

Prof. Dr. Judith Butler, University of California Berkeley, USA

Prof. Dr. **Judith Butler** is a professor of comparative literature at the University of California, Berkeley and holds the Hannah Arendt Chair in philosophy at the European Graduate School. She received a PhD at Yale University in 1984 where her dissertation focused on the relationship between Hegel, phenomenology, and the Frankfurt School. Professor Butler began to receive international acclaim with the publication of *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* in 1990. This text is recognized for its sophisticated questioning of hegemonic concepts within the philosophical and feminist traditions, particularly the essentialist views of sex, gender, and sexuality. *Gender Trouble* elegantly displaces the notion of a unitary “feminine” experience. Rather, gendered behavior is a violent imposition by external forces of control. It has since been lauded as one of the canonical texts launching the third wave of feminism that understands gender to be an artifact of its historical and cultural environments.

Her recent writings in political theory show a potent influence by her studies of subjectivation. *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* (2015) coalesced Butler’s ideas about the individuality of lived experience with an articulation of the multiplicitous nature of a political movement. It casts light on the forms of power and potentiality garnered by a gathering and coordination of bodies. While her early writings on gender and performativity are deeply impactful, they are by no means the entirety of her philosophical project. These are an expression of Butler’s larger work focused on exposing the politics of inclusion and exclusion, the production of marginality, and giving representation to diverse forms of life. This has given her cause to study a variety of questions ranging from her 2000 publication *Antigone’s Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*, to *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (2009), and *Parting Ways: Jewishness and the Critique of Zionism* (2012).

Butler’s theoretical writings have long been accompanied by her political, public engagement. She has been active with several human rights organizations, including the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York and the advisory board of Jewish Voice for Peace. Butler has been featured and cited by others in prominent news outlets such as *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*. She has received 12 honorary degrees from academic institutions, including the Université Paris-VII and the Universidad de Guadalajara.

Butler was conferred the Hermes Award from the International Institute for Hermeneutics in 2004 and 2020. She has advanced greatly the overtly political potential of the interpretive arts. Moreover, Butler’s work as an interdisciplinary theorist echoes the timeless hermeneutic insight that we are always already within, between, and encompassing the interpretations of our day.