

*“Recall the face
of the poorest and most helpless
person you have seen
and ask yourself if the next step
you contemplate is
going to be of any use to that person.”*

Mahatma Gandhi, Apostle of Nonviolence

Chapter 14

Repression and Teaching

'Revolutionary Intellectual' Leads Protest At UMass

Special to The New York Times

LAKE PLEASANT, Mass. — A series of campus protests this spring against Pentagon-financed research at the University of Massachusetts' Amherst campus have brought the arrests of dozens of people. Just one is a professor.

That is Terisa Turner, who teaches a seminar concentrating on Marxist political and social theories, and who evidently believes in practicing what she teaches. Just ask her students, some 70 of whom have also been arrested in the protests and a number of whom cite her as the inspiration for involvement in them.

Even for the Amherst campus, where protests are not exactly rare, the events of this spring have been unusual. The demonstrators, attacking not only the Pentagon research but also, to a lesser degree, what they see as societal racism and sexism, have taken over campus buildings at least four times in a month, held a weeklong hunger strike and staged a mock wedding between the university and the Defense Department. There have been 154 trespassing arrests. Some students have been taken into custody two or three times, and several sympathetic townspeople who occupied the university chancellor's office were also seized.

'Like Being a Midwife'

And so was the 40-year-old Ms. Turner, who describes herself as "a Marxist, a revolutionary intellectual."

"I practice revolution with others," she said in an interview at her home here, about 10 miles north of Amherst. "Our revolutionary activity is like being a midwife to help the socialist society that exists now be born."

Although the summer vacation now at hand may interrupt the revolution, Ms. Turner said, she and her students plan to continue agitating in the fall. Then, she said, they hope to "shut down the university, start a bus strike on campus and make it impossible for the research to go on." Already, Ms. Turner has agreed to abide by the wish of the students in her seminar, "Social Thought and Political Economy," that she not submit their grades to the university for this semester.

Ms. Turner, who is not tenured, has taught at the university for more than two years. She is trained as an economist, with a Ph.D. from the London School of Economics, but she teaches courses in women's studies as well as Marxist theory. All the leaders of this spring's protests have been students of hers, and most have taken the seminar.

"The class was an exercise in democracy, run by consensus," said Timothy Belknap, a senior who has been arrested twice this spring. "Terisa let go of her power over us. She was basically one of us. She'd come out with us at night or come over to our places and hang out."

During the yearlong seminar, Ms. Turner said, the class decides what to study and divides itself into study groups, each of which researches topics like "unfree labor," "resistance and revolution" and "women, violence and the state."

"The key thing is that students define the content of their education," she said. "Otherwise, they view it as a chore, an exploitation, and they blow it off." This spring, she held class amid a demonstration in a student-occupied building. The subject, she said, was "education and the underclass."

University administrators say they do not object to Ms. Turner's unorthodox teaching methods, as long as her courses are not mere breeding grounds for activism. But James M. Langley, a university spokesman, noted that some students had said their protest activity "was part of their involvement in the course."

"That would disturb us," he said. "If it became a launch pad for civil disobedience, that would seem to be one of those lines that should not be crossed."

If so, then Ms. Turner denies crossing it. Although she has participated in the protests and has discussed such activity with her students in a broad sense, she has not directed this spring's demonstrations, she says.

Protesters Rejected Offer

At first, the protesters were objecting to a specific Pentagon-financed research project about the genetic structure of the bacillus that causes anthrax. Some students and community members believed that the researchers, who say they are working on a better vaccine against the disease, were in fact helping the Pentagon to prepare for conducting germ warfare.

Early in the protests, the university's chancellor, Joseph D. Duffy, agreed to set up a commission to look at the economic reasons for Defense Department financing on university campuses. But this did not satisfy the protesters, most of whom, including Ms. Turner, will be arraigned for trespassing this fall. The university has offered to halt disciplinary actions against those who agree to pay a small fine for police costs and to perform community service, but none have accepted the offer.

New York Times
June 10, 1989

To the Editor

The New York Times May 31st article, "'Revolutionary Intellectual' Leads Protest at UMass," instantly struck me as blatant anti-communism, even before I knew that it was based on outright distortion of facts, fabricated quotations and purposeful obsfucation.

Professor Terisa Turner, the educator under discussion is not my personal friend, but I know very well her work and her integrity as a scholar and a teacher. The fact that this article is not signed by the reporter who conducted the interview strengthens the suspicion that another agent (who can help suspecting the FBI with its documented infiltration of hundreds of groups of nonviolent dissenters from U.S. policy in Central America?) tampered with the interviewer's text to produce this fake and inflamatory product.

One example of fabricated quotations is the following: "Although the summer vacation now at hand may interrupt the revolution, Ms. Turner said, she and her students plan to continue agitating in the fall. Then, she said, they hope to "shut down the university, start a bus strike on campus and make it impossible for the research to go on."

It is impossible to believe that Ms. Turner or any rational person would speak of revolution in this way, or suggest that a professor and her students would aim to shut down the university. No individual is capable of doing this, and to fabricate the story is transparent red-baiting.

The New York Times article seems to me to be a warning of the real danger we face in this country. The danger lies with those in power who can manipulate truth into its opposite, all in the name of freedom and national security.

Sincerely,

Margaret Holt
Grey Panthers, Pioneer Valley, Massachusetts

40 Van Meter Drive
Amherst, Massachusetts

SUNDAY, MAY 14, 1989

Visiting professor inspires students in their protests

By Jean Caldwell
Special to the Globe

AMHERST - Students who have staged five occupations of University of Massachusetts buildings in the last three weeks have a strong ally in Terisa Turner, a part-time visiting lecturer and associate professor who herself was arrested for trespassing in the first occupation of Memorial Hall.

Turner, 40, an economist specializing in oil, says half of the 24 students in her seminar on "Social Thought and Political Economy" have been arrested, some more than once. Nine others have participated in building occupations but left before being arrested. She said 10 of them were participating in the fifth incident, the takeover of Memorial Hall Tuesday night.

She says many students in her two other classes also took part in the protests, while others are friends brought in by her students.

The Canadian-born teacher, who calls herself "a revolutionary intellectual, a Marxist," is helping protesters prepare a video and a book detailing their experiences

being arrested.

Earlier this year her seminar produced a book, "Revolutionary Popular Culture," with a chapter by one of her students whose research set off the current series of protests against Department of Defense-funded research on campus.

During an interview last week in her Montague home, 11 miles north of campus, Turner wore a T-shirt decorated with a clenched fist and the slogan "UMass is Revolting." She maintains close touch with students and was awaiting word of another building occupation during the interview.

Turner, who recalls running away from home at 16, says she finished first academically in her high school class but was not allowed to be valedictorian because she had accumulated more demerits than anyone else.

"I had very definitely an anti-authoritarian attitude. I doubtless was a troubled, rebellious, precocious child."

She was expelled from the University of Alberta during her freshman year after being arrested with a dozen others who disrupted the provincial parliament.

Letter of Protest to James Langley

Jean Rosner

This piece is re-typed from an original copy sent to Terisa Turner. The following is the note written to Terisa from Jean Rosner. It is followed by the letter to the Chancellor:

I noticed in the Boston Globe that you are a supporter of the students against the military research. Thought They'd like to know I wrote to protest the Chancellor's punitive actions.

61 Middle St., Concord, MA. 01742

May 5, 1989

James Langley
Associate Vice Chancellor
University of Mass.
Amherst, MA. 01002

Dear Vice Chancellor Langley,

I wish to register a protest against the punitive action taken against the students who have been demonstrating against the use of Defense Department funds for research on your campuses. Admittedly, funding for universities is a difficult question and an unceasing problem for the Administrations of them all.

Nevertheless, the sooner everyone of us begins to realize that further military research is only leading us into a worse and worse future, the better off we will all be. By accepting Defense Department funds for military related research the Administration is simply falling into compliance with death.

As the American Friends Service Committee suggests, we should all be talking about the "imperative for a redefinition of all national and global security." What is your University doing to further that end?

Rather than punishing those brave students who are aware of the major moral issue of our times - how to avoid war - and who have the courage to demonstrate to stop the Defense Department business-as-usual approach, the University should be talking with them about alternatives to that source of funding and hailing them as the visionaries of the future for a more peaceful world.

I cannot protest strongly enough against your actions in arresting and then fining them for the costs involved in having 100 policemen on hand to heckle and arrest them.

I am a parent of a
former UMass student.

Sincerely,
Jean Rosner
[original handsigned]

Visiting professor joins protesters

She takes stand against money from military

By ROBERT GRABAR
Gazette Staff

AMHERST — Terisa Turner wore her heart on her shirt last week as she sat at a noon rally with University of Massachusetts students.

The T-shirt she wore -- designed by one of her students -- depicted a clenched fist with the words, "UMass is Revolting."

Turner, 40, a visiting professor for two years, said she's not the outside agitator a recent Boston Globe article implied she is. But it's true that many of the students arrested in this spring's protests are in her classes -- about one third of them.

The train already was running, she said. She just hopped aboard. While more than 100 professors have voiced support for the students, only Turner has gone so far as to be arrested. She was charged with trespassing after she and others occupied a Memorial Hall lounge.

Though it was Turner's decision to be arrested, she literally got pulled into the takeover.

Students had occupied the lounge during the night, secretly passing food, messages and even themselves through a bathroom window.

Turner, who spent the night outside, to be present if arrests were made, was talking to students through the window early the next morning, when police officers yelled to her to leave.

The students stretched out their arms to Turner, telling her to jump in. Without a thought, she found herself part of the occupation.

"I decided to stay," said Turner.

"I support the purpose, which is to stop death research at a public facility, and I support the tactic. What other social power do we have?" she said.

When Turner says "death research," she means the roughly \$11 million from the Department of Defense used by professors at UMass last year. Six takeovers since April 19 have made an issue of the UMass research policy, which allows on campus all research that is openly published.

The university insists that its policy on research funding is proper. A Faculty Senate committee will spend the next year reviewing that policy.

Turner may have hopped on a moving train, but it seems she has helped to give it direction. She teaches a seminar in social thought and political economy as well as classes in women's studies.

Joseph Rubin, a prominent member of the protesting group, took one of Turner's seminars. Along with other students, he already had begun researching military ties to UMass.



ROBERT GRABAR/Gazette Staff

Terisa Turner, a visiting professor at the University of Massachusetts, followed through on her support for student protesters by joining in a building takeover. It led to her arrest.

What Turner did was help the students voice their concerns in a desk-top publishing venture compiled through her class.

"That makes them feel powerful. They are recognized," said Turner.

Writing the book, entitled "Revolutionary Popular Culture," showed them they could do something about the research they wanted stopped. It encouraged them to do more, Turner said.

Turner was not involved in the recent protests until the second takeover.

After the first sit-in, in a Marcus Hall laboratory, UMass student Andrew Sirulnik asked Turner to edit a letter he had written to *The Collegian*, the student newspaper.

Sirulnik, not a student of Turner's himself, had helped edit the book written by Turner's students last fall.

Turner said Sirulnik's account, which alleged police brutality during the laboratory arrests, shocked and frightened her, leading her to sleep outside of the Memorial Hall lounge to keep an eye on things.

As it turned out, she got more than just a look at the arrests.

While spending the night in jail after the arrests, Turner and 16 others formed the Women's Solidarity Brigade to fight the military-funded research.

If Turner is not the driving force behind the protests, she seems to embody its spirit — and is completely engaged.

This week, under her guidance, students will publish "Military Mass Struggle," a compilation of writings related to the recent protests. The book, also the product of desk-top publishing, will be the sixth her students have written by computer. Two others are coming out this week. All are issued in paperback.

overs are only the beginning.

She predicts networks of students will spread the movement to other campuses. Already, students at the City College of New York and Howard University in Washington, D.C., have made their voices heard through large takeovers, said Turner.

Turner is no newcomer to protests, having been arrested six times on three continents. She said she's had experience in movements and mobilizations since she was 11.

A Canadian, she was expelled from the University of Alberta in 1967 for helping American draft dodgers during the Vietnam War.

As an oil economist, with a Ph.D. from the London School of Economics, she works for private organizations that help supply oil to those fighting for liberation — and that attempt to cut off oil from oppressors.

It's all part of her philosophy of "substruction."

Substruction — coined by a friend of hers — seeks subversion of capitalism and construction of global socialism.

"A new world is being born out of the carcass of capitalism," Turner said.

Despite her experience, she said she still learns from each new, "young and inexperienced" batch of protesters — a group she calls the "Sesame Street generation."

She is impressed with their ability, without specified leadership, to interact and cooperate.

Leadership, said Turner, is a "very backward and outdated form of organization."

Turner's contract ends this semester, and it's unlikely she will be back at UMass this fall.

But, she said, teaching or not, she will keep up relationships with students and continue the movement.

Organizing against the school

Jerry Fresia

14 May 1989, Worthington, Massachusetts

Dear Terisa,

It was so exciting to read about you in the *Boston Globe*. I received my PhD from UMass in political science in 1982 and have been mostly unemployed since. However, I did manage to get two and one-half separate one year jobs and in each case, without really trying too hard, I found myself working with students, organizing against the school, in and out of class on a variety of issues. In one case, the chancellor at the University of California at Santa Barbara actually ran over my foot with his car as some of us peacefully attempted to block his exit at an anti-apartheid sit-in. At this point, I have given up on academia - little if no support from other faculty - and I am trying to develop my art and write for a living.

I have recently returned from LA and the woman I live with and I have a small house and some land in Worthington but it is pretty isolating, especially politically. If you remain in the area beyond the semester or if you get some free time, we would love to meet you. In any case, we admire what you are doing, and again, it was exciting to see that a critically thinking teacher hasn't been reduced to a talking head in the classroom.

In solidarity, Jerry Fresia

PS - I hope you are rehired.

NEW FROM SOUTH END PRESS:

Toward an American Revolution

Exposing the Constitution and Other Illusions

by Jerry Fresia

Celebrations honoring the ratification of the Constitution uphold it as the document which brought democratic governance to the United States. Yet, today, when confronted with unfair and non-democratic government policies, many feel they have no say.

Toward an American Revolution deals with our sense of powerlessness by going to the root of the problem—the Constitution of the United States. Fresia reveals our "Founding Fathers" fears of rebellion and democracy, why the Constitution was opposed by a majority of the people, how its ratification was achieved through deception and physical coercion, and how the constitutional design effectively obstructs progressive legislation today. Through examples, Fresia argues that the Constitution was designed to protect the privilege and power of large property owners and to ensure that the majority would have no real voice in political affairs.

Fresia argues that present-day activists fail to confront the linkage between the empire of today, the intention of the framers, and constitutional imperatives. The result is a tendency among activists to become either "congressional technocrats" who believe that political work consists solely of pressuring Congress, or "abstract spiritualists" whose quest for peace prevents them from directly challenging political and economic structures.

Toward an American Revolution presents compelling evidence that there is a consistency between the counterrevolutionary tendencies of 1787 and those of today. It is a welcome departure from the lockstep celebrations of the recent bicentennial year.

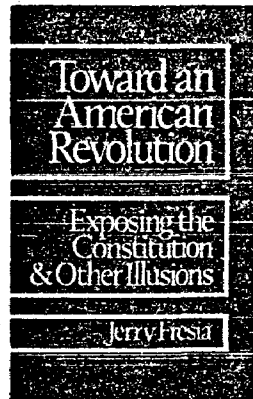
"Toward an American Revolution is a refreshingly bold look at the Constitution and early American history.

It is rich with insight and makes astute connections between past and present.

An important work for our time."

—Howard Zinn

Jerry Fresia has taught at Evergreen State College and is active in numerous social movements. He is the author of *There Comes a Time: A Challenge to the Two Party System.*



ISBN: 0-89508-297-0 \$10.00 (paper) ISBN: 0-89508-298-9 \$25.00 (cloth)

For individual orders of *Toward an American Revolution*, please send the price of the book plus postage (\$1.50 for the first book, 50 cents for each additional book) to: South End Press, 300 Raritan Center Parkway, Edison, NJ 08818. For orders of 5 or more, we offer a 40% discount. Exam copy orders should be sent to the same address. You will be invoiced for the book and asked to pay only if you do not use the book for your course.

Name	# copies
Street Address	postage
City/State/Zip	total

Dear Terisa,

Kassahun told me that you had left New York and were up in Massachusetts as we walked by your old apartment last fall. Imagine my surprise to see your picture in the *New York Times*. Despite the *Times'* cynicism creeping through at at least one point, it sounds like you are doing wonderful work at U Mass. In fact, the reason I'm writing is to learn more of your teaching. You'll recall that when I stayed at your place in New York I had just written a curriculum on teaching South Africa. Since then, I have become involved with teachers around the country trying to build a network of radical educators. (I've enclosed an article from a recent copy of *Z Magazine* and a flyer for our conference this summer in Cincinnati.) People understand the connection between teaching and social change differently, but most of us are struggling with how our teaching equips students to understand critically the larger society and to feel capable of changing it. From the little that the article describes of your work it sounds like you have been remarkably successful.

What I'm especially impressed with is your commitment to have the social relations of the classroom model the social relations of the society we're trying to create. In a recent book of Paulo Freire's he says that teachers "should live part of their dreams within their educational space." It sounds like you're doing just that. I've been teaching a course with an English teacher at Jefferson High School for the last three years where we've tried to push the limits of what is politically possible in a public school. I've always argued that most of the repression teachers experience is in our own minds; that we have much more freedom to be political with our teaching than we allow ourselves. As "dialogical" as we've tried to be in encouraging students to critique capitalism through analyzing their own lives, we still feel frustrated at the extent to which our attempts continue to spark the same kinds of resistances that characterized our classrooms a few years ago -- with some important differences. I often feel like I'm pushing my politics down their throats, even as I'm encouraging them to be critical of that kind of top-down teaching. In the NYT article you say, "The key thing is that students define the content of their education. Otherwise, they view it as a chore, an exploitation, and they blow it off," and say how the class is structured around study groups which define their own topics. This idea really interested my co-teacher, Linda, and me because we've been discussing ways of experimenting with something like this. I've been somewhat resistant because I worry that students wouldn't be equipped politically to use their freedom productively, and would simply replicate the kinds of voiceless, vapid term paper research that has characterized the rest of their high school experience. So reading of the structure of your class makes me wonder how you pull it off; where students learn the analytic tools to make their research radical. What is the character of

your intervention and guidance of students' process? Obviously, your class is not Summerhill-come-to-Amherst. The best way of finding out about the class is probably to call and just talk (your address and phone were courtesy of Kassahun), but if you have written about it, have syllabi, materials that students have produced, articles about the course, etc., please send them along. I'd be happy to reimburse for copying and postage.

I remember my short stay at your apartment with fondness. I was immediately impressed with your commitment to a kind of socialism that was uncompromisingly democratic and anti-elitist. The article suggests that you're still at it.

All the best,

Bill

Bill Bigelow
1233 N.E. Schuyler #4
Portland, OR 97212
(503) 282-6848

The Power in Our Hands

A Curriculum
on the History of Work
and Workers
in the United States

William Bigelow and Norman Diamond

"This is a workbook in the best sense. Its approach is original, exhilarating, and, most important, practical. That most neglected of all subjects in U.S. schools—the visions and lives of working people—is faced head-on in this book. A must for all people who earn their daily bread."
—Studs Terkel

"Pedagogical sophistication, ease of use, and intimate acquaintance with its topic make *The Power in Our Hands* not only the best 'labor in the schools' curriculum we've examined but one of the best social studies curricula ever produced."
—Fred Glass,
chairman, Labor in the Schools Committee,
California Federation of Teachers

"Most school teachers are drowned in paper, but here is one book I want to recommend to them. It is a way of getting American teenagers not just interested, but excited and passionate about their history—modern American labor history."
—Pete Seeger

"Everywhere I go I recommend this unique book. You want to learn more about labor history than just dates and famous people? Read and use this book. At long last, a book as exciting as labor's struggle itself."
—Julia Reichert,
filmmaker, *Union Maids*

"Uplifting, inspirational, empowering—what all good teachers look for, a practical curriculum in which the teaching style reinforces the lesson. It's also a gem for teacher training in this era of teacher empowerment."
—Mark Simon,
president, Montgomery (Maryland) County
Education Association (NEA)

"*The Power in Our Hands* is exactly that. Whether it's labor history, economics, or the sociology of work—it's all there in teachable terms. A game, as these lessons are, is worth a thousand words. I'd like to drop everything I'm doing and use these exercises with the union leadership, steward training, and new member orientation classes I teach. And my next labor history class is going to be a lot more exciting—for me and the students."
—Ross K. Rieder,
president, Pacific Northwest Labor History Association;
union consultant and trainer

At a time when the only trade unionists who make the front pages of the newspapers are football players and airline pilots, it is crucial for students in the United States to learn the history of our labor movement, as well as the important concepts that underlie how the workplace is structured, and how and why workers organize themselves. This innovative curriculum enables the participants to project themselves into real-life situations where they can explore concrete problems and potential solutions. Students enact the roles of managers, workers, and labor organizers. They create imaginary workplaces, reenact famous labor struggles, solve mysteries, and hold press conferences.

The first unit in the curriculum addresses the basic issue of how people work together to effect change, and shows how the history of ordinary people has often been neglected. The next section looks at how the workplace is structured and shows how the organization of the workplace affects the workers. The following sections introduce the students to past labor struggles and to the alternative ways in which workers have organized themselves; the conflicts between workers of different races and sexes, between skilled and unskilled, between immigrant and native born; and the current situation in the labor movement.

The sixteen units (each consisting of one to ten sessions) in *The Power in Our Hands* have been developed in the classroom, and have been tested in high schools and labor education programs around the country. The authors' introduction discusses the creative pedagogy that underlies the curriculum, and describes the different ways in which the units have been used. The curriculum, in an oversize 8½ × 11" format, includes both lesson plans and student handouts. An optional separate workbook of just the student handouts is also available.

Norman Diamond is former executive director of the Pacific Northwest Labor College. He has worked in a steel mill, saw mill, and as a college professor. His writing on cultural criticism, social movements, and science and technology focuses on how values and understandings change. *William Bigelow* is the author of the acclaimed curriculum guide to South Africa, *Strangers in Their Own Country*, as well as articles on educational issues. He is a teacher at Jefferson High School in Portland, Oregon.

\$15.00 PB7530 paper 256 pp. (Includes both lesson plans
and student handouts)

\$5.00 PB7549 paper 96 pp. (Student handbook)

A CALL FOR A CONFERENCE initiated by the: Coalition of Educational Activists

Reconstructing Our Schools Organizing for Justice & Democracy

August 4th - 7th, 1989

in
Cincinnati, Ohio

A Conference For: Teachers, Parents, Community Organizers, Administrators, Teacher Educators, Union Activists, Public Officials, and Student Activists.

In participatory workshops and discussions educational activists will examine the influence of racism, sexism and classism in our classrooms and schools. We will focus on:

- * Examining successful practices of critical pedagogy in classrooms and schools.
- * Grassroots organizing for educational change: unions and school communities.
- * Networking by constituency groups: People of Color, Women, Union Activists, Critical Pedagogy Teachers, and Parent/Community Activists.
- * Exploring the possibility of building a nationwide group of progressive educational activists.

Workshops in Planning:

Whole Language Teaching
 Labor Studies in High School
 Critical Pedagogy
 Setting Up New Schools
 Democratic Discipline
 School Based Management Councils
 Organizing Democratic Unions
 Parental & Community Organizing

Developing a Gender Equitable
 Classroom Practices
 Teaching & Organizing Against Racism
 Politics of Educational Reform
 Building a Rainbow Coalition for
 Educators
 Resisting the Right-Wing Educational
 Agenda

For more information call: Phil Nash (718) 575-4319, Haven Henderson (212) 860-8935, Bob Peterson (414) 265-6217, Maria Sweeny (201) 329-6822, Christina Brinkley-Carter (215) 877-8987, Harold Berlak (415) 530-7592, Mike Charney (216) 451-7104

Name _____	Phone _____
Address _____	City _____ Zipcode _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Send me more information/registration materials. <input type="checkbox"/> I would like to offer or organize a session or workshop. Please attach an additional page with a proposal. Include: (1) The topic or explanation. (2) Format & Organization. (3) Brief description and explanation. My primary interests and concerns are:	
<hr/> <hr/>	
Please return to: Dr. Roy Silver, Dept. of Sociology, Northern Kentucky Univ., Highland Heights, Kentucky, 41076	

Withhold grades in solidarity with suspended students

May 17, 1989

From:

*The Social Thought and Political
 Economy Junior Seminar I, 1989
 Social Thought and Political Economy
 Machmer E-27*

*University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003
 413 545 0043*

To: Chancellor Duffey

We, the members of the Social Thought and Political Economy Junior Seminar I 1989, adamantly support the right of our fellow students to protest the military involvement in this University. Whether or not we, as individuals, agree with their argument, we feel that the students have a right to voice their opinions. We urge you to reconsider your unnecessarily harsh actions, and immediately reinstate the suspended students. In a democratic society it is vital that the people have the opportunity to freely and openly make public their convictions. In suspending these students, who were engaged in a non-violent form of civil protest, and subsequently labelling them "terrorists" you are attempting to silence the voice of the people. We do not believe that this can be allowed.

As a show of support for the suspended students, and in direct protest against your punitive measures, we, as a class, have instructed our professor to withhold our grades until the suspended students have been reinstated. We deeply hope that this situation can be *rectified* as soon as possible.

Thank you,
 STPEC Junior Seminar I

May 30, 1989

WITHHOLDING OF GRADES AT REQUEST
OF STPEC JUNIOR SEMINAR I STUDENTS

Dear members of the board of the STPEC program,

Attached please find a letter from the members of the Junior seminar I in Social Thought and Political Economy, instructing me not to hand in grades until all disciplinary actions against students involved in the protests to end Defense Department funding of research are dropped.

Attached also please find records of grades for those students who it was agreed by the participants of the seminar were not participating in this grade action due to special circumstances. Grades for these students have been handed in at Whitmore.

I would appreciate your advice on this matter. I am submitting to you the grades for the remaining students in the seminar along with this request from the students that the grades not be recorded until disciplinary action is dropped.

Thank you for your attention. I can be reached after June 23rd at home: 367 9774.

Sincerely,

Terisa E. Turner

Academic freedom and a critique of leadership

Leigh Brownhill and Timothy Belknap

Letter to the Editor of the New York Times, June 10, 1989

Allan Bloom's *Closing of the American Mind* has galvanized educators to address the fundamental questions, "education for what?" and "what is the link between learning and doing, between theory and practice?" Your May 31st article "'Revolutionary Intellectual' Leads Protest At UMass" continues this important debate by focusing on UMass professor, Terisa Turner. She teaches critical analysis of society and has practiced her critique by being arrested with 151 other non-violent resisters who are opposed to biological warfare research at institutions of public education.

Our concerns however are with two contradictions in your reporting. First, our movement against military-funded research repudiates leadership. We have no leaders and your article reflects this by noting Ms. Turner's statement that "...she has not directed this spring's demonstrations...." But there seems to be a counter-voice (or rewrite editor?) who insists on leadership. This counter-voice is evident in your headline which inaccurately proclaims that Ms. Turner "...Leads Protest at UMass" and further that "All the leaders of this spring's protests have been students of hers...." This is far off the mark. The protests had no leaders and the vast majority of participants were not Ms Turner's students.

The reporter who interviewed Terisa Turner and others was absolutely clear about our consensus method of decision making and our refusal to send representatives into negotiations with UMass administrators over Defense Department research. At a May 2nd public forum on the protests, UMass Chancellor Joe Duffey said "If those occupying buildings were only disciplined enough to elect leaders and enter into dialogue, the violence accompanying police arrests could be addressed."

Why then does the *New York Times* article insist on fabricating leaders?

The insistence on leadership is comforting to upholders of the status quo. In line with the 1950s notion of the 'outside agitator,' (M.L. King was accusing of being one), the bad apple can be isolated and then everything supposedly will be all right.

While this is nonsensical, it does reinforce the illusion that participants other than 'the leaders' are sheeplike, apathetic, and are somehow susceptible to the machinations of imaginary leaders. However comforting to the military and its contract recipients, this fantasy has nothing to do with the reality of the UMass (or U.S.) student protest movement.

The second contradiction has to do with academic freedom. The article details four instances of the integration of the practice of democracy into Ms. Turner's curriculum. You report her agreement to heed student requests that grades be withheld until disciplinary action against protestors be dropped. One of her students is quoted as saying that "The class was an exercise in democracy, run by consensus," and the "class decides what to study...." Ms. Turner is quoted as saying that "the key thing is that students define the content of their education."

But then the counter-voice again breaks in, suggesting that students were directed by their professor to engage in protest activity as "part of their involvement in the course." Using deceptive wording, the article pretends to be quoting students but really quotes an administrator quoting unnamed students.

We find astounding your attribution to Ms. Turner of the statement that "she and her students" hope to "shut down the university, start a bus strike on campus and make it impossible for the research to go on." This is false. Ms. Turner made no such statement. Furthermore, it is not possible for an individual to engineer a general strike. For instance, the only people who can shut down a transport system are workers in that system.

The message is that the teacher manipulated students into engaging in civil disobedience. This directly contradicts the article's recognition of Ms. Turner's democratic pedagogy. But it provides the *New York Times* re-write editor the opportunity to make the thinly-veiled political point that professors who resist the militarization of our public universities, or who are social critics, will be weeded out. While George Orwell warned of the Party rewriting history, today's press rewrites the present.

A UMass administrator who strongly defends the receiving of some \$11.6 million from the Defense Department in 1988, is quoted as saying if student activism were indeed encouraged by Ms. Turner, "That would disturb us. ... If it [her course] became a launch pad for civil disobedience, that would seem to be one of those lines that should not be crossed." This subjective line-drawing, presented affirmatively by the *New York Times*, is an encroachment on basic academic freedom.

In this time of budget cuts and layoffs, faculty are being told by administrators and media to prevent student activism or face job insecurity. The ominous drawing of "lines that should not be crossed" is a warning to teachers: practice scholarship aimed at producing graduates who conform to the status quo, in this instance, acceptance of biological warfare research at a public institution.

The price of accepting military research funds is curtailment of academic freedom and the militarization of thought itself. A UMass administrator is warning faculty to guard against their students engaging in civil disobedience under threat of termination. This is unacceptable both to teachers and to students. But it is also unacceptable to university administrators, alumnae and citizens who respect academic freedom and who know that quality education must embrace social criticism. The closing of the American mind must be reversed.

Sincerelysigned by Leigh Brownhill, Timothy Belknap



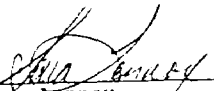
MEMORANDUM

Date 31 May 1989
To Terisa Turner
From Sara Lennox, Director, STPEC
Subject Expiration of Contract

In accordance with University regulations, I am writing to inform you that your current contract expired on May 27, 1989. I do not anticipate re-hiring you in the fall semester of 1989.

Please return your keys to E-27 Machmer and 517 Herter to Helen Johnson in the STPEC Office.

Good luck with your future plans.

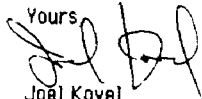

Sara Lennox

Division of
Social Studies

June 22, 1989

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am writing to support Professor Terisa Turner in her effort to reverse her firing from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. I presume that a significant component in the decision to fire Professor Turner is based on her militant leadership of nonviolent protest against the University's role in military research and development, and more generally, on her bringing a heightened political awareness to the student body. If this is so then the University has revealed itself to be the instrument of repressive state power rather than a bastion of freedom. The University thus demeans and betrays its own promise. In our society academic institutions have become one of the last centers where established values can be interrogated and challenged. Those who do so, like Professor Turner, should be honored for their courage and vision instead of persecuted. The hope of a free society resides in allowing radical dissidence its voice.

Yours,

Joel Kovel
Alger Hiss Professor of Social Studies