

January 4, 2017

President Lee Bollinger  
Provost John Coatsworth  
Columbia University in the City of New York  
New York, NY 10027

Dear President Bollinger, Provost Coatsworth:

We, the undersigned Columbia faculty members, urge you to withdraw your challenge to the recent NLRB election.

We are well aware of the energy and funds the university expended on opposing the formation of a union among Teaching and Research assistants, and of the exemplary campaign conducted by supporters of the union. On December 7 and 8, these members of our community voted by an overwhelming majority to unionize. Provost Coatsworth then released a statement announcing that, following “open and respectful conversation that explained the arguments for and against unionization, ... the research and teaching assistants who voted have chosen to be represented by the United Auto Workers.” He thanked all those who cast ballots. This statement of respect for the integrity of the election needs now to be reaffirmed. The university’s objections – for example, complaining about the alleged presence of union representatives near a polling place – are not simply frivolous; they are insulting to the Teaching and Research Assistants who voted, implying that they are incapable of weighing the relevant arguments and reaching carefully considered independent judgments.

The issue now is not whether a union is a good or bad idea, but whether the university will respect the outcome of a democratic process. In the aftermath of the presidential election, President Bollinger issued a letter pledging fidelity to Columbia’s core values. This is a moment when the university must make clear what its values actually are. It should drop its disingenuous objections and delaying tactics and move forward to constructive negotiations for a union contract.

Sincerely,

Lila Abu-Lughod  
Joseph L. Bottenwieser Professor of Social Science  
Anthropology/Arts and Sciences  
la310@columbia.edu

James Eli Adams  
Professor  
English & Comparative Literature  
jea2139@columbia.edu

Vanessa Agard-Jones  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Anthropology  
vaj2116@columbia.edu

Marcel Agüeros  
Assistant Professor of Astronomy  
Astronomy/A&S  
marcel@astro.columbia.edu

Angela Aidala  
Assoc Research Scientist  
Sociomedical Sciences/ Mailman Public Health  
aaa1@columbia.edu

Gil Anidjar  
Professor  
Department of Religion  
ga152@columbia.edu

Arnold Aronson  
Columbia University  
School of the Arts  
apa4@columbia.edu

Gergely Baics  
Barnard College  
Department of History  
gbaics@barnard.edu

Humberto Ballesteros  
Core Lecturer  
Italian  
hb2285@columbia.edu

Mark Barenberg  
Professor of Law  
Columbia Law School  
mb15@columbia.edu

Comment: As a senior professor of labor law, I can indeed attest that the University's challenge to the NLRB election raises just the kind of petty matters that high-paid anti-union consultants routinely raise and that in no way impaired the democratic choice of the graduate workers. Now for some civic editorializing: We have just experienced a presidential election the results of which threaten democracy, the rule of law, stability in the post-war world order, and planetary survival. Those results could have easily been tipped the other way, if union density were just a bit greater in the swing states. Exit polls

showed that union households voted against Trumpism by a margin of 8 to 16 percent. Some academic elites' reflexive opposition to democratically constituted worker organizations has repercussions for civil society and democracy and is staggeringly short-sighted.

Nicholas Bartlett  
Assistant Professor  
Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Barnard College  
nab2104@columbia.edu

Nico Baumbach  
Assistant Professor  
Film/School of the Arts  
nb2428@columbia.edu

ronald bayer  
professor  
mailman School of Public Health  
rb8@columbia.edu

Robert Beauregard  
Professor  
GSAPP  
rab48@columbia.edu

Courtney Bender  
Professor  
Religion  
cb337@columbia.edu

Susan Bernofsky  
Associate Professor of Writing and Director, Literary Translation at Columbia  
School of the Arts/Writing  
sb3270@columbia.edu

Elizabeth Bernstein  
Associate Professor  
WGSS/Sociology  
ebernste@barnard.edu

Richard Billows  
History/GSAS  
rab4@columbia.edu

Campbell Birch  
PhD candidate & Teaching fellow

English & Comparative Literature  
cjb2190@columbia.edu

Elizabeth Blackmar  
Columbia University  
History  
eb16@columbia.edu

Casey Blake  
Professor  
American Studies & History/A&S  
cb460@columbia.edu

Brian Boyd  
Director, Administration & Museum Anthropology  
Anthropology  
brian.boyd@columbia.edu

Ellen Chapnick  
Dean of Social Justice Initiatives and Lecturer-in-Law  
Columbia Law School  
chapnick@law.columbia.edu

Merlin Chowkwanyun  
Assistant Professor  
Sociomedical Sciences  
mc2028@columbia.edu

Yvette Christianse  
Barnard College  
English Lit. & Africana Studies  
ychristi@barnard.edu

Laura Ciolkowski  
Associate Director, Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality  
Women and Gender/Columbia College  
lec30@columbia.edu

Yinon Cohen  
Professor  
Sociology  
yc2444@columbia.edu

Jean Louise Cohen  
Nell and Herbert M. Singer Professor of Contemporary Civilization in the Core Curriculum  
Department of Political Science

jl5@columbia.edu

John Collins  
Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies  
Philosophy  
john.collins@columbia.edu

Francine Cournos  
Professor of Clinical Psychiatry (in Epidemiology)  
Epidemiology, Mailman School of Public Health  
fc15@cumc.columbia.edu

Zoe Crossland  
Associate Professor  
Anthropology  
zc2149@columbia.edu

Hamid Dabashi  
Hagop Kevorkian Professor of Iranian Studies  
Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies  
hd14@columbia.edu

Patricia Dailey  
Associate Professor, Director  
English and Comparative Literature, IRWGS  
pd2132@columbia.edu

Nicholas Dames  
Theodore Kahan Professor of Humanities  
English and Comparative Literature  
nicholas.dames@columbia.edu

Victoria de Grazia  
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences  
Department of History  
vd19@columbia.edu

Comment: How can we respect democracy as a principle, if we don't respect it in actual practice?

Hope Dector  
Creative Director, BCRW  
Barnard College  
hdector@barnard.edu

Dawn Delbanco  
Adjunct Assoc Prof. of Art History

Art History & Archaeology/Arts & Sciences  
dhd1@columbia.edu

Andrew Delbanco  
Alexander Hamilton Professor of American Studies  
American Studies/English/ Arts & Sciences  
andrew.delbanco@columbia.edu

Ann Douglas  
Parr Professor Emerita  
English and Comparative Literature  
ad34@columbia.edu

Jason Earle  
Alumnus, GSAS  
French, GSAS  
jearle@sarahlawrence.edu

Brent Edwards  
Professor  
English and Comparative Literature  
bhe2@columbia.edu

Deborah Eisenberg  
Professor of Creative Writing  
School of the Arts  
de2268@columbia.edu

Trey Ellis  
Associate Professor  
School of the Arts  
trey.ellis@gmail.com

Katherine Ewing  
Professor of Religion; Director, IRCPL  
Religion  
ke2131@columbia.edu

Gil Eyal  
Professor of sociology  
Sociology  
ge2027@columbia.edu

Catherine Fennell  
Anthropology  
Arts and Sciences

ckf2106@columbia.edu

Georgette Fleischer  
Lecturer  
English and Comparative Literature  
gf24@columbia.edu

Eric Foner  
DeWitt Clinton Professor of History  
Department of History  
ef17@columbia.edu

Herbert Gans  
Emeritus  
Sociology  
hjk1@Columbia.edu

Lynn Garafola  
Professor of Dance  
Dance/Barnard College  
lg97@columbia.edu

Lydia Goehr  
Columbia  
Philosophy  
lg131@columbia.edu

Bette Gordon  
Professor, Columbia University  
School of the Arts/Film  
gordon.bette@gmail.com

Erik Gray  
Arts and Sciences  
English and Comparative Literature  
eg2155@columbia.edu

Steven Gregory  
African American Studies (DGS)  
Anthropology  
sg820@columbia.edu

Frank Guridy  
Associate Professor  
History  
fg2368@columbia.edu

Jack Halberstam  
Department of English  
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences  
jh3641@columbia.edu

Kim Hall  
Barnard College  
English & Africana Studies  
khall@barnard.edu

Wael Hallaq  
Columbia University  
MESAAS  
wh2223@columbia.edu

Markie Hancock  
Independent  
Independent  
mhancock@nyc.rr.com

Elizabeth Harnarine  
Student  
MFA Photography  
harne241@newschool.edu

Michael Harris  
Professor of Mathematics  
Mathematics/GSAS  
mh2836@columbia.edu

Matthew Hart  
Associate Professor  
English & Comparative Literature  
mh2968@columbia.edu

Marianne Hirsch  
William Peterfield Trent Professor of English  
Department of English and Comparative Literature  
mh2349@columbia.edu

Ellie Hisama  
Columbia University  
Music/Arts and Sciences  
eh2252@columbia.edu



Benjamin Hoffman  
Human Rights Institute/Clinic  
Columbia Law School  
bhoffman@law.columbia.edu

Jean E. Howard  
George Delacorte Professor in the Humanities  
Department of English and Comparative Literature  
jfh5@columbia.edu

Martha Howell  
Miriam Champoin Professor of History  
Department of History  
mch4@columbia.edu

Joseph Howley  
Assistant Professor  
Classics  
jah2220@columbia.edu

Elizabeth Hutchinson  
Barnard College  
Art History  
Eh499@columbia.edu

Andreas Huyssen  
CC, GSAS  
Germanic Languages  
ah26@columbia.edu

Karl Jacoby  
Professor  
History  
kj2305@columbia.edu

Janet Jakobsen  
Claire Tow Professor of Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies  
Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Barnard College  
jjakobsen@barnard.edu

Margo Jefferson  
Professor of Professional Practice  
Writing, School of the Arts  
Mlj4@columbia.edu

Rebecca Jordan-Young  
faculty (also GSAS alum)  
Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies/Barnard  
ryoung@barnard.edu

Jeremy Kessler  
Associate Professor of Law  
Columbia Law School  
jkessler@law.columbia.edu

Jon Kessler  
Professor  
Visual Arts/School of the Arts  
jk342@columbia.edu

Katherine Keyes  
Mailman School of Public Health  
Epidemiology  
kmk2104@columbia.edu

Rashid Khalidi  
Faculty  
Department of History  
rik2101@columbia.edu

Mana Kia  
Assistant Professor  
MESAAS  
mana.kia@columbia.edu

Rob King  
Director of Undergraduate Studies - Film  
School of the Arts  
rk2704@columbia.edu

Binnie Kirshenbaum  
Professor of Writing  
School of the Arts  
bk185@columbia.edu

Tovah Klein  
Barnard College  
Psychology  
tklein@barnard.edu

Adam Kosto  
Professor  
History  
ajkosto@columbia.edu

Brian Larkin  
Barnard College  
Anthropology  
bl190@columbia.edu

Victor LaValle  
Associate Professor of Professional Practice  
Writing/School of the Arts  
vdl7@columbia.edu

William Leach  
Professor of History  
Department of History  
wrl3@columbia.edu

Eugenia Lean  
Director, Weatherhead East Asian Institute; Associate Professor, EALAC  
EALAC/A&S  
Eyl2006@columbia.edu

Andrew Lipman  
Assistant Professor  
History/Barnard  
alipman@barnard.edu

Lydia Liu  
Wun Tsun Tam Professor in the Humanities  
EALAC  
ll2410@columbia.edu

Claudio Lomnitz  
GSAS  
Anthropology  
cl2510@columbia.edu

Nicola Lopez  
Assistant Professor  
SOA  
ngl1@columbia.edu

David Lurie  
Columbia University  
EALAC/Arts and Sciences  
DBL11@columbia.edu

W B Macleod  
Professor of Economics and Public Affairs  
Economics/SIPA  
wbm2103@columbia.edu

Comment: I am reminded of Lord Chuchill's comment: "Yes, trust the people. You, who are ambitious, and rightly ambitious, of being the guardians of the British Constitution, trust the people, and they will trust you—and they will follow you and join you in the defense of that Constitution against any and every foe."

Mahmood Mamdani  
Herbert Lehman Professor of Government  
Anthropology / MESAAS  
mm1124@columbia.edu

Gregory Mann  
Professor  
History  
gm522@columbia.edu

Reinhold Martin  
Professor  
Architecture  
rm454@columbia.edu

Joseph Massad  
Columbia University  
MESAAS  
jam25@columbia.edu

Malgorzata Mazurek  
Associate Professor  
History  
mm4293@columbia.edu

Mary McLeod  
Professor  
Architecture, GSAPP  
mcm10@columbia.edu

Tey Meadow  
IRWAGS  
Sociology  
Tey.meadow@columbia.edu

Christia Mercer  
Philosophy  
Philosophy  
cm50@columbia.edu

Brinkley Messick  
Columbia  
Anthropology  
bmm23@columbia.edu

Nara Milanesas ch  
Barnard  
Department of History  
NMilanich@barnard. Edu

Janet Miller  
Professor of English & Education  
Arts & Humanities/Teachers College, Columbia University  
jm1397@columbia.edu

Denise Milstein  
Sociology  
Arts and Sciences  
dm531@columbia.edu

Timothy Mitchell  
Professor  
MESAAS/FAS  
tm2421@columbia.edu

Eben Moglen  
Professor of Law  
Columbia Law School  
moglen@columbia.edu

Rosalind Morris  
Columbia University, Arts and Sciences  
Anthropology  
rcm24@columbia.edu

Keith Moxey  
Professor  
Art History  
pm154@columbia.edu

Debashree Mukherjee  
Assistant Professor  
MESAAS  
dm3154@columbia.edu

Molly Murray  
Associate Professor  
English, School of Arts and Sciences  
mpm7@columbia.edu

Luca Naponiello  
PhD student  
Italian  
ln2353@columbia.edu

Constance Nathanson  
Professor  
Sociomedical Sciences/Public Health  
can2003@columbia.edu

Celia Naylor  
Assoc. Professor, History & Africana Studies  
Barnard College  
cnaylor@barnard.edu

Mae Ngai  
Lung Family Professor of Asian American Studies and Professor of History  
History  
mn53@columbia.edu

Robert O'Meally  
Zora Neale Hurston Professor and Director, Center for Jazz Studies  
English  
rgo1@columbia.edu

Patricia O'Toole  
Professor of Writing  
School of the Arts  
peo4@columbia.edu

Deborah Paredez  
Associate Professor of Practice  
School of the Arts Writing Program  
dp2783@columbia.edu

Susan Pedersen  
Morris Professor of History  
History / Arts and Sciences  
sp2216@columbia.edu

Richard Peña  
Professor  
Film/School of the arts  
rap4@columbia.edu

Comment: It's time to deal in good faith with the decision of the clear majority of the grad students.

Gregory Pflugfelder  
Associate Professor  
EALAC / History  
gmp12@columbia.edu

Pablo Piccato  
Professor  
History  
pp143@columbia.edu

Caterina Pizzigoni  
Associate Professor  
Department of History  
cp2313@columbia.edu

Elizabeth Povinelli  
IRWGS  
Anthropology  
ep2122@columbia.edu

Wayne Proudfoot  
Professor  
Religion/ Arts and Sciences  
wlp2@columbia.edu

Karen Rhoads Van Dyck  
Kimon A. Doukas Professor of Hellenic Studies  
Department of Classics  
vandyck@columbia.edu

Edgar Rivera Colon  
School of Professional Studies  
Narrative Medicine  
ec2648@columbia.edu

Bruce Robbins  
Old Dominion Foundation Professor in the Humanities  
English and Comparative Literature  
bwr2001@columbia.edu

Alexandre Roberts  
Assistant Professor  
History  
Amr2293@columbia.edu

David Rosner  
GSAS and Mailman  
History and SMS  
dr289@columbia.edu

Emmanuelle Saada  
Associate Professor  
French  
es2593@columbia.edu

Saskia Sassen  
Columbia University  
Sociology  
sjs2@columbia.edu  
Comment: We must respect the results of a process that was authorized and executed according to the rules

Christoph Schaub  
Core Lecturer  
Department of Germanic Languages  
cs2808@columbia.edu

Sharon Schwartz  
MSPH  
Epidemiology  
sbs5@columbia.edu

Seth Schwartz  
Faculty  
Department of History  
srs166@columbia.edu



Felicity Scott  
Associate Professor  
GSAPP  
fs2248@columbia.edu

James Shapiro  
Columbia University  
English  
js73@columbia.edu

Shelly Silver  
Associate Professor  
Visual Arts, School of the Arts  
sas2256@columbia.edu

Barbara Simon  
Associate Professor  
School of Social Work  
bls1@columbia.edu

Susan Sivard  
Part-time Core Lecturer  
Art History and Archaeology/GSAS  
sms22@columbia.edu

Joseph Slaughter  
Assoc. Prof. Columbia University  
English and Comparative Literature  
jrs272@columbia.edu

Seymour Spilerman  
Professor  
Sociology/Arts and Sciences  
spilerman@columbia.edu

Jane Spinak  
Edward Ross Aranow Clinical Professor of Law  
Columbia Law School  
spinak@law.columbia.edu

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak  
Columbia University  
College of Arts & Sciences  
gcspiv@gmail.com

Alan Stewart  
Columbia University  
English and Comparative Literature/Arts and Sciences  
ags2105@columbia.edu

Dustin Stewart  
Assistant Professor  
English and Comparative Literature  
dds2152[at]columbia.edu

Ezra Susser  
Professor of Epidemiology and Psychiatry  
CUMC - Department of Epidemiology  
ess8@columbia.edu

Kathryn Tabb  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Philosophy  
kct2121@columbia.edu

Neferti X. M. Tadiar  
Professor of Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies, Barnard College; Director, Center for the  
Study of Ethnicity and Race (CSER) at Columbia University  
Barnard College  
nt2181@columbia.edu

Michael Thaddeus  
Professor of Mathematics  
Mathematics  
mt324@columbia.edu

Kendall Thomas  
Nash Professor of Law  
Law  
kthomas@law.columbia.edu

Lisa Tiersten  
Barnard  
History  
ltiersten@barnard.edu

Van Tran  
Columbia University  
Sociology  
vantran@columbia.edu

Blake Turner  
Columbia University  
Psychiatry, College of Physicians and Surgeons  
jbt12@cumc.columbia.edu

Deborah Valenze  
Ann Whitney Olin Professor of History  
History Dept., Barnard College  
dvalenze@barnard.edu

Karen Van Dyck  
Professor of Modern Greek Literature  
Classics  
vandyck@columbia.edu

Jacqueline van Gorkom  
Columbia University  
Astronomy/ A&S's  
jvangork@astro.columbia.edu

Carole Vance  
Anthropology  
GSAS  
csv1@columbia.edu

Diane Vaughan  
Columbia University  
Sociology  
dv2146@columbia.edu

Jesús Velasco  
Columbia U  
Latin American and Iberian Cultures  
Jrvelasco@columbia.edu

Gauri Viswanathan  
Columbia University  
English and Comparative Literature  
gv6@columbia.edu

Jennifer Wenzel  
Associate Professor  
English & Comp Lit/MESAAS  
jw2497@columbia.edu

Josh Whitford  
Associate Professor  
Sociology/GSAS  
jw2212@columbia.edu

David Wills  
Visiting Professor  
English and Comparative Literature  
dw2744@columbia.edu

Mabel Wilson  
Architecture  
GSAPP  
mow6@columbia.edu

Susan Witte  
Associate Professor  
Social Work  
ssw12@columbia.edu

David Yerkes  
Columbia University  
Department of English and Comparative Literature  
dmy1@columbia.edu

Madeleine Zelin  
Dean Lung Professor  
EALAC/History  
mhz1@columbia.edu

Alan Ziegler  
Professor of Practice  
Writing / School of the Arts  
az8@columbia.edu