

DR. DEVIN BUCKLEY RESPONDS TO HER CANCELATION WITH AN OPEN LETTER TO HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Dr. Devin Buckley, a feminist philosopher and WoLF board member, was scheduled to speak at Harvard University on her cutting-edge work on British Romanticism and philosophy. But on April 18th, Dr. Buckley was notified that she had been disinvited, citing her board membership with "an organization that takes a public stance regarding trans people as dangerous and deceptive."

WoLF opposes this blatantly false characterization of our work, as well as Harvard's flagrant disregard for free speech. Dr. Buckley's original talk did not have anything to do with her feminist beliefs.

THE DISINVITATION EMAIL:

Dear Devin,

I have some bad news. As we were preparing the application for next year's funding, my co-coordinator looked you up on google to include the correct details about you on the application. She was surprised to find that your public profile is largely rooted in controversial issues regarding trans identity and that you're on the board of an organization that takes a public stance regarding trans people as dangerous and deceptive. Since you're mostly engaging in the public sphere as more of a polemicist than Romanticist, this puts the colloquium and the department and myself in an uneasy position.

My co-coordinator has refused to extend to you a formal offer to speak at our colloquium. I can't fight for you on this. I wasn't even aware of your online presence before Erin found it, and to be honest I didn't know this was so much a part of your public identity. Even if I were to push your visit past Erin, it will be near impossible to get our two faculty members to sign onto funding your visit once they learn of your online presence. Really, it's not so much because of your own personal conviction regarding trans identity. It's more about the public stance you've taken and how you've recently crafted a professional presence around these issues.

I'm so sorry we can't extend the formal invitation I promised you. You've done cutting-edge work in the study of Romanticism and religion. Maybe we can work out some other kind of engagement elsewhere in the future.

I'm willing to explain further about this if you want. I'm very sorry again.

Sincerely,

X

DR. BUCKLEY'S RESPONSE TO CANCELATION:

Dear X,

I understand that Harvard has forced you to be the bearer of bad news, namely that the panoptic power of Google has revealed me to be a dissident. I hold no grudge against you for this, since I assume you don't necessarily approve of Harvard's decision. You are still my friend and brilliant colleague. I won't, of course, ask you to make your views explicit, lest you risk cancellation as well.

The news of my disinvitation to Harvard is disappointing, not only because I would have loved to give a lecture on poetry and philosophy, but because this is yet another instance of an elite university punishing (and misrepresenting) someone who questions fashionable far left dogma.

As you know, the lecture I was to give at Harvard had absolutely nothing to do with gender or feminism. It addressed esoteric philosophical matters in the Romantic movement. This is not a case of Harvard refusing to platform ideas it dislikes. This is a case of Harvard deplatforming me for political reasons entirely unrelated to my scholarship. As you mentioned in your email, I was of interest to Harvard for my "cutting-edge research," not my women's rights advocacy—and I had no intention of bringing up gender or feminism at a talk on the relevance of Plotinian Neo-Platonism and Vedic Philosophy to transcendent ontologies of early nineteenth century British poets.

No matter. If my talk had been on astrophysics I have no doubt that I would have received a similar email.

If it is unacceptable for me to speak at Harvard on British poetry and philosophy because I am a feminist, then I invite Harvard to purge its libraries and museums of all those who hold views unacceptable to Harvard. If I am to be silenced, then why do the tomes and treatises of history's innumerable sexist,

racist, homophobes still sit on Harvard's hallowed shelves and continue to be cited with reverence? Harvard should cleanse them all and leave nothing but the purity of empty space.

It's difficult to discern whether those who cancel feminists like me won't or can't understand us when we critique gender. My suspicion is that most people do not believe that a male can become female. They simply remain silent on the matter for the sake of their careers. I want to call them moral cowards, but I also have sympathy for those who must do this to survive, such as adjuncts who struggle to find non-academic jobs and continue to hang on desperately to exploitative part-time labor at wealthy universities which advertise themselves as bastions of social justice.

Your email disinviting me states that I am "on the board of an organization that takes a public stance regarding trans people as dangerous and deceptive." This is a mischaracterization. Never has my organization, Women's Liberation Front, made the claim that a person is dangerous simply because he or she identifies as trans. Rather, our organization opposes ideology and policy dangerous to women. This includes laws which allow males entry into women's spaces on the basis of self-attested gender identity. This is happening right now in women's prisons.

One of my iniquitous 4W articles reported on a New York bill that would allow males to be housed with women solely on the basis of self-attested gender identity. We are already seeing the results of similar policies in California, Washington, and New Jersey. In New Jersey, for example, one of the 27 convicted male transfers being housed in New Jersey's Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women is a trans-identified male serving a 50-year sentence for the brutal murder of a sex trafficked immigrant woman. Additionally, two women at this facility are now pregnant through their association with another trans-identified male who goes by "Demi." There have also been reports of assaults on women by males in Washington and California prisons.

WoLF and I have never claimed that someone is dangerous in virtue of being a trans-identified person. Rather, we have claimed that some trans-identified males are dangerous in virtue of being predators. We have claimed that males in women's prisons, for example, are a threat to women because they are violent males. WoLF has no issue with trans-identified females being housed in a women's prison. Furthermore, one of our arguments against self-ID concerns the fact that self-attested gender identity is, by definition, unfalsifiable since it is grounded on a purely subjective experience and, therefore, may be abused by predatory males who would not otherwise identify as trans.

Since such nuance cannot be beyond Harvard's intellectual caliber, I can only assume either that Harvard believes the abuses at women's prisons are fake news or that Harvard believes such violence against women is in some way justified.

So much for the claim that WoLF believes trans-identified persons are dangerous. As for the claim that we believe trans identity is deceptive, I can only say that we do believe it is deceptive to claim that a male is female.

I shouldn't have to mention here that I have a degree in biology (neuroscience to be exact) but I will anyway just to drive the point home. Not only do I have a degree, but I attained highest honors in that degree and a record of straight A's from cell biology through computational neuroscience, to say nothing of the fact that I studied human and animal genetics at Stuyvesant High School of math and science while working part-time in a microbiology lab at Columbia University. I am confident about my definition of a woman—an adult human female.

Unfortunately, my sense of reality and justice do not align with woke gender doctrine. I find it morally offensive to allow rapists, murderers, and otherwise violent men to declare themselves female and be imprisoned with women. Evidently, Harvard finds my objection morally offensive.

I have, as you say, crafted a professional presence around this issue, much of which has involved polemic. That does not, however, eclipse my scholarly achievements nor does it negate my passion for subjects other than feminism.

Why can I not be interested in both Platonism and feminism? Shelley was. Why can I not write in multiple genres, including polemic? Many of the authors we study did—and they faced severe repercussions for deviating from the norms of their day.

Considering that many scholars at Harvard and elsewhere are celebrated for their activism both within and without their scholarship, while I am condemned for it, it's clear that the fact that I am an activist or a polemicist is not the issue, but what I am an activist about. Harvard has let me know that I cannot be a scholar of British Romanticism because I do not believe there are male women.

For my part, I'd rather be damned with the Romantics and Plato than go to woke heaven with Erin and the Harvard faculty.

Sincerely,

Devin Jane Buckley, Ph.D.