

# Faculty for a Reserve Officers Training Corps Program

The affirmative case for an ROTC program at Columbia has been crowded out by debate over legislation prohibiting military service by open homosexuals. The repeal of that legislation makes it possible to clearly state that case, which can be briefly summarized:

- It is damaging to democratic ideals of equality that graduates of highly selective, private universities are so underrepresented in the nation's officer corps.
- That the officer corps is drawn disproportionately from non-urban settings and other regions of the nation creates an imbalance that benefits neither American society nor its military.
- At Columbia, military service should be recognized as a form of public service as is service in civil society.
- Our students' prevailing experience is of great personal distance from military service, limiting preparation for citizenship.
- Reciprocally, military leaders are often uncomprehending of the values for which Columbia and its peer institutions stand. A civil-military gap caused by mutual incomprehension is undesirable.
- Diversity in the student body including students preparing for military service would help alleviate this situation.
- The university should not put obstacles in the way of students who wish to serve as commissioned officers and, in so doing, help finance their educations.
- These propositions are independent of judgments as individual citizens of policies involving the armed forces, and about which the university is institutionally neutral.

*Faculty signing this statement may not agree fully with all its features but all agree with the following:*

**Provided that ROTC is subject to the same academic procedures as govern other programs, we support the establishment of an ROTC program.**

MICHAEL ADLER (*School of Business*)

MARK H. ANDERS (*Earth/Environmental Sciences*)

JAMES APPLGATE (*Astronomy*)

RICHARD K. BETTS (*Political Science*)

JAGDISH BHAGWATI (*University Professor, Economics*)

PHILLIP C. BOBBITT (*Law*)

RONALD BRESLOW (*University Professor, Chemistry*)

DOUGLAS CHALMERS (*Political Science, Emeritus*)

FLORA DAVIDSON (*Political Science, Barnard*)

PADMA DESAI (*Economics*)

PAUL DUBY (*Engineering*)

RONALD E. FINDLAY (*Economics*)

ESTER R. FUCHS (*School of International/Public Affairs*)

TODD GITLIN (*Journalism/Sociology*)

SERGE GRAVRONSKY (*French, Barnard*)

JOHN HUBER (*Political Science*)

KENNETH T. JACKSON (*History*)

ROBERT L. JERVIS (*Political Science*)

KIMBERLEY JOHNSON (*Political Science, Barnard*)

ANGELOS D. KEROMYTIS (*Computer Science*)

MARK LILLA (*Humanities*)

ALFRED MAC ADAM (*Spanish, Barnard*)

ROBERT MCCAUGHEY (*History, Barnard*)

KIMBERLY MARTEN (*Political Science, Barnard*)

LETTY MOSS-SALANTJIN (*College of Dental Medicine*)

ANDREW J. NATHAN (*Political Science*)

RICHARD M. PIOUS (*Political Science, Barnard*)

ROBERT E. POLLACK (*Biological Sciences*)

RON PRYWES (*Biological Sciences*)

JUDITH SHAPIRO (*President Emerita, Barnard*)

ROBERT Y. SHAPIRO (*Political Science*)

ALLAN SILVER (*Sociology, Emeritus*)

JACK L. SNYDER (*Political Science*)

SEYMOUR SPILERMAN (*Sociology*)

*Signatories as of February 18, 2011*

**To sign this statement or for more information, contact Allan Silver: [as35@columbia.edu](mailto:as35@columbia.edu)**

## COLUMBIA AND BARNARD FACULTY OPPOSED TO ROTC'S RETURN

We, the undersigned faculty members of Columbia University and Barnard College, wish to state our unequivocal opposition to the reinstatement of ROTC at Columbia. We hold it to be a matter of the most profound principle and educational philosophy that the idea of a university and the ethos of the military are incompatible. We believe that the militarization of the campus represented by ROTC's uniformed presence is at odds with what we, as educators, hold sacrosanct.

Advocates for ROTC's return to campus claim that it would democratize Columbia, while enabling financially disadvantaged individuals to access the excellent opportunities of the Ivy League. We agree that poorer Americans should be given better opportunities, but we do not believe that upward social mobility should be ransomed for military service. Other forms of service, from planting trees to compensate for environmental destruction, to rebuilding communities ravaged by natural disasters, or tutoring disadvantaged youth, are not provided with systematic scholarship opportunities, and we do not believe that poor people should have to embrace militarism to obtain an education. By contrast, we would gladly endorse a more expansive and robust federal financial aid system open to all, with no strings attached. And we believe that many resources spent on funding war would be better spent on education.

Signed,

NADIA ABU EL HAJ, Associate Professor, Anthropology, Barnard  
LILA ABU-LUGHOD, Joseph L. Buttenwieser Professor of Social Science, Anthropology  
BASHIR ABU-RAWEL, Assistant Professor, English, Barnard  
ALEXANDER ALBERGO, Virginia Blooded Wright Professor of Art History, Barnard  
GIL ANDIJAR, Associate Professor, MESAAS & Religion  
COURTNEY BENDER, Associate Professor, Religion  
ELIZABETH BERNSTEIN, Assistant Professor, Women & Studies, Barnard  
AKEEL BILGRAMI, Johnsonian Professor of Philosophy  
ELIZABETH S. BLACKMAR, Professor, History  
BRIAN BOYD, Adjunct Assistant Professor, Anthropology  
LILA BRAINE, Professor Emerita, Barnard  
TAYLOR CARMAN, Professor, Philosophy, Barnard  
ELIZABETH CASTELL, Professor and Chair, Religion, Barnard  
JEAN LOUISE COHEN, Professor, Political Science  
ELAINE COMBS-SCHILLING, Associate Professor, Anthropology  
JOHN COLLINS, Professor, Philosophy  
EDGAR RIVERA COLON, Instructor, Sociomedical Sciences  
JONATHAN CRAWY, Meyer Shapiro Professor of Modern Art and Theory, Art History  
JULIE CRAWFORD, Associate Professor, English and Comparative Literature  
ZOE CROSSLAND, Assistant Professor, Anthropology  
KATHERINE DIECKMANN, Professor, Film, School of the Arts  
HAMID DABASHI, Haggay Keorlian Professor of Iranian Studies  
E. VALENTINE DANIEL, Professor, Anthropology  
MADLEINE DOBIE, Associate Professor, French and Romance Philology  
BRENT HAYES EDWARDS, Professor, English and Comparative Literature  
BERNARD FAURE, Kao Professor of Japanese Religions  
CATHERINE FENELL, Assistant Professor, Anthropology

We do not oppose veterans on our campus but we do not believe that the presence of non-uniformed soldiers has the same impact on the university as ROTC would. Columbia has a long tradition of welcoming veterans. Those who are soldiers or ex-soldiers and seeking education can and do attend classes, at all levels. But they are present to others as students and not as the symbolic incarnations of the military. In uniform, individuals are representatives of the military before all else, and their presence constitutes a symbolic militarization of campus.

Columbia aspires to be a global university. In the classrooms of our remarkably internationalized institution, students from countries that are otherwise at war speak to each other and forge the basis of mutual understanding and peace. This possibility is threatened by the presence of the uniformed military.

It is often said that it is the right of all to pursue their chosen paths and that exclusion of the ROTC constitutes discrimination against those who wish to participate in ROTC. Similarly, the drive to re-instate ROTC has gathered momentum in the aftermath of the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," on the grounds that its discriminatory powers have now been overcome. In fact, Columbia students are already able to partake in ROTC at other New York area campuses where ROTC exists. Equally important is the fact that ROTC will remain a

discriminatory institution even after DADT has become a relic of history. There are many reasons—from physical disability to age—for which people are disqualified from admission. This fact is clearly contrary to Columbia's policy, which prohibits discrimination against "any person in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs."

Many soldiers who advocate ROTC's return to Columbia rightly note that it is not the military that generates policies which are then implemented by soldiers, but Congress. The military merely implements those policies. But here is the most profound point of opposition between the military and the university as institutions: ROTC, and the military in general, trains people for obedience to the chain of command, whereas the university cultivates a critical and constantly questioning consciousness. This is the essence of the university's contribution to a democratic society. Although the military may play a defensive role to uphold that same democracy, it does so by means that are antithetical to those of the university, where speech and dialogue, rather than the bearing of arms and the use of force, are primary. For this reason, we believe that the ideas and ideals to which our university has been and should be devoted are undermined by the presence of ROTC on campus.

KATHERINE FRANKIE, Professor of Law

HERBERT J. GANS, Robert S. Lynd Professor Emeritus, Sociology

EDLA GOER, Professor, Philosophy

BETTE GORDON, Professor, Film, School of the Arts

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STATHIS GOUGOURIS, Professor, English and Comparative Literature, & Modern Greek

NAJAM HAIDAR, Assistant Professor, Religion, Barnard

KIM HALL, Lucyle Hook Professor of English, Director, Africana Studies, Barnard

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MARIANNE HIRSCH, William Peterfield Trent Professor of English, English and Comparative Literature

JEAN HOWARD, George Delacorte Professor in the Humanities, English and Comparative Literature

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