

**POL 484H/2026H**  
**Recent Political Theory**  
**Larkin 213**

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Over the past several years, I have been working on a book on the ethics of immigration and have concentrated my reading and research on work closely related to this topic. Having completed that project, I want to branch out a bit. The works that I have chosen for this course are eclectic. What they have in common is that, with two exceptions, they have been written in the 21st century and I have reason to believe that they will be interesting and illuminating. I'll say a bit more about each of the assigned readings at the beginning of the week in which it is discussed, but this will be a discussion course, not a lecture course. You are expected to come to class familiar with the texts and ready to engage with them.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:**

1. Active and informed participation in class discussion. (10% of course grade)
2. 3 short papers responding to the readings. You may discuss a single author or two different authors in each paper. Each paper is worth 30% of the course grade.

For undergrads, the papers should be 5-6 pages in length (12 pt. font, 1" margins, double spaced). For graduate students, the papers should be 7-8 pages in length. (same formatting as undergrads). Please submit your papers to me electronically in .doc or .rtf format.

You may choose the authors whom you wish to discuss, but you must submit at least one paper before the February break (i.e., one on Pettit or on Brown or on both). The papers are due on the Tuesday following the final class during which the author is discussed.

I do not prohibit late papers but they are subject to penalties. Late papers will be penalized one point per day including weekends, unless an extension is explicitly granted in writing in advance.

**Readings**

Full details posted below under Schedule. I have not ordered any books at the bookstore because students often prefer to read or purchase the texts online. The Pettit, Brown and Lear books are available online through the U of T library. The Zerilli, Iton and Allison readings will be posted on Blackboard. You will have to purchase the Kittay and Kymlicka books.

## Schedule

**Jan. 8:** No class. I am out of town. I will be available during my normal office hours on Jan 13 and 14 if anyone has any questions before the first meeting of the course on Jan. 15.

**Jan. 15:** Philip Pettit, *On the People's Terms: A Republican Theory and Model of Democracy* (Cambridge 2012): Introduction and Chapter 1. Available online through the library.

**Jan. 22:** Pettit, Chapters 2 - 3. Pettit paper due Jan. 27.

**Jan. 29:** Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Toleration in an Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton 2006): Chapters 1- 4. Available online through the library.

**Feb. 5:** Brown, Chapters 5-7. Brown paper due Feb. 10.

**Feb. 12:** Richard Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic: Politics and Popular Culture in the Post-Civil Rights Era* (Oxford 2008): Chapter 1 "Known Rivers, New Forms."; Dorothy Allison, *Skin: Talking About Sex, Class and Literature* (Firebrand Books 1994): "A Question of Class." Both texts available on Blackboard. Iton/Allison paper due Feb. 24.

**Feb. 19: No class. February break.**

**Feb. 26:** Linda Zerilli, *Feminism and the Abyss of Freedom* (Chicago 2005): Introduction "Why Feminism and Freedom Both Begin with the Letter F"; Zerilli, "Value Pluralism and the Problem of Judgment: Farewell to Public Reason," *Political Theory* 40(1) 2012: 6-31. Both texts available on Blackboard. Zerilli paper due Mar. 3.

**Mar. 5:** Eva Feder Kittay, *Love's Labor: Essays on Women, Equality, and Dependency* (Routledge 1999): Introduction and Part One: Chapters 1-2.

**Mar. 12:** Kittay, Part Two: Chapters 3-4 and Part Three: Chapters 6-7. Kittay paper due Mar. 17.

**Mar. 19:** Jonathan Lear, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation* (Harvard 2006). Available online through the library. Lear paper due Mar. 24.

**Mar. 26:** Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A Political Theory of Animal Rights* (Oxford 2013): Chapters 1-3: Introduction and Part One.

**Apr. 2:** Donaldson and Kymlicka, Chapters 4-8: Part Two