

**Professor takes medical leave after pro-Israel Facebook post leads to
'vicious hate mail' campaign:
A case study in academic intolerance**

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Andrew Pessin, Professor of Philosophy at Connecticut College, is the latest casualty in the campus-based culture wars. Dr. Pessin is a well-liked and much published professor, self-described as the “only Jewish professor on campus who openly advocates for Israel.” And now, for remarks made during last summer’s Gaza war, he faces an attack from Palestinian supporters seeking to silence pro-Israel stances on campus.

Pessin told *Breitbart News* he believes he was set up by “a Muslim student and an Islamic Studies colleague” who worked in concert. They dug up one of Professor Pessin’s Facebook entries, one he posted during the August 2014 war in Gaza, the war in which Israeli soldiers uncovered and destroyed countless underground terror-tunnels which opened into Israel and were to be used in a mass attack against Israeli civilians. Referring to a leadership that purposely exposed its own civilians to death merely for propaganda purposes, and whose holy warriors attacked mainly Israeli civilians, Pessin compared this leadership to a “rabid pit bull.”

One student, Lamiya Khandaker, whose parents are from Bangladesh and who is also the Chair of Diversity and Equity for the campus’s Student Government Association, wrote to Professor Pessin. He immediately clarified that he was referring to the Hamas leadership and ideology, not to Palestinians; and, upon the advice of the administration, he apologized to Khandaker and deleted the post. Too late, too little.

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A firestorm ensued. Students wrote letters and the student newspaper, *The College Voice*, published them (without reaching out to Pessin). An online petition was launched, calling upon the university to disassociate itself from Pessin's "racism," and on April 1st the university canceled classes so all students could attend a "mandatory series of events" for a campus-wide conversation on racism, equity, and inclusion.

Connecticut College now has the same kind of Brownshirt-style bullies whom I first encountered back in 2003. In the name of "anti-racism," they condemn true intellectual dissent and truth-telling as crimes. Something similar (although different in style) happened at Yale when, in 2011, the university ended Dr. Charles Small's very successful program: the Yale Initiative for the Interdisciplinary Study of Anti-Semitism. There, too, a pro-Palestinian student operative, mentored by a prominent Islamist professor, orchestrated a campaign.

Dr. Small has gone on to create an Institute that now exists at Harvard, Columbia, and Fordham Law Schools; McGill, Stanford—and at the Sorbonne, at Sapienza University, the largest university in Rome, and at the University of Chile.

For the time being, Professor Pessin has taken a medical leave of absence due to the "stress" caused by his being publicly defamed and condemned by both faculty and students. According to Pessin, he has been "receiving vicious hate mail and threats to me and my family from around the world."

Lamiya Khandaker writes that *she* feels "unsafe" because racism is "institutional" and also exists in "micro"-forms. Although she admits that she never felt "victimized" in any of Professor Pessin's classes, in a style meant to inflame, she writes:

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Just imagine if he [Pessin] substituted Gaza for ‘Ferguson.’ Imagine if he spoke about ‘Ferguson thugs’ as ‘rabid pit bulls’... In a time when everyday news headlines are sensationalizing the correlation between ‘Muslims’ and ‘Terrorism,’ it becomes increasingly hard to feel safe as a Muslim. I feel unsafe when I go out to the local community. I felt unsafe when my quick stop to Shop Rite resulted in dirty looks, and couples bringing up the topic of ISIS purposely in front of me. I feel unsafe if this is what our own academics are publicizing.

Khandaker is a practiced political operative. At Brooklyn Technical High School, she founded a chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine. Further, although Khandaker quickly deleted her own Facebook material, cached Facebook material “appears to show her accusing Israel of ‘genocide’ and ‘scoffing at anti-Semitism.’” Khandaker has also claimed that “Starbucks supports occupation and apartheid.”

Khandaker has been monitoring Pessin, taking notes on what he has said on panels (about the Islamist massacre at *Charlie Hebdo*), and corresponding with him, according to Pessin himself. This attack on intellectual diversity actively denies Pessin’s academic freedom as well as free speech— that he is entitled to hold views that differ from her own.

What has just happened at Connecticut College is typical, not unusual. Pessin says “it is an anti-Zionist, anti-Semitic campaign masquerading as a campaign against racism.”

For years now, and from coast to coast, professors have been attacked as “racists” and “Islamophobes” when they dared to offer a critique of Islamic gender and religious apartheid and the Islamist use of terrorism, or to note Islam’s long history of colonialism, imperialism, anti-black racism, slavery, and conversion via the sword.

Pro-Israel statements—or known pro-Israel professors—are beyond the pale, represent a point of view that is so evil it must be shamed, threatened, and silenced

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