

**RESOLUTION FROM THE EMERGENCY SUMMIT OF SCHOLARS AND ACTIVISTS
DEFENDING CRITICAL THINKING AND INDIGENOUS STUDIES
LAWRENCE, KS, SEPTEMBER 29-30, 2006**

WHEREAS Indigenous Peoples continue to defend their sovereignty and resist ongoing efforts to eliminate their (our) peoples, cultures, lands, resources, and histories, and we recognize that access to, and promotion of, historical truths and analyses that challenge the oppressive aspects of the status quo are essential to the survival of all of all Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities and youth; and

WHEREAS the University of Colorado has expanded its attacks on Professor Ward Churchill to encompass not only his critique of U.S. foreign policy, but to undermine his analysis of the history and lived realities of Indigenous Peoples; and

WHEREAS the University of Colorado is attempting to fire Ward Churchill based upon pretextual charges of research misconduct which have been “investigated” by a committee of non-Indigenous academics, none of whom are experts in American Indian Studies; and

WHEREAS the University of Colorado’s investigative committee has chosen to reinforce mainstream “truths” concerning the 1837 smallpox epidemic and other matters while accusing Ward Churchill of “disrespecting American Indian oral traditions” despite extensive testimony by Indigenous scholars supporting Professor Churchill’s historical interpretations; and

WHEREAS the biased nature of the University of Colorado’s investigation into Professor Churchill’s scholarship can be seen in the University’s repeated violations of its own rules and in its committee’s insistence that Professor Churchill be held to arbitrarily chosen standards which have not applied to other scholars; and

WHEREAS the University of Colorado’s investigative committee has justified the severity of its recommended sanctions on the basis of Professor Churchill’s “bad attitude,” i.e., his refusal to recant his understandings of historical truth; and

WHEREAS the attacks on Ward Churchill, one of the most prolific scholars in the field of American Indian Studies, are being used to chill the expression of counterhegemonic truths, to re-impose a “consensus” history dictated by the perspective of the colonizers, and to fuel racist attacks on students and scholars of color; and

WHEREAS we recognize that the attacks on Ward Churchill are part of a national and international movement to undermine the disciplines of Indigenous, Ethnic, and Gender studies which emerged as a result of protracted community-based struggles in response to the failures of mainstream disciplines to accurately reflect our collective histories and realities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the undersigned Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars and activists, call upon those who value academic freedom, the unconstrained pursuit of truth, and true diversity in education to join us in urging the University of Colorado to: (1) acknowledge that its investigation was deeply flawed, (2) rescind the report of the investigative committee, (3) fully reinstate Professor Churchill, and (4) acknowledge the value and necessity of perspectives which challenge orthodoxy in the pursuit of truth.

Signatories: (institutional affiliations listed for identification purposes only)

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Edward Valandra (Sicangu Lakota), Asst. Professor of Native American Studies, University of California-Davis
Sharon Venne (Cree), Attorney and Author, Edmonton
Robert A. Williams, Jr. (Lumbee), Professor of Law and American Indian Studies; Director, Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy Program, University of Arizona
Michael Yellow Bird (Arikara/Hidatsa), Assoc. Professor of Indigenous Nations Studies, University of Kansas; Director, Center for Indigenous Peoples' Critical and Intuitive Thinking

National Association of Chicana and Chicano Studies
Resolution passed at 2006 Annual Conference, Guadalajara, Mexico

Resolution in Defense of Ethnic Studies and Support of Prof. Ward Churchill
On behalf of COMPAS Caucus

Whereas, Chicana/o Studies, Ethnic Studies, Women's Studies, Native American Studies, Queer Studies, Asian American Studies and other related departments and programs have emerged out of hard-fought community struggle and have always had contested existences in their role as a spaces of contestation to power in its many manifestation;

Whereas, Professor of Ethnic Studies and Native American Studies Ward Churchill, currently at the University of Colorado, Boulder, has made a significant contribution to scholarly work in the various areas of Native American Studies, particularly genocide, violence and government infiltration, including over 20 published volumes;

Whereas Professor Ward Churchill has been politically and personally targeted over remarks made in his insightful analysis of the collapse of the World Trade Center written the day of the collapse and later expanded to full-length book, *On the Justice of Roosting Chickens, at the expense of attention to the analysis itself*;

Whereas, the attacks on Prof. Churchill have been extended to include a increased public attacks and possible investigations into Ethnic Studies, Women's Studies, Queer Studies, Labor Studies, etc. in Colorado and other states, resulting in interrogation of course lists, syllabi and instructors;

Whereas, the attacks on Churchill have been extended to include various academics across disciplines whose work has been seeing as "immoral" attempts to justify the attacks, fully dismissing the heart of their analyses, most notably Joseph Massad at Columbia University a Hatem Bazian, an affiliate of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley;

Whereas, the attacks on Prof. Churchill have been similarly been extended to include an all-out assault on academic freedom and the protections of academic tenure with public assertions of tenure as "a social construct" with "no constitutional protection" signaling a potential national battle in the Supreme Court over the value of tenure;

Whereas, numerous right-wing politicians and strategists, such as Newt Gringrich and David Horowitz, have made clear their intent of going after all Ethnic Studies programs, not only those limited to Colorado;

Whereas, we are in times where anti-terrorist terrorism is used to confront anti-terrorist terrorism and vice-versa and as such the few spaces of dissent and critique, such as those created by Ethnic Studies, Women's Studies, Queer Studies, and Chicana/o Studies are of vital importance;

Whereas, through a series of legally-questioned political and administrative maneuvers committees of mostly non-Native and non-Native American Studies academics were set up to "investigate" Churchill's "academic integrity"; and

Whereas, the President of University of Colorado, Boulder has since decided to proceed on firing Churchill on questionable and flimsy report, despite three of five only recommending suspension;

Let it be resolved, that the National Association of Chicana and Chicano Studies hereby denounces the attacks on Professor Ward Churchill, on Ethnic Studies and similar disciplines and on the values of academic freedom and academic tenure.

Let it be further resolved, that NACCS wholeheartedly recommits itself to maintaining the spaces of critical interrogation and intervention to all forms of domination.

Lastly, let it be further resolved that the NACCS Chair (or a delegated member of the Association as deemed necessary) write a letter to the President of the University of Colorado, Boulder and to the University of Colorado Regents stating the position NACCS as included herein.

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On November 17, 2006 the Faculty Assembly of the Indiana School of Liberal Arts at Indiana University – Purdue University, Indianapolis (IUPUI) unanimously passed the following resolution:

The Faculty Assembly of the Indiana University School of Liberal Arts at Indiana University – Purdue University, Indianapolis (IUPUI) deplores the decision of the University of Colorado at Boulder to fire tenured Ethnic Studies Professor Ward Churchill. He is being unfairly punished for having expressed unpopular and controversial views in a book and at public forums. We view this as an attack on critical thinking, which ought to be protected on campuses everywhere, and ask that the University of Colorado at Boulder rescind this decision immediately.

This motion of support will be sent to the American Association of University Professors and to the University of Colorado at Boulder.