

## **Radical Philosophy Association Statement on Repression and Academic Freedom**

The Radical Philosophy Association expresses its strong and unequivocal support for the many professors who have recently become targets of harassment, censure, and death threats for their public expression of critical perspectives in support of emancipatory social change, including Dr. Tommy Curry, Dr. Keeanga-Yamhatta Taylor, Dr. George Ciccariello-Maher, Dr. Dana Cloud, and Dr. Johnny Eric Williams. These individuals have been attacked particularly for their outspoken criticisms of white supremacy and racialized violence, as well as their unwillingness to adopt a stance of false neutrality on matters of great political and ethical importance. We believe wholeheartedly in the importance of academic freedom and even more urgently in the vital necessity of dismantling the intellectual frameworks that provide justification for systems of exploitation and domination that exclude and oppress billions globally and at home. As we state in our mission, “We believe that fundamental change requires broad social upheavals but also opposition to intellectual support for exploitative and dehumanizing social structures.”

These campaigns of intimidation of academics are not new, but have taken on a starkly violent and hateful character in recent months due to the cesspools of far-right extremism and nativism unleashed by the ascendancy of Donald Trump to the Presidency of the United States. Many of the individuals and organizations involved in such campaigns have affiliations with hate groups and authoritarian ideologies and are open in their advocacy of ableism, class elitism, homophobia, racism, religious intolerance, sexism, and xenophobia. University faculty, administrations, or policymakers who allow themselves to be cowed by such campaigns are only further emboldening these individuals and organizations in their hate-mongering and efforts to destroy what progress has been made in the United States in the last several decades. To concede to this element of our society, we must say, is to compromise on the dignity and safety of students, faculty, and administrators who are people of color, women, LGBTQ, religious or ethnic minorities, or others who do not fit the warped vision of a “patriotic American” held by these groups. The dignity and safety of all students, faculty, and administrators – indeed, of all people – are not, in our view, legitimate matters for negotiation.

In these times especially, we must all cultivate the courage to speak freely and truthfully. We must stand against those who would silence through fear and intimidation and their efforts to undermine the rights and well-being of so many fellow human beings. Thus, again, the RPA stands with Dr. Tommy Curry, Dr. Keeanga-Yamhatta Taylor, Dr. George Ciccariello-Maher, Dr. Dana Cloud, Dr. Johnny Eric Williams and many others who have experienced harassment, censure, and death threats for their unwavering conviction that another, a better, world is possible.