

# Fighting Against the Conservative Agenda in the Academy: An Examination of the 4Ss of Academic Repression and Repressive Pedagogy Post-9/11/01<sup>1</sup>

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With the recent repression on college campuses from the Dirty Thirty at UCLA, where Peter McLaren leads off as the number one threat at UCLA to Ward Churchill recently being fired from University of Colorado, Bolder, there is a need to call attention to a new conservative agenda unfolding throughout the nation on college campuses. There has been an increasing amount of articles in the *Journal of Critical Education Policy Studies* on the conservative agenda forcing its way on campus (Hill 2003; Leher 2004; Lipman 2004; and Malott 2006), but nothing specifically on academic repression. In this paper I will discuss the popularization of academic repression throughout the U.S. to professors post-September 11, 2001. As the academy becomes a battlefield of public opinion, which will in the end determine the war on terrorism and who is and who is not a terrorist and therefore a threat. This paper is not intended to provide a historical outline of academic repression in the U.S., but a brief overview, which acts as a stepping point to the main topic of the paper, the 4Ss of academic repression. After explaining the current political atmosphere and providing four examples of academic repression post-September 11, 2001, I discuss the possible future if repression is not resisted, by providing my examination of the FBI Academy. In closing, this article stressed the importance of solidarity between academics and activists in order to respond to academic repression affectively.

## Introduction<sup>i</sup>

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has begun as a time of war, violence, and terrorism on a global scale as social, political, and environmental problems continue to mount to crisis levels. If reality were a movie about terrorism, the United States would have the leading role, manufacturing fear in the world that a terrorist attack might be around any corner. The threat of terrorism is beyond subjective and closer to fantasy where the truth is a concept that does not exist and terrorism is Peter Pan. The powers that be in the U.S. go so far as to make citizens in the United States fear their own family members—those *active* citizens who involve themselves in protests against corporate domination and corrupt politics. In response to aggressive capitalist globalization policies, intense forms of resistance are mounting against the great endorsers of corporate domination such as the U.S. and the U.K. These resistance movements range from nonviolent anti-Iraq war and social justice protesters to animal liberation and environmentalists. Included in these ranks of resistors are professors who are developing analysis and theoretical works about and in support

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of the resistance to global capitalism and imperialism based in the Western world, specifically the U.S. and U.K.

We have entered a neo-McCarthyist period rooted in witch-hunts against academics and critics of the ruling elites. In an interview with *Clamor* Magazine, Ward Churchill stated "the techniques have advanced. ... What that era [McCarthy's era] didn't have is an articulated plan to convert the institutions of higher learning to the dominant ideology."<sup>iii</sup> In an article "Under Attack: Free Speech on Campus" by Justin M. Park, Ellen Schrecher<sup>iii</sup>, states,

What's different between now and the McCarthy Era is that then attacks were on individual professors for extracurricular activities with communists groups or whatever. At no time was anybody's teaching or research brought into question. What's different today, and I think more scary, are things directed against curriculum and classroom and attempts by outside political forces to dictate the syllabus.<sup>iv</sup>

While Churchill's remarks are important, they simplify the complexity of financial influence on campuses during the McCarthy Era compared to now. During the McCarthy era the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), which funded a great deal of research on military weaponry and nuclear, atomic, and other forms of bombs at universities and national laboratories, funded a large amount of military driven research on college campuses. In 1974 AEC went under serious criticism for their goals and mission, which forced Congress to dismantle it. The AEC's goals merged into the Energy Research and Development Administration, which later became the Department of Energy, which owns and conducts all testing of U.S. nuclear weapons. The AEC with the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, and other private foundations, provides funding of directed research in the area of national security, counter-terrorism, and international relations with financial institutions. Consequently, the arts and humanities suffer the most, with cut backs on departments such as philosophy, a discipline which administration does not see as relevant because of the lack of "practical" and vocational skills. Antonio Gramsci fought against this similar curriculum shift, and stressed the importance of intellectual work (p. 27, 1989).

This blaze of repression is targeting anyone in alliance with the repressed as well (Best and Nocella 2006). Case in point: when Ward Churchill made news with his controversial article about the "technocrats" who worked in the Twin Towers in New York and were killed September 11, 2001 because of his scheduled lecture at Hamilton College February 3, 2005. The following is an excerpt from Churchill's article "[Globalization] 'Some People Push Back' On the Justice of Roosting Chickens," the full article can be found at [www.darknightpress.org](http://www.darknightpress.org):

The [Pentagon] and those inside comprised military targets, pure and simple. As to those in the World Trade Center: Well, really. Let's get a grip here, shall we? True enough, they were civilians of a sort. But innocent? Gimme a break. They formed a technocratic corps at the very heart of America's global financial empire--the 'mighty engine of profit' to which the military dimension of U.S. policy has always been enslaved--and they did so both willingly and knowingly. If there was a better, more effective, or in fact any other way of visiting some penalty

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befitting their participation upon the little Eichmanns inhabiting the sterile sanctuary of the twin towers, I'd really be interested in hearing about it.

When the Hamilton College lecture was cancelled at the hand of the administration, alumni, and conservative student body, he became an example to all by the powers that be on college campuses that whomever speaks militantly critical of the elite are to meet the same doom as Churchill. Suspiciously enough his academic colleague and fellow activist Adrienne Anderson was shown the door (what does this euphemism mean) at the University of Colorado, Boulder right after Churchill hit the news. The reasoning by administration was because of her "curriculum changes."<sup>v</sup>

The terms and players have changed, but the situation is much the same as in the 1950s: the terrorist threat usurps the communist threat, Attorney General John Ashcroft dons the garb of Senator Joseph McCarthy, and the Congressional Meetings on Eco-Terrorism stand in for the House Un-American Activities Committee. Now as then, the government informs the public that the nation is in a permanent state of danger, such that security, not freedom, must become our overriding concern. As before, the state conjures up dangerous enemies everywhere, not only outside our country, but more menacingly, ensconced within our borders, lurking in radical cells. The alleged dangers posed by foreign terrorists are used to justify the attack on "domestic terrorists" within, and in a hysterical climate, the domestic terrorist is any and every citizen expressing dissent.

The purpose of this paper is to address the recent academic repression on campuses from the Dirty Thirty at UCLA, where Peter McLaren leads off as the number one threat at UCLA to Ward Churchill recently being fired from University of Colorado, Bolder. This article is broken down into three sections. First, there is a brief overview of academic repression in the U.S.<sup>vi</sup> with a section on the climate post-9-11; this acts as a stepping point to the main topic of this paper, - the 4Ss of academic repression. Then secondly, the article provides a case study for each of the 4Ss of academic repression. Third, the article provides in-depth research on the potential for drastic changes in public and private university settings if academic repression is successful in its objective, - repressive pedagogy, controlled pedagogical design, and false-truths, by using the FBI Academy as its example. Finally, as its conclusion, this article provides methods and strategies on responding effectively to academic repression, by advocating for unity among academics and activists.

### **A Brief Overview of Academic Repression in the U.S.**

When the law, which supports capitalism and global imperialism cannot arrest, capture, destroy, or neutralize terrorists, they go after people who support, sympathize, study, and are scholars of them. This article addresses how the university has become a battlefield between academic freedom and academic repression (Hill 2003; Leher 2004; Lipman 2004; and Malott 2006). Academic Repression is becoming more and more familiar to non-conventional and critical intellectuals. College administrations across the U.S. have been putting their campuses on intellectual lockdown post September 11, 2001 (Hill 2003; Leher 2004; Lipman 2004; and Malott 2006). There is an intellectual war, and conservative body on college campuses are

winning. They believe that the academy is the last hold for the leftists and if they can eliminate that, this country will be a bastion of conservative thought. Do not be fooled, the ruling elite in the academy have been kicking out great controversial minds since day one of the Academy, during Socrates time, and as recent in the U.S. as blacklisting communist professors during the Red Scare in the 1940s and 50s. One of the most famous cases in U.S. history of academic repression occurred in 1969 when UCLA philosophy professor Angela Davis, a well-known international scholar against oppression in all forms, was fired from her teaching position because she was a communist. Ironically enough, Former Governor of California Ronald Reagan once vowed that Davis would in no way ever work for the University of California educational system again, today she is a honored tenured faculty and chair of the History of Consciousness Department at University of California Santa Cruz.<sup>vii</sup> Furthermore, in a memorandum written to all faculty of UC, Governor Ronald Regan wrote in June 19, 1970:

This memorandum is to inform everyone that, through extensive court cases and rebuttals, Angela Davis, Professor of Philosophy, will no longer be a part of the UCLA staff. As head of the Board of Regents, I, nor the board will not tolerate any Communist activities at any state institution. Communists are an endangerment to this wonderful system of government that we all share and are proud of. Please keep in mind that in 1949 it was reaffirmed that any member of the Communist Party is barred from teaching at this institution.

Cordially,  
Ronald Reagan, Governor<sup>viii</sup>

In 1970, as if things were not bad enough for Davis, she was framed and placed on the FBI's Top Most Wanted List for charges of kidnapping three San Quentin prisoners and supplying the gun that killed four people during the incident, which drove her underground until her arrest. Her trial is one of the most famous modern U.S. political cases, which was watched internationally. She was acquitted in 1972.

It has been documented that in the 1970s and 80s University of California employees had to sign a statement saying that they are not a member of a group that seeks to overthrow the U.S. government. But, even in 1915, Scott Nearing, a socialist professor of economics, was fired from the University of Pennsylvania during the beginning of World War I. Nearing was an activist and academic who wrote against the war, including a pamphlet, *Great Madness*, which noted the commercialization of war and another, *The Menace of Militarism*, which discussed the war as a profitable investment. Along with his strong position against war, he also aided in the establishing in the U.S. of the "back-to-the-land movement," as a part of which he started the organic Kokopelli Farm in California. He was also very publicly opposed to the use of child labor in coalmines. A mine owner on the board of trustees at University of Pennsylvania influenced the president of the university to fire Nearing (Ollman August 31, 2006).

Another professor that was fired because of his actions and political beliefs was Edward Bemis, from the University of Chicago in 1894, who was a major influence in the Chicago School (Ollman August 31, 2006). He was fired because of his public and strong support of the 1894 Pullman railroad strike, although it was noted that Bemis did encourage the strikers to end the

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strike rather than continue it, which he explained in writing to the president of the university. With the heightened anti-communism rhetoric by government, in 1940 the Rapp-Coudert Committee, officially known as the "Joint Legislative Committee to Investigate the Educational System of the State of New York," was established in Albany by the New York State legislature to investigate "subversive activities" at public and private colleges in New York. Between 1940 to 1941, more than a hundred staff, faculty, and students were subpoenaed and interrogated on their activities related to the Communist Party. In 1942, over forty professors were fired or denied renewal of their contract because they were members of a communist organization or because they refused to divulge their political ideology or party membership. These are just a few of the first cases of academic repression in the U.S., but of course not the last (Ollman August 31, 2006).

Today, academic repression is not only coming from offices of the administration, but from the voices in the university student body and alumni as well. Faculty members are being targeted for the actions of studying, supporting, sympathizing, or merely being a scholar of dissent to U.S. policy.

Case in point the Dirty Thirty, a list of thirty professors at University of California Los Angeles who are said to be a threat to the U.S. by the Bruin Alumni Association. This association is a small group run by one individual, Andrew Jones, a 2003 UCLA graduate who headed the campus Bruin Republicans and who was employed by conservative David Horowitz, until this controversy backfired when news found out that Jones was offering UCLA students up to \$100 for tapes or notes of lectures that showed how "threatening" the given faculty members were with their thoughts in their classroom.<sup>ix</sup>

Furthermore, we can look at the case of Middle Eastern Assistant Professor Joseph Massad of the Department of Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures at Columbia University, who spoke, organized events, taught, and advocated against Zionism from a "Pro-Jewish" position. Massad, one of the University's most controversial professors, teaches courses on the Arab-Israeli conflict, Islam, and modern intellectual thought. He also speaks around the country, is the assistant editor of the Journal of Palestine Studies, and was listed among "Columbia's Worst Faculty" by the Columbia Conservative Alumni Association (Harris 2004). This case is only one of many that demonstrates that conservatives on and off college campuses are demanding that critical thinking and education for liberation marginalized, if not in full done away with. What they *do* want is to chase liberal and social justice teaching out of every corner of this country, from politics to teaching. It is clear that the right is in pursuit of hijacking all platforms of discourse in this country.

While many cases go unnoticed, in the realm of silencing, denying hire, eliminating funding, demoting, and even firing, this article will only address four cases. The trouble with academic repression and these various other forms of harassment is that they cannot always be proven; most of the time they are covered up and said to be for other reasons, usually lack of quality of teaching or research.

But do not be fooled academic repression has not begun recently, but has been a reality since the formation of the academy. It is for this reason that other academies were built, not merely for geographical convenience. I do not want the reader to believe that post-9/11 the following cases are the only individuals in the academy being repressed; there are countless victims of academic repression. Finally, but most importantly, I will provide an example of the possible ideal form of education by conservatives for the purpose of allowing people to understand what education might look like, i.e., FBI Academy, after most or all critical thought is absent from universities as a direct result of academic repression.

### **Taking Our 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment Rights Away**

Thus, in the post-9/11 climate, intense controversy brews around the discourse of violence and terrorism. And so the questions arise: Who and what are "terrorists"? And, conversely, who and what are "freedom fighters"? What is "violence," and who are the main perpetrators of it? It is imperative that we resist corporate, state, and mass media definitions, propaganda, and conceptual confluences in order to distinguish between freedom fighters and so-called "terrorists." United States' history is entrenched in defending, by the protection of the Bill of Rights, a small group of individuals in re-shaping the direction of the whole country, be it through economic sabotage (e.g., Boston Tea Party) or violent revolts (e.g., Haymarket Riots). Today, these rights are being eroded by the efforts of law enforcement agencies and administrations that see political groups not as visionaries or patriots, but as terrorists and a threat to national interest (Hill 2003). So, the classic question must be asked, is the United States getting more conservative and repressive and if so, is there a solution to this repression, without the weakening of national interests?

The current political climate in the United States is no doubt hyper-sensitive to national security, but at what expense? What are U.S. citizens forced to give up in order to receive the Bush Administration's plans to provide national security? Further, are there certain people more at threat of being monitored than others? The answer to that question is yes. If you are resisting the Bush Administration's plans of implementing "national security," or are a resister of a capitalist company or agenda, a file by the FBI might be created on you, or your home might be searched without the process of filing for a warrant. Thus, this takes us to a specific question in the realm of political repression. While there has been much research on political repression carried out by law enforcement agencies, there has been little discussion on political repression from university administration, which we will refer to as academic repression. This article discusses the implications of academic repression toward verbal support of illegal actions, the right to sympathize with any group, event or action; support individuals you believe are highly ethical and just, but are breaking the law, such as the underground railroad; be a philosophical scholar, i.e., theoretician of any ideology, social movement, or belief one wishes; and the right to study any topic, issue, or field of study with out being challenged or restricted from doing so.

In what follows I will introduce a new concept in the field of academic repression, *the 4Ss of academic repression*. The 4Ss are *sympathizing, supporting, scholarship, and studying*. This article is written in hopes of opening discussion of current methods of academic repression by university administration on four professors whom were academically repressed – Ward

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Churchill, University of Colorado, Bolder, sympathizer; Steven Best, University of Texas, El Paso, supporter; David Graeber, formerly with Yale University, scholar; and Victoria Fontan, formerly at Colgate University, studier. The 4Ss are to provide a general framework on how an faculty member at a university could by their intellectual work be repressed, no matter what their actions are if on the topic of resistances to U.S. imperialism.

### Sympathizer

Academics study others not because of mere curiosity, but because of humanity. To sympathize is to relate to others' experience in order to understand events, conflicts, reasoning, and actions taken. Pastor Martin Niemöller, author of the famous poem about solidarity and supporting those that need voices of support, ended by noting that "When they came for me, there was no one left to speak out."

To arouse sympathy, for instance in the form of comparisons or analogies, is essential for freedom and liberation. Thus it is truly not surprising when influential individuals speak out publicly in sympathy of the oppressed or unpopular thoughts, events, or individuals. It must be stressed that to sympathize does not necessarily mean support, but rather to relate or respect. Sympathizing with a group or individual generally means that this individual understands and can see the justification of the given act or event.

One who is a sympathizer of an idea, action, or comment is common in intellectual communities, specifically the academy, because diverse thought is always praised. Furthermore, thinking critically and from a variety of positions or perspectives is also supported, until that sympathizing is for ideas that are not *publicly* supported or a threat to the government or the dominating institutions. One taboo I have found is sympathizing with (i.e., understanding) the attackers motivations and logic. One such sympathizer is professor Ward Churchill from University of Colorado, Bolder, who has also written the notable books *Agents of Repression* (2002) and *The COINTELPRO Papers* (2002) both with Jim Vander Wall. Churchill, like most leftist professors that are academically repressed, is an academic-activist. His activism and academic work specifically lies in the field of political repression, social movements, and Native American Studies. The limitation of freedom of speech exercised upon professor Ward Churchill, Native American, member of the American Indian Movement, and a sympathizer of armed struggle, is on trial by the media, his university, and the government for writing a book, "On the Justice of Roosting Chickens: Reflections on the Consequences of U.S. Imperial Arrogance and Criminality" (2003). The book has received a tremendous amount of attention because in it Churchill refers to the white-collared workers in the pentagon and the World Trade Center towers as "little Eichmanns." His comment led Hamilton College in New York to cancel a speaking appearance. In "AAUP [American Association for University Professors] Statement on Professor Ward Churchill Controversy,"<sup>x</sup> it states, "We deplore threats of violence heaped upon Professor Churchill, and we reject the notion that some viewpoints are so offensive or disturbing that the academic community should not allow them to be heard and debated. Also reprehensible are inflammatory statements by public officials that interfere in the decisions of the academic community."<sup>xi</sup> Most recently, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (May 26, 2006) states in the opening sentence that Churchill, " ... the professor who once likened victims of the 2001

terrorists attacks to 'little Eichmanns,' plagiarized, falsified, and fabricated material in his own research, an investigative panel at the University of Colorado at Boulder has found. The finding moves the university one step closer to firing the controversial professor" (p. 1). In other words, University of Colorado is closer to firing professors that hold controversial positions, those who speak truth to power.

## Supporter

To take sympathizers one-step further, supporters are individuals that actively and publicly support actions and organizations, not merely understand or relate to them. Support, for example, could be in the way of speaking, writing, or engaging in activities that promote and advocate for a group or actions. An individual that transports individuals, provides financial aid to active members, or is involved in a given campaign or action, is not a supporter anymore, but a member of that group. One individual that is clearly a supporter and not a member of a militant group is Dr. Steve Best, professor at University of Texas, El Paso who co-edited *Terrorists or Freedom Fighters? Reflections on the Liberation of Animals* (2004), (which was forwarded by Ward Churchill), who began his public support of a militant underground transnational group, the Animal Liberation Front. Best has written more than a dozen articles, spoken on national radio stations and television, and was a co-founder and a former press officer of the Northern American Animal Liberation Press Office, which speaks out on communiqués and actions by the Animal Liberation Front. The Animal Liberation Front has been labeled as a domestic terrorist threat by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Therefore, one can clearly argue that Steve Best is a public supporter of terrorists.

Recently, Steve Best has been banned from England, appeared in the Higher Education Chronicle, and has been asked to step down from his chairpersonship of the philosophy department at University of Texas, El Paso, with pressure by his peers in the department, external interests, and law enforcement. The Chronicle of Higher Education 2005, on the front cover has Best with the title of the article "Speaking Up for Animals" [with the full title being "Speaking for the Animals, or the Terrorists?," which is shown with the full article] with only a brief beginning statement of the article "A philosophy professor is the public face of the Animal Liberation Front. Critics say he is helping terrorists." He is said in the article to recruit students and "young people" by Mr. David Martosko, research director of the Center for Consumer Freedom, a Washington-based nonprofit that publicly is against the animal rights movement. Best rebuts by saying that Mr. Martosko is a "vulgar McCarthy-ite. ... I certainly do not recruit students into the ALF. ... I don't even know anyone in the ALF." He goes on to state, "History will be written about them [ALF]. They will be defamed now, but they will be taught to children later. They will write storybooks about these people, like Harriet Tubman. And I respect them infinitely more than I respect a philosopher lost in abstraction."<sup>xii</sup> Best is a great example of what neoconservatives and fascist administrations do not want on their ideal campus, for Best forces students to be critical and have hope for a more ethical and kind world (Giroux 1997; Giroux 1988).



### Scholar

Since the rise of the anti-globalization movement, there has been an undertone of anarchism in present-day activism: black bandanas, patches on their pants, and black flags waving at every mass demonstration. Some organize so as to develop a Black Bloc, others conduct jail support such as the Anarchist Black Cross, and then there are others that are aiding in first aid such as the Black Cross Health Collective. It is clear that one cannot deny that the most common ideology, which has aided in the shaping of the anti-globalization movement is anarchism. Consequently, it should not be surprising that these anarchist activists are being taught and provided information about this ideology most often at conferences, gatherings, and camps, such as Ruckus Society, National Conference on Organized Resistance (NCOR), and Earth First! Round River Rendezvous. Along with these activist-organized forums, the outspoken prolific and brilliant intellectuals that write books, articles, and essays on the topic educate activists as well. Some of these authors can be found at universities and colleges. Today, anarchism is the popular social movement ideology, but of course the label has its side-effects, notably massive political repression to those that identify as anarchists. Such scholars who have felt or have been threatened with repression because of identifying as an anarchist include the infamous Noam Chomsky, as well as Luis Fernandez, Steven Best, Maxwell Schnurer, and David Graeber.

Another form of academic repression is targeting not the actions of what the activist-academic does outside of school, such as supporting militant groups, but what they do in school, such as writing and speaking (McLaren and Farahmandpur 2005). As we have recently found out, not all topics and issues are open for scholarship, especially anarchism. Not an anarchist as you might imagine, with fist raised high in all black yelling at police at a demonstration, but one that teaches at an Ivy League school on the importance of small communities based on consensus decision-making. David Graeber, a self-proclaimed anarchist as well as an anthropology professor at Yale University, has been informed that his contract with Yale will not be extended; many of course believe it is based on his political scholarship and not lack of it. Graeber (2001) has written *Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value: The False Coin of Our Own Dreams* and *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*, along with many other publications that were noted as being a negative by his departments' review committee, which believed he was too published and publicly recognized. He stated in an interview, "One thing that I've learned in academia is no one much cares what your politics are as long as you don't do anything about them. You can espouse the most radical positions imaginable, as long as you're willing to be a hypocrite about them."<sup>xiii</sup> Therefore, while it is fine to identify as an anarchist, do not dare profess anarchist theory or advocate action against capitalism or the powers that be.

### Studier

In a recent invite to Colgate University by former Peace Studies faculty member Victoria Fontan to speak on peacemaking with revolutionaries, I learned of her conflict at the University concerning her research. Of course there is never a lack of academics studying (also referred to as research) and conducting investigations on militant groups identified by law enforcement and governments as terrorists. From the FARC in Colombia to the Irish Republican Army in Ireland, there are books, articles, documents, and more research on these groups. Some scholars are

evident in their understanding of the use of violent tactics, in that violent tactics are a means to create social change. Not that the scholar necessarily supports violence, but understands that in fact violence does create change, for better or worse. It is at this moment that these scholars are questioned and criticized for suggesting such a notion, which of course is true, but should not be mentioned. When scholars provide different opinions from the current public stance, they are marginalized and seen as a threat - one that has an agenda to provide propaganda in the classroom. Consequently, they are not seen as a teacher, but a voice for violence. Fontan, who was a visiting Assistant Professor of Peace Studies, was fired from Colgate University by the pressure of fellow faculty, students, alumni, and right-wing think tanks. She was noted by the official Colgate University press release on her work in Iraq as being "'embedded' in one of Iraq's resistance groups."<sup>xiv</sup> In no time at all "embedded" became "supporting" and "resistance groups" became "terrorist cells". Her head was on the chopping block with her own University noting to the public that her research is not at all affiliated with Colgate. It left her a lone wolf to fend for herself. Today, Victoria Fontan is the Director of the Peace Studies Program at the United Nations' University of Peace in Costa Rica. Not all are as fortunate as Fontan, as we have noticed with other cases of academic repression, in which professors are not provided an alternative job. Rather, they are blacklisted from the field completely, to only struggle to find a job with the aid of fellow colleagues at other universities or departments. The dialogues I have found are common; these individuals are over-qualified scholars that are not even given an interview for a part-time instructor's position. The reason could be a number of factors: not qualified in the area the search committee is looking for, over-qualified, and of course, too public and controversial because of their politics.

### **The Goal of the Conservative Agenda**

As critical thought is being repressed, conservative education is being applauded and tested by the U.S. government by their law enforcement agencies before it is implemented and/or complemented by universities (Hill 2003). Most recently, the FBI Academy -- which provides classes in motivation and psychology of terrorists, law enforcement, public relations, management, etc., along with training in combat, arms, and vehicle operations -- has targeted academics as guest lectures that are sympathetic or supportive of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and/or Earth Liberation Front (ELF) in the hopes of gleaning useful information to destroy these liberation groups. These groups protect the environment and liberate non-human animals from places of torture. Because they pose a threat to corporate exploiters and use tactics of economic sabotage, the FBI has identified them as the top domestic terrorist threats. Mass arrests have occurred and investigations are taking place around the country on people that defend the Earth nonviolently, but criticize capitalism and U.S. imperialism<sup>xv</sup>.

Perhaps frustrated by their inability to catch any significant number of underground activists, the FBI recently began contacting academics and high-profile activists to invite them to speak at their academy. Under the guise of dialogue, their intention was somehow to glean information to use against the underground movement. I was told I had been invited not because of the ALF, but to quote the instructor, because of my "...studies in the areas of peacemaking and conflict resolution." Before deciding to accept their speaking invitation, I consulted the views of about 30 people -- former political prisoners, anti-imperialists, professors, animal liberationists, Earth

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liberationists, and friends. As many long-time anti-imperialists and Black liberationists have told me, the old way is not working; we need to gather information on the FBI, as they have continue to investigate us.

After much discussion and debate, I decided, with the agreement of others<sup>xvi</sup> that I would go for two main investigational purposes. The first was to investigate and experience repressive pedagogy; the second, to analyze law enforcements' strategies, tactics, and propaganda campaign.<sup>xvii</sup> Noam Chomsky (1966/1987) notes the importance of using the academic legitimacy " ... to expose the lies of governments, to analyze actions according to the their causes and motives and often hidden intentions. In the Western world at least, they have the power that comes from political liberty, from access to information and freedom of expression" (p. 60). I knew at that time that activists would say I should never have gone, and that an activist should never talk to the enemy.<sup>xviii</sup> While I understand this critique, this instance was much different for a number of reasons. I did not speak on a trial, case, or before a grand jury. I made it clear I would not speak on the ALF, thereby preventing the FBI from somehow learning something useful from my talk that they could use against these groups. I as a researcher also found that I would be asking them questions about what they knew, how they believed they would "deal" with these movements, and ending false-truths about our movements being violent. I would speak for about 1 ½ hours on conflict resolution, specifically restorative justice, which I am more than willing to do and have done for military officers, ROTCs, public safety, law enforcement, and NGOs throughout the Americas, in aiding to significant conflict management skills.<sup>xix</sup> I also said I would explain why there is no satisfactory definition of terrorism.<sup>xx</sup> I accepted the FBI's invitation to speak at their academy, along with their \$800.00 payment, and donated it to grassroots groups and political prisoners.

The FBI Academy, established on a military base, is a controlled environment, which regulates the allowance of people in and out of buildings and campus and, has faculty and adjunct from University of Virginia teaching its courses. Similar to this controlled pedagogical design is the educational system in U.S. prisons that offer college courses from faculty and graduate students to prisoners. For example, Auburn Correctional Facility, which has a school built inside the walls of the prison, offers G.E.D. classes, basic first and secondary education, and college courses that are offered by faculty members and university students who come from the surrounding area. Before going into each of the places mentioned above, one must undergo an extensive background check and interview process in addition to showing valid identification, signing in at the door, walking through a metal detector, having an identification badge, and having your course physically monitored. Classes within both places resemble a university classroom, of course the prison classrooms typically do not have much technology, but that is to be expected, because of the limited budget.

At the FBI Academy there were approximately 25 students that were law enforcement or criminal justice students from all over the world with extensive history, but mostly from the U.S. The classroom at the Academy was much like any university at first, but what was significantly different was the lack of public access and diversity of thought and students. While many asked critical questions, the dilemma was they were never willing to shed their law enforcement

identity. To learn about (investigate and research) law enforcement or criminal justice, one must be critical of it in hopes to advance it, e.g., from retributive justice to restorative justice.

The Academy with two checkpoints and a visitors' center resembled a modern university, with video cameras on the quad, armed police walking the campus, and a jail to hold unwanted guests and unruly students. The FBI and DEA trained together, but conformed physically and mentally to their given agency. The DEA students dressed in black clothing (black shirt and cargo pants) and the FBI in tan (tan shirt and cargo pants). Again, this is similar to that of ROTC on campuses, to build unity, commonality, and a lack of difference. They also lived and ate together, similar to military boot camps. Consequently, universities are the same, forcing their freshman and sophomores to live on campus, which builds a community of sorts, but with strict regulations and rules. Only a certain amount of people, sometimes only the same gender, and at given times are allowed to enter the living quarters, i.e., dorms. At certain universities, males have to keep both feet on the ground at all times with the door open in female dorms. At the Academy, there was a large ropes course, firing range indoor and outdoor, plus a number of helicopters and four wheeled armed vehicles. Similar to the one that Fresno State University has in the center of their campus, a huge ROTC ropes course. It might have been built because of convenience, but university administration must have known the ramifications of the subliminal military mission it clearly delivered. While the FBI Academy class was cross-listed with University of Virginia, the critical thought, freedom of expression, and diversity of identities that one would expect from a university class was absent. This is not a unique academic case, but there are many classes around the country that teach privately military and law enforcement, with a specific agenda, which they would like to refer to as a syllabus. The one big difference, a syllabus is only a beginning point for discourse; in this case it is a governor of it. The Academy class did recognize and stress the importance of dialogue and the need for privacy with no transcripts (which is common in university classes).

Will the FBI take up nonviolent conflict resolution, in the form that the Alternatives to Violence Program uses? Most likely not. Most importantly, I saw *repressive pedagogy*, the counter to critical pedagogy (Freire 1970), which is fundamentally based in using false-truths. For example, students at the Academy are taught and memorandums are written that the Animal Liberation Front kills people and Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC, a nonviolent animal rights campaign to close down an animal testing facility, Huntingdon Life Science)<sup>xxi</sup> flips over cars, which was stated by one student, and supported by others. I did, of course, explain to them the truth: that the ALF is a nonviolent group; and SHAC does not flip over cars, so that these false-truths will hopefully stop. Further, the class developed into a 'bad cop, good cop' structure, where someone would say something I identified as wrong, while others defended me, in possible hopes of building rapport with me. Students would try to get me off target, e.g., asking about future actions, to which I replied that it was impossible to answer or merely go back to discussing conflict resolution. In a true educational setting, one does not interrogate or plot an outcome. Education is a transformative and enriching experience. Consequently, repressive pedagogy is designed and used by military, fascist regimes, and dictatorial militia groups in hopes to have non-questioning agenda-driven members, which promote or conduct their actions under false-truths. Is the tactic of disseminating falsehood done intentionally or out of ignorance of the real nature of activist groups by the FBI? I believe politicians (the same individuals that

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call for congressional hearings on environmental and animal rights activity), who are bought by corporate interests, truly spearhead this propaganda campaign in the form of passing repressive legislation, i.e., Animal Enterprise Protection Act of 1992. The FBI Academy, who is given a budget by this legislation, continues it, be it by their own conscious knowledge or not.

With high school administrations and Parent Teacher Organizations already placing in schools metal detectors, governing the type of clothing students wear, determining what textbooks are used in classrooms, and having oversight of all curriculum, the question must be asked, is conservative education, teaching false-truths, and repressive pedagogy the future of public and private universities? While it seems that there is a push in this direction by conservative think tanks at universities/colleges, there are too many critical scholars to allow this to happen without a fight. In contrast to law enforcement that advocates repressive pedagogy, there is hope in such places as the Army War College, West Point, and National Security Studies that are inviting university professors to diversify and aid in the training of military officers, so they are not trained in a groupthink private environment. I applaud such educational programs as the NSS for bringing their students (top ranking military officers) to universities, where they are challenged by fellow university students and protested by others. A diversity of courses and topics are adding to their broad education such as cultural awareness, international diplomacy, negotiations, and conflict management and resolution. This adds to the tools to be used in battle, hopefully to lessen the amount of violence and increase the amount of nonviolent interactions.

With higher education, which has become the battleground for the global information war, all are fighting for the control of public opinion, via blogs, books, articles, classrooms, magazines, newspapers, videos, and websites. Academic-activists are experts at this game, and in many ways are winning, but the result is mass academic repression. Academic repression has not hit the radar as it should, most likely because the journals and authors which expose repression are the ones being silenced, therefore leaving no one to write for them except for activists. Ironically enough, many activists have a preconceived notion that academics are detached and neutral in the fight for peace and justice. Academic-activists aid in research, theoretical justification, and serve as expert witnesses for street-line activists.

### **Conclusion**

It is not new that the academy has with the hand of the U.S. government silenced voices of dissent on and off campus (Schultz, Shultz, and Navasky 1989; Goldstein 2001; and Schultz and Schultz 2001). Today we see it from the Dirty Thirty, which has direct connections with professors mentioned above, to the invisible blacklisting of professors and potential professors. One point that must be stressed is that before any productive action for massive social change takes place, there must be a theory to shape and sculpt the strategy of that action or possible revolution (Marcuse 1972; Tilly 2004). Therefore, if there is a theory, there must be a theorist, and theorists typically are professors, but of course not always. The powers that be understand this process, and strive to nip it in the bud before the theorist has the ability to put the pen to the paper. For if college administrations stops this, they stop a resistance movement from being conceived. To this point, few academics have helped these professors above, who are being repressed in any of the 4Ss. Rather, progressive, liberal, radical, and revolutionary faculty

members have kept on with their daily activities, with only a few writing letters in support of them in the Higher Education Chronicle, to the given university, or in a local newspaper. If these actions continue, universities will begin to enlist and replace non-tenured professors, adjuncts, and instructors, with individuals that will advocate for repressive pedagogy and a controlled pedagogical design. Professors who are tenured will be challenged on their form of pedagogy, curriculum, and topics of interest, with the goal of demotions and/or firing. This article is a call and a demand to academics to stand in solidarity with these above individuals. "Graeber agrees that awareness and reasoned opposition is key to deflecting attempts to squelch radical scholarship."<sup>xxii</sup> Many such as McLaren (1997) are stressing the strengthening of alliances, not only among academics, but also among activists and academics. For, as we should know, repression does not only occur outside the academy, but inside it as well. Political repression is not governed by geographical or economic locations; it is only governed by politics. Where there is an agreement with the ruling elite, there will be avoidance of repression; consequently, where there is resistance to them, there will be repression. In closing, activists need to understand now more than ever that not all academic activists have it "good" and easy. We must be in solidarity with all repressed academics that have fallen victim to the conservative agenda, as much as we are with activists in similar circumstances.

## Notes

i Parts of this Introduction have been taken from "Terrorists or Freedom Fighters? Reflections on the Liberation" (2004) *Introduction* authored by Steven Best and Anthony J. Nocella, II.

ii Park, Justin, M. (September/October 2005) *Under Attack: Free Speech on Campus*. Pp. 9 – 14. Clamor Magazine. Issue 34.

iii Ellen Schrecher is author of many books on the McCarthy era including, *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities*.

iv Park, Justin, M. (September/October 2005) *Under Attack: Free Speech on Campus*. Pp. 9 – 14. Clamor Magazine. Issue 34.

v Park, Justin, M. (September/October 2005) *Under Attack: Free Speech on Campus*. Pp. 9 – 14. Clamor Magazine. Issue 34.

vi To find more on political repression see both of the books by Schultz, B. and Schultz, R. in the bibliography.

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· [http://humwww.ucsc.edu/HistCon/faculty\\_davis.htm](http://humwww.ucsc.edu/HistCon/faculty_davis.htm)

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viii Angela Davis: An Autobiography. Angela Davis: pg 379. "The Case of Angela The Red" Time. October 17, 1969.

ix <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20060213/wiener>, August 31, 2006.

x <http://www.aaup.org/newsroom/Newsitems/churchill.htm>, March 29, 2005.

xi <http://www.aaup.org/newsroom/Newsitems/churchill.htm>, March 29, 2005.

xii Smallwood, Scott (August 5, 2005). *Speaking for the Animals, or the Terrorists?*. Pp. A8 – A10. The Chronicle of Higher Education. Vol. LI, Number 48.

xiii <http://www.counterpunch.org/frank05132005.html>, August 31, 2006.

xiv <http://littlegreenfootballs.com/weblog/?entry=14483>, August 31, 2006.

xv To find more out about the political repression by U.S. law enforcement toward earth and animal liberationists please visit [www.ecoprisoners.org](http://www.ecoprisoners.org), August 31, 2006.

xvi We can either be ignorant of the opposition and be dealt whatever blow they decide to deal us, or we can stop our part-time ill educated activism, which lacks knowledge of history, critical thought, theory, and tactical strategic analysis. We must learn from the repression that was handed out in mass quantity to groups such as the Black Panther Party and American Indian Movement, and not merely speak about what has happened or how to cope, but how to combat it.[I am working on a manuscript on responding to political repression].

xvii To build knowledge on political repression, one must know the strategies, tactics, and training methods that law enforcement and private contractors are employing, which has been the case for peace activists for hundreds of years, e.g., the School of America Watch, which conducted through investigations of the classes, curriculum, alumni, instructors, goals and objectives which also included meetings with staff of the School of the Americas. Just as animal rights activists investigate egg farms so do scholars of political repression investigate law enforcement practices from prison conditions to FBI classes. If not for investigations how would we have so much information and lawsuits? If activists want to take political repression seriously, it is not enough to read articles, books, websites, and journals, about tactics of political repression; one must also understand the reasoning, pedagogy, and how to combat it, which my manuscript for a book will discuss in-depth. I have over and over asked at activist forums: who is Robert Mueller? and no one knows; this needs to change. [Robert Mueller is the Director of the FBI]. Activists' knowledge and sophistication must change on the field of political repression; there is a whole field of literature out there on it, but not often used. While I do not advise fellow activists to attend the FBI Academy or work with the FBI at all, I do believe it was beneficial as a scholar of political repression (one who researches and writes on it).

xviii I hold to the belief that dialogue and critical examination (speaking truth to power) is the way to peace, not simplistic ideological positioning, e.g., kill cops or slaughterhouse workers are

our enemy. Therefore, we must look at our interests rather than our position when it comes to political repression. [See *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, by Fisher, Ury, and Patton. 1991. New York: NY, Penguin]. We must not be against the individual, even though some individuals are horrible people, but against the repressive and oppressive formal systematic structures currently in place such as the prison industrial complex, diary industry, oil and petroleum industry, and the US criminal justice system. For example, to free a prisoner one must understand the criminal justice system, in and out, plus be willing to investigate and research the parole board, warden, case, and judge's reasoning and verdict. If repression is to be minimized it must be played similar to that of chess, where the players must think about the oppositions next five movements, not merely reflect and in this case write on the move they just made, e.g., an arrest of a member of your organization. Stokely Carmichael once asked a group of people at a forum (paraphrasing), "Who hates racism?" Everyone raised their hand. He asked, "Who knows who Adolph Hitler was?" Everyone raised their hand again. He asked, "Who has read Mein Kampf?" only a few people raised their hand.

xix More will be written on this experience.

xx See Appendix of *Terrorists or Freedom Fighters? Reflections on the Liberation of Animals*, Best and Nocella, 2004, New York: NY, Lantern Books.

xxi [www.shac.net](http://www.shac.net), August 31, 2006.

xxii Park, Justin, M. (September/October 2005) *Under Attack: Free Speech on Campus*. Pp. 9 – 14. Clamor Magazine. Issue 34.

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