The political philosophy of liberalism was first formulated during the Enlightenment in response to the growth of the modern nation-state and its authority and power over the individuals living within its boundaries. Liberalism is now the dominant ideology in the Western world, but it covers a broad swathe of different (and sometimes rival) ideas and traditions and its essential features can be hard to define. The Cambridge Companion to Liberalism offers a rich and accessible exploration of liberalism as a body of political thought. It includes chapters on the historical development of liberalism, its normative foundations, and its core philosophical concepts, as well as a survey of liberal approaches and responses to a range of important topics including freedom, equality, toleration, religion, and nationalism. The volume will be valuable for students and scholars in political philosophy, political theory, and the history of political thought.

Steven Wall is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Arizona. He has published widely on topics in contemporary political philosophy. He is the author of Liberalism, Perfectionism and Restraint (1998), co-editor (with George Klosko) of Perfectionism and Neutrality: Essays in Liberal Theory (2003) and (with David Sobel) of Reasons for Action (2009).
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CONTRIBUTORS

RICHARD ARNESON is Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the University of California at San Diego, where he has taught since 1973, and a sometime Visiting Research Professor at the University of Arizona. He has published widely in ethics and political philosophy.

MARK E. BUTTON is Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Utah. His primary field of research is political theory, focusing on the history of political thought, ethics, and deliberative democracy. He is the author of Contract, Culture, and Citizenship: Transformative Liberalism from Hobbes to Rawls (2008).

THOMAS CHRISTIANO is Professor of Philosophy and Law at the University of Arizona, where he is co-director of the Center for Law and Philosophy. He is the author of two books in democratic theory: The Rule of the Many (1996) and The Constitution of Equality (2008).

JOHN CHRISTMAN is Professor of Philosophy, Political Science, and Women’s Studies at Penn State University. He is the author of The Politics of Persons: Individual Autonomy and Socio-Historical Selves (2011), and has published widely on issues related to autonomy, liberty, and political philosophy.

ANDREW JASON COHEN is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Georgia State University, where he is also a faculty affiliate of the Jean Bear Blumenfeld Center for Ethics. He is the author of Toleration (2014).

PHILIP COOK is Lecturer in the School of Social and Political Science at the University of Edinburgh. He is a co-editor of Res
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Publica. His research is primarily on contractualism, with particular interest in the moral and political status of children.

Gerald F. Gaus is the James E. Rogers Professor of Philosophy at the University of Arizona, where he directs the Program in Philosophy, Politics, Economics and Law. He is the author of Justificatory Liberalism (1996) and The Order of Public Reason (2011).

Jeremy Jennings is Professor of Political Theory at King’s College London. He was a founding editor of the European Journal of Political Theory, and he is the author of Revolution and the Republic: A History of Political Thought in France (2011).

Paul Kelly is Professor of Political Theory at The London School of Economics. He is the author of Utilitarianism and Distributive Justice (1990), Multiculturalism Reconsidered (2003), and Liberalism (2004). He is a past editor of Political Studies and Utilitas.

Frank Lovett is Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at Washington University in Saint Louis. His primary research concerns the role of freedom and domination in developing theories of justice, equality, and the rule of law. He is the author of A General Theory of Domination and Justice (2010).


John Skorupski is Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of St. Andrews. He is the author of Ethical Explorations (1999) and The Domain of Reasons (2010).

John Tomasi teaches political philosophy at Brown University, where he is the founder and director of the Political Theory Project. He is the author of Liberalism Beyond Justice (2001) and Free Market Fairness (2012).
Jeppe von Platz is Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy at Suffolk University.

Steven Wall is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Arizona, where he is also a member of the Center for the Philosophy of Freedom. He is the author of Liberalism, Perfectionism and Restraint (1998) and co-editor of Perfectionism and Neutrality: Essays in Liberal Theory (2003).

Daniel Weinstock is the James McGill Professor in the Faculty of Law at McGill University. He has written extensively on a wide range of issues in political philosophy, including democratic theory, multiculturalism, and global justice.

Nicholas Wolterstorff has taught at Yale since 1989. He was Noah Porter Professor of Philosophical Theology until 2002. He is the author of Reason Within the Bounds of Religion (1988) and Justice: Rights and Wrongs (2010) and co-author (with Robert Audi) of Religion in the Public Square: The Place of Religious Convictions in Political Debate (1996).

Linda M. G. Zerilli is the Charles E. Merriam Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago, where she is Faculty Director of the Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality. She is the author of Signifying Woman: Culture and Chaos in Rousseau, Burke, and Mill (1994) and Feminism and the Abyss of Freedom (2005).
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