

## **“Democracy – If You Can Keep It”**

**Zoom Videoconference**

**10:00 AM-12:00 PM**

**8 Weeks**

**Fee: \$55 plus purchase of book**

**Class size limit: 18**

**Course Description:** At the constitutional convention of 1787, Benjamin Franklin was asked – “What do we have, a republic or a monarchy?” Franklin is reputed to have said, “A republic, if you can keep it?” In these times of intense political chaos, we will explore the questions of democratic backsliding and resilience, both here and globally. We will examine the political and social forces that are contributing to democracy’s corrosion. And we will look at some of the social and psychological engines of our intense domestic partisanship.

**Course Format:** Two-hour sessions will feature two presentations. Typically, each class member will present *a specific topic of 20 to 30 minutes*, based on a selected chapter and/or a related article, followed by specific class discussion and questions for the remainder of the hour. Should a class presenter wish to present a topic not listed on the syllabus, you are free to do so, but should notify the coordinator beforehand of their topic. Selected readings should be sent to the coordinator the Friday before your turn to present on the topic.

This course will use the book, “How Democracies End”, by David Runcimen. Participants can obtain a print or e-copy from various book sellers.

**Coordinator:** Michael Dumond retired from 2 career paths, social worker (1<sup>st</sup>) and public health (2<sup>nd</sup>) with career experience in both New Hampshire and Massachusetts state government and nonprofit systems. He has participated in several LLC courses and shares our common concern over the fate of our democracy.