The UC Davis Forums
on the Public University and the Social Good

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Scholars at Risk: What Are the Obligations of Universities?

Judith Butler

Maxine Elliott Professor of Comparative Literature, UC Berkeley

Judith Butler is the Maxine Elliott Professor in the Department of Comparative Literature and the Program in Critical Theory at the University of California, Berkeley, where she also served as the program’s Founding Director.

Professor Butler is one of the world’s most influential scholars and activists working in the areas of gender and sexual politics and human rights. Her many books, which include Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (1990), Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex (1993), and Undoing Gender (2004), have been translated into 21 languages. She has received the Adorno Prize from the City of Frankfurt for her contributions to feminist and moral philosophy, the Brudner Prize from Yale University for lifetime achievement in gay and lesbian studies, and the Andrew Mellon Award for Distinguished Academic Achievement in the Humanities, among many other honors. She also serves on the Advisory Council of the New University in Exile, a consortium of universities and colleges dedicated to assisting persecuted and endangered scholars worldwide.

In her presentation, Professor Butler will address the growing problem of scholars suffering threat, detention, or forced exile for dissenting political opinions or work in controversial fields. She will shed light on the new obligations universities have not only to receive scholars at risk, but also to counter censorship, the attack on gender studies, and the expulsion of those whose research or extracurricular speech constitutes a “threatening” form of political dissent.

Lecture: 3 to 4:30 p.m.  ARC Ballroom B
Reception: 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.  ARC Ballroom B

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