

## STATEMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION LAW SCHOLARS AND EDUCATORS

June 3, 2020

Our hearts are with protesters seeking justice for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, David McAtee and countless others in the Black community who've been terrorized by police. As scholars and educators focused on the First Amendment, we are compelled to use our expertise and positions of relative power to speak against a range of violations of civil liberties that have recently occurred.

Beyond the continued violent treatment of marginalized people at the hands of law enforcement, the past several days have been marked by arrests, harassment and assault of citizens and journalists as they engaged in protected First Amendment activity documenting public protests. We now have seen the President and the Attorney General of the United States oversee the use of force to disperse a peaceful protest for the sake of a photo op.

The First Amendment protects the rights of American citizens against government action that infringes upon their freedom to speak and peaceably assemble so that they may petition their government for the redress of grievances. The Trump administration is encouraging, perhaps even ordering state entities, including the police and military, to use violence to curtail these Constitutionally protected rights in order to clamp down on public dissent and to threaten those who would hold our elected officials accountable.

Our country is in the midst of a pandemic that has led to a staggering death toll and yet, even against that backdrop, people across the nation are gathering in large groups exercising their protected First Amendment rights to protest the injustices being imposed upon them and their neighbors. The Trump administration's actions are unacceptable. The First Amendment represents the core value systems of our republic, and it provides the protections necessary to the democratic process. The very freedoms under attack are part of our social contract, and state-sanctioned suppression of those freedoms by an out-of-control administration cannot continue. We are defined by our actions, but also by the laws that govern those actions. The First Amendment provides citizens the strongest possible defense against our government's lawless actions.

It was, after all, the video of police assaulting and killing George Floyd, captured by a teenager engaged in a protected activity with her cellphone, which began the tumultuous events of the two weeks. The President and members of his Cabinet take an oath to defend these rights, not to abuse their offices and positions of power to silence dissenters who object to this administration.

We cannot abide the normalization of state-sanctioned violence when officials find the freedoms to speak and assemble inconvenient. Now more than ever, as our government overreaches its authority, is no time for our constitutional rights to be curtailed.

Signatories, with university affiliation for identification purposes only.

Christopher Terry  
Assistant Professor, University of Minnesota

Rachael L. Jones, Esq.  
Fellow, Brechner Center for Freedom of Information, University of Florida

Jonathan Anderson  
Ph.D. Student, University of Minnesota

Jason Martin  
Associate Professor, DePaul University

Kyu Ho Youm  
Professor/Jonathan Marshall First Amendment Chair, University of Oregon

Beth Knobel  
Associate Professor, Fordham University

Dylan McLemore  
Assistant Professor, University of Central Arkansas

Dr. Andrea Baker  
Senior Lecturer in Journalism, Monash University (Australia)

Caitlin Carlson  
Associate Professor, Seattle University

Amy Kristin Sanders  
Associate Professor, University of Texas at Austin

Roy Gutterman  
Associate Professor, Syracuse University

Susan Keith  
Associate Professor, Rutgers University

Kristen A. Patrow  
Ph.D. Candidate, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Daxton R. Stewart  
Professor of Journalism, Texas Christian University

Jasmine McNealy  
Associate Professor and Associate Director, Marion B. Brechner First Amendment Project, University of Florida

Aimee Edmondson  
Professor and Director of Graduate Studies, E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University

Brett Johnson  
Assistant Professor, University of Missouri

Bernardo H. Motta  
Assistant Professor of Journalism, Roger Williams University

W. Wat Hopkins  
Professor, Virginia Tech

Amanda Reid  
Assistant Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Steven Listopad  
Lecturer/Student Media Adviser, Henderson State University

Jeffrey Layne Blevins  
Head of Journalism Department, University of Cincinnati

Toni Locy  
Professor, Washington and Lee University

Jon Bekken  
Professor of Communications, Albright College

Brooks Fuller  
Assistant Professor, Elon University

Israel Balderas  
Assistant Professor of Journalism, Palm Beach Atlantic University

Deborah Dwyer  
Doctoral Candidate, UNC Chapel Hill

Victoria Smith Ekstrand  
Associate Professor, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

Nancy Whitmore  
Professor, Butler University

Nina Brown  
Assistant Professor, Syracuse University

Eric Robinson  
Assistant Professor, University of South Carolina

Lyrissa Lidsky  
Dean & Judge C.A. Leedy Professor, University of Missouri Law School

Jared Schroeder  
Associate Professor, Southern Methodist University

Scott Memmel  
Ph.D. Candidate, University of Minnesota Hubbard School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Joseph Russomanno  
Professor, Arizona State University

Bill Kovarik  
Professor, Radford University

Dayo Abah  
Professor, Washington and Lee University

David S. Allen  
Professor, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Harrison M. Rosenthal  
J.D./Ph.D. Student, University of Kansas

Jennifer Jacobs Henderson  
Professor and Chair, Department of Communication, Trinity University

Tony Palmeri  
Professor of Communication Studies, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

Rhonda Gibson  
Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Kearston Wesner  
Assistant Professor of Media Studies, Quinnipiac University

Jeremy Harris Lipschultz  
Peter Kiewit Distinguished Professor, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Jacqueline Reich  
Professor, Fordham University

Benjamin W. Cramer  
Associate Teaching Professor, Pennsylvania State University

Karla Gower  
Professor, University of Alabama

Kathleen K. Olson  
Professor, Lehigh University

S. J. Dahlman  
Professor of Communications and Humanities, Milligan University

Robert Drechsel  
Professor Emeritus, School of Journalism & Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Zachary Gorelick  
JD/MA Candidate, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

A.Jay Wagner  
Assistant Professor, Marquette University

Amy Aronson  
Associate Professor and Program Director, Fordham University

Derigan A. Silver  
Associate Professor, University of Denver

Gerry Lanosga  
Associate Professor, Indiana University

Sarah K. Wiley, J.D.  
Ph.D. Student, University of Minnesota

Robin Andersen  
Professor Communication and Media Studies, Fordham University

Dom Caristi  
Professor of Telecommunications, Ball State University

Deb Aikat  
Faculty Member, UNC Hussman School of Journalism and Media, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Tyler Valeska  
First Amendment Fellow, Cornell Law School First Amendment Clinic

Aaron Chimbel  
Dean, Jandoli School of Communication, St. Bonaventure University

Timothy Boudreau  
Associate Professor of Journalism, Central Michigan University

Catherine Katsafouros  
Teaching Artist in Residence, Fordham University, Dept of Communication and Media Studies

Angelique Gibson  
Lecturer, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Patrick File  
Assistant Professor, Media Law, Reynolds School of Journalism, University of Nevada, Reno

Meredith Guthrie  
Lecturer II, University of Pittsburgh

Barry D. Umansky  
Professor, Ball State University

Jason Shepard  
Professor and Chair, Department of Communications, California State University, Fullerton

Dan Kozlowski  
Associate Professor, Saint Louis University

Dr. Michael T. Martinez  
Assistant Professor, University of Tennessee

Krishna Jayakar  
Professor, Penn State University

David Hawkins  
Lecturer, Fordham University

Will Nevin  
Visiting Assistant Professor of Communication, University of Alabama-Birmingham

Kevin M. Lerner  
Assistant Professor, Marist College

Anne Hoag  
Associate Professor, The Pennsylvania State University

Holly K. Hall  
Professor, Arkansas State University

Andy Geronimo  
Clinical Fellow, Case Western Reserve University

Elizabeth Bradley  
Communication & Rhetoric Student, University of Pittsburgh

Jennifer Grygiel  
Assistant Professor, Syracuse University

Will T. Mari  
Assistant Professor, Louisiana State University

Craig A. Stark  
Associate Professor and Department Head, Susquehanna University

Ralph Hanson  
Professor, University of Nebraska at Kearney

Sascha Meinrath  
Palmer Chair in Telecommunications, Penn State University

Arthur S. Hayes  
Associate Professor, Fordham University

Jennifer Lambe  
Associate Professor, University of Delaware

Frank LoMonte  
Professor, University of Florida

Eric Bennett Easton  
Professor of Law Emeritus, University of Baltimore School of Law

Carrie Buchanan  
Assistant Professor, John Carroll University

Julia E. Largent  
Assistant Professor, McPherson College

Alan K. Chen  
Professor of Law, University of Denver Sturm College of Law

Genelle Belmas  
Associate Professor, University of Kansas

Yong Tang

Associate Professor of Journalism and Media Law, Western Illinois University

Greg Newton

Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, Research & Creative Activity, Scripps College of Communication, Ohio University

Paul S. Voakes

Professor of Journalism Emeritus, University of Colorado

Marcus Funk

Assistant Professor of Mass Communication, Sam Houston State University

Ashar Foley

Advanced Lecturer, Fordham University

Ben Birkinbine

Assistant Professor of Media Studies, Reynolds School of Journalism, University of Nevada, Reno

Dr. Joy C. Schaefer

Senior Lecturer of Media Communication, Lawrence Technological University

Joey Senat

Associate Professor, Oklahoma State University

Paul Levinson

Professor of Communication and Media Studies, Fordham University

Erik Ugland

Associate Professor, Marquette University

Natalie T. J. Tindall

Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Communication and Media, Lamar University

Jonathan Peters

Associate Professor, University of Georgia

Peggy Watt

Associate Professor, Western Washington University

Mark Arbuckle  
Professor, Pittsburg State University

Kara Jolliff Gould  
Assistant Professor , University of Arkansas

Scott Owen Chappuis, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor, Concordia University Ann Arbor

Erica Salkin  
Associate Professor, Whitworth University

Chad Roberts  
General Manager-WLFR-FM/Instructor, Stockton University

Michael F. Higgins  
Clinical Teaching Fellow and Staff Attorney, Civil Rights and Transparency Clinic, University at Buffalo School of Law

Thomas Grochowski  
Associate Professor, St. Joseph's College, NY

George Erb  
Adjunct instructor, Western Washington University

Miles Maguire  
Professor of Journalism, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

Matt Jackson  
Associate Professor of Communications, Penn State University

Patrick Davison  
Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Anthony Fargo  
Director, Center for International Media and Policy Studies, Indiana University Media School

Lyle E Harris Sr.  
Journalism Professor Emeritus, Western Washington University

Amy Lauters  
Professor, Minnesota State University, Mankato

Kathleen Bartzen Culver  
Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Rick Busselle  
Associate Professor, Bowling Green State University

Philip Terrigno  
Lecturer, Fordham University

Dale Herbeck  
Professor, Northeastern University

Katherine Fink  
Assistant Professor, Pace University

Laurie Thomas Lee  
Professor, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Ryan Thomas  
Associate Professor, University of Missouri

Anne Doris  
Assistant Teaching Professor, Penn State University

Bill Huntzicker  
Retired Faculty Member, St. Cloud State University

Nakho Kim  
Assistant Professor, Pennsylvania State University Harrisburg

Rodrigo Cetina Presuel  
Visiting Researcher, Harvard Law School

Michael Fuhlhage  
Assistant Professor, Wayne State University

Eddith Dashiell  
Director, E.W.Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University

Bryce C. Newell  
Assistant Professor, University of Oregon

Mary Alice Molgard  
Assistant Professor, Communications, College of Saint Rose

Jason Lee Guthrie  
Assistant Professor, Clayton State University

Maurika Smutherman  
Communications Professor, Winston-Salem State University

Anirban Baishya  
Assistant Professor, Fordham University

Michael S. Sweeney, Ph.D.  
Professor, Ohio University

Jane Marcellus  
Professor, Middle Tennessee State University

Lori Amber Roessner  
Associate Professor, University of Tennessee

Benjamin Holden  
Teaching Associate Professor, University of Illinois College of Media/Department of Journalism

Chris Vicari  
Adjunct & Educational Technologist, Fordham University

Elvira Carrizal-Dukes  
Assistant Professor of Practice, The University of Texas at El Paso