



# The Politics of Logic: Badiou, Wittgenstein, and the Consequences of Formalism (Routledge Studies in Contemporary Philosophy)

By Paul Livingston

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In this book, Livingston develops the political implications of formal results obtained over the course of the twentieth century in set theory, metalogic, and computational theory. He argues that the results achieved by thinkers such as Cantor, Russell, Godel, Turing, and Cohen, even when they suggest inherent paradoxes and limitations to the structuring capacities of language or symbolic thought, have far-reaching implications for understanding the nature of political communities and their development and transformation. Alain Badiou's analysis of logical-mathematical structures forms the backbone of his comprehensive and provocative theory of ontology, politics, and the possibilities of radical change. Through interpretive readings of Badiou's work as well as the texts of Giorgio Agamben, Jacques Lacan, Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, and Ludwig Wittgenstein, Livingston develops a formally based taxonomy of critical positions on the nature and structure of political communities. These readings, along with readings of Parmenides and Plato, show how the formal results can transfigure two interrelated and ancient problems of the One and the Many: the problem of the relationship of a Form or Idea to the many of its participants, and the problem of the relationship of a social whole to its many constituents.

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- Sales Rank: #2371235 in Books
- Published on: 2014-02-16
- Released on: 2014-02-18
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.02" h x .93" w x 5.98" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 412 pages

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Review

**"Very few philosophers can boast, not only of Paul Livingston's breadth, but of the charity with which he takes stock of our present philosophical 'situation.' In showing how this situation 'counts as one,' he does not merely sum it up; rather, he produces within it what *should* be seen as a major philosophical 'event'." – Andrew Cutrofello, Loyola University Chicago, USA**

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About the Author

Paul M. Livingston is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of New Mexico. He writes on philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, and political philosophy, both analytic and continental. His previous books are: *Philosophical History and the Problem of Consciousness* (Cambridge, 2004) and *Philosophy and the Vision of Language* (Routledge, 2008).

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