Commission will result in a nearly 18% cost increase in 2024. [Pacific Gas & Electric is requesting a 16% cost increase.](#)

It's not surprising that California's renewable craze is resulting in higher prices. A 2019 study by two academics at the University of Chicago, Michael Greenstone and Ishan Nath, concluded that renewables "raise electricity prices more than previously thought" due to "hidden costs that have typically been ignored." They also found that the mandates "come at a high cost to consumers and are inefficient in reducing carbon emissions." Greenstone and Nath said "the intermittent nature of renewables means that back-up capacity must be added" and that "by mandating an increase in renewable power, baseload generation is prematurely displaced, and some of the cost is passed to consumers." It continued, saying that renewable mandates lead to "[substantial increases in electricity prices](#) that mirror the program's increasing stringency over time."

**Renewables "raise electricity prices more than previously thought" due to "hidden costs that have typically been ignored." Greenstone and Nath also found that the mandates "come at a high cost to consumers and are inefficient in reducing carbon emissions."**

California's insanely expensive push for renewables confirms Greenstone and Nath's claim that they are inefficient at reducing emissions. As can be seen in the graphic at the top of this piece, which was produced from Electricity Maps data by [Grant Chalmers, an Australia-based analyst](#), the state's emissions rose after the closure of San Onofre, then fell a little, and have been roughly flat (or increasingly slightly) since about 2018. Why aren't California's electricity sector emissions falling? The likely answer is the state's heavy reliance on gas-fired electricity. In 2021, the state [generated more than 97 terawatt-hours of juice with natural gas](#), which was slightly more than what it generated with that same fuel in 2011.

A final point. California regulators are eager to impose taxes, restrictions, and regulations on energy in the name of climate change. These moves include bans on sales of vehicles with internal combustion engines, taxes on new residential developments, and other measures. Policymakers are implementing these measures even though California accounts for just 1% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (the state emits about [369 million tons](#) per year out of [36.8 billion tons emitted globally](#)). The state's belief in its importance can be seen in the BAAQMD's documents. In the same March 15 press release announcing the ban on gas

appliances, the agency said it is “responsible for protecting air quality *and the global climate in the nine-county Bay Area.*” (Emphasis added.)

I’ve read that line a dozen times and I still don’t know what it means: “The global climate in the nine-county Bay Area.”

Last September, while signing into law a slew of climate-related bills, Gov. Newsom declared that the state was taking the “most aggressive action on climate our nation has ever seen...That’s climate action done the California Way — and we’re not only doubling down, [we’re just getting started.](#)”

In other words, last year’s 15% increase in electricity prices was just an *amuse-bouche*. More big rate hikes are on the way.

The punchline here is obvious: California provides a stark warning to the rest of the United States about how NOT to manage an electric grid. Aggressive renewable energy mandates may be politically popular, but they come with exorbitant price tags that punish the poor and provide negligible (if any) cuts in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

## LEGAL INSURRECTION

### Oxford Physics Professor/CERN Researcher Concludes “Wind Power Fails on Every Count”

*Wade Allison crunches the numbers to highlight significant issues with the promotion of wind energy as epic green-energy solution.*

Posted by [Leslie Eastman](#) Monday, March 27, 2023

We have covered issues and problems [associated with wind farms](#), which eco-artists and media minions who adhere to climate change dogma ignore.

**The lack of attention to the failures associated with wind power doesn't make them any less real.** Recently, Dr. Wade Allison, Emeritus Professor of Physics at the University of Oxford and CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research) researcher, shed some bright light on those issues.

Allison, a reliable expert on this subject, wrote a brief review of calculations and assessments associated with wind energy projects for the United Kingdom that were published by the Global Warming Policy Foundation. His [conclusions were scathing](#).

British consumers should follow the example of Alice who, in negotiating terms with the White Queen, insisted on clarification of the day on which jam should be delivered. **Evidently, they should not look to wind power for reliable energy, but elsewhere.**

**With general energy shortages, the war in Europe, high prices and the likelihood of failures in electricity supply, many popular scientific presumptions underlying energy policy should be questioned. Wind power fails on every count.**

Allison delves into the mathematics of wind energy generation, so I will hit some of the highlights. A contrast with nuclear power, a potentially viable fossil fuel option, is made in one section. Allison also focuses on how relatively delicate the wind stations are in [very windy conditions](#).

If the wind speed is 10 metres per second (about 20 mph) the power is 600 watts per square metre at 100% efficiency. That means to deliver the same power as Hinkley Point C (3200 million watts) [nuclear power station in Somerset, England] by wind would require 5.5 million square metres of turbine swept area – that should be quite unacceptable to those who care about birds and to other environmentalists.

But the performance of wind is much worse than that, as a look at the simple formula shows. Because the power carried by the wind depends on the third power of the wind speed, if the wind drops to half speed, the power available drops by a factor of 8. Almost worse, if the wind speed doubles, the power delivered goes up 8 times, and as a result the turbine has to be turned off for its own protection. This is not related to the technology of the turbine, which can harvest no more.

**His observations are borne out by news reports. Last year, Scotland cut down [14 million trees](#) to make room for wind turbines.**

Scotland, site of the recent United Nations 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) climate summit, has cut down 14 million trees to make room for new wind power installations.

As reported in The Herald, the tree removal was for 21 wind turbine projects.

“The Scottish Government has moved to reassure that more trees have been planted, but it is unknown what proportion of these are mature plants that play a bigger role in turning carbon into oxygen.

Late last year, strong winds damaged wind turbines at the Lucelo [wind farm in Spain](#).

The wind turbines of these wind farms represent the first generation of large wind production facilities built in the province of León, Spain, where the turbine manufacturer was the then Spanish company Ecotecnia, which was later acquired by Alstom Wind and in 2015 by GE – General Electric.

It was the first time, as far as we know, that a wind turbine has crashed in Lyon County.

This area is currently experiencing a new wind boom, with many orders for new wind power facilities scattered across the county, with some of these license applications near where this incident now occurred.

Also, in 2022, a wind turbine [in Sweden collapsed](#)...leaking up to 200 gallons of oil.

Allison also explores how unreliable winds can be and the challenges associated with wind farm battery [storage capabilities](#).

...The wind blows somewhat more steadily offshore than onshore, as every sailor knows. Nevertheless, the unreliability inherent in ind energy persists.

...The green rectangle (added) illustrates that 8.8 GW was not available for this time, presumably because the average wind speed halved. That much energy, 1600 GWh, is 1000 times the capacity of the world's largest grid storage battery (1.6 GWh at Moss Landings, California).

Battery technology has its own problems. It can provide for laptops and other portable applications, even car batteries at up to 75 kWh, but larger batteries have problems with safety and mineral shortages.

Batteries 20 million times larger are never going to be available and storage batteries will never make good the failure of offshore wind farms, even for a week. And the wind can drop for longer periods than that.

**When planning to support electrical energy grids, every energy-producing option should be on the table. Scientifically valid assessments like Allison's must be considered: Wind energy is not a universal energy solution, and thrusting it into places it does not belong (e.g., [marine mammal habitats](#) and [bald eagle territories](#)) is truly environmentally destructive.**

[THE EPOCH TIMES](#)

## [Climate Safeguard Mechanism Will ‘Stifle’ Gas Industry, Warned Shadow Foreign Affairs Minister](#)

By [Nina Nguyen](#) March 28, 2023

**Australian businesses, and especially the gas industry, will suffer under the climate safeguard mechanism, Shadow Foreign Affairs Minister Simon Birmingham has warned.**

The safeguard mechanism, which was initiated by the centre-right Coalition but is being overhauled by the centre-left Labor, requires the 215 facilities that annually produce over 100,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases to limit their net emissions below a baseline limit.

It's highly likely the plan will pass through parliament after the left-wing Australian Greens announced it has successfully struck a deal with the Labor government on Monday.

Birmingham said if that were indeed the case, the economic ripple will be felt over months or years to come.

“What is going to occur if, as the Greens claim, it is going to stifle gas industry investment, in particular, because that has flow-on consequences and impacts for Australian businesses, Australian households, in terms of the availability of gas and therefore the price and reliability of gas for production purposes in industry, as well as what it means for electricity markets, too,” he told Sky News on Tuesday.

“I think there are still serious issues for particular business sectors, such as the cement industry sector, to really understand whether there is any compromise from the government.”

Birmingham said the implications need to be fully understood before the parliament passes the bill, but he suspected that the government will “seek to rush this through from here.”

“I hope, though, that given this deal has been stitched up behind closed doors between Labour and the Greens, they do allow a proper process for a full exploration of the consequences of what they’re doing.”

Birmingham also said it is crucial that the Liberal party could ensure they have a “compelling set of policies for the next federal election.”

“Including effective policies to achieve Australia’s emission reduction targets,” he said.

“Along with, of course, demonstrating that we also have the types of policies to actually deal with the cost of living pressures that Australians are facing at present.”

## **Greens Struck Deal With Labor To Pass Climate Safeguard Mechanism**

On Monday, Greens leader Adam Bandt said a deal had been made to put a ceiling on gross greenhouse gas emissions, which won’t be able to exceed current pollution levels of 140 million tonnes a year, and there will be a decreasing cap over time.

The bill will include a “pollution trigger” that will require the climate change minister to test a new or expanded project’s impact on the hard cap and net carbon budgets.

If the assessment finds that the project would contribute to exceeding the cap or budget, the minister must consult and recalibrate the rules or impose conditions on new entrants.

As well, all new gas fields for export will need to be carbon-neutral from day one.

ACT independent senator David Pocock reached an agreement with the government on Monday night.

“Reforms to the safeguard mechanism are imperfect but represent a step towards a credible climate policy,” Senator Pocock said in a statement on Tuesday.

Previously, Pocock argued that “the science is very clear that we can’t open new fossil fuel projects and potentially be on the path to a livable future.”

In addition, Pocock disagreed with the idea that Australia needed new coal and gas projects during the transition to renewable energy, saying the country already had plenty of existing gas and coal.

“We export three-quarters of it. And we’ve charged international prices for our own gas. That is a political failure,” he said.

“I’d argue that the solution is not more gas. It’s electrification and helping households get off a really expensive energy source.”

The government agreed to a hard cap on safeguard mechanism emissions, which Senator Pocock said would give Australians certainty of pollution reduction under the policy.

The government also agreed to accept, or partially accept, 16 recommendations as additional comments to the committee report on the legislation.

## **‘Biggest Carbon Tax’**

But Ted O’Brien, the Shadow Minister for Energy, on March 15 warned that electricity prices would “continue to spiral out of control under Labor, with further increases to whack small businesses by an additional \$1151 and families by \$463.”

“Labor cannot be trusted to reduce energy prices,” he [said](#).

O’Brien also called the climate safeguard mechanism “the biggest carbon tax Labor has introduced” and is three times more expensive than the carbon tax under former Labor Prime Minister Julia Gillard.

In 2014, the Gillard government priced carbon at A\$23 (US \$15.31) a tonne, compared to \$75 a tonne under the Albanese government.

“And it’ll be up to \$100 by 2034 times the price,” he told Sydney’s radio [2GB](#) on Jan. 11.

“Economic insanity is a tax on individual families and consumers. I mean, there is no chance that we are going to have all the companies under this scheme that are able to reduce their emissions, by the way.”

“You can grow the economy and do the right thing on the climate change side. But you don’t watch the economy and hurt Australians in the process. That’s what Labor’s doing,” he said.

## THE EPOCH TIMES

### Federal Agency Comes Closer to Gas Stove Ban

***Consumer Product Safety Commission one of multiple agencies now eyeing gas stove regulations***

By [Nathan Worcester](#)

March 17, 2023 Updated: March 17, 2023

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has made a formal [request for information](#) about the possible health hazards of gas-powered stoves—another signal that the United States may be moving towards a ban on those appliances under the Biden administration.

“This RFI does not constitute or propose regulatory action, but rather is intended to inform the Commission and the public,” the [request](#) states.

The request can be viewed [here](#). It has already received hundreds of comments. The comment period ends May 8.

The request states that it is seeking input and “proposed solutions” from stakeholders such as “consumers, manufacturers, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and researchers on chronic chemical hazards associated with the use of gas ranges.”

### **Media Comments**

The latest move from that federal agency comes just two months after its commissioner, Richard Trumka, Jr., suggested that a gas stove ban could be in the offing.

“This is a hidden hazard. Any option is on the table. Products that can’t be made safe can be banned,” he told [Bloomberg News](#) on Jan. 9.

Trumka Jr. is the son of the late former leader of the AFL-CIO, Richard Trumka Sr.



***U.S. President Joe Biden posthumously awards the nation’s highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, to Richard Trumka as Richard Trumka Jr. accepts, during a ceremony honoring 17 recipients, in the East Room of the White House in Washington on July 7, 2022. (Saul Loeb/AFP via Getty Images)***

The commissioner’s comments, including a [late December statement](#) floating the possibility of an outright ban, touched off a flurry of critical responses, mainly from Republican lawmakers.

In a joint letter with other Senate Republicans, Sen. Cynthia Lummis (R-W.Va.) sought answers from the CPSC.

“Gas stoves tend to result in lower utility bills than their electric counterparts. Gas stoves are also generally more durable, with less parts being susceptible to breakages or other defects. A ban on these stoves would therefore likely result in higher utility bills, disproportionately affecting low-income populations,” Lummis’ Jan. 19 [letter](#) stated.

CNN [reported](#) that the White House on Jan. 11 told it Biden “does not support banning gas stoves,” adding that the GPSC, “which is independent, is not banning gas stoves.”

Later [reporting](#) from Fox News revealed that Trumka Jr. had circulated an internal memorandum in Oct. 2022 stating that a gas stove ban could be proposed.

The memo was reviewed by The Epoch Times and can be read [here](#).

“The need for gas stove regulation has reached a boiling point,” he wrote in the memo.

“CPSC has the responsibility to ban consumer products that emit hazardous substances, particularly, when those emissions harm children, under the Federal Hazardous Substances Act.”

“There is sufficient information available for CPSC to issue an NPR in FY 2023 proposing to ban gas stoves in homes,” he added. NPR means “notice of proposed rulemaking.”

In a March 15 letter, Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) [asked CPSC regulators](#) to retain any documents related to its efforts to regulate gas stoves.



***Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) speaks in Washington on Sept. 23, 2020. (Greg Nash/Pool/AFP via Getty Images)***

Last month, Cruz and his colleague Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) [introduced a bill](#) that would [bar](#) a CPSC-led gas stove ban.

The CPSC isn't the only Biden administration agency that has trained its sights on gas stoves.

The Department of Energy on Feb. 1 [proposed a rule](#) that could [outlaw](#) a sizable fraction of gas stoves.

The request can be viewed [here](#). It has received not hundreds but thousands of comments to date. Its comment period ends on April 3, 2023.

## Research from China-Linked Think Tank

Trumka Jr.'s Jan. 9 comments followed the publication in Dec. 2022 of a peer-reviewed article that [traced](#) 12.7 percent of childhood asthma to gas stoves.

That paper was authored in part by researchers with the Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), an environmental think tank that focuses on "carbon-free buildings," among other topics.

The RMI also has a "[China Program](#)" involving a Beijing-based team. It advertises its connection to that state, which is run by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

"In China, we partner with the government to help the nation profitably surpass its existing national energy and emissions targets," RMI's website on that program [states](#).

RMI's Brady Seals [told the Washington Examiner](#) its study "does not assume or estimate a causal relationship" in the association it documented between childhood asthma and gas stoves.

Others are skeptical of the putative link between gas ranges and poor health.

The American Gas Association, an industry group, issued a [statement](#) on Jan. 10 criticizing the RMI study, saying it was "not substantiated by sound science."

"The authors conducted no measurements or tests based on real-life appliance usage, and ignored literature, including [one study of data](#) collected from more than

500,000 children in 47 countries that ‘detected no evidence of an association between the use of gas as a cooking fuel and either asthma symptoms or asthma diagnosis,’” the group stated.

## **As Goes California, So Goes the Nation**

The federal ban would follow developments in California, which has led the way in implementing restrictions on natural gas in the United States.

The city of Berkeley [banned new natural gas hookups](#) in 2019, making it the first place in this country to do so.



*Students pass through Sather Gate of the college campus at the University of California–Berkeley in a file photo. (David A. Litman/Shutterstock)*

In late 2022, the California Air Resources Board [approved a measure](#) that would ban new water heaters and furnaces powered by natural gas by 2030.

The California Bay Area’s Air District Board of Directors has [moved to amend](#) regulations on nitrogen oxide emissions from new water heaters and natural gas furnaces, effectively banning those appliances by 2030.

## REMIX

### Italy to ban lab-grown food to protect cultural heritage and tradition

#### ***Giorgia Meloni's administration announced a draft law on Tuesday banning all food and animal feed produced artificially in laboratories***

By Thomas Brooke March 29, 2023

Italian industry will be banned from producing laboratory-grown food and animal feed in a draft law approved by the Italian government on Tuesday.

The conservative administration has vowed to resist the changing climate in food production in an attempt to protect the health of Italians, the country's food and agricultural sectors, and Italy's cultural heritage.

Subject to parliamentary approval, the new law would result in a total ban on any food produced "from cell cultures or tissues derived from vertebrate animals," with violations being subject to fines of up to €60,000.

"Laboratory products in our opinion do not guarantee quality, well-being and the protection of our culture, our traditions," said Francesco Lollobrigida, a senior government minister in Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's administration and a Brothers of Italy colleague.

"We could not but celebrate with our farmers a measure that places Italy at the forefront, not only on the issue of defending excellence, a matter that is particularly important to us, but also on the issue of consumer protection," Meloni said on Tuesday.

"It's the first of such measure at the international level. Italy is the first country that says no to the so-called synthetic food and synthetic meat, and it does so with a formal act," said Agriculture Minister Francesco Lollobrigida. "We believe this is an important result."

"The law consists of six articles. It provides for a ban on the sale, commercialization, production, and import (of these products), and obviously for the sanctions that

are quite harsh for whoever violates these norms,” Lollobrigida added, insisting this is not about persecution “but the strong will to protect the health of citizens.”

Health Minister Orazio Schillaci also identified the draft law as the government reaffirming its commitment to offering “the maximum level of protection of citizens’ health and the safeguarding of our nation’s heritage and our agri-food culture which is based on the Mediterranean diet.”

Meloni’s administration has acted swiftly in this sector to address several evolving and controversial policies being implemented at an EU level. Earlier this month, the government banned insect flour from pasta production, and last week her government announced its intention to issue decrees to require products that contain or are derived from insects to have information labels stating as much for consumers.

## MANHATTAN CONTRARIAN

### Litigating The Government's Metastasizing Censorship Regime

March 28, 2023/ Francis Menton

For years, conservatives have complained of apparent censorship of their voices on the principal social media platforms, like Facebook, Google and Twitter. Posts or tweets get taken down, or de-boosted, or de-monetized, or degraded in search results, or “shadow-banned,” or slapped with content warnings, or otherwise suppressed. But the response from Big Tech has always been, hey, we’re private companies, and we’re not subject to the First Amendment. We can do as we please.

Then Elon Musk took over Twitter, and followed by giving several journalists access to Twitter’s electronic archives to investigate any untoward government manipulation. The result has been the Twitter Files, an ongoing series of Twitter threads laying bare the coordination between pre-Musk Twitter and dozens of government actors to suppress disfavored speech. The most recent [nineteenth segment of the Twitter Files series](#) was published on March 20 by Matt Taibbi.

Now that it is clear that the systematic censorship of conservative voices is very real and has been largely directed and coordinated by the government itself behind the scenes, is there anything that can be done about that through litigation? There actually are some significant efforts under way in that regard. Probably the most important is the case titled *Missouri v. Biden*, pending in the Western District of Louisiana. The case seeks declaratory and injunctive relief against the government under the First Amendment to stop it from continuing to pressure social media platforms to suppress speech that the current government does not like. On March 20, the court issued a major opinion denying the government’s motion to dismiss. [That opinion is available here.](#) With the motion to dismiss denied, the case will proceed through full discovery and, presumably, trial.

The plaintiffs in *Missouri v. Biden* are the states of Missouri and Louisiana, plus a group of private plaintiffs that includes some prominent names in the area of Covid-19 response — most notably Jay Bhattacharya of Stanford and Martin Kulldorff of Harvard. The two states are represented by their offices of Attorney General. The individual plaintiffs are represented by the New Civil Liberties Alliance, the public

interest law firm that is recently making a huge name for itself in cutting-edge civil rights litigation.

Being no dummies, the NCLA has brought this case in a Louisiana District Court where it was likely to find a favorable judge, and which is part of the federal Fifth Circuit, known as the most conservative of the federal courts of appeal. It's the flip side of how the game of environmental and "climate" litigation has long been played by the Left. When climate activists brought federal lawsuits trying to get some judge to declare a constitutional right to shut down use of energy, they went to the federal courts in San Francisco and Oregon, known to be home to multiple activist judges, and both part of the liberal Ninth Circuit. OK, two can play this game.

Although the original Complaint in *Missouri v. Biden* pre-dates the Twitter Files exposé, the plaintiffs were able to compile substantial information about federal involvement in the suppression of their speech. And, as more information has come out, the plaintiffs have amended their complaint twice. Here are just a few examples from the court's Opinion of allegations of speech suppressed as a result of threat from or coordination with the government. (The allegations in question come either from the plaintiffs' Second Amended Complaint, or from declarations submitted by plaintiffs as part of the motion papers.):

- ***"The Media Research Center found more than 640 examples of bans, deleted content and other speech restrictions placed on those who criticized [President] Biden on social media over the past two years." . . . "The list of censorship targets included an array of prominent influencers on social media: Trump; lawmakers like Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA); news outlets like the New York Post, The Washington Free Beacon and The Federalist; satire site The Babylon Bee; and others."***
- ***Jay Bhattacharya, one of the Private Plaintiffs, stated in his declaration, "Because of my views on COVID-19 restrictions, I have been specifically targeted for censorship by federal government officials." . . . [T]he "Great Barrington Declaration," which Bhattacharya co-authored, was subject to "immediate backlash from senior government officials who were the architects of the lockdown policies" for COVID- 19. . . . Bhattacharya alleges that "Google deboosted search results for the Declaration, pointing users to media hit pieces critical of it, and placing the link to the actual Declaration lower on this list of results." Further, a "roundtable" discussion***

*between Bhattacharya and others, posted via video to YouTube, was removed from the social-media platform, with YouTube claiming that the video “contradicts the consensus of local and global health authorities regarding the efficacy of masks to prevent the spread of COVID-19.” Additionally, Bhattacharya alleges that he and his co-authors of the Great Barrington Declaration were personally censored on social media, primarily on Twitter and LinkedIn.*

- *[Martin] Kulldorff co-authored the Great Barrington Declaration and allegedly “experienced censorship on social media platforms due to [his] views on the appropriate strategy for handling the COVID-19 pandemic.” . . . As just one example, Kulldorff alleged that Twitter censored the following tweet in March of 2021: “Thinking that everyone must be vaccinated is as scientifically flawed as thinking that nobody should. COVID vaccines are important for older, higher risk people and their caretakers. Those with prior natural infection do not need it. Nor children.” Kulldorff echoed Bhattacharya’s belief that the censorship of COVID-19-related opinions on social media was driven by government officials.*

There are numerous additional examples in the Opinion, and the Opinion indicates that it has only scratched the surface of the many allegations in the Complaint.

So is there precedent for the proposition that sufficient government involvement in speech suppression can turn what would otherwise be private activity into “state action” that violates the First Amendment? The court cites several precedents that have so found. Notable examples are:

- *Bantam Books, Inc. v. Sullivan*, 372 U.S. 58, 67, is a 1963 case from the U.S. Supreme Court. In that case the Court held that a legislatively-created commission, by notifying publishing distributors, on official commission stationary, that certain designated books or magazines had been declared objectionable for sale or distribution, thereby engaged in a scheme of governmental censorship.
- A more recent precedent is *Backpage.com, LLC v. Dart*, 807 F.3d 229, 230, from the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in 2015. That case involved threats by a local law enforcement official against MasterCard and Visa to get them to stop processing payments for the backpage.com website. (Backpage was known as a site featuring advertisements from people in the sex trade, although that was far from its only business.). The Seventh

**Circuit held “A public-official defendant who threatens to employ coercive state power to stifle protected speech violates a plaintiff’s First Amendment rights.”**

So it looks like the two states and the individual plaintiffs are going to get the chance to prove their cases. **Given the material so far revealed in the Twitter Files, there may be no shortage of evidence of deep government involvement in widespread censorship.**

In addition, the Louisiana court is giving the plaintiffs substantial opportunity to take discovery of the government players to explore their involvement in censorship. From November 2022 through January of this year, a series of depositions has already been taken of government officials on this subject. Deponents so far have included the likes of Anthony Fauci of NIAID and Elvis Chan of the FBI. [The NCLA has posted the full videos of the depositions on its YouTube channel](#). The depositions average almost 7 hours in length, so there’s no way I have time to watch them, but I’m sure there are plenty of interesting revelations for those willing to watch.

It may be some considerable time before there is a trial in this matter. However, as discovery proceeds, more and more information about the government censorship regime is likely to come out. Thanks are due to NCLA for undertaking the large effort to expose this completely improper conduct by our authorities.

## POPULAR SCIENCE

### April's skies boast the full pink moon, Lyrid meteor shower, and a total solar eclipse

***We're about to experience some epic sky events, just in time for Global Astronomy Month.***

By [Laura Baisas](#) | Published Mar 31, 2023 8:00 AM EDT

April 5 and 6	Full Pink Moon
April 7	34P/PANSTARRS comet at closest flyby
April 20	Total solar eclipse
April 21, 22, and 23	Lyrid meteor shower

April is officially [Global Astronomy Month](#), a month-long celebration of all things celestial by Astronomers Without Borders, a US-based club that connects global skywatchers. The event features a [Global Star Party and Sun Day](#) and online lessons to highlight the [conjunction of art and astronomy](#). April also happens to be an exciting month for space happenings in general. If you happen to get any stellar sky photos, tag us and include #PopSkyGazers.

[Related: [Your guide to the types of stars, from their dusty births to violent deaths.](#)]

### **April 5 and 6 – Full Pink Moon**

The first full moon of spring in the Northern Hemisphere will [reach peak illumination at 12:37 AM EDT on April 6](#). First glimpses of the full Pink Moon will be on April 5, but because it reaches peak illumination so early in Eastern Time, Western time zones will see it peak on the night of April 5.

April's full moon also goes by many names. The "pink" [references early springtime blooms of the wildflower \*Phlox subulata\*](#) found in eastern North America. This month's moon is also the [Paschal Full Moon, which determines when the Christian](#)

[holiday Easter is celebrated](#). Easter is always celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon of spring, so this year Easter will be on Sunday, April 9.

Every year, [the April full moon is also called](#) the Frog Moon or *Omakakiwi-giizis* in Anishinaabemowin/Ojibwe, the It's Thundering Moon or *Wasakayutese* in Oneida, and the Planting Moon or *Tahch'atapa* in Tunica, the language of the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana.

## **April 7 – 34P/PANSTARRS comet at its closest point in flyby**

The [Jupiter-family comet 364P/PANSTARRS](#) will pass within 11 million miles (0.12 AU) of the Earth in early April. The comet will be in the [“foxy” constellation Vulpecula](#) and is expected to have a [high brightness magnitude of about 12.3](#). It will be visible in the Northern and Southern hemispheres, but those in Northern latitudes will be able to see it better.

[Related: [A total solar eclipse bathed Antarctica in darkness.](#)]

## **April 20 – Total solar eclipse**

Eclipses are always an exciting event, but this one comes with a twist. A total solar eclipse occurs during a rare cosmic alignment of the Earth, moon, and sun. The next solar eclipse will be the first of its kind since 2013 and the last until 2031.

[On April 20](#), a new moon will eclipse the sun, but it will falter a bit. Since it is slightly too far away from the Earth in its elliptical orbit to fully cover all of the sun, the moon will actually fail to cause a total solar eclipse for a brief moment. A ring of fire [will be visible for a few seconds](#) over the Indian Ocean, but the moonshadow will completely cover the sun and cause a total solar eclipse by the time it [reaches Western Australia](#). Eclipse chasers in the town of Exmouth and on ships in the Indian Ocean will likely experience about one minute of darkness during the day.

A long display of [Baily's beads](#) around the New Moon and a view of the [sun's pink chromosphere](#) could also appear around the moon during totality on eclipse day. While this eclipse won't really be visible in the US, we're only a few months away from the [2023 annular solar eclipse](#), which will reach totality in the western part of the country this October.

## April 21, 22, and 23 – Lyrid meteor shower

[The Lyrids are predicted to start](#) late in the evening of April 21 or April 22 and last until dawn on April 23. The predicted peak is 9:06 EDT on April 23. While the peak of the Lyrids is narrow, the new moon falls on April 19, so it will [not interfere with skygazing](#).

[Ten to 15 meteors per hour](#) can be seen in a dark sky with no moon. The Lyrids are even known for some [rare surges](#) in activity that can sometimes bring them up to 100 per hour. The meteor shower will be visible from both the Northern and Southern hemispheres, but is much more active in the north.

The [same skygazing rules](#) that apply to pretty much all space-watching activities are key this month: Go to a dark spot away from the lights of a city or town and let the eyes adjust to the darkness for about a half an hour.

**DON'T FORGET THE CONJUNCTION THAT JUST HAPPENED.**