

Wayne's Cary Memorial Library to Host Author Douglas Rooks on Mar. 24

Maine author and journalist Douglas Rooks will read from his new book, *Rise, Decline and Renewal: The Democratic Party in Maine*, just published by Hamilton Books, on Sat. Mar. 24th at 1PM. .

Rise, Decline and Renewal tells the remarkable story of the Maine Democratic Party – how it suddenly rose from irrelevance in 1954 with the election of Governor Ed Muskie, successfully challenged the ruling Republican Party over the next two decades, and initiated a creative period of wide-ranging reforms that produced a model government for a state long perceived as a cultural and economic backwater.

Prosperity was clouded by leadership failures, however, then succeeded by political and institutional decline. The vision that had once galvanized Democrats faded, elected officials clung to power, and legislators failed to provide good representation for the citizens who'd empowered them.

The final chapters describe how Maine's largest political party can again seize the initiative, energize a new generation of young people, and govern in the public interest once more.

While *Rise, Decline and Renewal* focuses primarily on the evolution of the Democratic Party, it makes a strong case that only a vigorous two-party system, based on competition rather than endless conflict, can restore Maine's state government to health.

Former GOP State Senator Peter Mills has this to say about the book:

“Through decades of writing, Doug Rooks has chronicled, with unparalleled insight and devotion, Maine's politics – a state that's produced from its 1.3 million people an outsized share of leaders with national and international significance. Now, Rooks tells where these leaders came from, and in the process tells Maine's story: its sudden metamorphosis into a two-party state; the successes of reform; recent periods of strife; and the author's prescriptions for future progress. Throughout the world, democracies are under stress. Rooks provides a case study for how to grapple with that stress, and meet the challenges citizens face in this continuing struggle.”

Rooks is also the author of *Statesman: George Mitchell and the Art of the Possible* (Downeast Books, 2016.) Signed copies of both books will be available following questions and discussion.

The Cary is located at 17 Old Winthrop Rd, just off Rt. 133 in downtown Wayne. For more information phone the library 685-3612. In case of wintry weather, check the library's website www.cary-memorial.lib.me.us for cancellation.