

Scholars Circle Resource Guide

Double-sided

Preparing for the Coming Wave of Campus Divestment Campaigns

SCHOLARS CIRCLE



About Dr. Andrew Pessin

Andrew Pessin is Professor of Philosophy and Jewish Studies at Connecticut College and Campus Bureau Editor of the *Algemeiner*. His many books include *Anti-Zionism on Campus*, *Poisoning the Wells: Antisemitism in Contemporary America*, and *The Jewish God Question*, as well as several novels. One recent novel is *Nevergreen*, a satirical and now clearly prophetic account of campus cancel culture, its ideological excesses, and its deleterious impact on the Jews. Long ago he enjoyed some moments of fame portraying “The Genius” on the David Letterman Show.

DR. ANDREW PESSIN

Professor of Philosophy at Connecticut College and Campus Bureau Editor for *The Algemeiner*



Contact Andrew Pessin

WEBSITE: www.andrewpessin.com

EMAIL: apessin@conncoll.edu

SUBSTACK (ENCOURAGE SUBSCRIPTIONS!):

[HTTPS://ANDREWPESSIN.SUBSTACK.COM/](https://andrewpessin.substack.com/)

FOLLOW ON X: @ANDREWPESSIN

JOIN FACEBOOK GROUP: ANTI-ZIONISM ON CAMPUS

Learn more at
chaimitzvah.org

Common Q&A's

What is the “demand for divestment”?

As part of the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel, anti-Israelists demand that their universities divest their endowments of Israeli companies, companies that support Israel militarily or otherwise, or even companies that do business in or with Israel. The aim is to harm Israel economically as well as to stigmatize it and isolate it, as part of the overall campaign to destroy the Jewish state.

On what basis do anti-Israelists make this demand?

On the basis of a set of lies about Israel: that it is a racist state, an apartheid state, that it is guilty of ethnic cleansing, of genocide, etc. They falsely portray Israel as uniquely guilty of terrible sins, thus justifying its isolation and eventual destruction. At the same time they falsely portray their campaign as one advocating “for” the rights of Palestinians, whom they treat as pure victims and never responsible for their actions. Thus what is actually an “anti-Israel,” and in fact “pro-Hamas,” campaign is falsely represented as a “pro-Palestinian” one.

What are the main arguments against divestment?

There are many, and in a corresponding article I go through at least sixteen! These include many “general” (i.e. content-neutral) arguments based on considerations about the nature and norms of the university itself, including the idea that divestment of any sort, from just about any country, would be inconsistent with that nature and those norms. They also include arguments specific to the Israeli-Palestinian-Jewish-Arab-Muslim-Iran Conflict (IPJAMIC), including the idea that the nature and norms of the university dictate that universities should invest in Israel and divest from the other side.

Key Takeaways

- ☑ The divestment campaign is part of the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel. It is not a “human rights” or “pro-Palestinian” movement, but an anti-Israel, pro-Hamas, movement, concerned not about the rights of Palestinians, but about destroying Israel.
- ☑ There are many compelling reasons why a university should not merely say “No” to the demand, but denounce and condemn it. Many of these derive from the nature and norms of the university itself, which require (among others) academic freedom and institutional neutrality, both of which are inconsistent with divestment. The divestment campaign in fact is an effort by anti-Israel activists to hijack the institution for its own political ends.
- ☑ Many other compelling arguments against divestment are based on a proper understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian-Jewish-Arab-Muslim-Iran Conflict (IPJAMIC). In short, Israel is not only not the evil entity the anti-Israelists falsely proclaim, it is in fact the side far better aligned with the nature and norms of the university. The university, in other words, should be investing in, not divesting from, the Jewish state of Israel.