

A Republic, If We Can Keep It | Cornell University

By Center for the Study of Inequality

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On April 12-13, 2018, in Washington, D.C., the Center for the Study of Inequality and [New America](#) will host a conference on the state of democracy in the United States. The questions it addresses are timely and crucial:

- Can a liberal democracy and representative government persist in the United States in the face of rising economic inequality, political polarization, the expansion of presidential powers over those of Congress, and the resurgence of white supremacy and white nationalism?
- Are we experiencing a breakdown of democracy, as some commentators have claimed?
- Or are the checks and balances that are built into our political system and the mediating institutions that link citizens and government - for example, political parties, or a free press - strong enough to sustain liberal democracy?

A premise of the conference is that these questions are best answered by considering political developments in the United States in light of the experiences of other nations in which democracy has been challenged, and in some cases has deteriorated as a result. The conference will bring political scientists and other social scientists together with policy experts from outside academia, public intellectuals, and political journalists. The confirmed keynote speakers are E.J. Dionne and Jennifer Rubin, both of *The Washington Post*.

The lead organizers are Suzanne Mettler (Government, Cornell and CSI affiliate), Rick Valelly (Political Science, Swarthmore), Robert Lieberman (Political Science, Johns Hopkins University), Tom Pepinsky (Government and CSI affiliate, Cornell), Ken Roberts (Government, Cornell), and Lee Drutman (New America).