

Students, faculty and our community are deeply troubled by the recent efforts of the Traditionalist Workers Party—a group whose website advocates the "establishment of a white ethno-state in North America"—to develop a presence on our campus. We want our community to know that anthropologists at the University of Tennessee unequivocally oppose any attempts by groups and individuals to normalize, and to foment, white supremacy, white nationalism, and other forms of bigotry on our campus. These efforts not only promote the politics of bigotry and exclusion, but also pose a clear and present danger to the lives, safety and well-being of students, faculty and staff of color especially. In light of this development, and others unfolding on our own campus as well on campuses and communities through the nation, and the world, we are compelled to issue the following Statement of Principle.

### **Statement of Principle:**

Anthropologists are specialists in the study of both human diversity and similarities. Human rights and human dignity are at the core of our discipline. Per the American Anthropological Association's [1999 Statement on Human Rights](#), anthropologists have a responsibility to speak up "whenever human difference is made the basis for a denial of basic human rights." Although organized groups and individuals who espouse racist and other bigoted views have appealed to freedom of speech and conscience to project their agendas now and in the past, the very nature of their position – one rooted in hate and exclusion – is contrary to the spirit of those rights and freedoms. It is a cynical abuse and deliberate misappropriation of human and civil rights to make inaccurate and dangerous claims about the relationship between human difference and human worth.

Our collective critical and comparative study of human societies recognizes that power and inequality intersect with national, racial, ethnic, gender, sexual, religious, and socio-economic status. We know from vast empirical evidence how these differences have been mobilized at different times and places to build political movements in ways that benefit some by denigrating or destroying others. We see clear examples of this in our own society and political culture at this moment in time. Nationalist ideologies and groups that advocate goals of extermination, exclusion, and subordination of ethnic, racial, sexual, and other minorities are unacceptable. As history has shown, their rhetoric is never only rhetoric, especially where they find support at various levels of the state, police and military. As anthropologists, we remain fundamentally committed to the core goal of our discipline: making the world - and our campus - safe for human difference.

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