

Julie Burchill's publisher cancels book contract over Islam tweets

That's the headline from the [wrote this in defence](#) of Miss Burchill.

Cancel culture doesn't exist, they say. In which case maybe someone could explain why Julie Burchill's book on cancel culture has just been cancelled.



Burchill, Fleet St legend and contributor to *spiked*, was writing a book called *Welcome to the Woke Trials*. It promised to be a typically insightful and acerbic dissection of the hysteria and intolerance of wokeness. But it is no more. The yellow-bellied folk at Hachette Books have pulled the plug after Burchill got into a Twitter spat with Ash Sarkar.

The Twitter beef, like all Twitter beefs, is barely worth recounting. Apparently some Corbynistas, always on the hunt for someone they can publicly denounce in the neo-Stalinist fashion, discovered that Rod Liddle wrote a piece for the *Spectator* eight years ago in which he said he could never have been a schoolteacher because he would probably have tried

to shag some of the teenagers. A joke? Disgusting. He was duly denounced as a paedo by the humourless literalists who clog up what passes for 'the left' in 21st-century Britain.

Burchill waded in. She took to task one of Rod's Twitch-hunters – the Queen of Cancellations, Ms Sarkar – and asked her about Muhammad's very young wife Aisha. She suggested it was hypocritical of Sarkar to go mental over Liddle's mick-take aside about screwing teens given she follows a religion whose prophet is thought to have had a fairly iffy marriage. (*Very young? She was 6 when he married her and 9 when he fully consummated his ownership, having performed external sexual activity on her until then. I call that very iffy*)

Cue woke derangement. This is racist, they cried. Isn't everything?

Burchill's publisher, the Hachette imprint Little, Brown, said it had decided not to publish *Welcome to the Woke Trials* because she had used indefensible language when communicating with the journalist Ash Sarkar.

Sarkar said Burchill "[quite openly subjected \[her\] to Islamophobia](#)".

Little, Brown said Burchill's comments on Islam were "not defensible from a moral or intellectual standpoint" and they "crossed a line with regard to race and religion". It added that her book had become "inextricably linked with those views". "We will no longer be publishing Julie Burchill's book," the statement said. "This is not a decision we have taken lightly. We believe passionately in freedom of speech at Little, Brown and we have always published authors with controversial or challenging perspectives – and we will continue to do so."

And yet the reaction to Burchill's cutting tweets is unquestionably mad. First she was hounded off Twitter. Some

genuine scumbags made fun of the fact that her son committed suicide (there's nowt so vile as the 'kinder, gentler politics' crew). And then Hachette ditched the book. All over a couple of tweets that mainly just took the piss out of Islam. This is nuts.

If anyone ever again tries to say cancel culture doesn't exist, remind them of this: a book on cancel culture was cancelled because the author made fun of Islam.

I have no doubt Burchill's book will find a publisher. Indeed, she told me (*Brendan O'Neil of Spiked*) in an email today that she very much plans that it will. But that shouldn't distract us from the ominous nature of the cult of cancellation and the way it seeks to destroy anyone who dares to question woke orthodoxies or take the piss out of a certain religion. Woke trials, indeed.

This morning's news is that the