The 2016 presidential election has taken the form of a predictable and debasing spectacle. Although a rhetorical nod is made to soaring income inequality, neither the candidates nor the broader political establishment address the deep-rooted attachments of both parties to relentless US interventionism and the military-industrial-security complex, the corporate undermining of democracy, the ongoing attack on civil liberties, and the subjugation of the electoral process itself to dominant capitalist actors. Once again, the 2016 election remains an empty horse race with no hope of resolving the urgent crises facing the population.

The Political Science Department will host a panel discussion on the upcoming presidential elections. Our two speakers will discuss the profoundly undemocratic character of the two-party system, as well as offer an alternative vision of politics and democracy. Bill Van Auken is a leading member of the Socialist Equality Party who ran for president in 2004 and for a Senate seat in New York in 2006, challenging Hillary Clinton. Paul Street is a longtime critic of the two-party system and author of the book, They Rule: the 1 % Versus Democracy (Paradigm Publishers, 2014).