Establishing and maintaining a democratic form of government is no small task. This course examines the struggles for and against democracy in the United States, and approaches democracy as a moving target, not a well-defined destination. Not only did conceptions of democracy change over time, but Americans also disagreed, sometimes violently, over its meaning. We will look at key moments that both strengthened and threatened American democracy, beginning with the creation of the Constitution, and including several social justice and reform movements, and contested elections and the Supreme Court. We will discuss how these struggles continue to shape the state of American democracy today. Grades will be based on discussion participation, weekly short response papers, and a final essay.