



Speaker Biographies
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Katrina vanden Heuvel

Katrina vanden Heuvel is editorial director and publisher of *The Nation*. She served as editor of the magazine from 1995 to 2019.

She writes a weekly column for *The Washington Post*.

A frequent commentator on US and international politics for ABC, MSNBC, CNN, and PBS, her articles have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *The Boston Globe*. Vanden Heuvel is also the author of several books, including *The Change I Believe In: Fighting for*

Progress in The Age of Obama, and co-author (with Stephen F. Cohen) of *Voices of Glasnost: Interviews with Gorbachev's Reformers*.

Vanden Heuvel has been recognized for her journalism and public service by organizations such as Planned Parenthood, the National Women's Political Caucus, the New York Civil Liberties Union, the Center for Community Change, the Norman Mailer Center, the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill, American Rights at Work, Progressive Congress, and more. During her tenure, *The Nation's* journalism has been recognized for excellence by the National Magazine Awards, the Society of Professional Journalists, the Maggie Awards, GLAAD, and the National Association of Black Journalists, among others.

Vanden Heuvel serves on the boards of the Progressive Caucus Center, the Institute for Policy Studies, Type Media Center, the Sidney Hillman Media Foundation, the American Committee for US-Russian Accord, Inequality Media, Brave New Films, the Osborne Association, Research to Prevent Blindness, the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, and the Four Freedoms Park Conservancy. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Century Association.

Vanden Heuvel is a summa cum laude graduate of Princeton University, and she lives in New York City.



Sasha Abramsky

Sasha Abramsky is a widely published freelance journalist and book author. He writes regularly for *The Nation* magazine, and his work has also been published in the *New Yorker* online, the *American Prospect*, *Salon*, *Slate*, *Mother Jones*, *Rolling Stone*, *New York Magazine*, the *Village Voice*, the *LA Weekly*, *Sacramento Magazine*, *Sacramento News & Review*, London's *The Guardian*, the *Observer*, the *Sunday Telegraph*, and many other publications. He is the author of seven books, including three on the criminal justice system, one on hunger in America -- titled *Breadline USA* -- and a biography of President Obama, titled *Inside Obama's Brain*.

Abramsky's 2013 book *The American Way of Poverty: How the Other Half Still Lives* was listed by the *New York Times* as amongst the 100 Notable Books of the Year. His

2015 book *The House of Twenty Thousand Books* was listed by Kirkus Reviews as amongst the year's best non-fiction books.

Abramsky is a senior fellow at the Demos think tank, and a part-time lecture in the University Writing Program at UC Davis. He lectures widely at venues around the country. Abramsky currently lives in Sacramento with his wife and two children.

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II is an American Protestant Minister and a [professor](#) in the Practice of Public Theology and Public Policy, and Founding Director of the Center for Public Theology and Public Policy at Yale Divinity School. Barber was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, and moved with his family during his childhood to Washington County, North Carolina, to participate in public school desegregation.

Barber received a Master of Divinity and a Doctorate of Ministry from Duke University and pastored Greenleaf Christian Church from 1993 to 2023. Barber also led the NAACP's South Carolina chapter from 2006 to 2023 and served on the NAACP Board of Directors from 2008 to 2020.

He has received numerous awards for his lifelong work, including the [Puffin Award](#). He received the [MacArthur Foundation Genius Award](#) in 2018 and a Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Award in 2015.

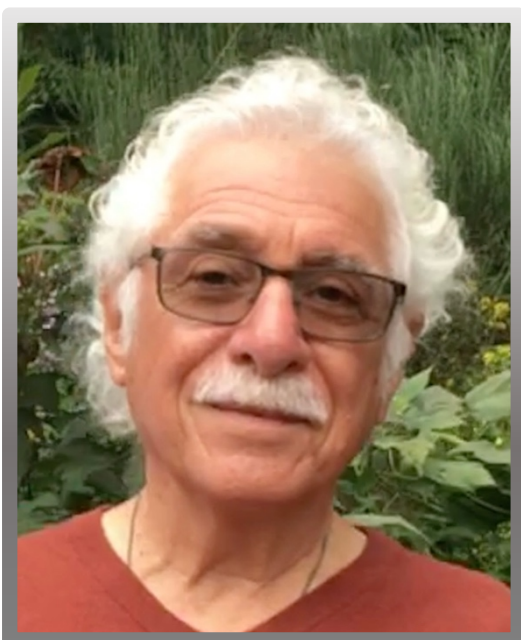


Barber also founded the non-profit [Repairers of the Breach](#), an organization committed to building a movement rooted in a framework that uplifts the United States deepest moral, religious, and constitutional values to redeem the heart and soul of the country.

Daniel Bessner

Daniel Bessner is an historian and journalist. He is currently the Anne H.H. and Kenneth B. Pyle Associate Professor in American Foreign Policy in the [Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies](#) at the University of Washington. He is the author of numerous books and articles on U.S. foreign policy and the political economy of the entertainment industry. In addition to his scholarship, he has published pieces in *The Nation*, *Jacobin*, and *The New York Times*, and other venues as well as cover stories in *Harper's Magazine*, the first on the past, present, and future of U.S. grand strategy and the second on the state of Hollywood.

Daniel is also the co-host of the foreign affairs podcast [American Prestige](#), which is produced in partnership with [The Nation](#) magazine, and which in 2025 won two Signal Awards (Listener's Choice and Silver medal) in the News & Politics category. He has appeared on several national television shows, including HBO's *Real Time with Bill Maher* and CNN's *Smerconish*, as well as NPR's *Fresh Air*. In 2019-2020, he served as a foreign policy advisor to Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign; in 2024, for unclear reasons, the Russian government sanctioned him.



Bill Gallegos

Bill Gallegos is a proud longtime Chicano Liberation activist. He is an author and poet who has devoted his recent time to working for environmental and climate justice, formerly as the executive director of Communities for a Better Environment, a leading environmental organization, where he participated in the state environmental justice advisory committee for AB 32, California's pioneering climate legislation. He is a member of the editorial board of *The Nation*.

Christina Greer

Christina Greer is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Fordham University - Lincoln Center (Manhattan) campus. Her research and teaching focus on American politics, Black ethnic politics, campaigns and elections, and public opinion. Prof. Greer's book *Black Ethnicity: Race, Immigration, and the Pursuit of the American Dream* (Oxford University Press) investigates the increasingly ethnically diverse black populations in the US from Africa and the Caribbean. She finds that both ethnicity and a shared racial identity matter and also affect the policy choices and preferences for black groups. Professor Greer is currently working on a manuscript detailing the political contributions of Barbara Jordan, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Stacey Abrams.



She recently co-edited *Black Politics in Transition*, which explores gentrification, suburbanization, and immigration of Blacks in America.

She is a member of the board of The Tenement Museum in NYC, The Mark Twain House in Hartford, CT, Community Change in Washington, DC, and serves on the Advisory Board at Tufts University in Medford, MA.

She is a frequent political commentator on several media outlets, primarily MSNBC, WNYC, and NY1, and is often quoted in media outlets such as the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and the AP. She is the co-host of the New York centered podcast FAQ-NYC, is a political analyst and host of podcast *The Blackest Questions* at thegrio.com, is a frequent author and narrator for the TedEd educational series, and also writes a weekly column for *The Amsterdam News*, one of the oldest black newspapers in the U.S.

Prof. Greer received her BA from Tufts University and her MA, MPhil, and PhD in Political Science from Columbia University.

Jason Johnson

Jason Johnson is a professor, writer, podcaster, host and political analyst for MSNOW. He is a full professor at the School of Global Journalism and Communication at Morgan State University. He's known for his wit, insight and ability to blend pop culture and politics in a way that makes his analysis accessible to audiences of all kinds. Johnson's writing has appeared in the Grio, the New York Daily News, Huffington Post and the Eisner Award Winning comic series "Bitter Root". His research into campaign politics has led him around the world from the U.K. to South Africa and the Philippines and he's provided political and cultural commentary for outlets on 4 continents. He received his undergraduate degree in government at the University of Virginia and his PhD in political science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. When he's not providing political analysis or speaking he enjoys nature, writing, reading comics and is a long time Seattle Seahawks fan.





Elie Mystal

Elie Mystal is *The Nation's* Justice Correspondent—covering the courts, the criminal justice system, and politics—and the force behind the magazine's monthly column, "Objection!" He is also an Alfred Knobler Fellow at the Type Media Center.

Elie is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School, a former associate at Debevoise & Plimpton, and a lifelong New York Mets fans. One of those things is not like the others. Prior to joining *The Nation*, Mystal was the executive editor of *Above the Law*. He's a frequent guest on MSNBC and Sirius XM. He will resist. He can be followed @ElieNYC.

John Nichols

John Nichols, a pioneering political blogger, has written the Online Beat since 1999. His posts have been circulated internationally, quoted in numerous books and mentioned in debates on the floor of Congress.

Nichols writes about politics for *The Nation* magazine as its Washington correspondent. He is a contributing writer for *The Progressive* and *In These Times* and the associate editor of the *Capital Times*, the daily newspaper in Madison, Wisconsin. His articles have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune* and dozens of other newspapers.



Nichols is a frequent guest on radio and television programs as a commentator on politics and media issues. He was featured in Robert Greenwald's documentary, "Outfoxed," and in the documentaries Joan Sekler's "Unprecedented," Matt Kohn's "Call It Democracy" and Robert Pappas's "Orwell Rolls in his Grave." The keynote speaker at the 2004 Congress of the International Federation of Journalists in Athens, Nichols has been a featured presenter at conventions, conferences and public forums on media issues sponsored by the Federal Communications Commission, the Congressional Progressive Caucus, Consumers International, the Future of Music Coalition, the AFL-CIO, the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, the Newspaper Guild [CWA] and dozens of other organizations.

Nichols is the author of *The Genius of Impeachment* (The New Press); a critically acclaimed analysis of the Florida recount fight of 2000, *Jews for Buchanan* (The New Press); and a best-selling biography of Vice President Dick Cheney, *Dick: The Man Who is President* (The New Press), which has recently been published in French and Arabi. He edited *Against the Beast: A Documentary History of American Opposition to Empire* (Nation Books), of which historian Howard Zinn said: "At exactly the time when we need it most, John Nichols gives us a special gift--a collection of writings, speeches, poems, and songs from throughout American history--that reminds us that our revulsion to war and empire has a long and noble tradition in this country."

With Robert W. McChesney, Nichols has co-authored the books *It's the Media, Stupid!* (Seven Stories), *Our Media, Not Theirs* (Seven Stories), *Tragedy and Farce: How the American Media Sell Wars, Spin Elections, and Destroy Democracy* (The New Press) and, most recently, *The Death and Life of American Journalism* (Nation Books). McChesney and Nichols are the co-founders of Free Press, the nation's media-reform network, which organized the 2003 and 2005 National Conferences on Media Reform.

Of Nichols, author Gore Vidal says: "Of all the giant slayers now afoot in the great American desert, John Nichols's sword is the sharpest."

Zephyr Teachout



Zephyr Teachout, a special advisor and senior counsel to the New York State attorney general's office, is also a Law Professor and has taught at Fordham Law School since 2009. She teaches corporations, antitrust, and democracy theory. Her most recent book, *Break 'em Up, Recovering our Freedom from Big Ag, Big Tech, and Big Money*, explores the intersection of antimonopoly law, labor, and democracy. Her prior book, *Corruption in America*, traces the history of the meaning of corruption in American law. Her writing has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Foreign Affairs*, *The New York Review of Books*, *Washington Post*, *The Nation* and *The New Republic*. Before joining Fordham, Teachout was a Visiting Assistant Professor at Duke Law

School, a visiting faculty at Harvard's Berkman Center, and an internationally recognized pioneer in internet organizing. She is a member of *The Nation's* Editorial Board.

She grew up in Vermont and received her BA from Yale in English and then graduated summa cum laude from Duke Law School, where she was the Editor-in-Chief of the Law Review. She also received an MA in Political Science from Duke. She clerked for Chief Judge Edward R. Becker of the Third Circuit Court of Appeals.

Joan Walsh

Joan Walsh is a national affairs correspondent for *The Nation* and the author of *What's the Matter With White People? Finding Our Way in the Next America*. *Salon's* first news editor, Walsh served as editor in chief for six years. She is a frequent guest on MSNBC and CNN, and has contributed to publications ranging from *Vogue* to *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

