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## Judith Butler responds to attack: 'I affirm a Judaism that is not associated with state violence'

Judith Butler (<http://mondoweiss.net/author/judith-butler>) •

tip ([mailto:jb\\_crittheory@berkeley.edu?subject=Deadline.com Tip](mailto:jb_crittheory@berkeley.edu?subject=Deadline.com%20Tip))

on August 27, 2012

181 Comments (<http://mondoweiss.net/2012/08/judith-butler-responds-to-attack-i-affirm-a-judaism-that-is-not-associated-with-state-violence#comments>)

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Yesterday the Jerusalem Post [published an attack on the awarding of a major international prize to Judith Butler](http://www.jpost.com/International/Article.aspx?id=282583) (<http://www.jpost.com/International/Article.aspx?id=282583>), the philosopher and Berkeley professor of comparative literature, because Butler favors boycotting Israel. Butler wrote this response and, unhopful that the Post would publish it, sent it to us. – Editors.

The Jerusalem Post recently published an article reporting that some organizations are opposed to my receiving the Adorno Prize, an award given every three years to someone who works in the tradition of critical theory broadly construed. The accusations against me are that I support Hamas and Hezbollah (which is not true) that I support BDS (partially true), and that I am anti-Semitic (patently false). Perhaps I should not be as surprised as I am that those who oppose my receiving the Adorno Prize would seek recourse to such scurrilous and unfounded charges to make their point. I am a scholar who gained an introduction to philosophy through Jewish thought, and I understand myself as defending and continuing a Jewish ethical tradition that includes figures such as Martin Buber and Hannah Arendt. I received a Jewish education in Cleveland, Ohio at The Temple under the tutelage of Rabbi Daniel Silver where I developed strong ethical views on the basis of Jewish philosophical thought. I learned, and came to accept, that we are called upon by others, and by ourselves, to respond to suffering and to call for its alleviation. But to do this, we have to hear the call, find the resources by which to respond, and sometimes suffer the consequences for speaking out as we do. I was taught at every step in my Jewish education that it is not acceptable to stay silent in the face of injustice. Such an injunction is a difficult one, since it does not tell us exactly when and how to speak, or how to speak in a way that does not produce a new injustice, or how to speak in a way that will be heard and registered in the right way. My actual position is not heard by these detractors, and perhaps that should not surprise me, since their tactic is to destroy the conditions of audibility.

I studied philosophy at Yale University and continued to consider the questions of Jewish ethics throughout my education. I remain grateful for those ethical resources, for the formation that I had, and that animates me still. It is untrue, absurd, and painful for anyone to argue that those who formulate a criticism of the State of Israel is anti-Semitic or, if Jewish, self-hating. Such charges seek to demonize the person who is articulating a critical point of view and so disqualify the viewpoint in advance. It is a silencing tactic: this person is unspeakable, and whatever they speak is to be dismissed in advance or twisted in such a way that it negates the validity of the act of speech. The charge refuses to consider the view, debate its validity, consider its forms of evidence, and derive a sound conclusion on the basis of listening to reason. The charge is not only an attack on persons who hold views that some find objectionable, but it is an attack on reasonable exchange, on the very possibility of listening and speaking in a context where one might actually consider what

another has to say. When one set of Jews labels another set of Jews “anti-Semitic”, they are trying to monopolize the right to speak in the name of the Jews. So the allegation of anti-Semitism is actually a cover for an intra-Jewish quarrel.

In the United States, I have been alarmed by the number of Jews who, dismayed by Israeli politics, including the occupation, the practices of indefinite detention, the bombing of civilian populations in Gaza, seek to disavow their Jewishness. They make the mistake of thinking that the State of Israel represents Jewishness for our times, and that if one identifies as a Jew, one supports Israel and its actions. And yet, there have always been Jewish traditions that oppose state violence, that affirm multi-cultural co-habitation, and defend principles of equality, and this vital ethical tradition is forgotten or sidelined when any of us accept Israel as the basis of Jewish identification or values. So, on the one hand, Jews who are critical of Israel think perhaps they cannot be Jewish anymore if Israel represents Jewishness; and on the other hand, those who seek to vanquish anyone who criticizes Israel equate Jewishness with Israel as well, leading to the conclusion that the critic must be anti-Semitic or, if Jewish, self-hating. My scholarly and public efforts have been directed toward getting out of this bind. In my view, there are strong Jewish traditions, even early Zionist traditions, that value co-habitation and that offer ways to oppose violence of all kinds, including state violence. It is most important that these traditions be valued and animated for our time – they represent diasporic values, struggles for social justice, and the exceedingly important Jewish value of “repairing the world” (*Tikkun*).

It is clear to me that the passions that run so high on these issues are those that make speaking and hearing very difficult. A few words are taken out of context, their meaning distorted, and they then come to label or, indeed, brand an individual. This happens to many people when they offer a critical view of Israel – they are branded as anti-Semites or even as Nazi collaborators; these forms of accusation are meant to establish the most enduring and toxic forms of stigmatization and demonization. They target the person by taking the words out of context, inverting their meanings and having them stand for the person; indeed, they nullify the views of that person without regard to the content of those views. For those of us who are descendants of European Jews who were destroyed in the Nazi genocide (my grandmother's family was destroyed in a small village south of Budapest), it is the most painful insult and injury to be called complicitous with the hatred of Jews or to be called self-hating. And it is all the more difficult to endure the pain of such an allegation when one seeks to affirm what is most valuable in Judaism for thinking about contemporary ethics, including the ethical relation to those who are dispossessed of land and rights of self-determination, to those who seek to keep the memory of their oppression alive, to those who seek to live a life that will be, and must be, worthy of being grieved. I contend that these values all derive from important Jewish sources, which is not to say that they are only derived from those sources. But for me, given the history from which I emerge, it is most important as a Jew to speak out against injustice and to struggle against all forms of racism. This does not make me into a self-hating Jew. It makes me into someone who wishes to affirm a Judaism that is not identified with state violence, and that is identified with a broad-based struggle for social justice.

My remarks on Hamas and Hezbollah have been taken out of context and badly distort my established and continuing views. I have always been in favor of non-violent political action, and this principle has consistently characterized my views. I was asked by a member of an academic audience a few years ago whether I thought Hamas and Hezbollah belonged to “the global left” and I replied with two points. My first point was merely descriptive: those political organizations define themselves as anti-imperialist, and anti-imperialism is one characteristic of the global left, so on that basis one could describe them as part of the global left. My second point was then critical: as with any group on the left, one has to decide whether one is for that group or against that group, and one needs to critically evaluate their stand. I do not accept or endorse all groups on the global left. Indeed, these very remarks followed a talk that I gave that evening which emphasized the importance of public mourning and the political practices of non-violence, a principle that I elaborate and defend in three of my recent books: *Precarious Life*, *Frames of War*, and *Parting Ways*. I have been interviewed on my non-violent views by *Guernica* and other on-

line journals, and those views are easy to find, if one wanted to know where I stand on such issues. I am in fact sometimes mocked by members of the left who support forms of violent resistance who think I fail to understand those practices. It is true: **I do not endorse practices of violent resistance and neither do I endorse state violence, cannot, and never have.** This view makes me perhaps more naïve than dangerous, but it is my view. So it has always seemed absurd to me that my comments were taken to mean that I support or endorse Hamas and Hezbollah! I have never taken a stand on either organization, just as I have never supported every organization that is arguably part of the global left – I am not unconditionally supportive of all groups that currently constitute the global left. *To say that those organizations belong to the left is not to say that they should belong, or that I endorse or support them in any way.*

Two further points. I do support the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement in a very specific way. I reject some versions and accept others. For me, BDS means that I oppose investments in companies that make military equipment whose sole purpose is to demolish homes. It means as well that I do not speak at Israeli institutions unless they take a strong stand against the occupation. I do *not* accept any version of BDS that discriminates against individuals on the basis of their national citizenship, and I maintain strong collaborative relationships with many Israeli scholars. One reason I can endorse BDS and *not* endorse Hamas and Hezbollah is that BDS is the largest *non-violent* civic political movement seeking to establish equality and the rights of self-determination for Palestinians. My own view is that the peoples of those lands, Jewish and Palestinian, must find a way to live together on the condition of equality. Like so many others, I long for a truly democratic polity on those lands and I affirm the principles of self-determination and co-habitation for both peoples, indeed, for all peoples. And my wish, as is the wish of an increasing number of Jews and non-Jews, is that the occupation come to an end, that violence of all kinds cease, and that the substantial political rights of all people in that land be secured through a new political structure.

Two last notes: The group that is sponsoring this call is the Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (<http://spme.net/>), a misnomer at best, that claims on its website that “Islam” is an “inherently anti-semitic (sic) religion.” It is not, as *The Jerusalem Post* has reported, a large group of Jewish scholars in Germany, but an international organization with a base in Australia and California. They are a right-wing organization and so part of an intra-Jewish war. Ex-board member Gerald Steinberg is known for attacking human rights organizations in Israel as well as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. Their willingness to include Israeli infractions of human rights apparently makes them also eligible for the label, “anti-Semitic.”

Finally, I am not an instrument of any “NGO”: I am on the advisory board of Jewish Voice for Peace, a member of Kehillah Synagogue in Oakland, California, and an executive member of Faculty for Israeli-Palestinian Peace in the US and The Jenin Theatre in Palestine. My political views have ranged over a large number of topics, and have not been restricted to the Middle East or the State of Israel. Indeed, I have written about violence and injustice in other parts of the world, focusing mainly in wars waged by the United States. I have also written on violence against transgendered people in Turkey, psychiatric violence, torture in Guantanamo, and about police violence against peaceful protestors in the U.S, to name a few. I have also written against anti-Semitism in Germany and against racial discrimination in the United States.

#### 181 Responses

seafoid (/profile/seafoid) August 27, 2012, 10:05 am

“I received a Jewish education in Cleveland, Ohio where I developed strong ethical views on the basis of Jewish philosophical thought. ”

Harvey Pekar was Jewish, a Mensch and from Cleveland , wasn't he?

“For those of us who are descendants of European Jews who were destroyed in the Nazi genocide, it is the most painful insult and injury to be called complicitous with the hatred of Jews. ”

Because they have nothing else to say when faced with reason. Nice to see Zionist

thuggery exposed to the light.

Equating those critical of Israel's slow hara kiri with people who want to murder Jews is a joke.

**Shmuel (/profile/shmuel)** August 27, 2012, 10:22 am

*I do not accept any version of BDS that discriminates against individuals on the basis of their national citizenship, and I maintain strong collaborative relationships with many Israeli scholars (even though I do not speak at Israeli institutions that fail to take a strong stand against the occupation).*

I think it is important to stress that this is entirely consistent with the official position of PACBI (Palestinian Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel), which does not call for the boycotting of individuals simply because they hold Israeli citizenship.

**Mooser (/profile/mooser)** August 27, 2012, 7:43 pm

*I do not accept any version of BDS that..." Butler*

*"I think it is important to stress that this is entirely consistent with the official position of PACBI (Palestinian Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel)" Shmuel*

Gee, wouldn't she be better off if she stopped apologising for what BDS isn't, instead of validating the Zionist prop. about it? Which version of BDS is it, Shmuel, "that discriminates against individuals on the basis of their national citizenship"? Who is promulgating and organising a campaign to "discriminates against individuals on the basis of their national citizenship"? Apparently it's so far advanced she needs to disavow it. Do you know what she is referring to?

**Shmuel (/profile/shmuel)** August 28, 2012, 1:42 am

I was wondering the same thing, Mooser. There have been various Palestinian boycott attempts over the years, and some have targeted all Israelis, solely on the basis of their citizenship, but these efforts were not coordinated and were not referred to as BDS – the movement that followed the 2005 Unified Call by Palestinian civil society. The coordinated BDS movement does not and has never advocated discrimination "against individuals on the basis of their national citizenship". So what is Prof. Butler talking about? It does sound like she's validating Zionist prop. against BDS (the kind that is inevitably followed by references to anti-Semitism and "1938"), while voicing support for it. With friends like these ...

**Theo (/profile/theo)** August 28, 2012, 8:39 am

All israelis are occupiers and colonists, just as all french were in Algeria and Marocco, all british in India and the half of the world, therefore a BDS should make no difference among persons or institutions. If you are fighting a system, then you must do it with all means, without exceptions.

**Shmuel (/profile/shmuel)** August 28, 2012, 9:41 am

*If you are fighting a system, then you must do it with all means, without exceptions.*

That is your opinion, but it is not the position of the Palestinian-led BDS movement.

**Hostage (/profile/hostage)** August 28, 2012, 10:40 pm

*Which version of BDS is it, Shmuel, "that discriminates against individuals on the basis of their national citizenship"?*

I would suppose the BDS spokespersons who complain so much about those musicians or musical groups who choose to perform in public in Israel.

Shmuel (/profile/shmuel) August 29, 2012, 3:31 am

*I would suppose the BDS spokespersons who complain so much about those musicians or musical groups who choose to perform in public in Israel.*

Prof. Butler was obviously referring to the academic boycott ("and I maintain strong collaborative relationships with many Israeli scholars"), and to those who would boycott individual Israeli scholars. There have been initiatives in the past that have done so (as in the case of Miriam Shlesinger), but the official position of BDS/PACBI is that the academic boycott must be institutional and not individual (for specific definitions and guidelines see the PACBI site).

With regard to the cultural boycott, a further consideration is that of normalisation, or contributing to the illusion that Israel is just another part of the international "scene". This aspect of boycott is very much inspired by the artistic boycott of South Africa (e.g. Sun City). As with the institutional boycott, individuals may be affected, but they are not targeted "on the basis of their national citizenship".

LeaNder (/profile/leander) August 29, 2012, 7:52 am

The activities against Daniel Barenboim make me pretty sad actually. I am not too fond of the idea either to collectively ban each and every Israeli scholar from congresses or symposia without the slightest consideration of who they are. To pick two at random Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin or e.g. Julia Chaitin, whom Phil has published here after she published an article in the Washington post strongly objecting Cast Lead. And if I wouldn't like to see, a boycott about these two standing for several others, I cannot remain honest with myself and support a boycott against any Israeli scholars or groups of scholars.

Here are activities at the UN concerning the Barenboim's (<http://pacbi.org/search.php>) West Eastern Divan Orchestra again. They don't want them to play in Ramallah either, by the way. Remember the reports of the musicians from the West Bank here?

The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) is alarmed that the UN is organizing a concert for the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra (WEDO), to be held at the Augusta Victoria on July 31st, 2012. **Given WEDO's political agenda that promotes normalization [1] and conflicts with the Palestinian struggle for rights and upholding international law, we call upon you to cancel this ill-conceived concert.**

.....

I am absolutely with Judith on this on all counts. But I am not and I never was with the left where its orthodoxy makes it slide towards illiberalism. Remember Barenboim is a harsh critic of the Israeli state, but first of all he is an artist. But these people seem only capable of perceiving a "normalization agenda"...

Edward Said must be turning in his grave.

There were voices on the left in the early seventies over here that wanted to abolish art and literature in university classes altogether, so they could rehearse the same texts by Marx and Engels all over again. They tried to reduce literature to an agitprop play about the barricades on a Berlin working class district.

But I am repeating myself. Although no doubt the language rings a bell.

And thanks Judith for expressing for us all the troubles of gender so well.

Shmuel (/profile/shmuel) August 29, 2012, 9:09 am  
LeaNder,

First of all, welcome back. It's good to "see" you again.

I think the normalisation argument (specifically in terms of dialogue groups, joint projects, NGOs etc.) is a valid one. Cliff recently defended it very eloquently on another thread. Whether you agree with it or not, however, it still does not constitute a boycott of individual Israelis on the basis of their citizenship.

The specific case of WEDO has been discussed here and elsewhere, and you can find PACBI's position at their website.

You write:

*I am not too fond of the idea either to collectively ban each and every Israeli scholar from congresses or symposia without the slightest consideration of who they are.*

Neither am I and neither is PACBI, which is why they have never advocated such a thing. On the contrary, PACBI opposes the idea of sorting individual Israeli scholars into "good" and "bad" – a prospect it has called "McCarthyite" – insisting that the boycott must be institutional (just to be clear: there has been no call to ban Israeli scholars from conferences and symposia).

So if BDS does not advocate a boycott of this kind, what is the point in Prof. Butler's assertion that she does not support a "version of BDS" that does not exist? It bugs me precisely because I appreciate Prof. Butler's positions and her support for BDS, and because this plays into the hands of critics of BDS, who constantly repeat this false accusation.

Klaus Bloemker (/profile/) August 29, 2012, 11:00 am

Lea,

With due respect, Barenboim has the notion that Israel is every Jew's "own land", regardless of citizenship. Historically understandable but still strange.

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 "Sometimes people ask me, "what is a Jew?" The answer is the following: A Jew who has anti-Semitic experiences in Berlin in 2008 is different from the Jew who had anti-Semitic experiences in 1940. The Jew of 1940 felt threatened; the Jew of today can think of his own land, of Israel."

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 SpiegelOnline

05/15/2008

My Land, My Pain

By Daniel Barenboim

LeaNder (/profile/leander) August 29, 2012, 11:51 am

Shmuel, small note, my brain is empty.

I can see the the human rights position as ultimately ethical. But how comes this clearness of motive and direction results in a paradoxical similarity with Israeli suppression and coercion in some cases?

I remember the article of the members of the West Eastern Diwan Orchestra, Phil, Adam et al published here, vividly. There were much restraints, some of the kids couldn't play whatever instrument they play. The image that stays most vividly with me, is the little girl that probably trained so hard for the concert but couldn't never get there with a little help from the occupation regime. Remember her bus couldn't get through to Ramallah, wasn't it Ramallah.? From where, from East Jerusalem? Now someone else decides, she will get no second chance due to ideological pureness.

Shmuel you know I respect your position, and your intellect, but sometimes I prefer to look at larger patters, and not only linear reason, and why shouldn't the little Palestinian girl be less important for me then the validity of normalization argument?

I start to feel uncomfortable when human interaction, the little that still exists can't be allowed to exist due to the validity of whatever argument.

If I may shift into the argument on another thread, I forget the subject, concerning the usage of the German verb "verboten", occasionally I struggle too with the many ways the Nazis have tainted the most innocent German word, but not in this case, since I absolutely respect the usage of "verboten" instead of forbidden in English in specific cases.

It's used exactly as deep down inside it feels to me. There is a reason why I am a red-light-no-stop-with-no-traffic-around-recidivist in spite of several rather high fines for us bicyclists lately here in Cologne. I like the idea of shared space, and not constantly more regulations, with artificial stops occasionally for no reason other than to obey the red light. Verboten to move on.

You will never see me move over and forget about human wants, needs and wishes for the sake of any ideological purity. Beyond that I agree with you, but sadly enough I happen to agree with NF a lot more lately than the average person here. It's not what we want, it is what the majority will accept embrace. I want the little girl to be able to take her instrument and go and play wherever and with whomever she wants to play. But were I her, I wouldn't trust promises like, if you do not play with Barenboim's orchestra for a while the world will turn into a better place, just wait and see.

Is it an accident that the ideological purity (is it?) in a straight human rights oriented ascendant can be turned against Judith Butler? Ideally the declaration wouldn't leave any exploitable space. I have to think a lot more about that. But I have other problems now.

I am watching occasionally, but I won't be around for a while.

take care

Shmuel (/profile/shmuel) August 29, 2012, 12:23 pm

An understandable position, LeaNder, perfectly consistent with "linear reason" and far from the sign of an "empty brain".

I liked Amira Hass' remark that BDS should not be treated like a religion (a little nicer than "cult", don't you think?), also citing her personal experience, growing up in a Marxist environment.

My comments on this thread have focused on a factual misrepresentation of the BDS movement, and the academic boycott in particular, not on ideological purity with no concern for who may get hurt along the way.

I look forward to your return.

LeaNder (/profile/leander) August 29, 2012, 2:45 pm



My comments on this thread have  
focused on a factual  
misrepresentation of the BDS  
movement,

I had you in mind when I changed a peculiar  
manipulation on German Wikipedia. I have to watch it.  
It left out an important part in the BDS mission  
statement. You know I am with you in this context, I  
hope. I'll watch it. No one needs to add his own fear  
angles. There is already enough on the plate.

**Hostage (/profile/hostage)** August 30, 2012, 2:03 am  
*the official position of BDS/PACBI is that the academic  
boycott must be institutional and not individual (for  
specific definitions and guidelines see the PACBI site).*

So the scholars can grant themselves a license not to tar  
everyone with the same brush, but the artists can just go  
fuck themselves? Sorry but I don't buy it.

*This aspect of boycott is very much inspired by the artistic  
boycott of South Africa (e.g. Sun City). As with the  
institutional boycott, individuals may be affected, but they  
are not targeted "on the basis of their national citizenship".*

Plenty of decent people disagreed with the cultural  
boycott then and now. If artists want to boycott Israel  
because they think the society is abnormal that's their  
business and its fine by me. But attempts to browbeat  
artists using the national culture as an excuse are a  
different matter altogether. You're talking about a  
public venue and an anonymous general admission  
audience. That is a case of discrimination on the basis of  
nationality, because the exact cultural views of the  
audience are at best unknown or irrelevant.

I don't think Professor Butler's philosophy would  
permit or encourage that sort of thing.

**Shmuel (/profile/shmuel)** August 30, 2012, 10:58 am  
*I don't think Professor Butler's philosophy would permit or  
encourage that sort of thing.*

I don't know how Prof. Butler feels about issues of  
normalisation, because she referred to discrimination  
"against individuals on the basis of their national  
citizenship", also strongly implying that she was  
referring to a boycott of individual Israeli scholars ("and  
I maintain strong collaborative relationships with many  
Israeli scholars") – a boycott that has never been called  
for by the BDS movement.

Naomi Klein has written about trying to find a balance  
between refraining from treating Israel "like a normal  
country" and not cutting off interaction with ordinary  
Israelis. It is not a simple question, and Prof. Butler  
might very well oppose asking artists not to perform in  
Israel (I also don't know how she felt about the similar

boycott of SA) and that position would be defensible, but that is not what she said or implied in her response to the JP attack.

**Hostage (/profile/hostage)** August 30, 2012, 2:01 pm

*Prof. Butler might very well oppose asking artists not to perform in Israel*

I have no complaint against those who ask artists not to perform in Israel, I support that myself. My complaint is with those who continue to browbeat artists after they've decided to appear there – even in cases where the artists have publicly condemned the occupation and systematic discrimination in Israel.

**Walker (/profile/walker)** August 31, 2012, 8:03 am

*You're talking about a public venue and an anonymous general admission audience. That is a case of discrimination on the basis of nationality, because the exact cultural views of the audience are at best unknown or irrelevant.*

By this standard, artistic boycotts of any state, including Nazi Germany or apartheid South Africa, would be illegitimate, since one never knows what views are held by each individual member of the audience. Is that what you're saying?

**Hostage (/profile/hostage)** August 31, 2012, 11:37 am

*By this standard, artistic boycotts of any state, including Nazi Germany or apartheid South Africa, would be illegitimate, since one never knows what views are held by each individual member of the audience. Is that what you're saying?*

No. I'm only saying that, if an artistic boycott can target the population of an entire state – and it doesn't allow for any exceptions – then by definition it does discriminate against all of the inhabitants on the basis of their nationality or citizenship. All the rationalizations and analogies in the world won't change that fact. But that happens in every case where sanctions target a pariah state. So just acknowledge that, and press on.

I've said that I personally support asking artists not to perform in Israel. I'm just put off by those who browbeat artists after they decide to go there and speak out against the discrimination and the occupation.

If you're going to allow exceptions for collegiality among scholars in the field of human arts who speak to audiences in auditoriums on university campuses or convention centers, then why not allow artists who speak out against the discrimination and the occupation to exercise their own discretion and common sense in these matters too?

BTW, if this is a cultural boycott, then why doesn't it apply to the identifiable elements of Zionist culture right here in the US? No one seems to be asking artists to avoid playing in venues that we all know are responsible for financing the occupation and the Israel Lobby. There

is no boycott or penalty for the Friends of the IDF-types in Hollywood, on Broadway, in the music business, or in the news outlets. BDS should be targeting those who are leading the national discourse here and raising billions to support Israel with a full-scale boycott of Zionist culture.

chinese box (/profile/chinese-box) August 27, 2012, 10:31 am

It's fantastic to have someone of Butler's stature in academia take this public position, especially after the past reluctance of some other major figures in post-structuralism to get involved with this issue. And she's been speaking out for awhile now:

link to lrb.co.uk (<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v25/n16/judith-butler/no-its-not-anti-semitic>)

RoHa (/profile/roha) August 27, 2012, 9:32 pm

Maybe. Post-structuralists write such long screeds of jargon-filled, meaningless, tosh that it is difficult to tell what their positions are on real issues.

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 28, 2012, 12:03 am

*"Post-structuralists write such long screeds of jargon-filled, meaningless, tosh that it is difficult to tell what their positions are on real issues."*

So that's what a post-structuralist is! I didn't really know. I thought post-structuralists were the ones how explained why the towers exploded so long after they were hit by the jetliners on that awful day.

American (/profile/american) August 27, 2012, 3:32 pm

I realize because of her academic profession she goes into long explanations and defense and it's probably offered mostly to the Jewish community.

You know what though? I look forward to the day when a Butler just responds with....."You're attacking me for standing up for human right and values!? Of all the nerve! you're the ones with the problem that is evident to the world! Go eat dirt." LOL...yes I look forward to the day no one feels they have to defend themselves from these cretins attacks or offer any explanation.

Slam the door on them, let them piss in the wind.

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 27, 2012, 6:55 pm

*"Jewish and Palestinian, must find a way to live together on the condition of equality"*

Wow, this lady is tough! She is calling for the complete destruction of Israel. oh, wait

*" And my wish, as is the wish of an increasing number of Jews and non-Jews, is that the occupation come to an end, that violence of all kinds cease, and that the substantial political rights of all people in that land be secured through a new political structure"*

Gee, and I thought that when you tell people you are going to impose a "new political structure" on them they don't want, they had the right, even the obligation, to use violence to prevent it. Oh wait, the "substantial political rights" of the Zionists

Nothing but double talk, read her closely. Basically, she's hoping the Israelis will miraculously start being nice to the Palestinians, but the Israelis have the right to keep what they've already stolen? Or something, because it keeps on going back on itself. And at no time does she even hint that the Israelis can't do this all themselves. Or are the Palestinians supposed to make them do it. And of course, nonviolently!

Useless.

It's the same old same old, every time. American, would you read her prescription having to do with Israel and tell me what you think. I think she is just dead refusing to look at the reality of the situation, and it's always the same reasons, can't admit how easily and thoroughly we were taken by Zionists, *and she can't admit, would rather appeal to pie-in-the-sky solutions ("a new political structure" coming from the same Israelis?) than admit the weakness and helplessness of the Jews in the face of the Zionists. Can't admit it to herself, so she's decided a miracle will happen. And if it doesn't why, we'll leave Judaism! That'll show 'em. Doesn't want to admit the Zionists embrace violence (and we gave them every permission) and will shrink from nothing.*

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 27, 2012, 7:02 pm

*"the substantial political rights of all people in that land be secured through a new political structure"*

Sure, if you first a) disband *and disarm* the IDF and Shin Bet b) investigate then indict and prosecute all Israelis who have committed crimes and jail or deport them c) make the GOI responsible for reparations to the Palestinians and d) make an impartial venue available where individual claims can be adjudicated and judged. Oh yes d) we'll need one hell of an outside force to do this, basically, the country will have to be conquered, occupied, and deZionised. We can use the Allied occupation of Western Germany as a model. (ROTFL)

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 27, 2012, 7:33 pm

*"In my view, there are strong Jewish traditions, even early Zionist traditions, that value co-habitation and that offer ways to oppose violence of all kinds, including state violence."*

Who cares if there are or aren't? You want 'em in your Judaism (I sure want them in mine) you stick 'em in. So if somebody can show you that the isolationist, supremacist traditions are more authentically Jewish, you'll abandon your principles?

Everybody knows that our religions serve us, but everybody has to pretend that they are serving the religion. What a dumb game. But wow, is it clear how little you have to deviate from Zionist line to get smacked.

This woman represents no danger to Zionism whatsoever, she disqualified herself from that when she confines herself to non-violence, and talks about the "substantial rights" of Israel. All Israel had to do was nod enthusiastically when she said "I affirm a Judaism that is not associated with state violence" and say "That's wonderful, neither do we", and go on to talk about protecting themselves and their "security" and the Palestinians making war on them.

chinese box (/profile/chinese-box) August 27, 2012, 9:54 pm

@Mooser

Unless I'm misunderstanding her position, she is an adherent of (real) BDS, and that is farther than Beinart and most of other public figures are willing to go at this

time. I don't think this is someone we should be dismissing out of hand just because she doesn't have all the answers, or promotes a non-violence position.

**Mooser (/profile/mooser)** August 28, 2012, 12:00 am

Chinese box, you are probably right, and I may be over-excited by the lynching and firebombing incidents. But I still think the idea that Jewish ethics or Jewish anything is going to have any ameliorating, let alone transformative effect on the issue is ridiculous. I am beginning to conclude it's only a delaying tactic to avoid facing up to what we have done. And by the time we finally face up to it, and drop our false pride, and trade our exceptionalism for badly needed help, it may be too late, for anybody, Jewish or Palestinian.

Of course, I would probably very much like a Judaism built around the ethics and peace she advocates. But I don't think Israel is a matter of Judaism any more. It's a matter of a dangerous, rogue state. It's about time we admitted that nothing in Judaism can deal with it. We crapped on the world and we don't even have the tools to clean it up.

And I appreciate your kindness, thanks

**MRW (/profile/mrw)** August 28, 2012, 12:17 am

@Mooser,

*Everybody knows that our religions serve us, but everybody has to pretend that they are serving the religion. What a dumb game.*

I'm with you.

**seanmcbride (/profile/seanmcbride)** August 28, 2012, 8:55 am

Mooser wrote:

"Everybody knows that our religions serve us, but everybody has to pretend that they are serving the religion. What a dumb game."

One of the deeper insights I've come across during the last month or so.

Yes.

But the truth is, most people aren't pretending to serve their religions — they are "under water" when it comes to religion — unconscious, on automatic pilot, sleepwalking, behaving like automatons or bots. They've been programmed. They are highly susceptible hypnotic subjects.

I am increasingly persuaded by the evidence that Abrahamic cults are largely a license to commit mass murder and to indulge in unlimited predation against cult outsiders — all with a morally righteous veneer (just war theories and the like). It's quite a racket.

Ovadia Yosef and John Hagee are your quintessential Abrahamists — not grotesque deviations from a supposed enlightened ideal.

**American (/profile/american)** August 27, 2012, 8:14 pm

" Or something, because it keeps on going back on itself.

"..Mooser

Bingo!

That is exactly what happens when the Butlers are forced to explain themselves....they end up reinforcing at least part the zio arguments.

American (/profile/american) August 27, 2012, 9:01 pm

"It's the same old same old, every time. American, would you read her prescription having to do with Israel and tell me what you think."...Mooser

I don't think Israel is ever going to change without outside intervention of some kind.

And I really don't believe the anti zionist or even liberal zionist have the political power in the US or Israel to intervene...not in time anyway.

I also don't really see any prescription for Israel in what she said...she is condemning some things in Israel...but basically she's hoping for some Jewish and or human values force to wake up and right things.

I don't think that's going to happen either. Again, not in time. That's

a slow, long process for Jews and for non Jews cause the Zios have the megaphone and the 65 years of propaganda and the political power we have to fight thru.

I have seen one Jew with any kind of national megaphone at all or that could be considered a leader of sorts say the truth of what needed to be done, the Jewish editor of the Nation about 5 years ago.

Can't remember his name at the moment but he wrote a scathing, pleading editorial saying that the US should, needed to, must intervene in Israel or it would end in a disaster.

It's getting worse now and I doubt the US ever will intervene.

That's why lately I am reconciled to the likelihood that Israel is going to play out however it plays out.

imho it would take a miracle or some great shock in Israel at this point for it to reform on its own.

Maybe I'm too pessimistic but that's how it looks on the surface.

seanmcbride (/profile/seanmcbride) August 28, 2012, 9:17 am

I think Zionism is probably going to culminate as a vast catastrophe. Every which way you crunch the numbers and trends, that's the probable outcome.

radkelt (/profile/radkelt) August 28, 2012, 2:39 pm

Victor Navasky?

ToivoS (/profile/toivos) August 28, 2012, 6:17 pm

American writes: *It's getting worse now and I doubt the US ever will intervene.*

Nor should the US intervene. Even though we are largely responsible for the mess in Palestine, we cannot unscramble the egg. The US is part of the problem and are inherently incapable of being part of the solution.

Politically the only realistic thing we can hope for is to withdraw our support from Israel, and even that will likely require decades.

American (/profile/american) August 29, 2012, 4:46 pm

"ToivoS says:

American writes: It's getting worse now and I doubt the US ever will intervene.

Nor should the US intervene. Even though we are largely responsible for the mess in Palestine, we cannot unscramble the egg.">>>>>

Well I think we should intervene. Have always thought we should.

Without US support Israel couldn't have done what it has and become what it is. That makes it our responsibility.

And the US 'could' unscramble the egg', it just won't do it.

Leopold Bloom (/profile/leopold-bloom)

August 29, 2012, 6:05 pm

How would that look?

Make future aid contingent on certain concessions? It worked with Egypt.

Or do you have something else in mind?

American (/profile/american) August 30, 2012, 1:05 pm

Leopold Bloom says:

How would that look?

Make future aid contingent on certain concessions? It worked with Egypt.

Or do you have something else in mind?">>>>>>

It would look like cleaning up our mess. It would be 'no aid', then no more US UN vetoes for Israel, then sanctions on trade and financial dealings with Israel just like we do on other countries, then international peacekeeping forces on the borders of what's left of Palestine.

If this isn't enough and Israel wants to get aggressive against it then there's always the military threat 'on the table' as we are so fond of using on other rouges.

Eisenhower 'militarily threatened' our allies, France and GB, as well as Israel during the Suez Canal standoff....and meant it...so it's not inconceivable that some future US President would adopt that same position.

But in reality cutting all aid, no UN vetoes and sanctions would do it.

Frankie P (/profile/frankie-p) August 27, 2012, 7:07 pm

@American,

I agree that it is a sad indictment of American academia that Professor Butler feels the need to write a number of paragraphs establishing her Jewish bona fides and a paragraph in opposition to Jews "disavowing thier Jewishness" before she gets to a defense of her very humanistic views. Indeed, standing up for human rights and values is enough, whether it stems from Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, atheist, or Martian (honorary humans) upbringing.

Frankie P

American (/profile/american) August 27, 2012, 9:08 pm

Have Jews opted out of Judasim because of Israel like she claims? I havent seen anything about that and it doesn't seem logical they would do that.

Makes more sense they would stay and fight zionism for Judaism if they are comitted religious Jews.

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 28, 2012, 12:23 am

*"Makes more sense they would stay and fight zionism for Judaism if they are comitted religious Jews."*

How? By raising enough money to double the offers of AIPAC to politicians? By locking media moguls in the bathroom while they're showering, putting on their clothes and going to their jobs disguised as them and changing the policies?

Please tell me by what mechanism, what process a committed religious Jew or any Jew can use Judaism to fight, or even moderate Zionism? Complain to the Rabbi, and he'll see Israel hears about it? I just don't get what you expect Judaism to do.

Don't you get it? The "Judaism" part is just a front, a distraction. Do you think a plebescite was taken a referendum among Jews, on whether or not to adopt Zionism and how Zionism should be conducted? And now a reversal of that vote will stop Zionism?

This goes back to all those arguments about the "Jewish community".

If every Jew in the US stood up tomorrow(except the couple thousand or so which really run Zionism here) and demanded Israel be stopped, it wouldn't make any difference. Don't you understand, Zionism is completely independent of Judaism. Sure, it goes to Judaism when it wants the services (religious cover, fund raising, public image, victim narrative, an ostensible good purpose) Judaism can provide, but in no way is Zionism, Israel, *dependent* on Judaism, nor does it need Judaism's approval for anything it cares to do. And if it does need a Jewish religious cover, it's got its own Rabbis on retainer, employees of the Israeli state. That's the reality of it. And Judaism, the little tart, has sold itself to Zionism for some cheap trinkets and a 15IQpt. boost. It's a classic co-dependent relationship. No matter how much we Jews revile Zionism we are aware of just how much the status we enjoy is based on it. It's like the girl who goes out with a guy who is an abuser after everybody tells her he beats women. But he's so handsome, and he has a cool car. Coming back around to her old friends, with the bruises showing, and saying "Well, you were right, and could I borrow some money, he took all of mine" is a humiliating procedure.

And besides, fighting Zionism, which has no compunction at all about violence,rhetorical or physical in fact, revels in it? What do we know of that? We know how deadly it is, we are afraid to have it turned on us. Sorry about the length.

piotr (/profile/piotr) August 30, 2012, 11:53 pm



I disagree.

Zionism without Judaism is like Communism without working class. Zionists do not have to practice Judaism, and Communists can lack personal experience of working for living but in both cases we have a type of "avant garde" that in its self-image works on behalf of a constituency, respectively Jews and workers.

For example, secular Zionists are totally incapable of rationally dealing with anti-Zionist and medieval "ultra-Orthodox" who on one hand infuriate them, but one the other hand are so adorably Jewish. If you collect the complaints that they have, it would seem that they should apply conscription to Haredi girls and give them Norplant for the duration. (I do not live under "Haredi demographic threat" so I can joke. Perhaps it is a bad joke, to all girls here: sorry!).

The fact is that most secular Israeli are pro-religion (pro-theocracy, if you will) and most religious Israeli (and most Jews) are Zionist. Which may be a very good deal for national Zionist believers of Judaism. but it leads to profound problems. More traditional Judaism has a tension between very tribal nature of the religion and having harmonious co-existence with non-Jews. One way to resolve it is to enjoin the believers from activities that can enrage Goyim. But if Israel can cope with Goim regardless if they are peaceful or militant, then the above justification is not obvious anymore.

**Chu (/profile/chu)** August 28, 2012, 10:12 am

I agree. She explains the long story about how she is sensitive to Jewish values. Why bother? She is saying I've done my mitzvahs, so step-off critics. Christians make the same points about defending those that cant be defended and helping others, etc. But so what? Judaism doesn't have a patent on ethical perspectives. Human rights arise from people, not religious texts.

It's ironic that with Israel criticism you're guilty [of anti-semitism] until you prove your innocence. Butler plays right into that. It's as if everyone who criticises Israel, has to say they are doing it because they care about Jews, Jewish interests, or Israel's struggle to survive. American is correct – all that is required to say is 'go eat dirt', and join the rest of the critics. There's no need to elevate your status by saying i'm a special critic of Israel.

**Walker (/profile/walker)** August 31, 2012, 8:16 am

What you say is completely true, yet I can't fault Butler for rooting her argument in the ethical framework with which she identifies. She is, after all, addressing other Jews.

**seafoid (/profile/seafoid)** August 27, 2012, 3:54 pm

Judaism has to go through some sort of therapy about the Holocaust. Because it is simply not sustainable to hold the Palestinians hostage to Jewish fear indefinitely. There is no point in sending young Zionists to Auschwitz. They don't learn anything to help them deal with their communal trauma.

Israel is a Jewish tragedy. And it is going to end very badly if the current path continues to be followed.

**Mooser (/profile/mooser)** August 27, 2012, 9:44 pm

*"Judaism has to go through some sort of therapy about the Holocaust."*

Seafood, it's not us that needs the therapy. Nope, we got no problem with the Holocaust. We can manipulate its images and its memory, even its consequences, to our advantage. Oh no we have a very healthy attitude toward the Holocaust, like a writer who turned his car accident or mugging into several very highly paid articles or a documentary film. As opposed to somebody who was traumatised by it, couldn't think about it, couldn't even face following through on the insurance claims which could, handled properly, result in a big check. Who spends sleepless nights wondering what part he might have played, what he could have done better. No, I don't think it's the Jews who need Holocaust therapy. We seem to have it well in hand by now.

Krauss (/profile/krauss) August 27, 2012, 3:55 pm

The anti-Apartheid voices inside South Africa were also marginalized, attacked as self-hating and a 5th column that would bring the destruction (if not genocide!) of the entire white population if they let the 'savages' get an equal footing.

I've said before and I say again, true liberals are very hard to find. Within all communities. When I grew up I never believed the 'cultural' explanations of why Germany became a Nazi nation, and by 'cultural' I mean 'it was in the water'.

The so-called 'Wave' experiment from the 1960s should have proved that. All human beings are vulnerable to the same psychological mechanisms.

Similarly, I've never quite believed that Jews are incapable of being racists, even systematically so. Yes, it's possible to march for civil rights in one generation and in the other Occupy another people.

Jews are not inherently better than other people – nor are we inherently worse than other people. And a lot of the cultural determinism is lazy claptrap and narcissism, especially in light where Israel is heading. Hardly a day goes by without a new race riot, a new lynching or a new racist law/statement being made.

For all these reasons I continue to believe that the true liberals within the Jewish community,(who are a minority, just like in any community) will need help from the outside.

This has been true in liberal struggles. Southern white liberals were not strong enough to do it on their own. Neither were white Afrikaaner liberals.

Both needed help from outside and so will we. And we will get it.

But what will make things more complicated is the backdrop of 2000 years of persecution. It is very easy for a racist nationalist to paint the opposition to ethno-religious nationalist fervor as a campaign against Jews. After all, why won't these people just let us brutalize a civilian population in peace?

I hope that the Jewish liberals will stand their ground on the onslaught against them, as Judith does here. But I also fear that many more inside the Jewish community will not have their courage and buckle under the pressure.

And that could lead to a situation where most of the liberals pushing for change, in fact this is the case already, are non-Jewish. And as this share increases, the easier it will be for the right-wing nationalists to use fear as a bulwark against change.

But at some point the pressure will be too much but who knows how people who feel like they are pushed up against not a wall but an oven, will react? We're talking about a deeply held siege mentality and a fundamental distrust of the world. We're talking about people who in many cases base their entire identity on the Holocaust.

These people will snap and the consequences of that will be very dangerous and volatile.

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 27, 2012, 6:04 pm

*"This has been true in liberal struggles. Southern white liberals were not strong enough to do it on their own."*

Yes, and it was very generous of African-Americans from all over the US to come to the aid of those Southern Liberals. I think they provided the music and soul food.

Imagine, keeping those Southern liberals subject to discriminatory laws for a hundred years or more.

Krauss (/profile/krauss) August 28, 2012, 4:36 am

Yes, we all know that the freedom riders were all non-white.

Just like we know the NAACP never had a single Jew in it.

Mooser, you shine once more with your studious intellect and historical accuracy.

Also, why are 50 % of the posts here yours?  
You're afflicted with a strong case of verbal diarrhea.  
You just can't stop keep spamming the thread.

seafoid (/profile/seafoid) August 28, 2012, 7:21 am

"But at some point the pressure will be too much but who knows how people who feel like they are pushed up against not a wall but an oven, will react? We're talking about a deeply held siege mentality and a fundamental distrust of the world. We're talking about people who in many cases base their entire identity on the Holocaust. These people will snap and the consequences of that will be very dangerous and volatile."

To what extent is that mentality manufactured, Krauss ?

Why don't the Parsis, the Lebanese in West Africa, the Chinese in South East Asia or the Armenians have this persecution complex ? They too have been the subjects of pogroms over history. How come they are normal ?

Do the Parsis define themselves by the component of their history which involves periods of oppression ? Do they cut themselves off from the world because of it ? Why do so many Jews define themselves thus ?

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 28, 2012, 9:29 pm

*"Why do so many Jews define themselves thus ?"*

Bear in mind, those who have a 15pt IQ advantage can do clever things like having a *pretense* for a self-definition. They're smart enough to say what they know people want to hear, what they know will be effective in manipulating them. It's much better to try and extrapolate their true self-definition from their actions. I ask you, to Zionists *act* like they're afraid of the world? They seem quite willing to engage it, challenge it and do battle with it to me.

Nevada Ned (/profile/nevada-ned) August 27, 2012, 3:59 pm

In addition to being a leftist, Judith Butler is a very distinguished literary critic and scholar. I would say more on this topic, but I know nothing about literary criticism. Check it out yourself: she is very much a leading literary light. An analogy might be Noam Chomsky's fame in linguistics. The rest of us can appreciate his political writings without being able to grasp his ideas about linguistics.

For a long time now, she has been highly critical of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians, serving on the board of JVP (for example). Naturally this has opened her up to attacks by the supporters of Israel's violent and racist policies. She has no

trouble disposing of these attacks, as she shows in the text above.

I'm delighted that she has responded so eloquently to the attacks on her. Her reply is somewhat long-winded, but she's an academic.

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 27, 2012, 7:14 pm

*"She has no trouble disposing of these attacks, as she shows in the text above."*

She sure doesn't, she simply demands a miracle, and that Zionism completely reverse the way it has acted for 100 years. Just like all the rest of 'em. The idea that somebody or something is going to have to force the Zionist entity to change is completely off the table. She simply refuses to face that.

What is apparent, however, is how little you have to deviate from the Zionist line to be smeared and persecuted. Can you imagine what the reaction would be if she said: 'Frankly, the Zionists will never change or deviate from their plan unless something more powerful than they are forces them to do it. Now let's get busy and put that force together and give it the power it needs to get the job done!'

Frankie P (/profile/frankie-p) August 27, 2012, 8:03 pm

@Mooser,

What is apparent, however, is how little you have to deviate from the Zionist line to be smeared and persecuted. Can you imagine what the reaction would be if she said: 'Frankly, the Zionists will never change or deviate from their plan unless something more powerful than they are forces them to do it. Now let's get busy and put that force together and give it the power it needs to get the job done!'

The moose is loose!! Mooser, you are spot on – the Zionists WILL NEVER CHANGE OR DEVIATE from their plan unless something more powerful than they are forces them to do it. Sorry, I had to repeat that, as its veracity is so blindingly obvious. Now let's get busy!!!

Frankie P

ToivoS (/profile/toivos) August 28, 2012, 6:56 pm

@Frankie *What is apparent, however, is how little you have to deviate from the Zionist line to be smeared and persecuted.*

That is the most important point about this entire thread. Someone as ineffectual and contradictory as Butler is considered an enemy Jew to be drummed out of the 'movement'. These are acts of desperation. The Zionist feel things going south, but they have not yet wrapped their minds around the problem and therefore thrash blindly in all directions – attacking what are in fact their allies as much as their enemies.

maggielorraine (/profile/maggielorraine)

August 27, 2012, 9:46 pm

Mooser, Butler has endorsed BDS. Seems to me that she's into force as long it is non-violent. That doesn't mean wishful thinking and thumb twiddling, it means an aversion to arms.

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 28, 2012, 12:35 am

*"Mooser, Butler has endorsed BDS."*

That's great. And I hope BDS is as effective as it can possibly be. But even there she had to trot out the Zionist myth that BDS means to discriminate against individuals because of their nationality. I'm sure she's effective and sincere, but we Jews have given the Zionists too many hostages to ever be effective against them *as Jews*. And on that point I think I'll be proved right.

Toivos (/profile/toivos) August 28, 2012, 6:32 pm

Ugh you can't compare her to Chomsky. Her field is Rhetoric and Comparative Literature. This has to be one of the weakest academic disciplines found in the modern university. They babble on endlessly misunderstanding Heidegger and elevating Derrida to the status of a great thinker. Chomsky is accomplished in linguistics, a field with respectable intellectual tradition that has even succeeded on occasion in bringing in real science to a difficult problem.

Les (/profile/les) August 27, 2012, 4:00 pm

To say that the religion of Judaism is to blame for the occupation and ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians, is anti-Semitic. Zionists believe that just such treatment is essential to the survival of their brand of Judaism.

White Christians faced the same dilemma when they examined their history of exterminating American Indians in the name of Christianity. At the time, the media reflected both their racism and the debate within Christianity. Today's big media, print and broadcast, is more than a little Jewish at the top with nary a one of those of the Jewish Voice for Peace ilk. Among those Jewish media moguls there simply is no such debate going on about the necessity, in the name of religion, to get rid of the Palestinians. What debate there is among fringe elements contrasts to its utter non-existence by the owners and managers.

Krauss (/profile/krauss) August 27, 2012, 4:16 pm

The last bit was a bit rambling.

Among those Jewish media moguls there simply is no such debate going on about the necessity, in the name of religion, to get rid of the Palestinians.

Written in a disappointed tone. It sounds as if you're lamenting that Jewish media moguls aren't seriously debating 'getting rid' of Palestinians just like the Christians got rid of the Native Americans.

Which I know isn't your position, but rambling post is rambling.

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 27, 2012, 6:10 pm

*"Which I know isn't your position, but rambling post is rambling."*

Well, I guess when your own posts are so cogent, short, and to the point, you've got time to help other commenters and critique their posts.

Cut him some slack Krauss, maybe only one of his parents was Ashkenazi. He may not have gotten the 15pts.

American (/profile/american) August 27, 2012, 8:23 pm

"White Christians faced the same dilemma when they examined their history of exterminating American Indians in the name of Christianity."

We didn't do it the name of Christianity we did it in the name of taking their land. Just like Israel is doing. The only christianity about it was among the forever with us religious supremist who think they are specially ordained by God to save and covert the lesser heathens.

seanmcbride (/profile/seanmcbride) August 28, 2012, 9:32 am  
American,

Actually, any serious student of Western intellectual history knows that much of Western (European and American) imperialism has been justified by biblical beliefs and themes (mostly from the Old Testament).

Which is not to say that many historical empires around the world (especially Asian empires) didn't go about their business without any reference to the Bible whatever. Imperialism emerges from primal human impulses that cut across all religions and cultures.

But is there something exceptionally savage about Abrahamic imperialism? (I am still trying to figure that out by collecting and looking at all the available evidence.)

American (/profile/american) August 29, 2012, 12:20 am  
@ sean,

I dont know. Savage is savage and religion can make fanatics as savage as anything else.

American (/profile/american) August 30, 2012, 5:58 pm  
""has been justified by biblical beliefs and themes (mostly from the Old Testament).""...sean

'Justified by' is different from 'because of'. 90% of things are justified by something that has nothing to do with the real motive.

pipistro (/profile/pipistro) August 27, 2012, 5:26 pm

"... and that the substantial political rights of all people in that land be secured through a new political structure."

About that, I fear they'll say: here's another one who wants to wipe Israel off the map...

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 27, 2012, 9:35 pm

*"About that, I fear they'll say: here's another one who wants to wipe Israel off the map..."*

When she is really offering them a get-out-of-jail-free card. But if we admit that Zionism simply used Judaism and then threw it away when they were through with it, we're gonna look pretty stupid and very credulous, and our cupidity and kick-down-kiss-up ethics will be exposed. If we ask for help, than we admit that we can't indeed run our own affairs, nor anybody elses.

*They will take our 15 IQpts. away!!*

seanmcbride (/profile/seanmcbride) August 28, 2012, 9:35 am  
Mooser: "But if we admit that Zionism simply used Judaism...."

But what if Zionism is the natural and organic manifestation of some of the deepest ideological currents in Judaism?

Enlightenment Judaism is a very recent historical phenomenon — and apparently it has not been very well-grounded. It is disappearing before our eyes.

**Mooser (/profile/mooser)** August 28, 2012, 9:37 pm  
 sean, I was always told that Zionism is a product of Enlightenment Judaism, it's finest product, its flower. And the whole problem with trying to suss out ideological currents in Judaism is in demonstrating that these ideologies have been efficiently inculcated and universally absorbed and obeyed by Jews. And with the variety of Jews, and Jewish ways of living, and learning Judaism and experiencing Judaism, it's impossible to follow the thread from thousands of years up to Israel in any coherent way. Saying that it's "in our DNA" won't do it (not that you said it, of course)

**Danaa (/profile/danaa)** August 30, 2012, 5:37 pm  
 Mooser, I would take up Sean's second point as the more worrisome one, partly because we all fear there's more than some truth to it, and partly because it does not pander to any potential "DNA" endemic to the religion and/or culture per se, a meme you take exception to.

"Enlightenment Judaism" was indeed recent, though perhaps not as unique in history as first appears. "The Golden Age" in Spain was another form of "Enlightenment" that befitted its time and place. There were other movements that grew out of Judaism that sought to align it with more universal, outward-looking streams of thought, just as there were such movements throughout the history of Christianity and Islam. But everything has to be taken in the context of the times. Some would even say that exilic Babylonian Judaism was the earliest attempt at incorporating a measure of ancient-style enlightenment into an otherwise deeply tribal, exclusionary, inward-looking religion.

What is true is that the European-born "Enlightenment Judaism" - however it is defined or perceived (and there's no one definition to my knowledge) does include those outward looking, human commonality, rights based universal elements that form the most positive core of Judaism for many who consider themselves Jewish in this day and age. I know exceptionalism is all tangled up with modern enlightenment too but I kind of see that as a separate battle on the same road.

What is most worrisome is that these "Enlightenment" values may indeed be under siege - largely because of some darker reactionary streams that grow in and out of Israel. These seem to harken back into ultra-nationalist tribalist themes such as happened to take over Israelites before, long ago, holding them in thrall, strangely enough whenever they found themselves confined - in some numbers - to that narrow strip of land in the Middle East. Unfortunately, this time around that particular Middle Eastern state - with its ever-expanding cult-like undertones, is threatening to bend not just Enlightenment Judaism, or enlightened Jews

elsewhere, but the very principles of enlightenment itself, as a universal movement, something that can be shared across the planet.

And Sean, the fact that zionism – at its best and worst – was a natural outgrowth from ideological streams within Judaism itself is a bit of a truism. The trouble comes when the more reactionary undertows – fueled by delusions of power – threaten to take over the more “enlightened” currents – not just in Israel, but everywhere else. I think that’s what we see slowly but surely bubbling up to the surface.

American (/profile/american) August 30, 2012, 6:16 pm

“And with the variety of Jews, and Jewish ways of living, and learning Judaism and experiencing Judaism, it’s impossible to follow the thread from thousands of years up to Israel in any coherent way.”...Moose

Actually you probably could follow the thread and pin point various out growths and splits or morphing, but it wouldn’t mean any more about Judaism than following the thread of Christianity with it’s main thread sending out all kinds of other threads and changes means about Christianity.

People make things mean whatever they want they want them to mean...particular in religion...then they go try to find others who will agree with them on what something means and join them.

Keith (/profile/keith) August 30, 2012, 6:23 pm

DANAA- “What is most worrisome is that these “Enlightenment” values may indeed be under siege....”

Enlightenment values are indeed under siege, all enlightenment values. We have come full circle in an epic journey whereby the divine right of Kings has been replaced by the divine right of capital. We are approaching what may be described as neo-feudalism which, according to Chris Hedges, includes the death of the liberal class. The New Deal in tatters, Ayn Rand ascending. I could go on, but I’m trying to keep this comment light and cheery.

Sin Nombre (/profile/sin-nombre) August 27, 2012, 6:00 pm

Judith Butler wrote:

“I understand myself as defending and continuing a Jewish ethical tradition that includes figures such as Martin Buber and Hannah Arendt.”

Ah, the nub of her misunderstanding. While Buber and Arendt certainly talked alot about ethics, it was really the ethics of everyone \*else\* they concentrated their critical fire on.

Sure can seem that that vaunted Jewish ethical tradition had a convenient little hole right in the middle of it. Sort of funny though that despite the great bulk of her community essentially pointing that out Ms. Butler still soldiers on, unwilling to give up that great specialness she thinks being jewish and so being able to invoke “the Jewish ethical tradition” represents.

Special special special; just oh so special.



Pretty damned funny seeing these assorted jewish folks like Butler (or Marc Ellis) straining straining straining to say that their ethics, because they are informed by their jewish nature, are special, superior and etc., when the vast bulk of jews not only don't seem to share their ethics as to the substantive issues being discussed, but feel that jewish ethics also then extend to blackening and silencing them by calling them self-hating jews, anti-semites, terrorist sympathizers and etc., etc.

Now, remembering Spinoza, \*that's\* more of the tradition, isn't it? Less like ... tikkun olam or any of that crap and more like ... Omerta, and the punishment for violating same.

Still, hard to get over the humor. Sort of like seeing seeing two or three lone geese flying North in the Fall, against the uncountable skeins of all the other geese and indeed other birds flapping South, but nevertheless proclaiming how special and superior it is to be a goose because true geese fly North.

**Philip Weiss (/profile/philweiss)** August 27, 2012, 7:33 pm

what is the difference between our dissent and dissents from islamic orthodoxy or catholic?

**PeaceThroughJustice (/profile/peacethroughjustice)**

August 27, 2012, 8:11 pm

*"what is the difference ..."*

It depends on what Butler means by "Jewish ethics." If what she means is just a particular local understanding of the universal principles of ethics, then there's not much difference (although as Sin Nombre pointed out, it's not clear that it then deserves the title "Jewish"). But if she's referring to a privileged Jewish insight into those ethical truths, then there's a huge difference.

**Walker (/profile/walker)** August 31, 2012, 8:26 am

Well said.

**Frankie P (/profile/frankie-p)** August 27, 2012, 8:12 pm

Phil,

Your dissent isn't really dissent. Jesus Christ, Spinoza, Gilad Atzmon – that is dissent. Your dissent is one informed by the idea that we must stop the war crimes and oppression perpetrated by a state that claims to represent us so that we can retain our specialness. Now I'm all with you in the battle to stop the state of Israel in its ethnic cleansing and dispossession of the Palestinian people. I guess its our motivation that differs; you seem to be motivated and informed by a desire to save the Jews and make them into your ideal image; others are motivated by a more humanistic, inclusive ideology.

**Sin Nombre (/profile/sin-nombre)** August 27, 2012, 8:45 pm

Well, so as to put things in the accurate context what Butler and Ellis are doing isn't "dissenting" really; instead they're saying that they represent true jewish values and it's all the other jews who are supportive of what Israel has been doing who are the heretics.

(And it's interesting that in this respect they seem different from what I at least have read of you, Phil, who have been very forthright in saying that what we have been seeing in Israel is somewhat of the logic consequence mainstream jewish thinking. E.g., your frank talk about being raised to believe in inferior goyish-type thinking, and etc. and so forth.)

So Butler and Ellis aren't "dissenters" really, and given the circumstances provoke the stark question of the credibility of their claim: It has, after all, been more than forty years since Israel has been gobbling Palestinian land and sitting as colonizers if not worse on the Palestinians (not to mention driving 700,000-some off in the Nakba originally in '47-'48). And in all that forty-plus year period of time there's been lots of acceptance and approval of what Israel has done by the world Jewish community.

So at what precise or even general point do Butler /Ellis/ et. al. concede that no, their view of Jewish ethics just ain't really Jewish ethics? Fifty years? 100? 200?

Whatever you want to call this though—"dissenting" or whatever—wherever there's been the same thing done by Muslims vis a vis claimed Islamic ethics or Catholics vis a vis claimed Catholic ethics obviously there's no difference whatsoever.

But I don't think you can deny, Phil, with either Butler or Ellis, that they aren't just sitting there saying they're just part of the hoi polloi criticizing Israel: Instead they are both clearly hanging onto their Jewishness (elsewise why do they take such care to talk about it so obsessively?) as if that and their voices speaking from some perceived "Jewish ethical tradition" makes their ethical criticisms in \*general\* something different and thus special as opposed to criticisms coming from that Gentile hoi polloi mob. And not just different and special in relation to criticizing Israel ethically, but indeed in all things. And that's what I don't like; nobody's Chosen in that way in my book.

**Mooser (/profile/mooser)** August 27, 2012, 8:59 pm

*"what is the difference between our dissent and dissents from Islamic orthodoxy or Catholic?"*

Telegraphic style indecipherable stop Please use complete sentences stop Make self clear stop In re refusal to use capital letters please stop

**Mooser (/profile/mooser)** August 27, 2012, 9:26 pm

*"what is the difference between our dissent and dissents from Islamic orthodoxy or Catholic?"*

Well, judging from the progress in the Catholic Church on so many issues dear to dissenters, and progress towards unity and eschewing of violence and sectarianism in Islam dissenters plead for, I would say, very little.

**Mooser (/profile/mooser)** August 27, 2012, 9:19 pm

*"I understand myself as defending and continuing a Jewish ethical tradition that includes figures such as Martin Buber and Hannah Arendt."*

Okay she defends and continues a Jewish ethical tradition, and I'll be the first one to sit in the pews of her temple and listen. But why on earth would Zionists listen? And remember, while we have these very

slippery, amorphous ethical traditions, the Zionists have the things land, and national identity, that it's well proven people will die to keep.

Nobody wants to admit that this has gone far, far beyond the ability of the Jewish religion to effect. That nothing Jews can do will even moderate the Zionist entity's actions. Oh, but we can make sure that we tell them, don't worry, our Jewish ethics prevent us from doing anything which might be effective.

*"Like so many others, I long for a truly democratic polity on those lands and I affirm the principles of self-determination and co-habitation for both peoples, indeed, for all peoples."*

She wants Palestinians to marry their rapist? And what on earth is that crap about self-determination? This a bugger-all to do with self-determination.

Why can't she express herself other than in Zionist contexts?

Hostage (/profile/hostage) August 31, 2012, 12:15 pm

*While Buber and Arendt certainly talked alot about ethics, it was really the ethics of everyone \*else\* they concentrated their critical fire on. Sure can seem that that vaunted Jewish ethical tradition had a convenient little hole right in the middle of it.*

You have a vivid imagination. Arendt's works were banned in Israel for decades because of her withering criticism of the State and her portrayal of Zionist leaders, like Kasztner, as Nazi collaborators.

She also compared Israel and the rabbinical cradle to grave control over personal status to the Nazi Nuremberg Code and blamed the Zionists for inventing a false and exaggerated historical narrative which portrayed Jews as perennial victims. She accused the Jews of Palestine and the Zionists of ignoring the wishes of the Arabs by "pushing ahead" with unjust demands for a Jewish state without obtaining consent. She wrote that Ben-Gurion had "forfeited for a long time to come any chance of pourparlers with Arabs; for whatever Zionists may offer, they will not be trusted." If there's any ethical hole there I've missed it.

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 27, 2012, 6:21 pm

*"In the United States, I have been alarmed by the number of Jews who, dismayed by Israeli politics, including the occupation, the practices of indefinite detention, the bombing of civilian populations in Gaza, seek to disavow their Jewishness. They make the mistake of thinking that the State of Israel represents Jewishness for our times, and that if one identifies as a Jew, one supports Israel and its actions. And yet, there have always been Jewish traditions that oppose state violence, that affirm multi-cultural co-habitation, and defend principles of equality, and this vital ethical tradition is forgotten or sidelined when any of us accept Israel as the basis of Jewish identification or values."*

She's not the first one to say this on Mondoweiss, others have, and that's wonderful. So I'm wondering if we can get some links to temples, congregations, or even websites which promulgate this view and construct their Judaism around it. I'd hate to think those people she talks about in the first sentence left because they felt they had no place to go within Judaism, when their might have been a congregation of no-state violence Jews right around the block, or even somewhere in their US state. She says, *"there have always been Jewish traditions that oppose state violence, that affirm multi-cultural co-habitation, and defend principles of equality..."* and if that is true, I sure hope we can hear about them, or even have a directory of them, attached to Mondoweiss. Where are they? Considering this reaction to (per Ellis) Empire Judaism is just getting started, these places, traditions might be small and hard to find. Any help in directing people to them would be positive. And although it's

hardly necessary, it would be nice to prove the Atzmon's wrong. And it's not pleasant to think of Jews who do desire to engage in Jewish communal religious practice either being at odds with everyone else in the *schul*, or sitting there frustrated and disgusted, when a more congenial congregation they could wholeheartedly participate in was available.

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 28, 2012, 12:39 am

Oh well, its only been about 3 hours. I'm sure that by tomorrow there will be *something* posted which will tell me where I can go to get that ethical-style Judaism.

Ali Anvari (/profile/ali-anvari) August 28, 2012, 9:38 am

What is your evaluation of Neturei Karta?

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 28, 2012, 9:41 pm

"What is your evaluation of Neturei Karta?"

♪ Oh, they'll be *frum, frum, frum*

Til Daddy takes the T-book away! ♪

jayn0t (/profile/jayn0t) September 6, 2012, 10:45 pm

I haven't posted on this site for ages. Mooser's Beach Boys impersonation is so un-be-fing-lievably funny... I had to look up 'frum'. I got to this page via Alison Weir's Facebook page. Most of the comments here make mincemeat of Judith Butler's position.

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 27, 2012, 9:52 pm

*"In the United States, I have been alarmed by the number of Jews who, dismayed by Israeli politics, including the occupation, the practices of indefinite detention, the bombing of civilian populations in Gaza, seek to disavow their Jewishness."*

Shhh! Don't mention the *Nakba*. Don't mention the dispossessionary basis of the Zionist state, in the teeth of the generous offer of a Jewish homeland for the displaced. Don't even mention that the Occupation had been going on for what 40-50 years by the time we even get to Gaza.

Most of all, don't mention the only reason anybody is even concerned with this in the Jewish community is because the Palestinians refused to die or disappear on schedule, and are getting really hard to hide.

MRW (/profile/mrw) August 28, 2012, 12:31 am

*Most of all, don't mention the only reason anybody is even concerned with this in the Jewish community is because the Palestinians refused to die or disappear on schedule, and are getting really hard to hide.*

In other words, the reality. And the angst isn't over what's been done to them (the pesky Palestinians), but how the quasi-champion of 'I'm for 1/4 of this, a 1/3 of that, with a blush of BDS as I understand it in San Fran' is being perceived by the Israeli hierarchy. You've been hitting them out of the ballpark, Mooser.

douglasreed (/profile/douglasreed) August 27, 2012, 11:58 pm

I stand with Judith Butler.

Funded and armed by an Israel-lobby-controlled US congress, the Netanyahu government feel invincible – able to attack the 75 million Iranian people, to bomb and kill as they see fit whilst the UN and the international community must stay silent as the hours and days tick by towards the start of an Israeli manufactured nuclear war that could contaminate the ME region, including the Gulf, for years.

It would almost certainly cut Gulf oil supplies to Europe for a period of weeks or months, the consequence of which would be a doubling or trebling of the price of petrol and all transport costs throughout the EU.

Eventually, the US would reopen any blockage in the Strait of Hormuz caused by the war, but not before immense damage would have been caused to European economies.

The answer must be for the European parliament to warn Messrs Netanyahu, Barak & Lieberman that if they instigate an unlawful attack against Iran, then all bilateral trade between the EU and Israel will be immediately discontinued.

In these potentially dangerous circumstances, it is necessary to use extraordinary economic force to prevent a violent force that would affect all of us around the world, and in particular in the Jewish Diaspora.

piotr (/profile/piotr) August 28, 2012, 4:47 am

I am not sure if "Eventually, the US would reopen any blockage in the Strait of Hormuz". What if Russia declares that any further attack on Iran is an attack on Russia and "all issues should be resolved by negotiations". In old days, that was the most plausible scenario how WWII may start, namely the premise that USA may be compelled to attack Iran and Russia (then USSR) may be equally compelled not to allow it. Currently, Russia has an elegant option of nuking Diego Garcia which is a purely military installation as a follow up on an ultimatum (should USA disregard it).

One can disparage pacifist ethics and make fun of this or that justification for such ethics (like is it really Jewish, why one should try to have ethnic/religious justification for ethics etc.), but the other extreme is vulgar realism of "interests" and force, which makes it hard to stop before a major annihilation.

seanmcbride (/profile/seanmcbride) August 28, 2012, 9:45 am

douglasreed wrote:

BEGIN QUOTE

The answer must be for the European parliament to warn Messrs Netanyahu, Barak & Lieberman that if they instigate an unlawful attack against Iran, then all bilateral trade between the EU and Israel will be immediately discontinued.

In these potentially dangerous circumstances, it is necessary to use extraordinary economic force to prevent a violent force that would affect all of us around the world, and in particular in the Jewish Diaspora.

END QUOTE

And Israel would probably respond to this threat with a credible counter-threat to exercise the Samson Option.

Consider the current situation with Israel and Zionism now to be totally out of control and heading towards an inevitable global catastrophe.

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 28, 2012, 9:44 pm

*"The answer must be for the European parliament to warn Messrs Netanyahu, Barak & Lieberman that if they instigate an unlawful attack against Iran, then all bilateral trade between the EU and Israel will be immediately discontinued."*

Because if Judith Butler tells the European Parliament that, they will listen, and the Zionist entity will listen to the Parliament?

gamal (/profile/gamal) August 28, 2012, 12:02 am

Were there many who supported the anti-apartheid struggle who were careful to disavow any support for the ANC, why stop at Hizbullah, for safety sake perhaps she should have made clear her abhorrence for al-qua'da.

Since the Zionist entity destroyed the PLO and slaughtered the leaders of the popular committees of the intifada, Judy and all the ethical Jews on earth and Israeli's have no right to choose the Palestinian resistances' representatives or to cavil at Palestinians choices.

i saw her speak in Frankfurt with Gyatri Spivak, at the Goethe institute's centre for post colonial studies, run by Nikita Dawan, it was interesting, but the above leaves me a bit underwhelmed, Haneen Zoibi was electric, in Cork a guy from the embassy tried to disrupt the MK from the floor, so harsh was the response from the Irish audience that he was reduced to opening his shirt to reveal an Israeli flag t-shirt and beating a hasty retreat, but she was saying something.

i don't get these bizarre ramblings about "violence" it is in this metric alone that the relationship of oppressor and oppressed become obscured, between dispossessor and dispossessed its about ending violence, which is safe to say now that its origin has been occluded and responsibility shared out equally, its about equality isnt it or is it the repressive capacity of American/Zionist alliance, and her milieu.

she extols some nebulous "equal" rights guaranteed for all and er equality and the Jewish ethical tradition, the ethical tradition, its funny the one word she didn't use was Law, be it Jewish or otherwise. Palestinians want their legal rights, oh enough, like Dr. Butler i am against bad things and generally in favor of good ones, her statement seems to me, apart from being self-serving, a rousing call to apathy. but its not nothing, just barely.

she says "or that I endorse or support them in any way."

honestly its the "in any way" that lost me, bit extreme, not to say fundamentalist of her, she could support their efforts to defend the Palestinians and secure their rights, even if she feels they are misguided tactically and socially regressive. wonder what the position of her synagogue is on these matters.

She claims naivete, presumably as a way of evading the absurdity of her position, having valorised the violence of victims as an essential element in her analysis, as do all aggressors, she then praises a form of epistemic violence to the Palestinians, by ignoring the nature of their encounter with Zionism, ironic.

chinese box (/profile/chinese-box) August 28, 2012, 8:44 am  
@Mooser et al,

I agree it's unfortunate that Butler chooses to base at least part of her argument around "Jewish ethics and values", especially since it's exactly the type of flimsy construct that she would effortlessly expose and dismantle in her academic work. Butler is no dummy and clearly knows that the notion of a set of "Jewish values" over and against human/universalist values is hogwash. She has probably gotten a lot of flack for her stance on BDS and felt the need to couch her arguments in this way. Ideally she would just say what she means, but at the end of the day I think her support for BDS counts for a lot more than the other problems with her speech.

Mooser (/profile/mooser) August 28, 2012, 9:49 pm

*"I agree it's unfortunate that Butler chooses to base at least part of her argument around "Jewish ethics and values", especially since it's exactly the type of flimsy construct that she would effortlessly expose and dismantle in her academic work"*

Yes, but we've talked many times about Ziocaine's effect on judgement. You've never seen a drunk who, as he (or she) drinks, becomes convinced that everybody is as convinced as they are by their own words?

You don't have to be a Zionist to love Ziocaine.

chinese box (/profile/chinese-box) August 28, 2012, 8:44 am  
@Mooser et al,

I agree it's unfortunate that Butler chooses to base at least part of her argument around "Jewish ethics and values", especially since it's exactly the type of flimsy construct that she would effortlessly expose and dismantle in her academic work. Butler is no dummy and clearly knows that the notion of a set of "Jewish values" over and against human/universalist values is hogwash. She has probably gotten a lot of flack for her stance on BDS and felt the need to couch her arguments in this way. Ideally she would just say what she means, but at the end of the day I think her support for BDS counts for a lot more than the other problems with her speech.

Theo (/profile/theo) August 28, 2012, 8:53 am

First of all, congratulations Prof. Butler on receiving the Adorno Prize and on your work that made possible for you to qualify for it.

In Germany the Jewish Central Committee is up in arms protesting the decision and the reason why you were chosen. In other words the Zionists are very upset that a Jew has the guts to criticize Israel and support the BDS against it.

Anything that upsets the JCC makes me more than happy, because they do everything to stop any negative news concerning their beloved land, censor just about anything and the politicians kow-tow to their wishes.

I cannot help, but wonder, why don't they immigrate to that land of milk and honey, because most of them are not even Germans, but born in Poland, and other eastern European countries. I wish the Germans would grow a spine and tell them to shut up.

seanmcbride (/profile/seanmcbride) August 28, 2012, 10:02 am

Perhaps Judith Butler needs to reexamine her fundamental beliefs about the world from the ground up.

The truth of the matter is that Enlightenment and humanist Jews have completely lost the battle to define Jewishness. That battle has been won by Likud and religious Zionists who have defined Jewishness as militant and xenophobic Jewish ethnic nationalism.

Sheldon Adelson, Haim Saban, Benjamin Netanyahu, William Kristol, Dennis Ross and even Ovadia Yosef wield much greater power in the Jewish establishment (and Jewish "community") than the handful of Judith Butlers.

The question Butler needs to ask herself is this: does she really have any further interest in identifying with a tradition and community that advocates values that are in radical conflict with her own best values? Perhaps the time has come for her to emotionally and psychologically "divest" from that community and to join another community.

Perhaps the much maligned Gilad Atzmon has been a bit ahead of the curve — even prophetic — in figuring out these issues.

tokyobk (/profile/tokyobk) August 28, 2012, 1:57 pm

Sean,

First of all I appreciate Prof. Butler's comments, having long wondered about her "global left" comments, and to Mondoweiss for being the venue for this clarification.

I would urge you to consider how similar your position is to that of Jihad Watch about Islam: the extremists are right about the character of Islam and the reformers and progressives are just dreaming up their own private faith.

BS there and BS here. What was the belief system of most Catholics in 1492? How about before Vatican II? Religions like all thought systems have core beliefs and much change around them across geography and time. Witness Mormonism then and now with a growing base of African American adherents.

Finally, re Judaism Atzmon is nothing new and nothing special. Jews have been asking similar questions from within the tradition since the beginning. About the nature and perils of self ascribed "chosenness" etc...

His uselessness has to do with his intent and his tone. His self aggrandizing is exactly why he has been ignored and marginalized by both Jews and a good portion of Palestinian activists.

seanmcbride (/profile/seanmcbride) August 28, 2012, 2:56 pm  
tokyobk,

Is my impression mistaken that the Jewish establishment has been sucked into the dangerous vortex of Likud Zionism and militant Jewish ethno-religious nationalism? When Obama tried to challenge Netanyahu about Israel's ever-expanding settlements (part of the official Likud project of building Eretz Yisrael), he was attacked and undercut by "liberal Zionists" (most of them from the Jewish establishment) in his own supposedly moderate left party.

Protestations within the Jewish establishment against indefensible Israeli policies have become weaker and less convincing with each passing year.

The leaders of the Jewish establishment, like Sheldon Adelson, have the power to purchase major political parties or media outlets. The Judith Butlers have been entirely marginalized by their own community. I doubt that "progressive" Rachel Maddow would dare to interview Butler and give her a platform for fear of incurring the wrath of the Jewish establishment and the Israel lobby.

Stop and think about it: why in the world would Judith Butler \*want\* to be a member of the same community as Benjamin Netanyahu, Sheldon Adelson, Joe Lieberman, Eric Cantor and Israeli settlers? Why? I would be fascinated to hear her answer to that question.

seanmcbride (/profile/seanmcbride) August 28, 2012, 3:17 pm  
tokyobk,

Butler could identify herself as a member of the community of enlightened people from all ethnic, religious and national backgrounds who care about modern Western democratic values. That could be her primary identity. Her secondary identity could be based on her appreciation of those values in her Jewish upbringing which are consistent and harmonious with those values.

Quite a few contemporary Americans take that approach to their respective ethnic and religious backgrounds in defining themselves — and it seems to work quite well for everyone. We are not spitting on or terror bombing one another over ethnic and religious issues or ancient claims based on holy books and mumbo jumbo.

Regarding Atzmon: he is an intellectual provocateur — that's the nature of his game. But there is substance to his thought. He may be the beginning of a major movement within the Jewish world in reaction to all the problems that have been created by Zionism.

Leopold Bloom (/profile/leopold-bloom) August 28, 2012, 2:43 pm



I am just curious if anyone commenting here is living in the United States on land that once belonged to Native Americans. If so, please indicate when you plan to relocate to your ancestors' country of origin, and if you do not plan to do so, please explain how your situation differs from that in Israel.

**Blake (/profile/blake)** August 28, 2012, 3:33 pm

You cannot compare the 2 scenarios. The European settlers in America never ethnically cleansed the natives out, denied they were the natives or are refusing them their right of return.

**Leopold Bloom (/profile/leopold-bloom)**

August 28, 2012, 7:13 pm

You're being sarcastic, right? If not, I would recommend that you read Dee Brown's "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee" for a refutation of your entire posting.

**Blake (/profile/blake)** August 28, 2012, 10:58 pm

Why would I be sarcastic? America is not denying the right of return of the native American people.

**Leopold Bloom (/profile/leopold-bloom)**

August 29, 2012, 8:00 am

Really? So the Cherokee who were forcibly removed to Oklahoma on the Trail of Tears can return to Alabama? I suppose there's nothing stopping them (at least, not now, over 150 years after their removal), but they would have to purchase the land back from the people living there now. So the modern analogy would be for Israel to allow Palestinians to do the same. Kind of like reparations, only the money would be flowing in the opposite direction.

**Woody Tanaka (/profile/woody-tanaka)**

August 29, 2012, 10:20 am

"but they would have to purchase the land back from the people living there now. So the modern analogy would be for Israel to allow Palestinians to do the same."

Not the same, Bloomie, because many of these Palestinians are the people from whom the land was stolen.

**Blake (/profile/blake)** August 29, 2012, 8:42 pm

Are these Native American people in a state of limbo (stateless) without any basic human rights Leopold?

**Leopold Bloom (/profile/leopold-bloom)**

August 30, 2012, 10:55 am

Not now, but they were for many years. They do not have complete control over the areas surrounding the reservations, for example, they can prevent liquor stores from opening within reservation boundaries, but have no authority over stores in neighboring towns, despite the effect this has on the community.

Also, Native Americans were subjected to systematic genocide on a level far beyond anything the Palestinians have experienced.

The attitude of many posters here shows the typical "Israel is evil and the Palestinians are blameless." Also, I always hear "criticism of Israel is not anti-Semitic," yet one of the first responses was to bring up a "pulpul package," whatever that is.

seanmcbride (/profile/seanmcbride) August 30, 2012, 11:20 am  
Leopold Bloom,

Isn't it a hasbara blunder of the highest order to use American mistreatment of Native Americans in the 18th and 19th centuries as a justification for Israeli mistreatment of Palestinians in the year 2012?

With this line of argument you are confirming the charge that Zionism is a racist and genocidal movement, engaging in systematic ethnic cleansing. And you are providing retroactive legitimization for several thousand years of antisemitism in the past and a defense for any acts of genocide that might occur against any groups in the future.

Apparently Hitler used the ethnic cleansing of Native Americans as an inspiration for Nazi policies:

link to nazism.net  
([http://www.nazism.net/about/ideological\\_theory/](http://www.nazism.net/about/ideological_theory/))

BEGIN QUOTE

Hitler claimed that nations that could not defend their territory did not deserve it. Slave races, he thought of as less-worthy to exist than "master races." In particular, if a master race should require room to live (Lebensraum), he thought such a race should have the right to displace the inferior indigenous races. Hitler draws parallels between Lebensraum and the American ethnic cleansing and relocation policies towards the Native Americans, which he saw as key to the success of the US.

END QUOTE

(Note: I haven't fact-checked this claim yet, but it seems plausible at first glance.)

Where are you coming from on Mideast politics? Nation of citizenship? Ethnicity? Religion? Religion of upbringing? Cultural biases? What dog do you have in this fight?

There is an excellent article on the colonial nature of Zionism today at the Daily Beast by Yousef Munayyer:

"Wilf's Colonialism Denial"  
link to thedailybeast.com  
(<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/04/20/wilf-s-colonialism-denial.html>)

Theodor Herzl was completely explicit about his colonialist agenda.

By the way, I am also a big fan of James Joyce. Under no circumstances can I envision Joyce as being a supporter of Likud Zionism or Greater Israelism. Bloom was not an ethno-religious nationalist zealot.

elijay (/profile/eljay) August 30, 2012, 11:31 am  
>> The attitude of many posters here shows the typical "Israel is evil and the Palestinians are blameless."

Jews used terrorism and ethnic cleansing to create an oppressive, colonialist, expansionist and supremacist "Jewish State" in Palestine...and the Palestinians are supposed to shoulder some (most? all?) of the blame for it. Interesting.

The attitude of many posters here shows the typical Zionist supremacist "The victim is an aggressor because she resists the rapist, so the rapist is just another victim!"

seanmcbride (/profile/seanmcbride) August 30, 2012, 11:41 am  
Leopold Bloom,

Are you a serious James Joyce scholar?

You might want to look into this book:

book; AUTHOR Neil R. Davison TITLE James Joyce, Ulysses, and the Construction of Jewish Identity DATE 1998 PUBLISHER Cambridge University Press

Check out this quote in context:

"The son of a depressive, radical convert, Bloom's attitude towards Zionism here embodies not only a self-abnegating sense of Jewishness, but suggests a Weiningerian negativity both Jewish and female."

link to books.google.com

(<http://books.google.com/books?>

[id=s\\_eXYzdEmxcC&pg=PA144&lpg=PA144&dq=james+joyce+zionism&source=bl&ots=ZhU1LE3ryo&sig=uSBZPLx3ReygeHDA5Yic](http://books.google.com/books?id=s_eXYzdEmxcC&pg=PA144&lpg=PA144&dq=james+joyce+zionism&source=bl&ots=ZhU1LE3ryo&sig=uSBZPLx3ReygeHDA5Yic)

From the book's description:

"Representations of 'the Jew' have long been a topic of interest in Joyce studies. Neil Davison argues that Joyce's lifelong encounter with pseudo-scientific, religious and political discourse about 'the Jew' forms a unifying component of his career. Davison offers new biographical material, and presents a detailed reading of Ulysses showing how Joyce draws on Christian folklore, Dreyfus Affair propaganda, Sinn Féin politics, and theories of Jewish sexual perversion and financial conspiracy. Throughout, Joyce confronts the controversy of 'race', the psychology of internalised stereotype, and the contradictions of fin-de-siècle anti-Semitism."

A complex subject, to say the least.

seanmcbride (/profile/seanmcbride) August 30, 2012, 12:22 pm  
Leopold Bloom,

James Joyce, and Leopold Bloom (his fictional character in "Ulysses"), were anti-Zionists and universalist humanists (much like Albert Einstein and Hannah Arendt):

article; AUTHOR SDBURKE TITLE Leopold Bloom and the Judaic Other: Zionism and the Dilemma of National Identity in Ulysses DATE June 24, 2010 PUBLICATION SDBURKE URL [link to sdburke.wordpress.com](http://sdburke.wordpress.com/2010/06/24/109/)  
(<http://sdburke.wordpress.com/2010/06/24/109/>)

## BEGIN QUOTE

On this subject Joyce appears to be expressing his own views through Bloom. In Bloom's realization that his momentarily inflamed enthusiasm for Zionism is made from the same stuff as the Irish nationalists' obnoxious exclusionism and prejudice, we can discover Joyce's own compassionate and percipient forewarning: that the only thing that can come from the relentless segregation of peoples into disparate 'nations,' is greater misunderstanding, suspicion, and strife. The emancipation of the world's abiding wandering minority to their own nation has the effect only of endowing them with their own version of xenophobic superiority over their neighbors. This is the principle upon which Bloom's rejection of Zionism is based, and the rationale behind the disavowal of his Jewishness in "Eumaeus."

On "Bloomsday," Bloom has been confronted with the pervasive and humiliating realities of anti-Semitism and the difficulties of assimilation, and he has been presented as well with the possibility of escape, to join the Zionist project currently underway in Palestine to help to build a Jewish nation where Jews need no longer be the "other." Bloom rejects both paths. Despite the attempts of the jingoistic nationalists in Barney Kiernan's pub, Bloom refuses to be bullied into abetting their homogenization of Ireland, and leaving the land he considers his own ("Ireland...I was born here. Ireland.") Bloom alludes here to Daniel Mendoza, an English Jewish boxer of the previous century, who proved that assimilation was possible by achieving enormous fame and popularity while wearing his Jewishness proudly and calling himself "the star of Israel." In the end Bloom recognized that by leaving Ireland he would only be contributing to the trend toward, "that multiple, ethnically irreducible consummation," which he, and Joyce, believe is counterproductive to the true universal objective of mutual equality and universal brotherhood. Prejudice can never be overcome by separating out all that is different, and so, as he lays in bed at the end of the day, Bloom has made his choice: to live on in Ireland, hoping and sustaining one modest ambition, "to purchase by private treaty in fee simple a thatched bungalow-shaped 2 storey dwellinghouse of southerly aspect."

## END QUOTE

Your thoughts? Are you on the same page with Joyce and Bloom?

Some of the passages on Zionism in "Ulysses" could be read as prophecies of Zionism's inevitable doom.

**Leopold Bloom** (/profile/leopold-bloom)

August 30, 2012, 12:38 pm

I'm not using the United States' genocide of Native Americans to justify Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. I'm using it as an example of the disgusting hypocrisy shown by many people on this thread.

**seanmcbride** (/profile/seanmcbride) August 30, 2012, 1:37 pm

Leopold Bloom wrote:

"I'm not using the United States' genocide of Native Americans to justify Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. I'm using it as an example of the disgusting hypocrisy shown by many people on this thread."

What in the hell are you talking about? What people in this thread, other than pro-Israel activists, are expressing support or providing excuses for contemporary ethnic cleansing? I no more accept responsibility for past American policies towards Native Americans than German Lefty accepts responsibility for Nazi crimes against Jews.

You are seriously confused. And I strongly doubt that you know much about the views and attitudes of James Joyce. You remind me of some pro-Israel militants who weirdly try to associate themselves with Albert Einstein or Martin Buber, simply because they were Jewish. Einstein explicitly compared Revisionist Zionism (the strain of Zionism which currently rules Israel) to Nazism.

**marc b. (/profile/marc-b)** August 30, 2012, 1:47 pm  
*Also, I always hear "criticism of Israel is not anti-Semitic," yet one of the first responses was to bring up a "pilpul package," whatever that is.*

so you're accusing commenters of 'knee-jerkism', yet you assume a comment is anti-semitic while acknowledging in the same breath that you don't even know what the comment means. brilliant. the innate logic of hasbara distilled into a single, tortured sentence.

**Blake (/profile/blake)** August 30, 2012, 2:00 pm  
 Leopold Bloom, They were for many years long before I was born and we are living here and now in the present not responsible for the sins of our fathers. Their families were not separated for 6 decades either. How tiresome and irrational you are. You should perhaps learn the meaning of being a hypocrite because the cap fits your head.

**Woody Tanaka (/profile/woody-tanaka)**  
 August 30, 2012, 2:16 pm  
 "I'm not using the United States' genocide of Native Americans to justify Israel's treatment of the Palestinians."

Yes, you are, Bloomie. If you were not, you would be calling on the israelis to end their oppression of the Palestinians. But you're not because you've got genocide envy and you are using the Native Americans' suffering as a prop in your i-love-zionism love-fest.

"I'm using it as an example of the disgusting hypocrisy shown by many people on this thread."

There's no hypocrisy at all, Bloomie. The people on this thread have demonstrated exactly how the situations differ and what the israelis can do to be viewed in the manner which we view the US.

Woody Tanaka (/profile/woody-tanaka)

August 30, 2012, 2:30 pm

"Also, I always hear 'criticism of Israel is not anti-Semitic,' yet one of the first responses was to bring up a 'pilpul package,' whatever that is."

Bloomie, if you don't know what it is, then how can you know that it's antisemitic? Oh, that's right, a critic of israel said, so it HAS to be antisemitic. Do I have that right Bloomie?

Hostage (/profile/hostage) August 30, 2012, 3:19 pm

*The attitude of many posters here shows the typical "Israel is evil and the Palestinians are blameless." Also, I always hear "criticism of Israel is not anti-Semitic," yet one of the first responses was to bring up a "pilpul package," whatever that is.*

If you click on the "Hostage" link, you'll find that my comment archive contains many entries which explain that Dugard and Goldstone had documented the fact that both sides have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity that should be investigated, and that the responsible individuals should be prosecuted and punished appropriately. I've never had a single response from anyone here who challenged or questioned that proposition.

If Zionists were asking continual questions until a contradiction was exposed, we'd point out that they were using inductive logic or the Socratic Method instead. There's nothing anti-Semitic about calling extreme hairsplitting or extrapolation of contentious and doubtful concepts from texts "pilpul".

In many cases Zionists attempt to deflect attention away from the subject by observing that there are worse or similar human rights abuses elsewhere. That's just a propaganda or hasbara technique. If you check my comment archive you'll find I have commented about the US genocide in the Philippines; formal complaints filed with the UN CERD panel of experts by Native American tribes; CERD complaints from NGOs working on behalf of the "Untouchables" of India; the Secretary General's Commission on the massacre of the Tamil people; and a long list of other complaints filed with the various treaty monitoring bodies. I have contributed money to AI, HRW, and blogs like Mondoweiss and Tikun Olam who call attention to all sorts of human rights violations.

When we point out that the Nuremberg Charter and the Rome Statute list a number of acts and say that they are war crimes or crimes against humanity when they are committed against *any civilian population*, many Zionist respond by saying, yes but Palestine is not a sovereign state. That is an example of pilpul.

Palestine is a state with treaty agreements on terrorism, extradition, and diplomatic immunity with the League of Arab States and OIC states that have joined the ICC.

The Court would be legally bound to respect those agreements and treat Palestine as a third state for the purposes of Article 98 of the Rome Statute if it refuses to accept Palestine's article 12(3) declaration. The agreements on extradition would actually facilitate the surrender of the individuals in Gaza that the Goldstone report accused of acts of terror and war crimes. Zionists, including Dore Gold, respond by suggesting that the meaning the undefined term "State" is somehow different when it appears in Article 12(3) – "a State which is not a Party to this Statute" – than the one that appears in Article 98 – "a third State" or "a sending State". That is another example of extreme hairsplitting and an extrapolation of a "State" concept that is not warranted by the text, i.e. pilpul.

That whole line of legalistic argumentation flows from Yehuda Blum's 'Missing Reversioner', and M. Shamgar, 'The observance of international law in the administered territories' which argue about topics, including the reversionary rights of "sovereign states", which cannot be found in the text of either the Hague or Geneva Conventions. That is an example of unwarranted extrapolation or pilpul.

**Hostage (/profile/hostage)** August 30, 2012, 3:39 pm  
*I'm not using the United States' genocide of Native Americans to justify Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. I'm using it as an example of the disgusting hypocrisy shown by many people on this thread.*

Sorry but I'm on record here in support of the US honoring its treaty agreements with Native American tribes. If that is no longer possible, I'm for restitution of property still in the hands of the US Department of Interior and compensation for the remainder for Native American tribes in line with the intent of the various Indian Compensation and Claims Acts. Israel and Zionists have done nothing like that. That's what we are underlining here in this thread.

**justicewillprevail (/profile/justicewillprevail)**  
 August 30, 2012, 7:03 pm  
 So, Leo the Lion, if you deplore the US treatment of Native Americans, we can take it that you absolutely loathe the more despicable and vile behaviour of Israel towards the Native Israelis, otherwise known as Palestinians.

**Leopold Bloom (/profile/leopold-bloom)**  
 August 31, 2012, 8:01 am  
 The Palestinians have not been subjected to the same treatment that Native Americans suffered, including total genocide of many tribes and near-total loss of cultural and linguistic continuity for most others. But it's pointless to argue over whether the Native Americans had it worse than the Palestinians, or the Australian Aborigines, or maybe your own ancestors in Ireland or Wales at the hands of the British. There is plenty of misery and oppression to go around, and none of it is justified.

Reparations for Native Americans and Palestinians?  
Great! What about the Israeli Jews who are descended from people who purchased their land from the Ottoman Empire, or who have lived in the area since Roman times? And as far as the U.S., if "reparations" require you to relocate to another part of North America or Europe to make way for Native Americans who may want to re-inhabit the area where you live, without any Wasichu present, are you OK with that? It's very convenient for you that there is absolutely no chance of this ever happening. So by your standard, if the Israelis can just hang on for another 30 to 50 years, and do a more effective job, you will be just fine with the situation. You're the apologist for genocide, not me.

My solution, by the way, is two states, like India and Pakistan. Jews will probably have to vacate all or part of the West Bank, as they did Gaza. I wouldn't expect many Israeli Arabs to relocate to the new country of Palestine, however. Jerusalem would have to be jointly administered, probably with UN involvement, as the place is important to many people outside of the area. In return, Israel gets guarantees of peace and full diplomatic recognition.

The Israelis that want a "greater Israel" will have to abandon their dream, along with their counterparts who want to "push the Jews into the sea."

**eljay (/profile/eljay)** August 31, 2012, 9:29 am

My solution, by the way, is two states ...

Mine, too. (<http://mondoweiss.net/2011/01/citing-national-security-coalition-of-realists-and-liberals-freeman-zogby-beinart-call-on-obama-to-condemn-settlements.html/comment-page-1#comment-269927>)

My solution calls for both states to be secular, democratic and egalitarian states of and for their people:

- Israel, the state of and for all Israelis, equally; and
- Palestine, the state of and for all Palestinians, equally.

Is this what you envision, too? Or does Israel, in your reckoning, get to remain a supremacist "Jewish State", a state of and for the fundamentally-religious (since it cannot be acquired bureaucratically) nationality of "Jewish", with special rules/laws for Jewish citizens of Israel?

**seanmcbride (/profile/seanmcbride)** August 31, 2012, 10:06 am

Leopold Bloom,

I am still curious: why did you choose as a handle the name of a famous literary character who, like his creator, was skeptical of Zionism?

One gets the impression that Leopold Bloom of Ulysses and James Joyce thought that Zionism was a losing game from the start:



BEGIN QUOTE

Through an amazing distortion by Bloom (and by Joyce), the sea of Galilee, with its promise of new life, is turned into the Dead Sea. Joyce uses stunning metaphors in expressing Bloom's rejection: "...a dead sea in a dead land, grey and old... the oldest people. Wandered far away over all the earth, captivity to captivity, multiplying, dying, being born everywhere... Dead; an old woman's: the grey sunken cunt of the world".... There is no chance for the Zionist dream, because the Dead Sea can never be brought to life.

END QUOTE

chapter; AUTHOR Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi TITLE Political and Literary Answers to Some 'Jewish Questions': Proust, Joyce, Freud and Herzl BOOK TITLE Psychoanalysis, Identity, and Ideology: Critical Essays on the Israel/Palestine Case PUBLISHER Kluwer Academic Publishers DATE 2002

I don't necessarily agree — but your handle inspired me to look into James Joyce's views on Zionism. His apparent belief that ethnic nationalism in general (including Zionism) was a dead end may prove to be prophetic. Certainly the cultural views of most contemporary Americans and Europeans are more Joycean than Herzlian — they are comfortable with diversity and drew the correct conclusions from the debacle of Nazism.

Hostage (/profile/hostage) August 31, 2012, 1:55 pm  
*Reparations for Native Americans and Palestinians?*  
*Great!*

No, the United States has already paid hundreds of millions in claims. In the case of the Black Hills, the compensation fund has grown to more than a \$1 billion. Israel has not done anything like that in the past 60+ years.

The Federal government is the largest single land owner in the territory west of the Mississippi river. In these cases involving the well-known tribes and treaties, I don't believe that the Department of the Interior actually has a stronger claim to retain the land. For their parts the tribes have started to pursue their claims in the UN treaty bodies. Customary law requires actual restitution of property unless the injured parties prefer monetary compensation. The parties on both sides of the disagreement in the United States enjoy equal rights and citizenship pending a final settlement or judgement, unlike the situation in Israel regarding the Palestinian people. So the situations are very different.

*So by your standard, if the Israelis can just hang on for another 30 to 50 years, and do a more effective job, you will be just fine with the situation.*

Not at all. You should acquaint yourself with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). It stressed "the urgent need to respect and promote the rights of indigenous peoples affirmed in

treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements with States". That has subsequently become a mandatory item addressed under the UN's Universal Periodic Review process and as a normal part of the CERD reporting and review process.

\* link to [untreaty.un.org](http://untreaty.un.org)

([http://untreaty.un.org/cod/avl/ha/ga\\_61-295/ga\\_61-295.html](http://untreaty.un.org/cod/avl/ha/ga_61-295/ga_61-295.html))

\* link to [un.org](http://www.un.org)

([http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/61/295](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/61/295))

FYI, massacres, population transfers, and seizure of private or communal property were prohibited under the Civil War era Lieber Code. It codified the existing Laws and Customs of War in 1863 and was the basis of the subsequent Hague Convention. link to [avalon.law.yale.edu](http://avalon.law.yale.edu)  
([http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\\_century/lieber.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/lieber.asp))

The general prohibition against the seizure of state property or the acquisition of enemy territory by conquest was part of the Declaration of the First International Conference of American States, 1890. It was embodied in the Kellogg-Briand Agreement and the Stimson Doctrine no later than 1932.

There is a principle of law involved, *nullum crimen sine lege*. It applies to people and states as persons of law. It provides that a person cannot be held responsible unless the conduct in question constituted, at the time it took place, a crime. All of Israel's wrongful acts were defined by the principles of international law that were codified in the UN Charter and Geneva Conventions of 1949.

Cliff (/profile/cliff) September 3, 2012, 8:18 pm  
@Leopold Bloom

What about the Israeli Jews who are descended from people who purchased their land from the Ottoman Empire, or who have lived in the area since Roman times

There is no parallel between the fraction of Jews, not ISRAELI JEWS, who lived continuously in Palestine under various rule and the Palestinian Arabs, Bedouins, etc.

There was no Israel. There was no Israeli identity. You are making up the concept of an 'Israel' and saying that this anachronism is on equal footing with the majority population that was ETHNICALLY CLEANSED by the European colonists (European Jews) who stole their land and homes.

The Palestinians don't owe the Israelis anything collectively as you insinuate.

And even if they did, once again, the Jewish claim is meager and you can substantiate that meager claim by referring to the only empirical data we have! Yet, hasbarat liars like yourself keep mystifying the conflict and never actual state the fact where these Jews came from and how many there were and all the other pertinent information one would expect to be common sense prerequisites to any intelligent discussion on such a f\*\*\*in contentious issue.

Furthermore, Israel is the colonial entity here. So in spite of your lame equivocation about Greater Israel advocates to the 'Push the Jews into the Sea' camp being in EQUAL NUMBERS, the FACT OF THE MATTER is that the Zionists are mainstream, accepted, more powerful and guess what? They won.

Whether you think it was legitimate or not is the core issue in reality, not all the rest.

The core issue is whether you think Israel has a 'right to exist' outside of history and whether Jews should be given a free pass due to the history of Jewish suffering (weaponized to such an extent that everyone is a potential Amalek and no one's suffering is adequate).

Note your intellectually dishonest opener regarding the Native Americans and Palestinians:

NO \*\*\*\* the Palestinians aren't being exterminated. This is like the idiotic criticism Chomsky faced with regards to his propaganda model (Hey, Chomsky, you're here on this television channel, hence, you're not being censored and hence there is no propaganda model).

I.e. your punchline comparison is superficial. There is a reason why things happen.

Do you know why slavery shifted to the West Indies? Could you explain it using sociological variables? That is history.

Israel and it's defenders regularly say that there is nothing wrong in the territories because the Palestinians are growing in pop.

As if we should look at that and turn away. That is what you're doing. You are comparing two vastly different time periods and standards of warfare (or LACK THEREOF) and etc. etc. without any hesitation and common sense.

You are a joke. I doubt you read anything by Joyce. Just another Zionist poseur.

Woody Tanaka (/profile/woody-tanaka) August 28, 2012, 4:03 pm

"I am just curious if anyone commenting here is living in the United States on land that once belonged to Native Americans."

Hey, everyone, we got ourselves another new zionist with genocide envy!!!!

Well, Leopold, the situation here is different because the dispossession happened in the past in the US, whereas it's happening now in Palestine. Also, in the US, the Native Americans are given citizenship, the vote, and can live anywhere they choose. That's the next step which must be given to the Palestinians in the land between the sea and the Jordan. But, there is much to be done. The US should institute a system of payments to Native Americans to compensate them for what was taken from them. I assume that you'd favor Israel making the same payments to the Palestinians??

**Leopold Bloom (/profile/leopold-bloom)**

August 28, 2012, 7:18 pm

Got it – 1948 is in the memory of many living people, while Wounded Knee and the 400 years preceding happened far enough in the past to be irrelevant. Very convenient for you.

I have no problem with reparations to Native Americans. I assume you're fine with your taxes being raised to pay for it. This is the first time I've heard the proposal that Israel pay off the Palestinians. If it would result in a permanent peaceful solution, it's worth considering.

**dbrncos (/profile/dbrncos)** August 28, 2012, 9:26 pm

"This is the first time I've heard the proposal that Israel pay off the Palestinians."

Wow. What planet have you been living on?

**Mooser (/profile/mooser)** August 28, 2012, 9:54 pm

*"This is the first time I've heard the proposal that Israel pay off the Palestinians."*

And of course, it never occurred to you, did it? Well, you can forget about. Any just reparation would break Israel, take the shirts right off their back.

That is so funny, you never, ever thought maybe, just maybe, offering payment for what was taken illegally might be a good start? I wonder why not?

**Blake (/profile/blake)** August 28, 2012, 10:59 pm

Rather taxes go to them then a racist supremacist terrorist regime.

**Cliff (/profile/cliff)** August 29, 2012, 2:50 am

Just because the Native Americans got shafted by the Founders doesn't mean present-day Americans like myself, of Indian descent, should ignore what the colonial settler-State of Israel is doing to the Palestinians.

One theft does not excuse another. We also condemned Nelson Mandela as a terrorist until 5 years ago or so. It was embarrassing that it took us that long to get him off our terrorist list.

During the late 60s, 70s, and 80s – the American government supported lots of genocidal Latin American dictatorships that our countrymen protested against.

Does that make us hypocrites?

Your argument is so infantile and inanely idiotic it's not even worth this many words but I like shooting fish in a barrel.

Take your 'academic' scenario and shove it, 'Leopold' (LOL) you third-grade hasbarist.

**Woody Tanaka (/profile/woody-tanaka)**

August 29, 2012, 7:54 am

"Got it – 1948 is in the memory of many living people, while Wounded Knee and the 400 years preceding happened far enough in the past to be irrelevant. Very convenient for you."

Sorry, Bloomie, you have trouble reading. I said the differences are three-fold: First, the fact that the zios are dispossessing the Palestinians now. Like it or not, the crimes committed against the Native Americans happened in the past. The crimes committed by the Jews in Palestine started in the 19th Century and have continued, unabated, to this day.

And it's also quite disgusting for you, Bloomie, to invoke the suffering of the Native Americans to cover the vile crimes of the zionists against the Palestinians. Who the hell do you think you are to treat their suffering at the hands of oppressors as a sword in the hands of the oppressors of Palestinians. You are a sick person, Bloomie.

The second difference, Bloomie, is that Native Americans have the absolute full rights of Americans and get to vote and are not subject to fascistic military law, as the Palestinians are. Very convenient for you to ignore that. Are you willing to favor that, too? Or is equal rights and the right to vote something that should be reserved for Jews and a few token Arabs, in your view??

The third difference I mentioned was the fact that the Native Americans have free movement and can live anywhere between the Atlantic and Pacific. Very convenient for you to ignore that, eh Bloomie? Are you willing to give the Palestinians the same freedom of movement between the Jordan and the Mediterranean? Or is free movement only something that should be given to Jews?

**Annie Robbins (/profile/annie)** August 29, 2012, 10:44 am

Wow. *What planet have you been living on?*

leopold is from the planet of lies and diversions.

'oh my, offer them money? wow, what a unique concept... i'm surprised nobody thought of financial compensation before? someone should have thought of that sooner...and while we're at it we can just do a swap for our possessions in baghdad because like...all those arabs are the same...'

**Blake (/profile/blake)** August 30, 2012, 2:28 pm

Pay for reparations, Right of return still stands.

**MRW (/profile/mrw)** August 28, 2012, 8:14 pm

*Hey, everyone, we got ourselves another new Zionist with genocide envy!!!!*

And carrying his pilpul package under his arm.

**Cliff (/profile/cliff)** August 29, 2012, 2:51 am

Don't complement him MRW. Pilpul is at least convoluted enough to appear superficially complex.

This guy is just your textbook copy-paste hasbarat. Complete with pretentious Joyce reference.

What's with these Zionists? Such theatrical names!

**Leopold Bloom (/profile/leopold-bloom)**

August 29, 2012, 8:09 am

So the idea is for the Palestinians to live anywhere they want in Israel, for the Israeli government to compensate them for past and present injustices, and for any Jewish Israelis to return to whatever country their most recent ancestors came from. If you're in favor of an equivalent scenario in the United States, at least you're being consistent. Otherwise, yes, you are being hypocritical. And by the way, I haven't been inside a synagogue for 20 years, and have never held a Talmud in my hands, let alone studied it. There's more of value in the writings of James Joyce than in the Bible, Qur'an, and every other "sacred" book combined.

**Woody Tanaka (/profile/woody-tanaka)**

August 29, 2012, 10:30 am

"So the idea is for the Palestinians to live anywhere they want in Israel, for the Israeli government to compensate them for past and present injustices, and for any Jewish Israelis to return to whatever country their most recent ancestors came from"

Bloomie, Bloomie, Bloomie. I certainly did not say that the "Jewish Israelis" should move back to whatever country their most recent ancestors came from. That's your fabrication. I believe every individual in the land should be permitted to remain and those who were driven out in 1948 and their children should also be permitted anywhere in the land, as they wish. So, no, I don't favor forcing out the Jews. (I favoring requiring the evacuation of the settlers unless the Zionist entity grants complete and absolute equality for all the people in Palestine.)

And you STILL ignore the most important part, Bloomie, the vote.

"If you're in favor of an equivalent scenario in the United States, at least you're being consistent. Otherwise, yes, you are being hypocritical."



I am consistent, Bloomie. I believe that the US government should pay reparation to compensate Native Americans, and they should be permitted to live anywhere they want and have full political and civil rights, equality, and the vote.

If you're not willing to demand the same of the Jews  
running israel with respect to the Palestinians, Bloomie,  
then it is you who is a hypocrite (or worse.)

**German Lefty** (/profile/german-lefty) August 30, 2012, 12:59 pm  
@ Leopold:

I agree with Woody. Besides, past injustice doesn't  
justify present injustice. So, your entire argument is  
pointless.

Here's Norman Finkelstein commenting on Native  
Americans and Palestinians:

Norman Finkelstein - Zionism 2...  



**Walker** (/profile/walker) August 31, 2012, 8:55 am  
Times, and ethical standards, have changed. Would you justify  
keeping slaves now by pointing out that Americans had slaves 150  
years ago?

**Jan Rolletschek** (/profile/jan-rolletschek) August 28, 2012, 3:45 pm  
To put things back into "context" for starters: "Yes, 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. It doesn't stop those of us who are  
interested in non-violent politics from raising the question of whether there are  
other options besides violence."  
Right, she did call them "progressive" – by some sick ruse of reason? – but did not  
outright support them. That is: she did not withhold her outright support on the  
grounds that they are not left-wing, only on the grounds of their (violent) means.  
Basically, what she said: They are left wing; right on, but please non-violently, please  
with different means.  
People, like J.B., faced with a certain British audience, in a crowded venue, may get  
nervous and say silly things. But people (like J.B.?) may also rethink and restate  
their views. Who would reasonably hold them to statements they made years ago –  
if they didn't do it themselves!?!  
Rather than admitting a stupid statement J.B. unfolds an argument that (especially  
considering her wordy appeal to "reason") would be embarrassing to every rookie  
in any logics-class on the second day of them taking that class. How then is it,  
according to J.B., that these organizations are "progressive" and "left-wing"?  
Because they are, supposedly, "anti-imperialist".  
To be opposed to "imperialism", i.e. the occupation of one's traditional territory (let  
alone by a "Jewish state"! ) is NOT a sufficient reason to be on the left. It is not a  
distinguishing point (USP) of left wing organizations as opposed to right wing ones  
at all. To be "anti-imperialist" perfectly harmonizes with the fascist doctrine of  
ethno-pluralism, of blood-and-soil, a people and its land. Carl Schmitt's (the main  
NS-Jurist) notion of the partisan is centrally defined by this very nexus.  
Disregarding the logical lopsidedness of J.B.'s argument Hamas and Hezbollah are  
plainly not on the left. They are quite frankly fascist organizations. Everyone, who  
does the slightest bit of research into their past or present, could know that. And it  
would suit J.B. well, not to defend her rather mindless statement, putting up  
necessarily mindless arguments in its defense, that serve to discredit the actually  
reasonable things she may also say.

Is she simply too proud to admit a mistake? Well, if so, she can't be all that proud either, for it is certainly embarrassing to hold on to a mistake that is so flagrant, likely even to herself.

Ali Anvari (/profile/ali-anvari) August 28, 2012, 6:20 pm

Hezbollah is nowhere near a fascist organization, it most closely resembles a communist guerrilla outfit, right down to its cellular structure and social services wing. The fascists were Hezbollah's enemies, specifically the Lebanese Phalange.

dbrncos (/profile/dbrncos) August 28, 2012, 9:10 pm

"Fascism (/ˈfæʃɪzəm/) is a radical authoritarian nationalist political ideology.[1][2] Fascists seek elevation of their nation based on commitment to an organic national community where its individuals are united together as one people in national identity. They are united by suprapersonal connections of ancestry and culture through a totalitarian state that seeks the mass mobilization of a nation through discipline, indoctrination, physical training, and eugenics.[3][4] Fascism seeks to eradicate perceived foreign influences that are deemed to be causing degeneration of the nation or of not fitting into the national culture."

Jan Rolletschek could tell us what makes Hezbollah a "fascist" organization? Surely he meant to say that Israel is a fascist state. "Fascism" works well for Israel but not for Hezbollah.

Sibiriak (/profile/sibiriak) August 29, 2012, 11:58 am

Hezbollah and Hamas are not fascist organizations. Their brands of Islamism, though, rule them out as "leftist" or "progressive" organizations in the usually sense of those terms, imo.

Klaus Bloemker (/profile/) August 29, 2012, 6:34 pm

Judith Butler says:

"I was asked ... whether I thought Hamas and Hezbollah belonged to "the global left" and I replied with two points. My first point was MERELY DESCRIPTIVE: those political organizations define themselves as anti-imperialist, and anti-imperialism is one characteristic of the global left ..."

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What she says is NOT merely descriptive – there is a value judgement involved: Imperialism is bad – anti-imperialism is good.

The Marxist left frames Israel and her policies in colonial or imperialist terms. In doing so, there is a value judgement involved to begin with.

The Zionists frame Israel and her policies as a "return to the land of our forefathers."

There is also a value judgement involved to begin with: The "RIGHT of return".

– Of course, Judith Butler delegitimizes Israel's policies if not her whole concept.

– All those who defend her are more or less beside the point and not quite honest.

Klaus Bloemker (/profile/) August 29, 2012, 8:17 pm

I would like to add something:

I'm sick and tired of the Jewish intellectual/argumentative racism:

You first have to provide your Jewish credentials – then you can criticize Israel.

All who defended Judith Butler sought to provide FIRST her Jewish credentials.



Israel isn't just a Jewish affair, it concerns us all – so why should it matter whether the critic is circumcised as a Jew or a Gentile who isn't?

ColinWright (/profile/colinwright) September 4, 2012, 3:04 pm

Klaus says: “...Israel isn't just a Jewish affair, it concerns us all – so why should it matter whether the critic is circumcised as a Jew or a Gentile who isn't?”

It matters because it is always possible to defame a gentile critic of Israel as being motivated by antisemitism. That old reliable fails if the critic is Jewish himself/herself. One is then forced to retreat to the rather unsatisfying claim that the critic is a 'self-hating Jew.'

...there may also be the hope that by thus restricting the circle of critics to other Jews, the criticism can be kept within bounds. If the *whole world* is permitted to consider and pass judgement on Israel, the verdict is likely to be both unfavorable and overwhelming. If, on the other hand, the criticism is restricted to other Jews, it's almost certain to be confined within decidedly manageable limits — and indeed, writers such as Amira Hass and Gideon Levy at *Haaretz* (and writers at this site) can harp away until doomsday without having noticeable effect. That sort of thing poses little threat.

But grant that the great, multi-billion gentile unwashed is entitled to comment, and one's talking about a tidal wave. Israel could never survive it...

ColinWright (/profile/colinwright) September 4, 2012, 3:22 pm

Klaus says: “What she says is NOT merely descriptive – there is a value judgement involved:

*Imperialism is bad – anti-imperialism is good.*

*The Marxist left frames Israel and her policies in colonial or imperialist terms.*

*In doing so, there is a value judgement involved to begin with.*

*The Zionists frame Israel and her policies as a “return to the land of our forefathers.”*

*There is also a value judgement involved to begin with: The “RIGHT of return”....”*

Well, you see, I disagree with this whole approach.

I'm quite happy with others making different value judgements than I would (well, resigned to that, anyway). I certainly don't expect all to conform to the values I would prefer. Absent certain gross deviations, I take the different judgements others would make in stride.

The thing is, when it comes to Israel, unless one is prepared to accept Torah as the sole criterion of truth and Jews as inherently possessed of a unique title to Palestine, there's no valid defense for Israel. Regardless of the perspective one approaches it from, the argument for Israel falls apart.

To take your specific example, the argument that 'Israel is a return to the land of our forefathers' doesn't merely fail to hold up because such a 'right' is non-existent. If that were all that was wrong, the case would be debatable — it would indeed depend on what values one held. The argument also fails to hold up because Jews are by and large not 'from'

Palestine, nor did Jews ever constitute the sole population of Palestine, nor were they ever solely present in Palestine. It is as if I said 'I'm better because I'm taller than you' — and I was 5' 8" while you were 6' 0".

The whole thing's indefensible and vile no matter how one looks at it. And that's why I oppose it. As I once said elsewhere, in most controversies, I am to some extent hobbled because I can see that my interlocutor does have a point if only one looks at it differently. Israel has the dubious virtue of being an abomination no matter how one looks at it.

**MHughes976 (/profile/mhughes976)**

September 4, 2012, 4:39 pm

Complete rejection of a value judgement doesn't stop you recognising it as a value judgement which is wrong. I'd say that acceptance of an authority, regarding it as worthy of respect and obedience, has to combine interpretation — 'what is it saying?' — with a value judgement — 'knowing what it says I find it worthy of respect and obedience.'

**Klaus Bloemker (/profile/)** August 30, 2012, 11:03 am

Today, the weekly DIE ZEIT (the time) published a German translation of Judith's above text under the title "I'm deeply hurt". A commentary alongside the text said that it first appeared on the "American internet forum Mondoweiss".

**American (/profile/american)** August 30, 2012, 2:51 pm

"A commentary alongside the text said that it first appeared on the "American internet forum Mondoweiss"

wow!...good.

**Blake (/profile/blake)** August 30, 2012, 2:59 pm

Thanks for that info Klaus. "Die Zeit" has a large readership if I am not mistaken. Also agree with your comment above this one. I have been thinking that for the longest time.

**Klaus Bloemker (/profile/)** August 30, 2012, 5:51 pm

Thanks for your comment Blake. One doesn't need a PhD in Jewish moral philosophy (or any other) to see that the Zionist concept is a moral absurdity. — Yes, 'Die Zeit' is influential.

**Klaus Bloemker (/profile/)** August 30, 2012, 11:58 am

Tony Judt and Judith Butler

In 2007 Tony Judt got the Hannah Arendt award of the city of Bremen and the Heinrich Böll Foundation (of the Green party). The Jewish community of Bremen protested strongly, quoting Leon Wieseltier. — There is a rerun of this today with Judith's Adorno prize.

The unstated or coded insinuation is always this: The committee awarding the prize are lefties who — as Germans — can't really attack Israel and are therefore looking for "good" anti-Zionist Jews to give a prestigious "Jewish" (Arendt, Adorno) award to.

**Klaus Bloemker (/profile/)** August 30, 2012, 2:16 pm

A comment on a paragraph of the Jerusalem Post about Adorno:

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"Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) was a GERMAN JEWISH social philosopher who fled the Hitler movement to the US and returned to post-Holocaust Germany to teach at Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt. Adorno wrote about modern anti-Semitism and OPPOSED GERMAN LEFTIST STUDENTS who attacked and sought to delegitimize Israel after the Six Day War."

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1.

Here you have the somewhat indirect hint that the Adorno prize to Butler is a leftist thing – contrary to Adorno's spirit. – Adorno, as a Marxist, was always an idol of the lefties when he lectured in Frankfurt though they resented his 'bourgeois' taste of music (he detested Jazz as an expression of American mass culture). I knew him.

2.

He was a baptised Catholic but a half-Jew by Nazi standards because his father was from a Jewish family (two grandparents Jewish). The reason he was then considered more Jewish than gentile was because he married a Jewish woman from an Austrian Jewish family-background.

Henry Norr (/profile/henry-norr) August 30, 2012, 4:00 pm

As'ad AbuKhalil has an interesting discussion of this piece, under the heading "Judith Butler: why so defensive, Judith?," over at his Angry Arab site. link to angryarab.blogspot.com (<http://angryarab.blogspot.com/2012/08/judith-butler-why-so-defensive-judith.html>)

Annie Robbins (/profile/annie) August 31, 2012, 12:37 am

*In this sentence she clearly and unequivocally equates the violence of occupation with the violence of resistance.*

well..he's wrong about that. she didn't once 'equate' the two other than to say she endorsed neither, so how would he know her attitude about that. much less "clearly and unequivocally" for the only thing clear and unequivocally here is his opinion about it.

unverified\_7gl4mi63 (/profile/philipst) August 30, 2012, 5:33 pm

I believe in co-existence and a two-state solution. In 2008, I lamented the return of Netanyahu to power in Israel, as I feared that his settlements policy would marginalize reasonable voices on all sides, and make a peaceful solution an ever-diminishing prospect. I condemn intolerance, hateful rhetoric, and violence. I do not endorse all of Judith Butler's positions, but I emphatically support her right of self-expression and applaud the decision of Frankfurt to award her the Adorno Prize. I've blogged about this issue today at my own website. Commenters may read it at this link, link to philipsturner.com (<http://philipsturner.com/2012/08/30/judith-butler-attack/>)

Danaa (/profile/danaa) August 30, 2012, 5:56 pm

On Leopold Bloom and the invisible line between American Indians and Palestinian natives:

I would suggest a deeper psychological rationale for the fondness with which zionists and israelites bring up the Indians: deep at heart – and for many, not so deep – they are enraged that they cannot 'get away' with what the American colonists did. Why them and not us, is the secret – and not so secret – israeli lament. Must be anti-semitism that we can't and "they" could.

One of these days the full truth shall be told about what the majority of Israelis really wish they could do – if only the world would agree to look away for a while. Of course, to know of such disturbing views – so wisely held by the unholy majority in the holy land, would require taking off that pretty liberal zionist, enlightened wrapper in which it usually comes packaged. Do the Lib Zionists actually know – I sometimes wonder? does Beinart really know? do any of them want to?

Klaus Bloemker (/profile/) August 30, 2012, 11:24 pm

The city of Frankfurt announced on Thursday that it will stick to its decision to award Judith Butler the Adorno prize.

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Here is a little aside on the matter of the attacks on Butler. The most vicious attack – worse than the Jerusalem Post – came from the general secretary of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, Stephan Kramer. He attacked both the committee who

awarded the prize and Butler saying, she was a “committed Israel hater” and the committee “lacked the moral strength and completely failed to distinguish between Butler’s contribution to philosophy and her moral depravity.”

Now, who is this Stephan Kramer? He is a jurist who converted to Judaism as an adult. There is a saying in German: The Catholic converts are more papal than the pope. This seems to be also the case with convert Kramer trying to be more Jewish than the Jews.

Annie Robbins (/profile/annie) August 30, 2012, 11:51 pm

*The city of Frankfurt announced on Thursday that it will stick to its decision to award Judith Butler the Adorno prize.*

yeah!!

jayn0t (/profile/jayn0t) September 6, 2012, 11:34 pm

The Adorno Prize is appropriate for Judith Butler. But unlike Theodor Adorno and his colleagues, she doesn’t even pretend to be scientific. I doubt if her work, which says gender is ‘socially constructed’, is taken seriously outside liberal arts departments, but Adorno’s school’s ‘The Authoritarian Personality’, STILL has influence in the wider world: in a nutshell, it says Jewish identity is good, gentile identity isn’t, and those who disagree are mentally disturbed. The CNI recently posted a paper by me which takes this argument further: link to tinyurl.com (<http://tinyurl.com/bqsq9dw>)

Hostage (/profile/hostage) September 7, 2012, 2:44 pm

*Kenneth Stern, a founder of the discipline of hate studies, vigorously defends Zionism against the “racism” charge.*

Of course, some terms, like the word cleave, have logically inconsistent or even contradictory meanings, i.e. 1) to sever or split something in two; 2) to cling or stick fast to something.

Zionism is a term that can be used to describe various beliefs, including those who believe “the lion and the lamb shall lay down together” and that the Jewish Messiah will one day heal the nations and establish peace on Earth and universalism – even in Eretz Israel. Alternatively, it can also be used to describe supersessionist, racist, beliefs and practices of ethnic segregation. Strictly speaking, “Neturei Karta – Orthodox Jews United Against Zionism” are religious Zionists of the former type.

If you intend to highlight the latter, racist varieties, then you should simply acknowledge the existence of both forms from the outset and then explain the distinguishing characteristics of the racist varieties using the EUMC reports into manifestations of Islamophobia; countries which have designated Kahane and Kahane Chai et al as racist or terrorist organizations; international fact finding reports and treaty monitoring body reports on structural racism in Israeli society and the occupied territories; and the body of research that you’ve marshaled in the current paper.

LeaNder (/profile/leander) August 31, 2012, 11:13 am

Klauser it seems you are correct, “Die Zeit”

([https://www.google.de/search?](https://www.google.de/search?q=Mondoweiss+Judith+Butler+%22Die+Zeit%22&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8)

[q=Mondoweiss+Judith+Butler+%22Die+Zeit%22&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8](https://www.google.de/search?q=Mondoweiss+Judith+Butler+%22Die+Zeit%22&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8)

8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:unofficial&client=firefox-a) initially mentioned Mondoweiss, although not spelled with a capital letter, which means, they may have picked it up here. It still shows in the cache. But seems to have disappeared by now from the online edition.

Strictly, if they publish it and did not get it directly from Judith Butler, than they must indeed mention Mondoweiss, that's German copyright law, and Germany's most respectable weekly should know. No?

**LeaNder (/profile/leander)** August 31, 2012, 11:15 am

Have they only been able to contact her after it was already online? Interesting story.

**Klaus Bloemker (/profile/)** August 31, 2012, 12:52 pm

DIE ZEIT and Mondoweiss

In yesterday's printed edition Judith's piece is on the front page of the arts section (Feuilleton). The commentary on the side says at the end:

She replied to the attacks on Monday "auf der amerikanischen Internetplattform Mondoweiss" ... "We document her article on this page exclusively in German."

At the end of Judith's article it says in smaller print: "The original of this article appeared on the internet forum mondoweiss.net"

The article also features a very large picture of Judith sitting in a red armchair and a small picture of her on the Berkeley campus.

**German Lefty (/profile/german-lefty)** August 31, 2012, 2:30 pm

@ Klaus:

I really hope that Mondoweiss will get more German readers due to this publicity.

I just followed the link that LeaNder provided and discovered this German article:

link to medforth.wordpress.com

(<http://medforth.wordpress.com/2012/08/31/judith-butler-schreibt-fur-antisemitischen-hetzblog/>)

The author calls Mondoweiss an "anti-Semitic hate blog" and finds it "alarming" and "scandalous" that Die Zeit quotes from such a blog. What a douchebag.

**Annie Robbins (/profile/annie)** August 31, 2012, 2:44 pm

douchebag is right. it is absolutely massive judith butler published her response with mondoweiss. what an honor.

**Klaus Bloemker (/profile/)** August 31, 2012, 3:36 pm

Lefty,

I've read the link you provide, too. Ridiculous.

I'm pretty sure that Butler's piece in Die Zeit made the difference. You didn't hear any comments on the matter from the city of Frankfurt but immediately after the Zeit article the city announced that it will stick to its decision to award her the Adorno prize. Also: the very high-brow intellectual monthly 'Cicero' (a little like The New Yorker) ran a very positive piece on Judith's philosophy on its website and defended her.

But you have to take into account that Jews get a bonus in Germany and Judith made quite a big deal of her Jewish ethical background. And Mondoweiss is also more or less Jewish.

The committee who decided on Butler made its decision already in May and they probably didn't know much about the Israel boycott. Among the members of the committee is the now head of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research. That's what Adorno was before he emigrated. And these so called 'critical theory', 'Frankfurt School' people always had some good relations to Berkeley. – I tell you, when I studied sociology in Frankfurt I didn't like these people and me and my friends made more fun of Adorno than taking him seriously. We considered his writing and teaching a philosophy gone astray. – Anyway, his lecture hall was always packed (500 – 600 students).

piotr (/profile/piotr) September 2, 2012, 8:53 pm

I do not understand German, but this sound beautiful "auf dem Blog von Blogger Philip Weiss". Now I will think about Phillip Wess as "von Blogger".

The website is titled "Jihad Watch", which shows an unfortunate German tendency of using English and English-German hybrids like "kartofelwedges" (in a commissary), Jugendtrain and Partyzug (on a site of the national railroad, there are special trains for the Spring Break, the train departs and the party starts! beer to be replenished at every station, I presume). Shouldn't proud citizens of Germany have Dschihad Waht?

German Lefty (/profile/german-lefty)

September 4, 2012, 2:02 pm

@ piotr:

*The website is titled "Jihad Watch", which shows an unfortunate German tendency of using English and English-German hybrids*

Well, this particular blogger seems to be a British citizen. Therefore, it's not surprising that he mixes English and German a bit.

By the way, in an article published today he calls the BDS movement as well as John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt "anti-Semitic".

German Lefty (/profile/german-lefty)

September 4, 2012, 2:05 pm

@ Klaus:

What's your opinion on Evelyn Hecht-Galinski and her book?

link to en.wikipedia.org

([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evelyn\\_Hecht-Galinski](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evelyn_Hecht-Galinski))

Klaus Bloemker (/profile/) August 31, 2012, 2:09 pm

Lea,

As to the question of copyright, I wonder whether Phil owns all my comments on his site and can sell them (not that they are worth any dollars or euros). – But the

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung once published a letter to the editor of mine in a book and asked my permission to do so.

**Klaus Bloemker (/profile/)** August 31, 2012, 7:39 pm

Lea,  
concerning copyright issues of comments on Mondoweiss, I think Phil could make a fortune by selling "The collected comments of Mooser" or "Best of Mooser on Mondoweiss" – he could do that, an anonymous 'Mooser' can't claim a copyright. – Anyway, I'll be among the first to buy a copy.

**Walker (/profile/walker)** August 31, 2012, 7:36 am

I come late to this discussion, but boy, is this good. Professor Butler's statement is bookmark-worthy, which is something rarely seen in a blog. Phil, as far as I'm concerned you've justified the site with this one post.

**Walker (/profile/walker)** August 31, 2012, 9:22 am

One more thing should be said about Judith Butler's statement. The level of discourse in the thread is high. It contains far fewer rote responses and less personal slagging than most. I think this is due to the standard Butler set.

**Klaus Bloemker (/profile/)** September 2, 2012, 7:01 pm

Judith Butler's NEW response in two German papers.

A somewhat left-liberal Frankfurt Paper had asked Judith Butler to respond to the accusations by the German Council of Jews that she

1. "calls for a boycott of Israel" and
2. that she considers Hamas and Hisbolla as "legitimate social movements."

– Her response was published on Aug. 31 in the Frankfurter Rundschau and also in the Berliner Zeitung.

She says:

1. "Unlike BDS I reject the discrimination of people on the basis of their nationality."
2. "Even if the two organizations were part of the 'global left', it's by no means a reason to suspect them." (No mention of anti-imperialism as in her above text.)

She talks at length about the need to fight anti-Semitism and that in Germany there are special reasons to suspect Israel critics of anti-Semitism. (She doesn't seem to suspect that German Israel supporters may be suspicious because of a guilt complex.)

Overall, her rather lengthy response sounds very defensive and poor.

**Klaus Bloemker (/profile/)** September 2, 2012, 9:15 pm

To be correct, Judith's response was published in the printed editions of the two German papers on Saturday Sep. 1. (Online on 8/31). The headline read: "Let's start to talk together".

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She starts by saying (on half a page) that the accusations against her are a "denunciation" and says, "as long as there are no arguments that I can respond to, I can only analyse this denunciation as an act of speech". – Later on in her text, she in fact addresses the content of the two "denunciations" mentioned above.

MONDOWEISS