



Degrading Democracy, CNN-Style

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Everyone's talking about last month's CNN debate. We can't unsee President Biden's performance.

But something else *did* go unseen: candidates independent of the two dominant parties—specifically, RFK, Jr.

“CNN RULES WOULD HAVE BARRED EVERY INDEPENDENT PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE FOR LAST 112 YEARS,” [read](#) this month's *Ballot Access News* (BAN) cover story.

Wow. That's a long time.

Self-deputized to supposedly defend “democracy,” CNN

sponsored the recent presidential debate using criteria [pointedly designed](#) to shut out independent voices—even those polling double digits.

The main culprit was their mandate that “the candidate must [be] certified for the ballot in states with at least 270 electoral votes, by June 20.”

That doesn't make any sense given the calendar for ballot qualification. As BAN relates, “The rule about being on the ballot was probably written by individuals who had no knowledge of the typical time-line for presidential candidates running as independents, or nominees of new parties.”

Plus, “the rule” was applied with a double standard—one for Republicans and Democrats and another for [other parties and independents](#).

“They require certainty for the independent candidate to show ballot placement,” notes BAN, “but they only require probability for the Democratic and Republican invitees.”

Once upon a time major news outlets were seen as playing a vital watchdog role, as referees, politically. Today, CNN and its ilk require their own umpires, a whole new set of watchdogs.

We are it—all of us on X, Facebook, podcasts and the blogosphere—we are those watchdogs.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.