



WHEELER HALL

Info Packet

To all fellow resisting students, workers, faculty, and supporters...

What follows are mostly statements by people who occupied Wheeler Hall on the 20th of November, 2009 at the University of California, Berkeley. Each voice is singular. Our power is in our heterogeneity and any one statement could not properly represent the diversity of minds involved in the occupation and the larger historical struggles to which this action belongs. What can be said is we want change.

Nothing is over.

Occupy everything?

This call has been heard all over the world. And we have tried to answer it. But even if we occupy every lecture hall, classroom, administration building, research facility, library, construction site, art studio, music studio, café, theatre and laboratory on every campus, our efforts would be limited in a crucial way.

Looking around the second floor of Wheeler at the people sharing with me the intense emotional and physical surge of Friday November 20, I wondered what they could possibly be thinking, be feeling. I knew that something felt different in me; at some point I recognized the sensation. I was occupying my own body. In a way I never had before. It's a terrifying realization, and it's a beautiful feeling.

A society that coaches us to ingest numbing medication at the slightest discomfort, just to get through a day of unfulfilling work for an unsympathetic boss, just to have a roof under which to sleep and food to eat, prohibits this feeling. A society that erases the validity of anything between, among or outside of man or woman, and vandalizes our erogenous zones with blueprints and technical manuals, prohibits this feeling. A society that has set up for us a tidy system by which to catalog one another based on how much pigment our skin regularly makes, or how many tasks we can physically complete compared to a idolized norm, prohibits this feeling. A society that stands by watching people die of diseases that it has deemed inevitable for the poor, immoral and exploitable, of diseases that conquer and destroy cell after cell until the body gives in and shuts down, prohibits this feeling.

We live in that very society.

When we were handcuffed and waiting to be processed after the occupation, the plastic ties bit into my wrists, causing my hands to lose feeling and tiny capillaries to break along the unforgiving lines of contact between skin and restraint. But I did not ask for them to be loosened. At that moment, I consciously took control of the pain against the police's arbitrary authority that made it acceptable for them to take control of us. I derived no pleasure from the bruises, only anger and resolve. Only one of the people oppressing me could stop the pain, so I wouldn't let them; I would have fought to keep that pain constant until I was free.

But that's not all. Our bodies are connected to, in immeasurable ways, our minds. They are possibly one and the same. Not surprisingly, our minds are also ours for the taking.

We may tear down the militarized zone that lives in our heads, which only allows for seeking power over others and a kill-or-be-killed reaction, and

raise a school or a health clinic. We may tangle the neatly wound thread of rationality and find that simplifying problems has the potential to lead us to answers that are just too convenient. We may avoid the exclusive use of a pinned-down, premade pattern in our creations, expecting mistakes, embracing these mistakes and their correction, to find gratification in process as well as goal. We may reach out over the cliff to catch and look over all our thoughts flying by, knowing full well how dangerous that can be, but taking pride in that courage and finding strength in the imbalance. All of these are possible, but none of us is in a vacuum. We have to live in the world in which we exist. This world is not kind nor is it cruel, but simultaneously an infinite number of points between. So are we, comprising that intricate lace. We can seek collective empowerment and lasting resistance to oppression, realizing the impossibilities at hand, by defending side by side the occupation of our interpersonal relations.

There is a relationship in which we dwell happily, engaging in the frustrating, fulfilling process of communication, in which we account for our behaviors in the presence of those affected. There is a trust that does not require all the details, just a little reminder that connections of friendship, love, kinship, camaraderie and/or solidarity are not severed by some ambiguity or misunderstanding. There is a place between aggressive dominance and passive compliance with the will of others where we can stand up for ourselves and each other, fight back against attacks on our autonomies, and build the respect of those who deserve it.

All the while, we fight for our spaces. We fight for the means of production and the means of survival. We fight for validation of our self-given identities and against identities forced upon us. We fight for our truths and our histories. We fight against the destruction of the processes of evolution in which humanity finds itself. We fight for ourselves and for each other.

Most of us living here on this planet can't just take up a foot of chain and a bicycle lock and occupy a building. There are so many forces of power acting against the people who need empowerment the most. But there is so much for the taking.

So, by all means, occupy everything. Occupy anything.

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“We have a strong tradition of free speech on campus. Let us not forget that we are all fighting for the same cause: *to maintain the public character of our university by sustaining Berkeley's excellence and accessibility.*”

TO the surprise of no one, this is the nature of the reappropriation of our actions: seemingly innocuous to the casual observer, but ultimately a rewriting of events obscuring the practical aspects of our demands. First, we must look at

some misinformation that has been perpetuated... Our demands did include the rehiring of 38 laid-off workers, and (far less importantly) amnesty for the occupiers, but it was *not* limited to these two (as the message from Birgeneau and much of the media coverage would suggest). What was left out was the call for equitable treatment of the immigrant-owned businesses in the Bear's Lair (i.e. a stop to rent increases) and allowing the Rochdale cooperative to continue its existence as an affordable housing option for low-income students. The rehiring is painted as out of the hands of administrators (“what's done is done and the budget still isn't balanced”), while some decisions, which directly undermine the public character of our university, haven't been made. It is important to note that both the recognized and omitted demands address facets of larger problems – what is larger, of course, is the dismantling of excellent and accessible education through 32% fee increases and a **lack of transparency** (suggesting a private, counter-public character of the UC system at large). When a budget is hidden, anything can be done in the name of efficiency. Nothing is justifiable because there is no information to support any decision made to the public. So instead student fees are extorted to back, for example, high-interest construction bonds, outweighing the needs of the workers, while undermining instructional value. We have reached a point of collective realization that if all is left to those counter-public forces that persist, very quickly we will find that all that exists is a mere spectre of what was a symbol of excellence in public education. The outpouring of support seen during the occupation only validates the sense of urgency and commitment of the public at large. Everything is within our hands now and always.

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From Pakistan:

To brave students of California,

We are watching with absolute interest the brave action that you are taking to defend the right of a decent education. The budget cuts in education is a real attack on the right of working class youth to education.

You have taken a right step by showing a culture of resistance. We condemn the police action against students and demand an immediate withdrawal of all cases against the students.

We in Pakistan salute to your courageous action and believe that your success is our success and your fight is our fight, an injury to one is an injury to all. Long live the struggle of students to defend right of a decent education.

Our solidarity with students in struggle,

Victory is ours

Farooq Tariq
Spokesperson
Labour Party Pakistan

Kashif Aslam
Organizer
Progressive Youth Front Pakistan

Irfan Choudry
President
National Students Federation Punjab

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////**This campus** is occupied Ohlone land. Ohlone remains are still held here despite demands they be returned to their families. This campus, like the rest of California, like the rest of the United States, like much of the rest of the world, is a product of European colonial expansion and the genocide and dispossession of native people.

The fee hikes, the firing of workers, and the virtual evictions of Rochdale and the Bear's Lair businesses are contemporary manifestations of the logic and material infrastructure of a colonial cultural formation that will stop at nothing to maximize profits.

The production of wealth is always also a production of poverty. As the fees go up, so do the regents salaries and the buildings that facilitate the production of new technologies of global power.

The disciplinary methodologies of the university system are trainings in the productions of cultural hegemonies and loyal oppositions, variously in the immediate maintenance of infrastructures of domination or the recuperation and specialization of resistance.

In the university system, the production of nuclear weapons and the production of counter-hegemonic discourses occur within the same institutional context. They are both productions of commodities and differ from other forms of production primarily in the relative privilege accorded to the producers. They are in no way mutually exclusive.

The institutionalized recuperative production of counter-hegemonic discourses and the production of technologies for the immediate maintenance of global power are united in their spatial location within the UC's architectures of power.

The architecture of UC Berkeley constructs the campus as an elite space by approximating European structural formations that produced and were produced by asymmetrical power relations. The campus produces social elites whose own self-aggrandizement is modeled after the grandeur of Roman Imperial Architecture.

Counter-hegemonic discourses within the university system must recognize their situatedness in architectures of power. If they are to refuse recuperation, these discourses must position themselves in opposition to the spatial

formations of power in which they find themselves. The university system is an artifact of European colonial expansion.

There are certain crevasses, however, in this architecture of power, open spaces that can be reclaimed, buildings that can be re-purposed. There are crowds of young people that feel with their whole bodies what it means for the police to have beat protesters with batons. We understand that this is the state's mobilization of violence to protect the interests of capital.

We understand also that this is what happens when critical thinking steps outside its institutionally delineated boundaries, when social theory shakes off its careerism and alienation from social practice. This is what happens when critical intellectuals cease to be mere producers of intellectual property.

In the apparent normalcy of an everyday school day, we will remember that this normalcy is always maintained through the threat of violence, that if we do not contest this violence we are complicit in it.

We can understand also that this violence is heir to a legacy of colonial violence, that colonial violence was and is largely a product of the need of capitalism for raw materials and labor. When we come together in an outcry against the contemporary moment in the asymmetrical flows of capital we are inevitably met with the violence of the state which exists largely to facilitate these flows.

We will widen existing crevasses, proliferate reclamations of space and ruptures with the ordered asymmetrical flow of capital that is protected through state violence. This is only the beginning.//////////

Knowing that the road to free public education is long and the issues confronting it are much larger than me or Berkeley or the state of California, I occupied Wheeler on Friday, November 20th because sometimes you need to make some noise if you want anyone to listen.

-Will Heegaard////////// 6

//////Wheeler Occupation, November 20 2009 -Notes by Zack Norwood

I volunteered to take notes as a legal observer during the Wheeler Hall occupation of November 20, 2009. What follows is a barely edited version of the notes I took including dialogue and relevant/irrelevant details I recorded during that day starting from the beginning of occupation at around 5:30am until the arrests inside Wheeler Hall that took place that night. I was sleep deprived and stressed, so please excuse the sloppiness that follows:

Cops arrest three: Aakash Desai, Idris Robinson, and Julian Martinez. They attack with Batons, injure at least one, Matt Marks, who has multiple baton lacerations. A non-violent protest. Announcements to folks outside, telling media what has happened. Cops yell "open the door now!" "We have

demands!": rehire the 38 AFSCME workers who were laid off. Police spray pepper spray under doors. "They're cutting through the barricades!" Moving from door to door. We have been here 2 hours. Attempts by police continue to pepper spray through doors. Announcements to crowd gathered on walkway to west side of Wheeler hall. "We're students." "Whose university? Our University!" chanting continues. Holding every door with multiple people. "20 observers on west side of building." "rumors of tear gas." "Police threaten to tear gas." Banging on doors by all protesters continues as "Our University" chants are heard. "Broken glass" from banging on doors cuts one of the protesters. "Looking for a number to UCPD to negotiate directly with them" 7:47am A message from outside: "Do you know how proud we are of you." "Solidarity with UC system and education around the world" 10 protesters holding SouthEast doors, 7 at Northeast doors, 9 at Northwest doors, 6 at Southwest doors, 7 in press room. 8:05 am Loud banging on doors Radio setup in press room. 8:11am 60 people outside supporting protesters, chanting, singing, sitting in pathway. Radio station being setup in room 223. protesters taunting police on other side of doors "Mercenaries", "Whose side are you on?" From outside: "Sit with us!" 6 protesters holding NW doors, 9 at SE doors, 7 at NW doors, 5 at SW doors No violence perpetrated by protesters. No, "radio is not working" 8:27am. 8:30am. NE doors, "they're taking off the hinges" 8:33am Broadcast from Wheeler room 223. 40 protesters in Wheeler Hall 2nd floor, after 3 arrests. Invincible by Pat Benatar plays on the sound system in 223 Wheeler. 8:53am "Loosening door hinge screws, and crow bars have arrived" "Something under the door" Door cracks to reveal head of officer trying to get in. "Jared skateboards by" 8:59am "Oh yeah, you got it" "That's the sound of desperation" Door shimmies on SE side. 9:06am 6 protesters holding SW doors, 6 holding NW doors, 7 holding NE doors, 7 holding SE doors. Report that 3 first arrestees were charged with burglary for holding doors closed with furniture. "Whose University? Our University!" 9:37am 150 people outside. 4 protesters at SW doors, 9 at NW doors, 5 at NE doors, 4 at SE doors 9:52am 10:05am. Twitter account update. Police have been eerily quiet. 10:14am Man in crowd taken down without provocation & dragged off in handcuffs carried by cops (Two people?) 10:27am SW door activity, bang. "They've got no problem locking up 13000 native american remains but they have a problem with UC students locking themselves in" Cops passed note under door 1 hour ago reading "We're tired and want to go home" 11am 100s of people outside at every entrance so that police can't take us out of here without people seeing. Top news on all media. 11:11am Big table moved to barricade door on NE. Fire alarms being pulled throughout campus. 11:30am Room 205 opens up to chanting out of East side of building, reports of crowd blocking barricades. 11:50am 12:21pm List of demands sent. 12:30pm All quiet, raining hard outside. Police corral off supporters so they can't access rear (North) entrance of Wheeler. Unclear whether there are also supporters of the protesters on south side. Reports say we are currently on CNN. 1Pm Police tell protesters through the doors that they are all going to get felonies and spend the weekend in jail. Doe

or Moffitt? Which library are we being processed through? Doe. 1:30pm Riot outside, Zhivka almost had her finger broken by baton. 2:15pm Northeast corner door handle is nearly broken off. Abhay eats ham & cheddar sandwich, it's "A'ight" 2:45pm Crowd is amazingly supportive. "We read our demands again and they cheer" 3pm Ananya Roy, Dean of Students Poullard proposed to come in here and discuss. We want assurances that our demands are met, and UCPD off of 2nd floor during negotiations. 3:07pm Ananya Roy, Student Senator, Chief of Police offer to come in and give us information. We discuss with crowd, are advised not to negotiate unless Vice-Chancellor is there. We are proposing to negotiate on the green (out the west facing window of room 223). with the Vice-Chancellor and Ananya Roy and Senator. Stalemate. They want to have negotiations by opening up our doors; we want to do it in front of the crowd. Four people, Marika Goodrich, Ananya Roy, Chief of Police, Vice-Chancellor Harry Lugain. Food coming through window (from the crowd thrown into Wheeler). Chief of Police pressured for promise to stand down during negotiations. The crowd and us reject the offer to dialogue inside because it would compromise our security. Crowd promises to stay the night and we don't agree to the negotiations on the polices' terms. "Leave our friends alone" Rubber bullets and fist fights occurring outside. Extremely loud banging, hinges perhaps coming off?Continues, deafens us. One at a time we are handcuffed and arrested for trespassing.////////// 8

Badge numbers of arresting officers:

- 79
- 67 - Miceli
- 63
- 85
- 93
- S13 - Tucker
- 88
- 89
- 116 - Video camera
- 77
- 38
- 31 - Parnell
- 30
- 78

Statement in support of the UC Mobilisation

24 November 2009

We the undersigned declare our solidarity with University of California students, workers and staff as they defend, in the face of powerful and aggressive intimidation, the fundamental principles upon which a truly inclusive and egalitarian public-sector education system depends. We affirm their determination to confront university administrators who seem willing to exploit the current financial crisis to introduce disastrous and reactionary 'reforms' (fee-increases, lay-offs, salary cuts) to the UC system. We support their readiness to take direct action in order to block these changes. We recognise that in times of crisis, only assertive collective action – walkouts, boycotts, strikes, occupations... – offers any meaningful prospect of democratic participation. We deplore the recent militarization of the UC campuses, and call on the UC administration to acknowledge rather than discourage the resolution of their students to struggle, against the imperatives of privatization, to protect the future of their university.

Signed:

- Gopal Balakrishnan, History of Consciousness, UC Santa Cruz
- Karyn Ball, English and Film Studies, University of Alberta
- LeGrace Benson, Emerita, SUNY Empire State
- Nathan Brown, English, UC Davis
- Darcy C. Buerkle, History, Smith College
- Julie Carlson, English, UC Santa Barbara
- Anthony Carrigan, English, University of Keele
- Paula Chakravarty, Department of Communication, UMass Amherst
- Piya Chatterjee, Women's Studies, UC Riverside
- Noam Chomsky, Linguistics, MIT
- Joshua Clover, English, UC Davis
- Elizabeth DeLoughrey, English, UCLA
- Mattanjah S. de Vries, Chemistry and Biochemistry, UC Santa Barbara
- Hent de Vries, Humanities Center, Philosophy, Johns Hopkins University
- Alexander Garcia Düttmann, Philosophy and Visual Culture, Goldsmiths University
- Aranye Fradenburg, English, UC Santa Barbara
- Manu Goswami, History, NYU
- Greg Grandin, History, NYU
- Martin Hägglund, Society of Fellows, Harvard University
- Peter Hallward, Philosophy, Middlesex University
- Werner Hamacher, Literature, Goethe University
- Harry Harootunian, History, Columbia University and Duke University
- Patricia Ingham, English, Indiana University
- Priya Jha, English, University of Redlands
- Adrian Johnston, Philosophy, University of New Mexico
- David Farrell Krell, Philosophy, DePaul University, University of Freiburg

- Ernesto Laclau, Politics, University of Essex
- Jacques Lezra, Comparative Literature and Spanish and Portuguese, NYU
- Akira Mizuta Lippit, Critical Studies, Comparative Literature, East Asian Languages and Cultures, USC
- Todd May, Philosophy, Clemson University
- Patricia Morton, History of Art, UC Riverside
- Fred Moten, English, Duke University
- Jack Linchuan Qiu, Journalism and Communication, Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Joseph Rezek, McNeil Center for Early American Studies, University of Pennsylvania
- Corey Robin, Political Science, Brooklyn College and the CUNY Graduate Center
- William I. Robinson, Sociology, University of California at Santa Barbara
- Avital Ronell, Comparative Literature, Germanic Languages and Literatures, NYU
- Louis-George Schwartz, Film, Ohio University
- Susan Seizer, Communication and Culture, Indiana University
- Brenda R. Silver, English, Dartmouth College
- Christine A. Stewart, English and Film Studies, University of Alberta
- Rei Terada, Comparative Literature, UC Irvine
- Sasha Torres, Information and Media Studies, University of Western Ontario
- Alberto Toscano, Sociology, Goldsmiths University of London
- Elizabeth Walden, Philosophy and Cultural Studies, Bryant University
- Mirko Wischke, Philosophy, National University of Kiev
- Slavoj Žižek, Philosophy, University of Ljubljana.

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Someone much wiser than me once said, “Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world.” I believe in the latter. It is not for my own sanity or healthy blood pressure—if it was, I would believe in the former, aimlessly ambling within the well-masked confines of status quo and normalcy. No, I believe in the latter. The former has already been proven to be dysfunctional, perpetuating a system of injustice and inequality. The problem runs deeper than a list of laid-off workers, of cut curricula, of administrative bonuses. It is the de-prioritization of a human necessity by those with the power to do so.

And yet, what is the use of belief if one does not defend it? It is conviction in action that keeps an idea burning. Transformation does not happen on its

own, especially against those with vested interest in maintaining business as usual. As students, workers, *people*, we must realize the power we have as a collective in reclaiming what is rightfully ours.

It will not be easy, but the results will be worth the sweat, that is for sure: A redefining of priorities. A remapping of power structures. The movement is picking up speed; let's not let it die down. We have the vigor, we have the fortitude, and we sure as hell have the justification. Because if there is one thing Berkeley has taught me, it is what solidarity looks like.

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My choice to participate in the Wheeler occupation has as much to do with the University of California (UC) system as it has to do with the City University of New York (CUNY) system, which increasingly faces privatization despite its original mandate to provide a free education for the whole people of NYC.

Public education in this country has been in crisis for quite some time. The recent 32% fee increase, drastic layoffs, furloughs, and weak or absent contracts only serve to underline the gravity of our ongoing struggle at UC. "The decisive element in every situation," according to political theorist Gramsci, "is the permanently organized and long-prepared force which can be put into the field when it is judged that a situation is favorable (and it can be favorable only in so far as such force exists, and is full of fighting spirit)." This force was clearly evident on November 20th from the multitude of organizations and unions participating on the macro level to the affinity groups and friends on the micro level.

It is my hope that our direct action has helped to concretize the situation so many have already been organizing around. Such actions, in conjunction with long-term campaigns, are not only useful but necessary to 1) help publicly illuminate on national and international levels the forces that have been cannibalizing access to higher education and to decently paid work, and to 2) make plain to ourselves and to everyone the wholeness of our commitment to creating the new world we carry in our hearts.

Like Puck said in the LA Times, this wasn't convenient for anybody. I was holding the barricade with one hand and reading a book for finals with the other. But what is education for if not to enable us to produce critical analyses of our situations and to engage strategies towards the radical transformation of these systems for the better? California should be proud it has produced intellectuals committed to defending public education with both their words and their bodies.

I have no doubt that the reason our occupation was a success was because of the fierceness of students, faculty, workers, staff and community members outside the building--under falling rain and rubber bullets--committed to protecting not just the wellbeing of those inside Wheeler but to defending the very idea that our university, that our education, belongs to us. There is nothing "public" about an education that the people have to pay for--not with our wallets, not with our silence.

IANNA HAWKINS OWEN

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GREAT LINK - MORE LETTERS OF SOLIDARITY:

Messages from Japan (Zengakuren), the United Kingdom, Pakistan (Labor Party Pakistan), Canada (Ontario Coalition Against Poverty)...

<http://weknowwhatsup.blogspot.com/2009/11/solidarity-messages-for-cal-students.html>

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Class Is Cancelled

The questions that people have asked about the occupation since we were released from police custody could fill an entire zine in their own right, but one particularly beautiful, demanding inquiry still stands out to me:

Okay, so I understand your situation, and I support lower fees and all, but why the hell did you have to cancel class?

I want to make love to every single person who has ever asked me this question. It's so simple! It's so sincere! It's so human! It's everything you could ever want in a question!

... and it's something that a lot more students should be asking their administrators.

For a lot of us involved in the occupation of Wheeler Hall, both inside and outside, class had *already* been cancelled. The cruel triptych of Administrative Incompetence, Callousness, and Larceny had finally coalesced, kicking many students, staff, and faculty off of campus, either by raising fees or by cutting low-income student resources. For these members of the university community, it didn't particularly matter whether or not class met as usual on Friday the 20th in Wheeler as it always had, because if we failed, we weren't coming back anyway. For the rest of us, those who will be able to weather the hurricane of administrative stupidity and kleptomania, the prospect of standing in solidarity with our peers was an intuitive, sensible option. That, in a nutshell, is why I occupied Wheeler Hall.

But let's be honest: If you really needed someone to explain this to you, you probably haven't been paying much attention in class to begin with.

Well, it's time for all of us to pay a bit more attention, because even though class was canceled, there were important lessons to be learned. Don't worry! The final may be coming up, but we can share notes! Here are some of mine:

- Make your demands clear, and make your demands clear *early*. If you give the administration the opportunity to distort any ambiguity, they will dutifully oblige.
- Solidarity is about community, not ideology. The bulk of the droves of people who manifested outside to hold the lines (and save our sorry asses) weren't self-described radicals -- most of them had never been to a strike meeting or a walkout meeting or a General Assembly meeting or any other boring, masochistic ritual that activists routinely subject themselves to. Hell, some of them probably even voted for McCain (well, maybe). But the kids on The Outside were victims of the same bullshit that the kids on The Inside were, and what's more, they recognized that they were our peers and our friends, and thus, our allies. So while the commies peddled their newspapers on the outskirts of the crowd, and much of the more egotistical 'radical' faculty picked their noses in their offices (or worse, ran around outside telling lies to the crowd about the negotiations process), members of the university community of *all* ideological backgrounds held the fucking line despite police intimidation and violence because they had *friends* in there and this, quite frankly, was bullshit. November

20th's ad hoc uprising was organized by friendship; political parties only showed up for the afterparty.

- It's easy to take over a building. Really, really, mindblowingly empoweringly *HeavensToBetsyThisIsSTUPENDOUS*-ly easy. Don't believe me? Try it for yourself.
- The police are not here to protect you. This much was clear within hours of the construction of the barricades. People gathered outside to support people on the inside, people locked themselves inside Wheeler to support people on the outside, and the cops were here to support.... who? The kids who were missing their History section? Unlikely, seeing as the Chancellor had already cancelled all classes in the building via email (thanks for the free campus-wide publicity, Mr. Birgeneau!). And that wouldn't exactly explain the riot gear anyway. It seemed rather clear -- to me, at least -- that the only 'victims' of our alleged crime were nowhere to be seen. I speak, of course, of bulbous, cancerous , blubbery egos of administrators to whom we pay six-figure salaries for the simple task of raising fees and cutting jobs and student services at rates that we could only expect from 'competitive administrators' of their caliber. But we were also reminded that cops are simply overgrown toddlers with pepper spray and nightsticks, and that like all toddlers, cops get a little uneasy around large groups of people. So when thousands of (unarmed) allies gathered outside, the threats of beatings and the assaults on our barricades began to slow down. Don't let them fool you: we are the big kid on the playground, so don't be afraid to throw your weight around from time to time.
- Music can rejuvenate an entire building full of hard workers in any situation, but if you play The Beatles' "Revolution" during an occupation, you'll just make them cranky and embarrassed.
- We're big in Europe. Actually, we're pretty big everywhere, but that's simply because our problems are also pretty big everywhere. Students and professors in Pakistan, in Slovenia, in New York (which is basically it's own country, let's be honest) et cetera, wrote to UC students expressing solidarity, and pointing out that public education was under attack in their country as well. Students in Austria stormed the U.S. Embassy in Vienna to support us. My point isn't that we're unique celebrities that have impressed people across the globe -- on the contrary, our struggle is one that is felt everywhere, and UC stakeholders need to start dishing out hella international solidarity NOW, because we owe those kids our hides right now.
- This really is, for all intents and purposes, OUR UNIVERSITY. Even if we forget sometimes. • x lenc

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This is not just about furloughs, fee hikes, and who runs things.

This is fundamentally an issue of the balance of power. About how for too long, the few have dictated how the many should live. About how for too long, the few, the privileged, have sucked parasitically on the life-blood of the many. Why should we allow our resources, our opportunities, our futures, to be held in their hands; to be torn and twisted and manipulated into whatever shape they feel fits their world view. Choosing one's rulers is not the means to true freedom. We must have no rulers, no presidents, no regents. Our affairs must be governed by us. When did Chancellor Birgeneau or Mark Yudof take classes at Wheeler Hall? When did they need books from the Anthropology library? So why should they determine how we use them? We should, we did and we must continue to do so.

-We are all seething with anger at the police for their brutal and inhumane aggression towards our fellow students. I myself, while tied up in the basement of Wheeler, observed two UCPD officers brag about beating a fleeing student. At the bail bondsman's office I was angered to tears seeing images of police brutality on television. The police are cowards; they hide behind their masks and batons to account for their moral bankruptcy. However, we must recognize that the police are merely a tool of the administration; a tool of government that is brandished at any moment that the people attempt to take what is rightfully theirs. The administration are also cowards; they hide behind their tools of coercion because they lack any semblance of justified authority. The rulers, the politicians, the CEOs, the capitalists, the administrators; they have secured by force all that is necessary for us to live our lives as we see fit. Thus, they have made us slaves to their world view; by controlling the resource and dictating how it is used, they control our lives. But we changed that on Friday...

-It was as clear as the sky was dark; that the administration, the governors of our education, value property over people. They value an inanimate object over the interests of the students. They had me and two others arrested, charged with felony burglary and imprisoned. They had their dehumanized pawns beat and harass our people in order to keep a lump of concrete and steel in their control. But it wasn't in their control; it was in ours. We gave them just a taste of what we are capable of on Friday; and it scared them. We did not take the beatings passively; we fought back. We took the building, we

fought back against the police, we showed them the true power of student resistance, and we won.

-The great trick of those in power is to lie and co-opt in order to turn around and steal from us at every chance they get. We must not let them diffuse the power of our movement through their pitiful appeals to freedom of speech and non-violent demonstration. Freedom of speech is meaningless if it is not followed by action. Words will not bend the will of those in power; actions will.

-Mario Savio said ""...you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop". I disagree; we must dismantle the machine, from top down, so that it never starts again. If we want freedom, if we want control over our own lives, we will dismantle this structure that facilitates the privatization of the wealth that should be the common inheritance of all. We will take buildings, streets, and all that is necessary until we are free and rid of this bureaucratic, authoritarian, and unjust structure. No student group should from now on pay for access to campus resources or request permission for anything. This is out campus, and we will use what we need and take what we need. We will occupy, we will appropriate, and in turn, we will liberate. -Aakash Desai

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I did what I did because I still believe in the power of the people. I still believe that we must take it upon ourselves to be the change we want to see. If you see a law that's unjust, break it. Break it until everyone around you sees your image, and agrees or disagrees. Break it because you must, for yourself and others. Don't let the stigma of an arrest stop you from acting on what you believe. A problem is a problem, no matter how big or small. If you see a law that's unjust, break it. They've told me I should learn from history, and I have. You learn civil disobedience in the streets, not a classroom. There's no better way to change the system than through civil disobedience. Here's a poem for all the supporters, thank you all so much.

“Oh say can you see? But if we can dream a new day it may be. You had to know the baddest bro, with the phattest flow would shake up the status quo, with my adjectives and adverbs and ad libs. Like Gandhi, protest is my modus operandi. It's like Malcolm and Martin's evolution with art and revolution 'cause the total thrust is global justice.”

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To all students that I prevented from attending class:

Please don't misunderstand what happened on November 20. Don't think that I don't value your education. Your education, and the education of all current and prospective students, is what I value above all else.

I understand that our tactics may be frustrating. I'm sure there is someone who stayed up all night finishing a paper, only to find out they suddenly had the whole weekend to write it. But try to put this movement in perspective. You will recover from missing one class. You will still graduate. But there are other students who will never graduate because of what is happening to the UC system.

Funding is being cut by Sacramento, true, but how can we expect the government to defend education when the people in charge of the best university system in our country don't even defend it? The Regents made their priorities perfectly clear on November 19 when they voted to increase tuition by an unprecedented 32 percent. If they can vote to raise it by 32 percent, unanimously, even amongst the frenzied protests at UCLA, then there is no limit to how far they will privatize our university. They will continue with their frivolous construction projects, they will continue with their inflated salaries, they will continue to sit back and watch as the government makes deeper and deeper cuts to education.

Right now, California is known for higher education. Soon, it will probably be better known for its expansive (and ever expanding) prison system. If we want to fix the budget, we should spend less on locking people up. Which means we need fewer people committing crimes. Which means we need to reduce poverty and build up the middle class. *Which means we need to educate our citizens.* (If you want the statistical evidence of these relationships, spend ten seconds googling it)

The Regents are not listening to us. Sacramento is not listening to us. If we want to reclaim our university, first we must reclaim our voice. Please join us, in body or in spirit, but always in solidarity.

Katie Gilmore

Art Practice, class of 2012 (hopefully)

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/////How to fell a dead tree

The axe:

November 20th, within UC Berkeley's Wheeler Hall, a group of students, not knowing each other, were that axe. And just beyond the walls of Wheeler hall, an even bigger group of students (many times over) gathered by the hundreds upon hundreds and similarly acted with sharp action. These tools, of occupation and resisting, when considered against the violence that the UC systems and (necessarily) capitalism have created, are not radical, but appropriate.

The dead tree:

People recognize all over the world that the system of oppression perpetuated by global corporations, and those powers that look to please them, are very much within the same narrative including the corporations that are privatizing the UC system with each loss in public character pushed by those in control. This is not just a localized resistance against the UC regents and administration, but rather a piece in a global multi-generational fight against the thieving system that is Capitalism.

The conditions:

We exist within a larger struggle.

November 20th marked 40 years since the native peoples occupation of Alcatraz, which was a stand against oppressive imperial forces and a call for justice. We have a similar call for justice that we will take now, for we will not wait any longer.

This is not an isolated incident. Today, throughout the world, there are instances of power in people who, not allowing themselves to fall prey to the overarching system as it is, do because there is nothing more important. In our actions, we have received support from people in all corners of the world: from those who stormed the US Embassy in Vienna; from the Labor Party Pakistan, who note the importance of a “culture of resistance”; from Zengakuren of Japan, who call for “unity and solidarity of workers and students who fight against war and privatization”; from the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty; from those in the United Kingdom, who have sent a message of standing against “injustice and oppression”;—all a remarkable stand against what is wrong.

We are surrounded with decay and know that there is no growth. The People (who have undeniable power) can be described as an axe. With solidarity, the axe finds itself in the hand of an invincible movement. Ease in the axe's movement depends on the surrounding environment – the time, the available force, and motivation – we have this. You have this. Even more importantly, the tree knows it's dead and this is the cause of fear for those in power. They are afraid of the ecstatic, spontaneous energy of every single person present at the time and this fear persists. **The tree is coming down and it knows it.**

“November is, for many reasons, the month for the axe. It is warm enough to grind an axe without freezing. But cold enough to fell a tree in comfort.” -Aldo Leopold

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