

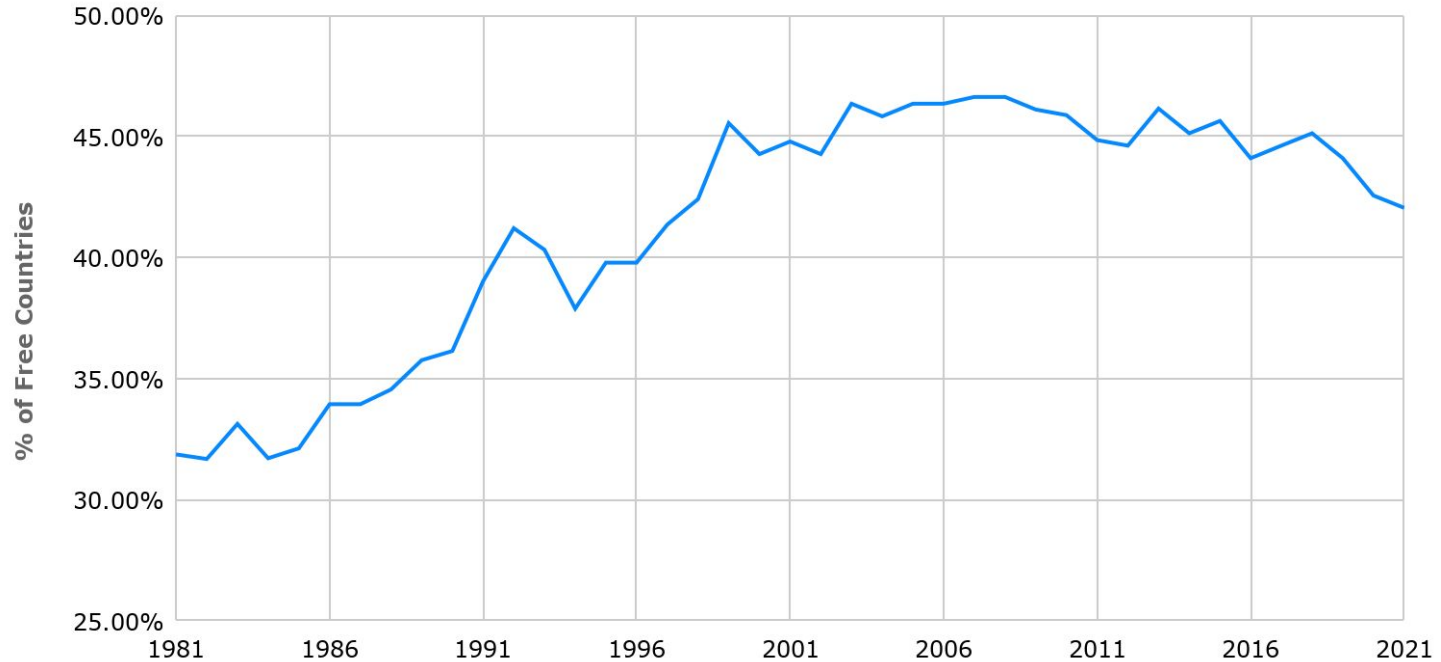
The graphic consists of a blue horizontal bar on the left and three red horizontal bars on the right, stacked vertically. The text 'Protect Democracy' is centered between these bars. 'Protect' is in blue and 'Democracy' is in red.

**Protect  
Democracy**

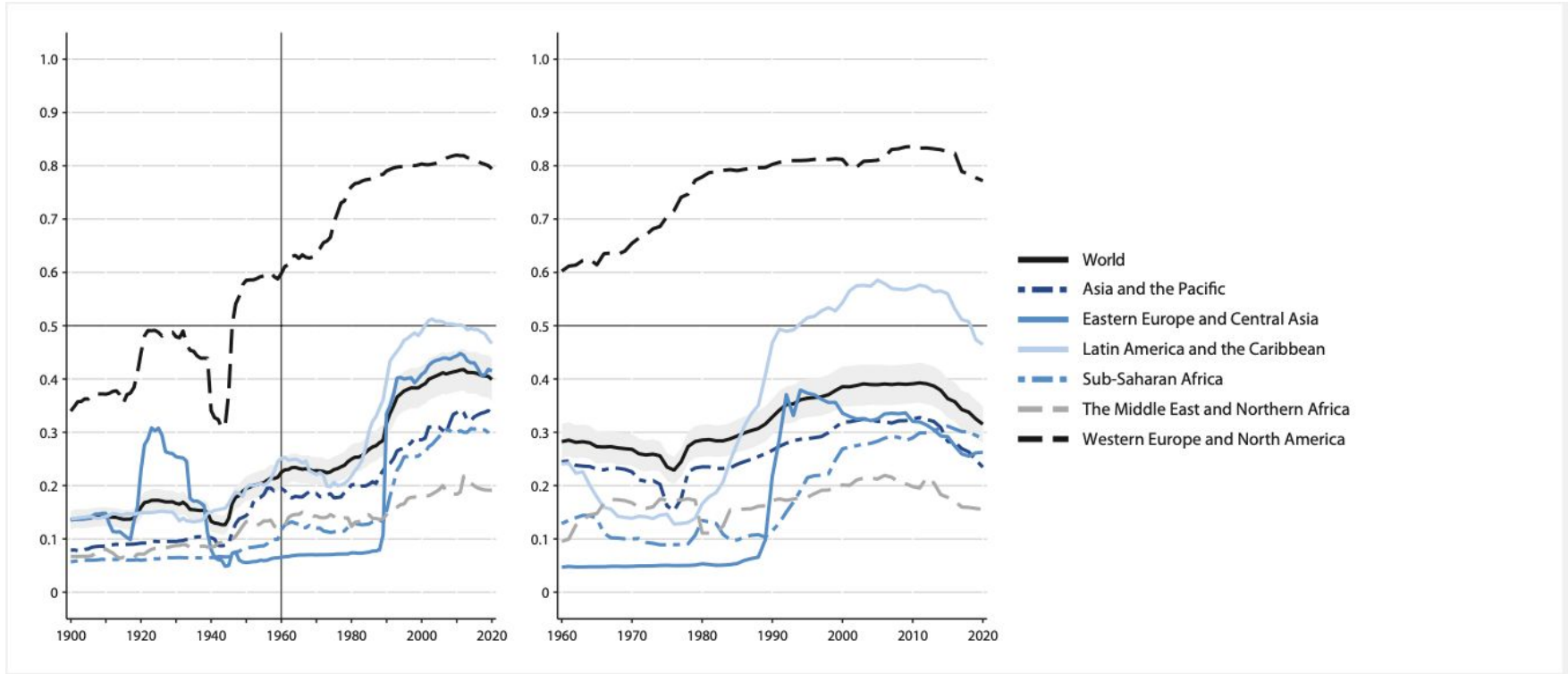
**September 2022**

# **Global Democracy Has Been in Recession for More Than a Decade**

# Freedom House Shows The Third Wave Cresting Around 2007



# V-Dem Shows a Sharp Decline in Past Decade, by Country and Population



# The Economist Intelligence Unit Survey Showed a Nadir in 2021

The  
Economist

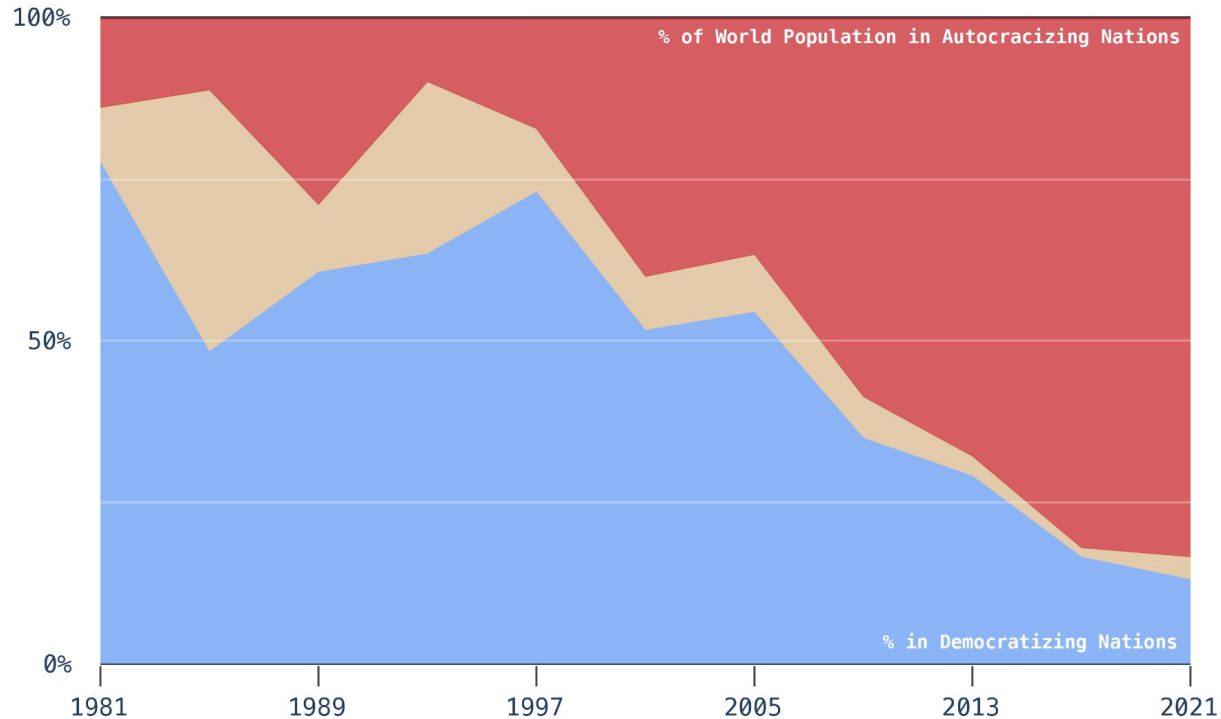
INTELLIGENCE  
UNIT

## The global average score hit an all-time low:

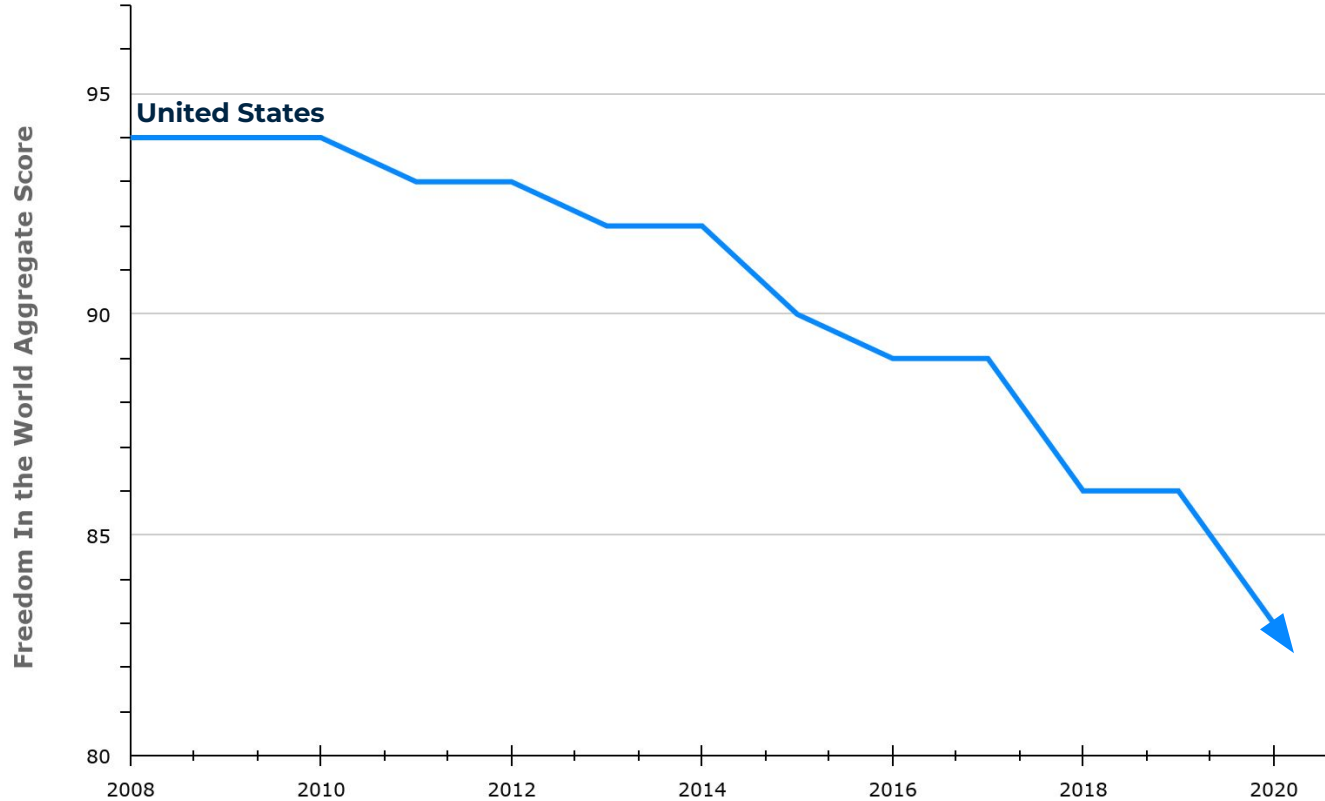
The average global score in the 2021 Democracy Index fell from 5.37 in 2020 to 5.28 in 2021.

“This fall is the biggest since 2010... and **sets another dismal record for the worst global score** since the world democracy index was first produced in 2006.”

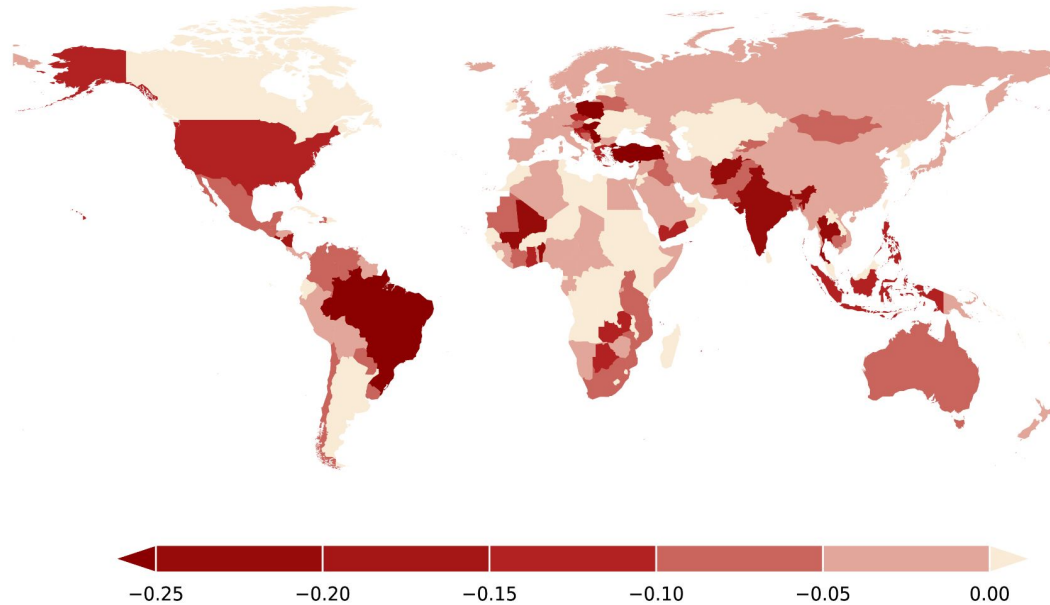
# Autocratic Regimes Are Rising in Democracy's Place



# The United States Has Been Far From Immune to This Trend



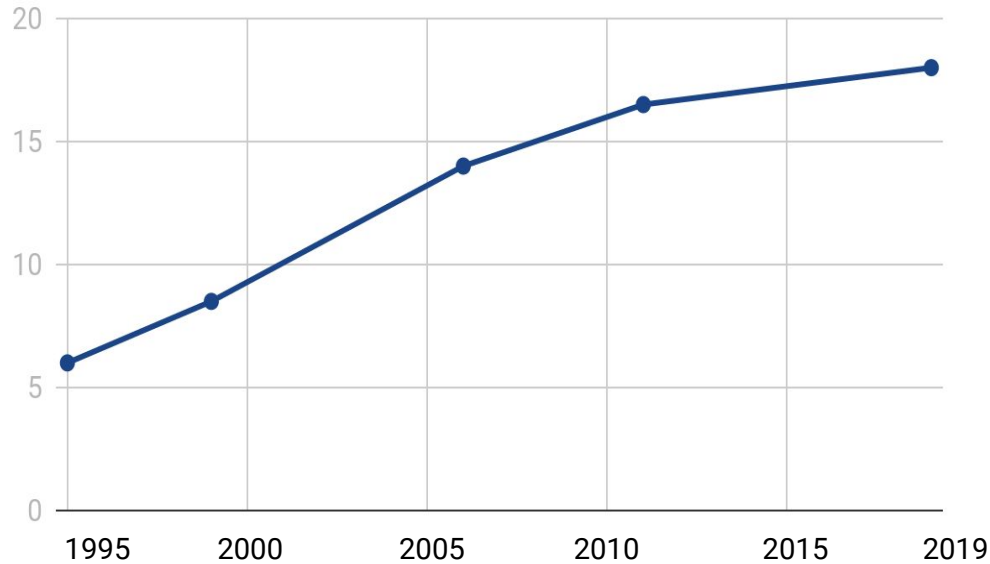
# The U.S. is Among Top Autocratizing Countries in the Past Decade





# And Americans' Commitment to Democracy Has Eroded Substantially

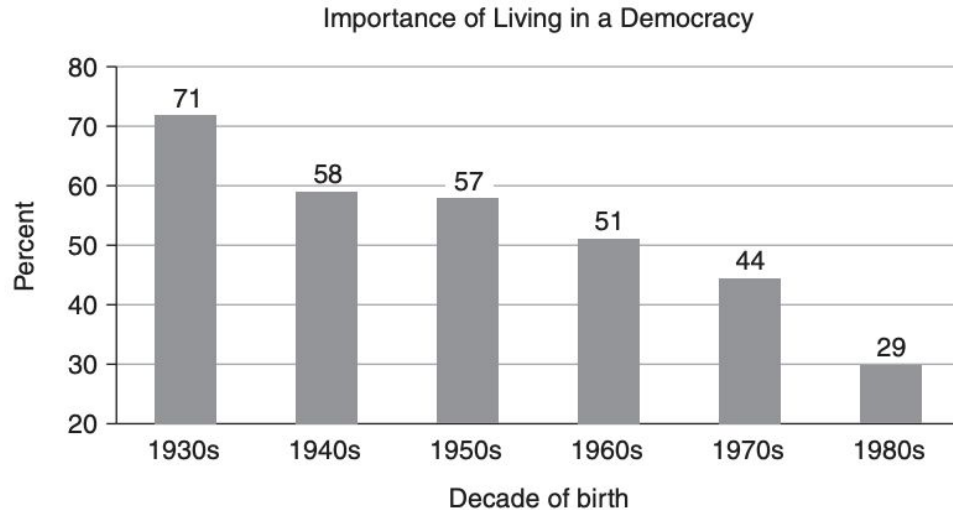
Share of Americans In Favor of "Army Rule"



*Data from Democracy Fund Voter Study Group, 2020*



# Younger Americans' Commitment to Democracy is Weaker Than in Poland



Percentage who agree that Democracy is a “bad” or “very bad” way to run a government.

- **Globally:** 1 in 10
- **Poland prior to Law and Justice:** 1 in 6
- **US Millennials:** 1 in 4

Share of US respondents who believe it is “essential” to live in a democracy, by decade of birth.

**69% of Americans worry that their democracy is at risk of collapse.**

# The Result: A Wave of Autocrats



2003



2010



2013



2014



2015



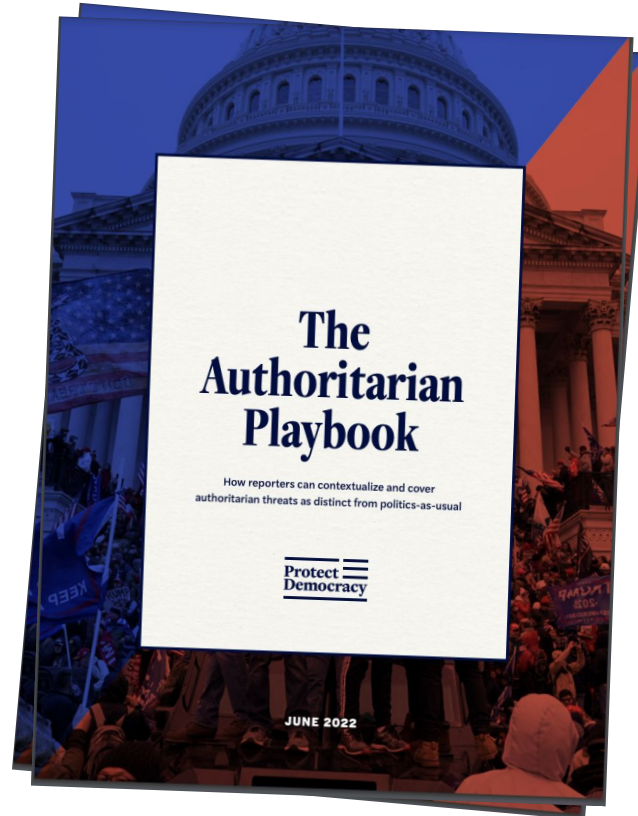
2016



2018

# What Do These Autocrats Do to Dismantle Democracies?

# Modern Authoritarians Across the World Use a Similar Playbook



# Modern Authoritarians Across the World Use a Similar Playbook

Politicizing  
Independent  
Institutions



Spreading  
disinformation



Executive Power  
Grabs



Quashing  
Dissent



Delegitimizing  
Communities



Corrupting  
Elections



Stoking  
Violence



# They politicize independent institutions





- **They spread disinformation**
- **Aggrandize executive power**
- **Quash dissent**
- **Target vulnerable communities**

# They corrupt elections



And if all of those steps fail, incite a violent insurrection.

# They stoke violence



**Democracy depends on the public having unbiased information about what's happening.**

**Is this politics-as-usual?**  
*or*  
**Is this a threat to democracy?**

# This is not easy.

## *How Journalists Wrestle With Covering Threats to Democracy*

A new report challenges news outlets to provide richer, more urgent coverage of the rise of authoritarian movements in the United States and abroad.

United States and abroad:  
urgent coverage of the rise of authoritarian movements in the



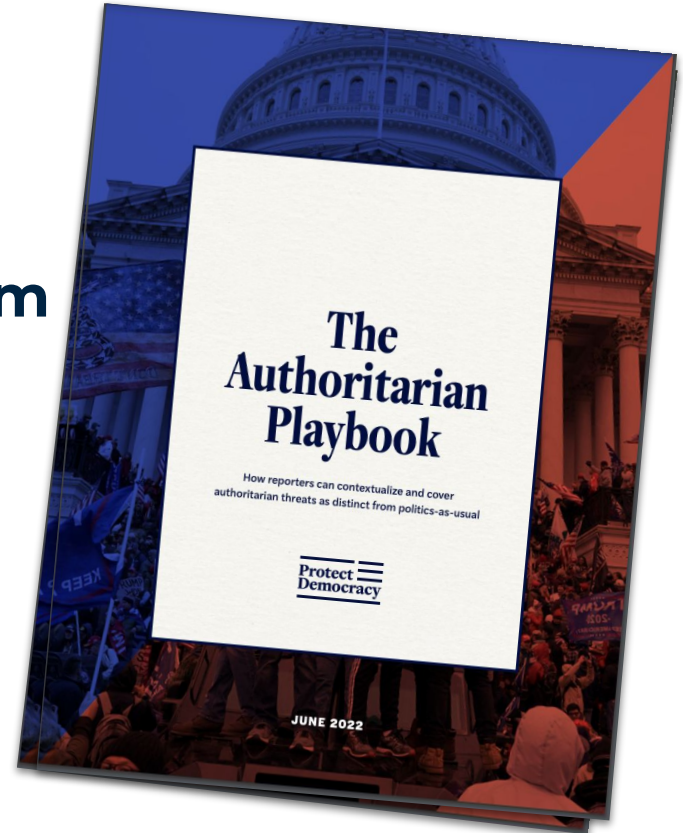
But we've learned three lessons that can help.

# Lesson 1: Does this fit in the Playbook?

Be able to spot tactics in the wild.

Pattern recognition is key:  
Does the actor use other tactics from  
the Authoritarian Playbook?

TARGETING VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES	CORRUPTING ELECTIONS	STOKING VIOLENCE	
POLITICIZING INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS	SPREADING DISINFORMATION	AGGRANDIZING EXECUTIVE POWER	QUASHING DISSENT



## Lesson 2: Is this new?

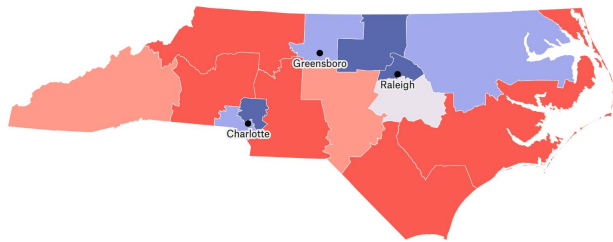
How much does an action deviate from precedent?  
Significance = degree + frequency.

“In an authoritarian transition, what everyone thinks is normal is the authoritarian transition. Journalists have a responsibility to ask whether they are doing enough to record the strangeness or novelty of what politicians do.”

TIMOTHY SNYDER, YALE UNIVERSITY

NEW MAP OLD MAP

### Gerrymandering



VS.



*Trump Aides Prepared Insurrection Act Order During Debate Over Protests*



## Lesson 3: Is this a systemic risk to democracy?

“The key thing ... is how systemic the threat to democracy is. Just as personalistic authoritarian regimes are more fragile than party-based ones (because when the leader disappears from personalistic regimes, the regime tends to crumble), **threats to democracy that ... are rooted in an institutionalized party are much more dangerous.**”

— *Sheri Berman, Columbia University*

## The Bottom Line:

**The public needs context and judicious coverage so they can recognize the story before it's too late.**

**Thank You.**

# Q & A