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MCGILL U. SHOULD BE ASHAMED TO CONFER PH.D. ON PRO-TERRORIST, ANTI-ISRAEL RACIST BUTLER

“Understanding Hamas, Hezbollah as social movements that are progressive, that are on the left, that are part of a global left, is extremely important.” — Judith Butler, 2006

“The loss of demographic advantage for the Jewish population in Israel would surely improve prospects for democracy in that region,” — Judith Butler, 2012

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McGill Awarding Honorary Doctorate to Divisive Ideologue: Barbara Kay, *National Post*, May 23, 2013—Universities must be careful in the awarding of honorary doctorates. What seems like a safe choice at the time can come back to haunt a university later. Sometimes even five minutes later. McGill University will be awarding philosopher and gender theorist Judith Butler of the University of California at Berkeley an honorary doctorate on May 30. The choice has stirred up controversy and no small degree of dismay amongst many students and some staff at McGill.

Judith Butler: More Palestinian than the Palestinians: Alan Johnson, *World Affairs Journal*, Oct. 16, 2012—In 2006 the rock star left-wing academic Judith Butler said that “understanding Hamas, Hezbollah as social movements that are progressive, that are on the left, that are part of a global left, is extremely important.” (See 16:24 in [this video](#).) Butler’s remark expressed all that’s wrong with the new style of “Palestinian solidarity work.”

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MCGILL STUDENTS FOR ISRAEL AND HILLEL MCGILL STATEMENT

McGill Students for Israel

[Facebook](#), May 22, 2013

Dear Chancellor Steinberg,

McGill Students for Israel would like to express its deep dismay and disappointment on your decision to confer upon Judith Butler an honorary McGill degree. An honorary degree “reflects McGill University’s highest aspirations and ideals”, and the recipient “...will serve as an inspiration and role model to our students, graduates and our community as a whole [and] to enhance the reputation of McGill University”. This is why we are so distressed that you have chosen to award an individual who calls for the boycott of the State of Israel and its dismantlement as a Jewish state.

Butler has called Hamas and Hezbollah, recognized terrorist organizations, “progressive” organizations that are part of the global left, later clarifying that “They are “left in the sense that they oppose colonialism and imperialism, but their tactics are not ones that I would ever condone.” A cursory examination of these organizations reveals the totalitarian and oppressive nature of Hamas and Hezbollah, who have their own brand of religious imperialism. In the aftermath of the Israeli army’s withdrawal from Southern Lebanon in 2000, over 6,500 Southern Lebanese fled to Israel, rightly fearing for their lives as Hezbollah waged a merciless media campaign against citizens from the South, with Hezbollah General Secretary Hassan Nasrallah saying, “We will enter their bedrooms, pierce their stomachs, slaughter them and slice their throats.”

Hezbollah has not only launched attacks on Israeli civilians inside Israel, but has also attacked Jews outside of Israel, such as in the 1994 Jewish community center bombing in Buenos Aires in which 87 people were killed and 100 injured, and the 2012 suicide bombing of a passenger bus carrying Israeli civilians in Bulgaria.

Hamas’ charter calls for the genocide of the Jewish people and borrows from the Czarist anti-Semitic forgery “The Protocols of the Elders of Zion”. Its misogyny, homophobia (homosexuality is a crime in Hamas-ruled Gaza), glorification of terror and death, and lack of respect for basic human rights are well documented. Since Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005, more than 12, 8000 rockets and mortars have been fired indiscriminately at Israeli towns.

Are these the highest aspirations and ideals of McGill University?

Ms. Butler is a leader in Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign to isolate Israel culturally, economically and academically, with the ultimate goal of eliminating Israel as a Jewish state. The BDS campaign opposes peace negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians and rejects the internationally endorsed two state solution. BDS actively opposes any form of cooperation between the Israeli and Palestinian governments.

Is this something that McGill believes should inspire its graduates?

We consider the honor McGill is about to bestow on Professor Butler astounding and deeply offensive. We urge you to rethink this decision. Butler’s support of Hamas and Hezbollah is an affront to the values that McGill holds dear as an institution of higher learning, and is offensive to those who have suffered from the tyrannical rule and terrorist attacks of these organizations. Her leadership of the BDS campaign to de-legitimize and demonize Israel does not consist of an accomplishment that McGill should celebrate.

Respectfully, McGill Students for Israel & Hillel McGill

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MCGILL'S JUDITH BUTLER BUNGLE

Gil Troy

[The Daily Beast](#), May 24, 2013

When I first heard that McGill University, my university, was awarding Professor Judith Butler an honorary doctorate, I winced, quietly. Butler is a caustic critic of Israel, with a blind spot for terrorist totalitarians. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that she is a respected scholar. And, frankly, I never wanted to be one of those hair-trigger activists who bellows predictably at every anti-Israel affront.

However, on reconsideration, inspired by a powerful statement by McGill Students for Israel, I have decided to challenge the McGill honorary doctorate committee’s foolish decision, aware that the university will not change its mind—and hoping no protestors will disrupt commencement or repudiate McGill overall. I am not fighting my university, whose ideals I cherish. I am, however, fighting to uphold those very ideals for which McGill stands, along with all great universities.

Controversy focuses on Butler's general support for boycotting Israel and, particularly, her remarks at a "teach in" on war, when she said, "Understanding Hamas/Hezbollah as social movements that are progressive, that are on the left, that are part of a global left, is extremely important. That does not stop us from being critical of certain dimensions of both movements." Her follow-up explanation was that they are "'left' in the sense that they oppose colonialism and imperialism, but their tactics are not ones that I would ever condone."

The only thing "anti-imperialist" about these movements is that they use that label to mask their desire to destroy Israel. Her welcome telegraphs a show of solidarity with these two organizations because of that defining ideological stance.

Both times she failed to denounce the Hamas-Hezbollah religious zealotry, homophobia, sexism, anti-Semitism and genocidal aims. Her need to prettify these terrorist organizations as "social movements," her reductionist insult to progressivism by suggesting that these brutal anti-democratic movements are at all progressive because they are imperialist, meaning anti-Israel, reflects a moral obtuseness and intellectual sloppiness that has made many intellectuals enablers of Islamist terrorists and Palestinian rejectionism.

The McGill committee's Butler blind spot reflects a broader intellectual malady today. This week, even the Wall Street Journal described the rioters in Sweden as angry youths without mentioning words like "immigrants" or Islamists. That is like covering the Watts or Rodney King Los Angeles riots without mentioning race.

Of course, we must not demonize any religion, race, or ethnic group. The objection to boycotting begins with its essentialist bigotry that attacks Israel as an entity rather than Israeli policy. Too many academics like Butler have been ideologically colonized by a form of totalitarianism which is intellectually imperialist—imposing a foreign regime of dos and don'ts, of likes and dislikes, that distort the truth, simplify the complex, reward the violent, and doom peace efforts.

Academics used to push politicians to see truth clearly—in all its messiness. Today, politicized professors like Butler push students to cloud the truth through their particular political prism. That McGill, like so many other universities, honors such academic saboteurs insults all truth seekers, left and right.

This is not about Butler's right to free speech or her right to be wrong. An honorary doctorate rewards exceptional role modeling; tenure rewards good scholarship. As the McGill Students' statement notes, an honorary degree "reflects McGill University's highest aspirations and ideals," celebrating the recipient as "an inspiration and role model to our students, graduates and our community as a whole to enhance the reputation of McGill University."

Hmm. My McGill—our McGill—is about the noble, consistent ideals John Peters Humphrey and others from McGill Law School defined when writing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Not Butler's amoral, sloppy, politically correct identity politics.

My McGill—our McGill—is about the sacrifices 5568 men and women of McGill made defeating totalitarianism in World War II not the weak intellectual fig leaves Butler provides today's totalitarians.

My McGill—our McGill—is about the exemplary impact of an Irwin Cotler in fighting for human rights worldwide, not the damage a Judith Butler does in rationalizing Islamists' human wrongs by uniting in anti-Israel zeal.

My McGill—our McGill—is about the tremendous bridge-building efforts of a Jim Torczyner, whose McGill Middle East Program in Civil Society and Peace Building has been fighting poverty, ignorance, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia with creative anti-poverty programs and joint social work studies involving Israelis, Palestinians, Jordanians, and Canadians for decades now. Not the bridge-burning efforts of Butler and her BDS comrades who polarize an already divided Middle East.

My McGill—our McGill—is about a scholarly tradition since 1821, which encourages complex thinking rather than the simplistic sloganeering of Butler’s boycotters, which reduces the messy Israel-Palestinian conflict to a black and white, good-guys versus bad guys fight.

And my McGill—our McGill—is about the courageous leadership in the fight against anti-Semitism spearheaded by our outgoing principal Heather Munroe-Blum, who said calls for McGill to boycott Hebrew University go “against everything McGill stands for. It suggests a cowardice that I, as Principal of this great university, categorically reject.” How tragic that one of her last acts as principal will reward someone who epitomizes that cowardice.

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MCGILL AWARDING HONORARY DOCTORATE TO DIVISIVE IDEOLOGUE

Barbara Kay

[National Post](#), May 23, 2013

Universities must be careful in the awarding of honorary doctorates. What seems like a safe choice at the time can come back to haunt a university later. Sometimes even five minutes later. McGill University will be awarding philosopher and gender theorist Judith Butler of the University of California at Berkeley an honorary doctorate on May 30. The choice has stirred up controversy and no small degree of dismay amongst many students and some staff at McGill.

According to McGill’s own definition, an honorary degree “reflects McGill University’s highest aspirations and ideals.” The recipient “...will serve as an inspiration and role model to our students, graduates and our community as a whole [and will] enhance the reputation of McGill University.”

I don’t think Judith Butler fits a single word of that description. Although a respected intellectual in the small hothouse world of radical feminists, Butler’s greater claim to fame arises from her fixation with (in her eyes) Israel’s crimes against humanity. She is a leading figure in the international campaign to delegitimize Israel.

Butler advocates for the BDS movement (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions), singling Israel out from all other nations as a perpetrator of evil. The BDS campaign opposes the two-state solution to peace in the Middle East. Its ultimate goal is to replace Israel with a one-state “solution,” whereby Israel would be dissolved as a national Jewish homeland.

Butler has called the recognized terrorist organizations of Hamas and Hezbollah “progressive.” She has said that “understanding Hamas and Hezbollah as social movements that are on the global left is important.” Social movements? When she suffered blowback for what was widely perceived as terrorism laundering, she protested her words had been taken out of context, stating in an August, 2012 letter to the Jerusalem Post that “I do not endorse practices of violent resistance and neither do I endorse state violence.” In other words, adding insult to injury, she espouses the more pernicious, morally equivalent assignment of equal blame for terrorism to both Hezbollah and the state of Israel.

Although a pioneer of Queer Studies and an advocate for gay rights in the West, like many extreme leftists, Butler upholds double standards where persecution of gays is concerned. She denounced a gay organization in Germany as Islamophobic for criticizing Muslim violence against gays.

But quite aside from her offensive political views, Butler should not be honoured because she is a terrible writer. In 1999, *The New Criterion*, a highbrow cultural magazine, cited Butler for especially bad writing, one of a “triumvirate of absurd figures” .

In an essay, “The Professor of Parody,” renowned philosopher Martha Nussbaum raised the issue of Butler’s style, calling it “ponderous and obscure” and “dense with allusions to other theorists, drawn from a wide range of different theoretical traditions...It bullies the reader into granting that, since one cannot

figure out what is going on, there must be something significant going on, some complexity of thought, where in reality there are often familiar or even shopworn notions, addressed too simply and too casually to add any new dimension of understanding.”

Most famously, in 1998, philosophy professor Denis Dutton’s journal *Philosophy and Literature* awarded Butler first prize in its “Bad Writing Competition,” which claims to “celebrate bad writing from the most stylistically lamentable passages found in scholarly books and articles.” Butler received the award for this 94-word sentence that was published in the journal *Diacritics*:

The move from a structuralist account in which capital is understood to structure social relations in relatively homologous ways to a view of hegemony in which power relations are subject to repetition, convergence, and rearticulation brought the question of temporality into the thinking of structure, and marked a shift from a form of Althusserian theory that takes structural totalities as theoretical objects to one in which the insights into the contingent possibility of structure inaugurate a renewed conception of hegemony as bound up with the contingent sites and strategies of the rearticulation of power.

So let’s tally up. We have an honoree who represents the most controversial aspect of the most toxic and divisive issue roiling campuses all over the world. We have extreme ideology that offends a wide swath of the McGill community. And we have egregiously bad writing that offends true scholars. Is Judith Butler really “an inspiration and role model” to students? The answer is no. And the question is: What was Chancellor Arnold Steinberg thinking in issuing this invitation?

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JUDITH BUTLER: MORE PALESTINIAN THAN THE PALESTINIANS

Alan Johnson

[World Affairs Journal](#), Oct. 16, 2012

In 2006 the rock star left-wing academic Judith Butler said that “understanding Hamas, Hezbollah as social movements that are progressive, that are on the left, that are part of a global left, is extremely important.” (See 16:24 in [this video](#).) Butler’s remark expressed all that’s wrong with the new style of “Palestinian solidarity work.”

Viewing the two-state solution as a sell-out, Butler attacks the PA application to the United Nations for recognition. The bid’s only value, she argues, is that it allows the left to jump up and down on the grave of the “sham of the peace negotiations” and celebrate the “break with the Oslo framework.” She wags her finger at Salam Fayyad and Mahmoud Abbas. By seeking a deal with Israel they are “abandon[ing] the right of return for diasporic Palestinians” and “potentially abandon[ing] Gaza.” If they succeed, “half of all Palestinians may well be disenfranchised.”

The Guardian newspaper sounded the same note when it published the leaked “Palestine Papers” from the Olmert-Abbas Annapolis talks, with distorted editorial gloss, and called Palestinian negotiators “craven” for engage seriously in final status talks. *The London Review of Books* routinely denounces Fayyad, the prime minister of the Palestinian Authority, as a collaborator. “Fayyad’s critics,” wrote Adam Shatz, “call him a ‘good manager of the occupation,’ a ‘builder of apartheid roads,’ ‘the sugar daddy who got us hooked on aid,’ and it’s all true.”

The Palestinian national movement is being policed from the “left,” and from the coffee shops and seminar rooms of London and New York by people who consider themselves more Palestinian than the Palestinians. Butler gives an outraged “No!” to Abbas. She will not “sacrifice the right of return for millions of Palestinians outside the region.” But think about that “No!” It is a program for the dismantling of the Jewish state. “The loss of demographic advantage for the Jewish population in Israel would surely

improve prospects for democracy in that region,” she writes (optimistically, shall we say) in her new book, *Parting Ways: Jewishness and the Critique of Zionism*. As Leon Wieseltier wrote in the *New Republic* back in 2003, “the one state solution is not the alternative for Israel. It is the alternative to Israel.”

The new style treats negotiations as useless. Butler claims the Oslo years have seen only “the indefinite deferral of all ‘permanent status issues’—effectively establishing the occupation as a regime without foreseeable end.” Quite as if there never was Camp David at which Ehud Barak offered the shop, ’67 borders more or less, settlements uprooted; nor the Clinton-era proposals which Barak accepted and Arafat rejected; nor Annapolis at which Olmert offered all of that and more, including a shared capital in Jerusalem.

Another part of the new style is to pose an entirely literary “alternative” to the two-state solution. Butler talks of “Palestinian self-determination ... without external interference,” “the right of return for diasporic Palestinians,” “the one-state solution.” Refusing to travel to Israel, so with no feel for Israeli society, and with a prose style that secured her first prize in the “Philosophy and Literature Bad Writing Contest” Butler’s answers are, literally, literary. More importantly, Butler gets wrong what the conflict is actually about. Two highly developed and distinct societies, Israeli and Palestinian, each based on a powerful sense of national identity, must divide the land. When there are strong desires for national self-determination, the one-state idea collapses. Brit Shalom, the bi-national Zionist movement of the 1920s, could not know this. We can’t not know it.

To divide the land, each people needs to feel confident and secure if it is to make excruciating compromises. For that, each people must feel itself to be understood as a permanent feature of the Middle East. Butler’s one-statism does the opposite. It proposes to resolve a national question by denying the right to national self-determination of both peoples.

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ON TOPIC

[Anti-Israel Event at Brooklyn College Promotes Hate, Represses Dissent:](#) [Danielle Avel, *Breitbart*, Feb. 19, 2013](#)—The most disturbing part of the evening occurred early on. In the midst of Judith Butler’s soft-spoken rant, the audience was utterly silent until a voice near the door exclaimed, “This is an oppression of freedom of speech, this an oppression.” Looking over, I noticed Jewish students being removed from the room and thought to myself, “I guess kippas are not allowed.”

[Judith Butler Shouldn't Be Honoured By McGill University:](#) [Lauryn Oates, *Huffington Post*, May 27, 2013](#)—I’ve been ashamed here and there over some of the output that comes out of my latest alma mater, the University of British Columbia, all of it belonging deep within the dump heap that is the pseudo-scholarship of post-modernism, but my first alma mater, good ol’ McGill University, seems to be clambering on board more and more with the trending Nonsense Studies disciplines, and its associated culture of victimhood, identity politics, and relativisms.

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