

Silence of the Feminist Lambs: Not a Word on Hamas Horrors



by Phyllis Chesler

In 2005, I published a book titled [*The Death of Feminism*](#). At the time, I was focused on how Western feminists had become obsessed more with the alleged “occupation” of a country that has never existed – Palestine – than with the real occupation of women’s bodies in Gaza and on the West Bank, who were being forced into hijab, niqab, and child and arranged marriages, or who were being honor killed by their families for minor or imagined infractions. This form of [femicide](#) is primarily a [Muslim-on-Muslim](#) crime both in the West and in Muslim countries but, to a lesser extent, also takes place among [Hindus](#) in India, and, less frequently, among Sikhs. Honor killing is likely a tribal custom that religious leaders have failed to abolish, I wrote, one in which women

also [collaborate](#).

Both Stalinized and Palestinianized feminists and rabid Islamists denounced me as an “Islamophobe” for prioritizing the rights of women of color over and above the rights of the men (and women) of color who were terrorizing and even killing them. I was also condemned as a “Zionist” for questioning the sacredness of Palestinian victimhood.

Thus, I may have been among a handful of people not surprised by the feminist silence on Hamas’ Oct. 7 pogrom-on-steroids. It does not ease my sorrow that so many others, including the worldwide media and professoriate, human rights groups, and the United Nations, are also actively engaging in Oct. 7 denialism, as well as in relentless and vicious blood libels against the Jewish state, every single day.

By the late afternoon of Oct. 7, I was a cognitive warrior on fire. Between Oct. 11 and Jan. 25, I had published 24 [articles](#) on the subject and been [interviewed](#) about it [10 times](#).

Most second-wave feminists have died, suffered strokes, or are struggling with either dementia or cancer. Many are disabled. They are no longer “dancing in the streets.” But some of my long-time allies still attend conferences, march, sign petitions, write articles, and speak out.

These are the feminist allies who did not respond to the articles that I sent them about their shameful, even unbearable, silence. Perhaps they felt that Israel deserved whatever it got but were too embarrassed to say that to me. Instead, they said nothing.

Only one such feminist ally responded by sending me articles by [Masha Gessen](#) and [Judith Butler](#). She suggested that reading their ideas about the moral superiority of vulnerable Jewish Diaspora life and the advantages of dissolving the Jewish state would “open my mind to the truth.” She also sent me an

article that blamed Benjamin Netanyahu – and only Netanyahu – for the failure of a “two state solution – the only fair solution.”

I immediately sent her my [critique](#) of Butler and Gessen; I sent her [Bassem Eid's](#) fact-based piece in *Newsweek*. Eid summarizes the long history of Arab rejection of the offers for a Palestinian state, first proffered by the British, then by the UN, and, finally, by Israel at least six times. Thus far, she has not responded.

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