

**POL 197 H1F: Solidarity in Diverse Societies
(First-Year Foundations Seminar)**

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Wednesdays, 2:00-4:00

SK 218

Liberal democracy is in crisis. A quarter-century following the triumph of liberal democracy over communism, the triumphalist conviction that liberal democracy has no competitors and that its spread is virtually inevitable has been replaced by cynicism and self-doubt. Liberal democratic politics is increasingly defined by polarization, and many observers fear that liberal democracies are in danger of becoming shadows of their former selves. These observers note that many liberal democracies are finding it increasingly difficult to accommodate diversity. As a result, it has become unclear whether or not liberal democracies can even protect those commitments which they have traditionally held most sacred – the rule of law, free and fair elections, freedom of the press, and the like.

This course will explore how societies can realize and sustain solidarity in a manner that allows them to accommodate diversity and to preserve liberal democracy. We will first sharpen our understanding of what is at stake by refining our understanding of liberal democracy and by considering what is at stake in today's 'populist moment.' Next, we will consider various political theoretical attempts to cultivate civic unity in a manner that is consistent with liberal democracy and broadly inclusive, rather than in a manner that undermines liberal democracy and promotes ethnic, religious, and/or cultural homogeneity. Some of these approaches aim to promote solidarity by promoting a shared civic or national identity – the sense that we are all friends by virtue of being "fellow Canadians" or "fellow Americans." Other approaches instead focus on reinvigorating citizens' face-to-face relations; and others still, on cultivating dispositions and capacities of "political friendship" that can allow citizens to behave *as if* they were friends – even if they are strangers. Lastly, we will consider theories that reject the need for solidarity. Some of these theories deem solidarity redundant, arguing that liberal democracy and diversity are better served when individuals are allowed to interact freely, with minimal state interference. Others, in contrast, maintain that the promotion of solidarity and trust is counterproductive and that what matters is the expression of political antagonism *between* friends and enemies. This may or may not require societies to jettison their commitment to liberal rights and institutions and to abandon the pursuit of diversity.

Although this course, due to the anticipated class size, will be structured as a lecture, class discussion will play a major role. Regular (and quality) class participation will be expected. We will refer to the texts during our discussions and debates, so please remember to bring copies of the texts to class. Especially with respect to the more challenging readings, I have sought to keep the reading load manageable so as to encourage you to read and reread the texts closely – to 'live' with the texts.

Please note that this is a provisional draft of the syllabus and is subject to change.

Readings: All readings will be available on **course reserves**. If you wish to purchase these books, however, you can do so through online retailers (e.g., Amazon).

Readings Taken from the Following Books:

- Allen, Danielle, *Talking to Strangers* (978-0-226-01467-8)
 Habermas, Jürgen, *The Inclusion of the Other* (978-0-262-58186-8)
 Kaufmann, Eric, *Whiteshift* (978-1-4683-1697-1)
 Locke, John, *Two Treatises of Government* (978-0-300-10018-1)
 Miller, David, *On Nationality* (978-0-19-829356-9)
 Murray, Charles, *What It Means to be a Libertarian* (0-7679-0039-1)
 Mouffe, Chantal, *For a Left Populism* (978-1-7866-3755-0)
 Mouffe, Chantal, *The Democratic Paradox* (978-1-84467-355-1)
 Nozick, Robert, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (978-0-465-09720-3)
 Putnam, Robert, *Bowling Alone* (978-0-7432-0304-3)
 Schmitt, Carl, *The Concept of the Political* (978-0-226-73892)
 Schwarzenbach, Sibyl, *On Civic Friendship* (978-0-231-14723-1)
 Sunstein, Cass, *Can it Happen Here? Authoritarianism in America* (978-0-06-269619-9)
 Tocqueville, Alexis de, *Democracy in America* (978-0-06-112792-2)

External resources: I encourage you to dig deep into the texts and to independently develop fair interpretations of those texts, aided by the class discussions – to *live* with the texts. I have tried to keep the reading load reasonable so that you can do this. If you would like to consult external resources, go to the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Do NOT consult Wikipedia except for biographical reasons. Some Wikipedia articles are good, but some are really not.

Grade Breakdown

- Paper 1 – 30%
 Paper 2 – 35%
 Paper 3 – 35%
 Attendance/Participation – Tiebreaker Function (see Pg. 3)

Assignments:

You will write **three, double-spaced, 5-7 paged essays**. These essays will be based on prompts that I will distribute two to three weeks prior to the essays' respective due dates. They will *not* require outside research. For each essay, you will submit **one hard copy** during class and **one electronic copy** to [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com).

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the TurnItIn.com service are described on the Turnitin.com.

If you do not feel comfortable with Turnitin.com, please come talk to me, and we will work out an alternative means of verifying the originality of your work.

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Lateness policy: A half-letter grade will be deducted for every day the paper is late, except in pre-approved cases or emergencies. So, e.g., for a paper that is one day late, an A- would become a B+; and for a paper that is two days late, an A- would become a B.

Plagiarism policy: Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will be dealt with accordingly. For further clarification and information on plagiarism please see Writing at the University of Toronto: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources> .

Paper Grading Guidelines:

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	Grade Definition	
90-100	A+	4.0	Excellent	Strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
85-89	A	4.0		
80-84	A-	3.7		
77-79	B+	3.3	Good	Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.
73-76	B	3.0		
70-72	B-	2.7		
67-69	C+	2.3	Adequate	Student who is profiting from his/her university experience; understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.
63-66	C	2.0		
60-62	C-	1.7		
57-59	D+	1.3	Marginal	Some evidence of familiarity with subject matter and some evidence that critical and analytic skills have been developed.
53-56	D	1.0		
50-52	D-	0.7		
0-49	F	0.0	Inadequate	Little evidence of even superficial understanding of subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; with limited or irrelevant use of literature.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance will be taken every class. You are allowed **two unexcused absences**.

Please post a short reflection piece (roughly 150-200 words) on any or all of the given week's readings on **Quercus** by **11:59 p.m. every Tuesday**. I realize that this is annoying, but it is a useful practice for focusing your reading, distilling your thoughts, and discovering what might have resonated with you (in the readings). You may skip this requirement for **two weeks** during the semester. I also encourage to read some of your classmates' posts, and **I will give extra credit to those of you who choose to respond to your classmates' posts more than periodically.**

Failure to fulfill these requirements will adversely affect your grade. For example, if your written work collectively merits a low B+, but you fail to satisfy the attendance and participation

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requirements, then I may reduce your B+ to a B. *Conversely*, if you have gone above and beyond in class discussions and/or in your posts, then a high B+ might become an A-.

Electronics policy: **The use of electronics is not permitted** (unless I say otherwise). Sorry! It is for your own good. Studies indicate that taking notes by hand has several advantages over taking notes by computer. See: <https://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away> .

SCHEDULE

Wednesday, September 11: Tom Ginsburg & Aziz Huq, “How We Lost Constitutional Democracy, from *Authoritarianism in America*, edited by Cass Sunstein (Pg. 135-156)

LIBERAL DEMOCRACY & THE “POPULIST MOMENT”

Wednesday, September 18: John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* – Ch. 1-4, 6-10 (Pg. 100-110, 122-158)

Wednesday, September 25: Chantal Mouffe, *For a Left Populism* – Ch. 1-2 (Pg. 9-38)
Eric Kaufmann, *Whiteshift* – Ch. 1 (Pg. 1-28) **PAPER 1 DISTRIBUTED**

POTENTIAL WAYS TO CULTIVATE SOLIDARITY

Wednesday, October 2: Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* – Introduction (Pg. 9-20); Volume 2, Part II, Ch. 1-8 (Pg. 503-528); Volume 2, Part IV, Ch. 6-7 (Pg. 690-702)
Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone* – Ch. 1 (Pg. 15-28)

Wednesday, October 9: Jürgen Habermas, *The Inclusion of the Other* – Ch. 4 (Pg. 106-127), Part of Ch. 8 (Pg. 222-226)

For context: Robert Strayer, “Communism and fascism,” from *The Cambridge World History Volume 7*, edited by J.R. McNeill and Kenneth Pomeranz (Pg. 442-464) [focus on fascism]

PAPER 1 DUE

Wednesday, October 16: David Miller, *On Nationality* – Ch. 2 (Pg. 17-47); Part of Ch. 3 (Pg. 65-80); Ch. 5 (Pg. 119-154) [Pg. 124-140 are recommended but not mandatory]

Wednesday, October 23: Sibyl Schwarzenbach, *On Civic Friendship* – Ch. 1 (Pg. 1-23); Ch. 2 (Pg. 27-58) [SKIM Pg. 27-40]; Parts of Ch. 3 (Pg. 59-82); Parts of Ch. 5 (Pg. 135-142, 164-175)

Wednesday, October 30: Danielle Allen, *Talking to Strangers* – Prologue (Pg. xiii-xxii); Ch. 1-4 (Pg. 1-49); Ch. 9 (Pg. 119-139) [focus on Pg. 133 onwards]; Ch. 10 (Pg. 140-159)

PAPER 2 DISTRIBUTED

– **READING WEEK** –

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OBJECTIONS TO SOLIDARITY

Wednesday, November 13: Charles Murray, *What it Means to be a Libertarian* – Part I (Pg. 1-44); Optional: Part II (Pg. 45-140)

Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* – Ch. 10 (Pg. 297-334) **PAPER 2 DUE**
PAPER 3 DISTRIBUTED

Wednesday, November 20: Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Pg. 19-79)

Wednesday, November 27: Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox* – Ch. 2 (Pg. 36-59); Ch. 4 (Pg. 80-107) [SKIM Pg. 80-93]

Review: Chantal Mouffe, *For a Left Populism* – Ch. 1-2 (Pg. 9-38)

Wednesday, December 4: **TBD**

PAPER 3 DUE

READING QUESTIONS

John Locke – *Second Treatise of Government*

- What are the various metaphorical understandings of political society that Locke implicitly posits? Which metaphor does he choose, and why does he choose that metaphor?
- What, according to Locke, is the state of nature? What are the state of nature's characteristics? How do people in the state of nature relate to one another? Is the state of nature a state of anarchy, or do rules, rights, and enforcement mechanisms for those rules and rights exist in the state of nature?
- Why do people wish to leave the state of nature? How do they go about doing so?
- How do people select the form of government by which they wish to be governed? What are the characteristics of that form of government?

Chantal Mouffe – *For a Left Populism*

- What, according to Mouffe, is a 'hegemonic formation'? What was the hegemonic formation in the decades following World War II? Since the 1970s?
- What, according to Mouffe, are the characteristics of centrism?
- What is the primary division or 'frontier' in politics today?
- Are all forms of populism, for Mouffe, equal?

Eric Kaufmann – *Whiteshift*

- Mouffe provides an economic account of the rise of populism. How about Kaufmann?
- What is the difference, according to Kaufmann, between ethnicity and nationality? Why is the distinction blurred for some whites?
- What is 'whiteshift'? What are its causes?
- What are the four potential white responses to rising diversity?
- What is Kaufmann's proposed solution to the predicament at hand?

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Alexis de Tocqueville – *Democracy in America*

- “No novelty in the United States has struck me more vividly during my stay there than the Equality of Conditions (9).” What does Tocqueville mean?
- What are the characteristics of the “Age of Aristocracy” and of the “Age of Democracy”? What, according to Tocqueville, are the positive and negative attributes of each?
- What are the differences between egoism and individualism? Why is individualism, according to Tocqueville, a specifically democratic phenomenon?
- What is “soft despotism”/“democratic despotism”?
- How does Tocqueville propose to “relink” people in the democratic age?

Robert Putnam – *Bowling Alone*

- What is “social capital”?
- How is social capital useful?
- What is the difference between “bridging” and “bonding”?

Robert Strayer – “Communism and fascism”

- What is fascism – its presuppositions, strategies/tools, and political goals?
- What is special about German fascism?

Jürgen Habermas – *The Inclusion of the Other*

- What, according to Habermas, must a plausible conception of solidarity (“social integration”) overcome?
- Why does Habermas reject nationalism?
- What is “constitutional patriotism”? What is it developed on top of? How do citizens, under constitutional patriotism, come to share in solidarity? Are constitutional patriotism and cosmopolitanism the same things? How is constitutional patriotism “post-national”?

David Miller – *On Nationality*

- How are nations, according to Miller, imagined or mythical? Does that imagined quality, for Miller, make nationality a problem?
- What is the difference between legitimate and illegitimate national identities?
- How does Miller think nationalities can evolve into conformity with liberal democracy and become inclusive?
- In what way are groups defined by “mutual responsibility”?
- How are nations different than other groups from a normative standpoint?

Sibyl Schwarzenbach – *On Civic Friendship*

- How does Aristotle’s conception of “friendship” (roughly speaking) differ from our contemporary understanding of friendship?
- What, according to Schwarzenbach, is “productive” labour and property? What is the “public acquisitive” conception of the self?
- How does productive labour differ from “ethical reproductive labour”? Who exemplifies such activity?

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- What, according to Schwarzenbach, is the danger of a state that does not realize the importance of ethical reproduction?
- What does a state that recognizes the importance of ethical reproduction look like? What sorts of citizens are required to support such a state?

Danielle Allen – *Talking to Strangers*

- What is the (concrete) motivating social and political problem that Allen tries to address through her discussion of political friendship?
- What are the two “myths” of American society? How have they been disproven?
- What does Allen mean when she says that we must “preserve the allegiance of all citizens, including electoral minorities, despite majority rule (xix)”?
- What is the “preeminent democratic ritual,” and how can it redress the above problem?
- How might political friendship motivate citizens to practice that preeminent democratic ritual?
- What is the difference between *pleonexia* (rivalrous self-interest) and equity?
- How is political friendship different, according to Allen, from other forms of friendship?
- What are some of the practices of political friendship discussed by Allen?

Charles Murray – *What it Means to be a Libertarian*

- What is the preeminent value of libertarianism? How does libertarianism, according to Murray understand that value?
- What libertarianism’s vision of the ideal state – its size and functions?

Robert Nozick – *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*

- What is the ideal libertarian society, according to Nozick? How does it serve to actualize libertarian values?

Carl Schmitt – *The Concept of the Political*

- What, according to Schmitt, is the relationship between “the state” and “the political”?
- How does Schmitt define “the state”? “The political”?
- What, according to Schmitt, is the distinction between friends and enemies? How does it differ from other sorts of antagonisms?
- How can the friend-enemy distinction be expressed? How, by implication, must a state maintain security and stability?
- What, according to Schmitt, is the problem with liberalism? With the League of Nations?

Chantal Mouffe – *The Democratic Paradox*

- Why does Schmitt, according to Mouffe, believe that democracy demands homogeneity?
- Why, according to Schmitt, is democracy incompatible with liberalism and pluralism?
- What does Schmitt, according to Mouffe, get wrong about political identity? How, according to Mouffe, is political identity actually determined?
- What, according to Mouffe, is hegemony?
- Why does Mouffe believe that her model of “agonistic democracy” can both satisfy the need to express political antagonism (between friends and enemies) *and* enable pluralism to persist within the political society in question?

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