

Academic Freedom in Israel: A Comparative Perspective

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Stanley Fish: *Academic Freedom: From Profession to Revolution*

Academic Freedom in Israel: A Comparative Perspective compares academic freedom in Israel with that enjoyed by faculty in three academic leaders-Germany, Great Britain and the United States. This first of its kind research, is systematic, detailed and meticulously referenced.

The study indicates that, contrary to the view of radical scholars and their liberal supporters, the Israeli academy has enjoyed far greater freedom than its comparative counterparts. Indeed, in all three countries a combination of case law, ethic codes and strong oversight by boards of directors and politicians who appointed the boards have made it hard on activist faculty in public universities to push an activist political agenda.

Not countervailed by academic duties and a need to account to the public and its elected representatives, radical academics in Israel have abused academic freedom in both inside and outside the classroom. Radical faculty has routinely compared Israel to the apartheid regime in South Africa and Nazi Germany - an analogy that is not acceptable under the European Union "Working Definition of anti- Semitism."

The expansive sense of academic freedom has hurt Israel's liberal arts and social science in particular, they have been trending well below global averages, jeopardizing Israel's overall quest for international academic excellence.

We hope that the study will spur a long-overdue debate on how to restore much-needed balance between academic freedom and the broader interests of the society and the state.



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Professor Seliktar is the author of eight books and dozens of article journals, chapters in books and scores of reports on Middle East issues and Israel. In 2005, she published *Tenured Radical: From Post Zionism to Political Activism* that analyzed the abuse of academic freedom by radical scholars.