

# Against Bruce Gilley's Colonial Apologetics



[Joshua Moufawad-Paul](#) started this petition to [Academics](#)

It has come to our attention that Lexington Books, an imprint of Rowman and Littlefield, has green lit a book series entitled Problems of Anti-Colonialism that is co-edited by Bruce Gilley. A few years ago Gilley expressed his poorly researched thoughts on colonialism and anti-colonialism in a paper that was retracted from Third World Quarterly. The retraction was based on the fact that it had been published without peer review and simply in the interest of debate, causing fifteen members of the journal's board to step down. Moreover, despite Gilley's complaints about being "silenced", the fact was that his thesis that colonialism was good and that anti-colonial theory misrepresented the goods of colonialism was based on a misrepresentation of source material and egregious historical revisionism. More than one response to his retracted paper revealed the shoddiness of his research, demonstrating that he should not be taken as a scholarly expert in the area of colonialism and anti-colonialism.

It is troubling that someone who has never seriously studied the history or theory of colonialism and anti-colonialism, and has only recently insinuated themselves in this field, should be treated as a serious scholar. His only published work in this area was retracted because it did not meet academic standards, because he

misrepresented and misunderstood the work to which he was referring. Imagine if a scholar of Renaissance Art declared themselves an authority on ancient Egyptian history and wrote a paper ignoring or misrepresenting the work in this area. Or imagine a scholar of Pythagoras wrote a paper for a contemporary astronomy journal arguing for the relevance of astrology. Or a Six Day Creationist publishing their thoughts against Darwin in a reputable biology journal. We would rightly castigate this “scholarship” as inadmissible just as we would castigate flat earth theorists. Why, then, is the field of the history of colonialism and anti-colonialism not held to the same standard? Why is horrendous scholarship, which largely ignores a century of work, treated to lax publication standards? We hope the answer is not that white nationalism, which is ultimately the position Gilley’s work would lead a reader to endorse, cancels out rigorous scholarship.

Moreover, considering that Rowman and Littlefield has published the work of leading scholars in anti-colonial theory and history, we find it strange that the same publisher is choosing to promote a scholar who has shown that he has very little knowledge in this area but instead wants to abide by outdated and disproven historical perspectives about colonialism. Gilley is under the impression, along with the rising white nationalist trend, that European colonialism was good and spread civilization! His own work has shown a pig-headed refusal to deal with the rigorous historical analyses that have demonstrated otherwise; he has in fact misrepresented some of this material.

Hence we are calling on Rowman and Littlefield to terminate Gilley’s series because Gilley not only fails to meet the standards of scholarship in the area his series is purportedly about, but because he endorses a white nationalist perspective that is opposed to historical research itself. It is difficult to believe that the volumes in this series will accomplish anything more than lend academic credibility to paternalist and eurocentric revisionism and neo-colonial and settler-colonial propaganda and policy.

Please sign your name with the institution you're affiliated with, if you are affiliated with an institution.

PETITION UPDATE

## The Open Letter Worked

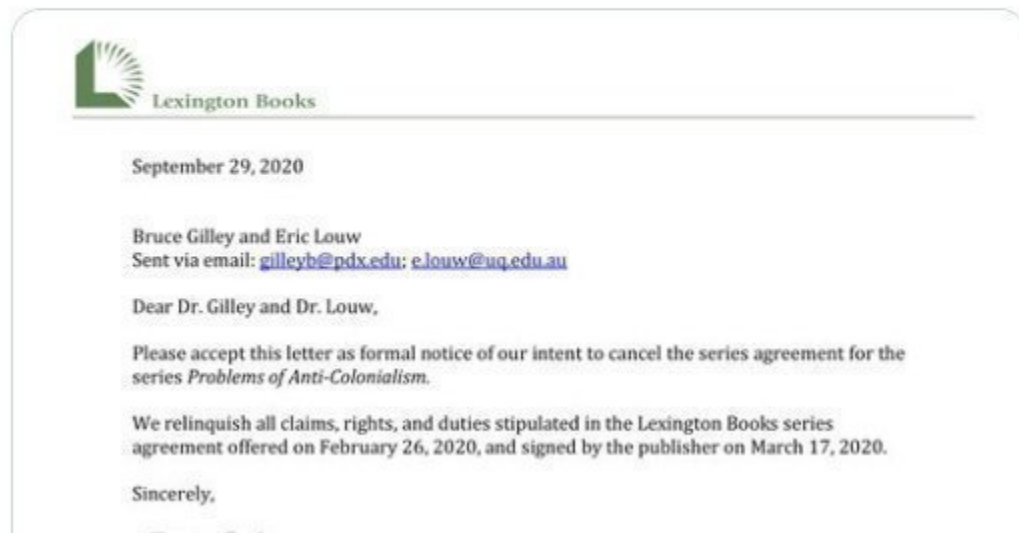
Joshua Moufawad-Paul

Toronto, Canada



**Bruce Gilley** @BruceGilley3 · 29m

UPDATE: The Taliban has won. Our book series has been yanked by the publisher, thanks to Maoists. Hey America: what country do you live in?



SEP 30, 2020 —

Thanks to everyone, in all the diverse fields and political backgrounds, who signed this open letter. Rowman and Littlefield paid attention to the academic community and Gilley's shameful series has been rejected. As you can see from his reaction he still doesn't understand the difference between academic standards and censorship, but I'm glad that many of us still do.

Reasons for signing

William Minter

Racism by academics is still racism.

J Vanessa de St-Blanquat

There is NO excuse for colonialism. Simply put, it is inhumane, it is cruel, it is illegal, it is undemocratic. It is rape of everything.

Thomas Turner

Not all opinions are equal in value.

Michael Panzer

Anti-anti-colonialism is white supremacy writ large. Period, end of sentence.

Steve Monteith

Self evident

Jay Ramasubramanyam

Gilley is a scourge to academia!

Rachael Hill

Assistant Professor of History

Cal Poly Pomona

Arun Brahmbhatt

St. Lawrence University

Amit Prakash

Middlebury College

Gustavo Rivera

DOWN WITH NEO-FASCISTS!

Emmanuel Udeagha

Colonialism is evil

Reshmi Dutt-Ballerstadt

Lexington will lose credibility as a press if they moved forward with publishing Gilley and his racist and unnecessary glorification of colonialism.

Rebecca Karl

I will advise every person I know to avoid publishing with Lexington AND its parent company. This isn't scholarship; it is screed.

Chijioke Onah

It is just absurd and irresponsible.

Megan Horst

Portland State University. Giley is NOT an expert in colonialism.

Anthony Alessandrini

I'm signing because I have a book on Fanon that was published by Lexington, and it would be an insult to his legacy to have it share a catalog with this odious series.

Lopamudra Basu

I am signing because I will be embarrassed to mention that my book is published by a press supporting this bogus discredited writer.

Kim Hall

This elevation of someone who has already been exposed as a shoddy researcher is an egregious misuse of Rowman's authority as a press.

Aparajita De

I won't be comfortable seeing my published work get shared along with this hack!!

nalini iyer

As an R&L author, I'm disappointed. I won't be submitting future proposals to them

Charlie Campbell

I am so sick of white people doing the bare minimum and calling us savages who are unworthy of our own land and sovereignty when they have literally... [Read more](#)

Richard Godden

Louisiana State University

Lisette Blanco-Cerda

This is just downright embarrassing and begs the question, WTF?

Sonja Kleij

Utrecht University

Elijah O'Bryant

This racist scam being packaged as an intellectual endeavor is too dangerous for the colonized and their descendants to roam free in this world.

Sayan Dey

This is against the basic values of humanity. This is absolutely ridiculous!

Kanika Batra

I oppose Bruce Giley's views supporting colonialism.

Mark Harvey

As a fellow University Academic this book is unethical and racist.

Shamma Boyarin

Because no one needs an academic series defending colonialism.

Molly Slavin

Georgia Institute of Technology

Andy Black

This series allows valuable resources and unnecessary exposure to ideas that are insidious and easily refuted (and have been), in which a white man... [Read more](#)

Kate Moore Koppy

I'm signing this petition because I don't want my book to share a catalog with this series.

Nourhan Abdellatif

Because you white supremacists just need to stop. Just stop.

Amy Earhart

It is unacceptable to publish such a series.

Gavin Johnson

This is a ridiculously disgusting concept for a book series. I cannot even begin the harm this kind of platform will have if it goes forward.

Dominick Knowles

colonialism is imperialism is genocide. this entire project is an embarrassment to an already-embarrassing academy, anchored to a notorious... [Read more](#)

Timothy Johnson

Imperial apologias rely on shitty scholarship and even shittier morals.

Victoria Santamorena

To publish and promote a series that furthers a history and tradition of genocide is despicable. By promoting anti-decolonization work, Rowman is... [Read more](#)

Tyler Shipley

This will be embarrassing for serious anti-colonial authors associated with the press. I hope Lexington will rethink the decision.

Joshua Moufawad-Paul

Gilley is a hack